CHAPTER II

TYPES OF CONFLICT IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS.
A THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE
Conflict is an inherent and ineradicable component of international relations. In its most perverse form it comes out through the struggle for power and influence, both dominant factors in global politics.

It is an irony but a fact that as the world today is becoming more integrative and interdependent, it is also at the same time becoming more conflict-ridden. This is perhaps because in a primarily integrative atmosphere — i.e. cooperative, supportive, agreed upon - the demands of the association itself as they compete with the preferences of national interest brings forth the strands of conflict.

According to James Rosenau and his analysis of world politics states,¹ states in the interstate system are primarily active in the sphere of politico-strategic and military field. In other words, world politics is so state-centric, so entwined in preserving the national interest that it fails to see beyond it in order to ruse other issues to a high political priority aspect.

International system as it has been right from the times of Thucydides through Machiavelli and Hobbes till the present time, is essentially engulfed in the struggle for power and that according to Hans Morgenthau classic statement, "statesmen think and

act in terms of interest defined as power\textsuperscript{2}, broadly conceived to include both material and psychological, military and economic capabilities. The "national interest" in this view is to maximise power. Because power exists only in relation to the other, hence it follows that world politics is inherently conflictual.

International system as the theory of realism puts, is anarchic, meaning less in terms of it being chaotic but more in terms of a 'system' lacking a political authority higher than that of a state. While both private actors, such as multinationals and non-governmental organisations exits and influence the system as does the intergovernmental organisation like the UN it, however, is not as dominant as the interests of the states. Aspects of foreign policy, the systemic processes especially those that regulate international conflict, the causes of war and the elements of negotiation and bargaining with emphasis to security and strategy are all deeply rooted in the concepts of national interest and power. This provides a pervasive explanation for conflict within the international arena.

**Meaning and Understanding of Conflict**

A conflict in a very simple expatiation pertains to the situation in which parties (two or more) perceive that they possess incompatible objectives. When this perception has a great deal of value attached to it then the conflict is more intense. When the objective is numerous the scope of the conflict becomes greater and more the actors in the conflict the larger becomes its domain. Value, scope and domain are the essential dimensions of

conflict, which shapes the actors relationship and behaviour to each other. In a world where each state views its interest as a primary objective, it is hence not surprising to find a global behaviour dictated by bargaining, litigating, striking and fighting which decides the outcome in favour of one party or another.

Lewis Coser in his works on social conflict highlights the ‘realistic’ and ‘unrealistic’ conflicts in the domain of international politics. The unrealistic explains the misperceived or illusory incompatibility between states in which the good of one of the party/parties might conceivably be to engage in conflict for its own sake. The realistic conflict on the other hand is the pursuit of a genuinely incompatible and extrinsic objectives.

The incompatibility can be classified into either conflict of interest or conflict of values. Issues relating to border dispute or territorial animosity or competition over scarce natural resources where the stakes are considerable high can be defined in clear terms as a conflict were the interests of the nations predominate everything and the logical end to which lies wither in one state gaining its objective over the other or because of the parity of strength (between two actors) conclude a compromising settlement. Conflict of values

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5 Martin List and Volker Rittberger, “Regime theory and international environmental management”, in Andrew Hurrell and Benedict Kingsbury, eds., n.3, p.91
relates to states ideological differences, principles and perception. It might not be overt as that of conflict of interest but its impact and sustainability in keeping hostilities alive is awesome.

The most interesting facet of conflict, which is also the most awakening is its response to changes in international affairs. In fact, conflict in all true sense is about change. Change in social structure and institutions, in the distribution of resources and in human relations at many levels. Conflict by its very nature is governed by two sets of issues: what changes shall occur and at whose expense.

Conflict, therefore is both a cause and consequence of change and has diverse effect in the society. It is a symptom, which accompanies the birth of much that is new in society and frequently attends the demise of whatever is outworn. More often than not conflict signals the ills in the body politics and the inability to suppress it. The decision making process which is so hampered by the unresolved conflicts existing between states should not be a total hostage to it. Seeking alternate solutions which are more persuasive and less power-laden is what conflict resolution implies. Conflict is not a unitary phenomenon. While it may have different shades and varying degrees of propensity it, however, reflects one particular underlying force generally common in all hostilities and tensions — i.e. Inequality.

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6 Ibid., p. 91
The politics of the world today are volatile owing to the tensions arising from inequality. Whether it is within a country or between countries, the privileges and valuables enjoyed by some have provoked conflict between those who feel less favoured. The privileges like prestige, power and wealth are often distributed according to race, religion and culture. As we move towards the next century on the platform of equality and a vision of a shared world, we still have not come to terms with the existing inequalities which is still cited as a basis for conflict 'in' and 'between' nations throughout the world.

Differences between the industrialised 'North' countries and the less developed to developing 'South' countries are based on unequal wealth and income distribution; on aid and technological sharing and on the unequal views and understanding specially in matters relating to the environment.

In their notable work, Alastair and Angus Taylor have separated the 'North' and 'South' countries primarily based on inequalities. The title, 'Poles Apart' is highly suggestive in explaining the asymmetrical relationship. The countries of the 'North' have almost always defined the 'South's' interests from an exclusive Northern perspective. In transferring technology, installing infrastructure and introducing governance, the movement has invariable been in the same direction: from North to South. Such process has given North the attitude of superiority and arrogance while at the same time has caused deep resentment and a feeling of inequality among South countries. The present

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world situation according to the authors is a non-zero sum game (lose-lose) whereby the North and South have set the stage for "mutual vulnerability." 

Indeed, inequality, actual or perceived is, the greatest motivating force in politics. Equality is still a vision for it means a desire to be in par or on the same level with some particular thing. So long as inequality prevails, so long will differences on all important matters be unresolved. The reason why inequality is such a dominant factor is because for the first time in world history, societal transformation is taking place on a global scale, simultaneously affecting every society and leaving no culture unscathed. Never before has demands for right and equality reached the level it has today signifying that inequality has reached rock bottom from where it can deep no further.

**Typology of Conflict**

In a general atmosphere of inequality, two types of conflict based on Vilhelm Aubert's classification can be discerned: Dissensual conflict & Consensual conflict. Dissensual conflict exists when the parties (state actors) differ in norms, values or beliefs and either the requirements of co-ordination make those differences incompatible or one side wants the other to accept the values and beliefs. In consensual conflicts the parties (state actors) are confronted with a situation of scarcity in which every actor desires the same valued

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8 Ibid., p. 8
9 Vilhelm Aubert, "Competition and dissensus: two types of conflict and conflict resolution", *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, no. 7, 1963, pp. 31-32
object but cannot fully be satisfied because there is not enough for everybody. In this core typology Martin List and Volker Rittberger classification on a fourfold level of conflict identification merits incorporation. These are: Conflicts about values, Conflicts of interest about relatively assessed goods, Conflicts of interest about absolutely assessed goods and Conflicts about means.  

Since state actors do not only disagree about what is desirable but also on how to reach agreed or common goals. Hence, on a broader understanding dissensual conflicts include not only value related incompatibilities i.e. conflicts about values but also dissensus about means i.e. conflicts about means. Consensual conflicts on the other hand by its meaning and understanding includes conflicts about relatively assessed goods like power, prestige and hegemony, which gain their value only if one actor has more than the others and conflicts about absolutely assessed goods like water, food and various resources, which gain their value independently of the amount other parties have.

The typology further expands on Martin List and Volker Rittberger classification by identifying the kinds of conflicts that assume to play a predominant role in world politics and the degree of its potency in transforming into a war.

10 Martin List and Volker Rittberger, n.5, pp. 91-92
Going by Quincy Wright's observation that peace is a condition of equilibrium among numerous factors: military, legal, social, political, economic, technological and psychic, then war in this view is both the result of serious disturbances in this equilibrium and a means of restoring it. Similarly conflict may usefully be regarded as the subset of all disputes between parties capable of waging war in which the military option has been introduced and at least one party perceives the issues at stake in partially, if not wholly, military terms.

It can be postulated that the most significant points in the development of hostilities are those at which:

1. A dispute arises between parties capable of waging war
2. At least one of the parties begins to conceive of the conflict at hand as an actual or potential military issue and takes steps to prepare for that contingency.
3. Other options are either exhausted or abandoned in favour of the military.

If as Clausewitz has argued, warfare is regarded as but one of many alternative instruments of policy, as a continuation of policy "with other means", then in this view, war occurs only when one of at least two parties capable of waging it opts for a military solution to an ongoing conflict between them. War therefore, can be regarded as one of

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the possible mode of policy activity aimed at effectively and favourably resolving an ongoing conflict of interests.

**War**

War is probably the most brutalising of human experiences and an inevitable outcome of the social and political institutions in which individuals and states operate. German geopoliticalist Friedrich Ratzel viewed the state as a living organism, building on Charles Darwin’s theory of evolution, he put forward that states grow, mature, decay and die.  

As in Darwin’s human jungle where only the fittest survive, Ratzel’s state is engaged in a constant struggle for survival. In this struggle, the stronger state tends to expand at the expense of its weaker neighbours, this, in turn, allows it to preserve its vigour and to prolong its life cycle. Once a state loses its expansionist impulse, it goes into a rapid decline, which, in many cases, ends in its eventual demise.

Enunciated at the turn of the 20th century, Ratzel’s ideas were further elaborated by a younger generation of German geopoliticians, most notably Karl Haushofer. Haushofer elevated the ideal of expansionism to a categorical imperative. In this view, since the state’s very existence depended on the possession of an adequate living space (or Lebensraum in German), ‘the preservation and protection of the space must determine all its policies. If the space has grown too small, it has to be expanded.’ These expansionist

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14 Ibid., p.64
geopolitical notions eventually penetrated the thinking and praxis of Adolf Hitler, with disastrous consequences for the entire world.

Disputing Clausewitz's classical dictum that 'war is the continuation of political activity by other means', military historian Martin Van Creveld argues that "war, far from being merely a means, has very often been considered an end."15 To a predominant school of thought, known as political realism, war is an inevitable outcome of human insecurity and the desperate quest for power it generates. In realist thinking, most saliently represented by Hans Morgenthau, the world is a violent, hostile environment, in which the will to self-preservation rules.

The ideas that 'bad states' wage wars while 'good states' coexist in peace and harmony, and that universal organisation can decisively curb war, if not eliminate it altogether, gained political currency during most of the 20th century. Given the numerous ideologies vying for supremacy, from Liberalism to Fascism to Communism to religious fundamentalism, the rival great powers have been increasingly disposed to portray themselves as champions of peace, and their opponents as warmongers.

In justifying his decision to take the United States into the First World War, merely a year after praising the merits of neutrality, President Woodrow Wilson described the

move as implementation of a moral obligation to help the forces of light, the democratic states, in their Manichean struggle against the forces of darkness, the authoritarian states. 16 Not surprisingly, things looked differently on the other side of the world. To Marxist-Leninists, including those occupying the Kremlin between 1917 and till the end of Cold War, the distinction between peaceful and aggressive states is immaterial. Rather, the nation state as a socio-political institution is the root of all evil, the cause of war. As argued by Vladimir Lenin, war is nothing but an oppressive tool allowing the ruling classes to keep the oppressed classes in awe. Once Socialism triumphs, the state will wither away, and with it the phenomenon of war. 17 Until then, war is a necessary, indeed a legitimate instrument to spread the socialist message throughout the world. There is nothing immoral in war as such: What determines its moral value is the cause for which it is fought. Wars waged by the oppressed classes against their oppressors are legitimate and just, wars fought to perpetuate reactionary and oppressive institutions are immoral. 

In the broadest sense war is a violent contact of distinct but similar entities. In this sense a collision of stars, a fight between two primitive tribes, and hostilities between two modern nations would all be war.

16 Efrain Karsh, n.13, p. 67
17 Ibid., p. 67
Grotius conception of war as "the condition of those contending by force as such"\textsuperscript{18} is usually followed by diplomats, international lawyers and military planners. Grotius criticised Cicero's definition of war as simply 'a contending by force' because he said war was 'not a contest but a condition'. Meanwhile sociologist in particular have accepted to a great extent Cicero's definition with the qualification that violent contention cannot be called war unless it involves actual conflict and constitutes a socially recognised form or custom within the society where it occurs. From the sociological point of view war is, therefore, a socially recognised form of intergroup conflict involving violence.

Clausewitz defined war as "an act of violence intended to compel our opponents to fulfill our will",\textsuperscript{19} and elsewhere he emphasised the continuity of violence with other political methods. Whatever the point of view, war is only one of many abnormal legal situations. It is but one of numerous conflict procedures. It is only an extreme case of group attitudes. It is only a very large-scale resort to violence.

Combining these four points of view, war is seen to be a state of law and a form of conflict involving a high degree of legal equality, of hostility and of violence in the relations of organised human groups, or, more simply, the legal condition which equally permits two or more hostile groups to carry on a conflict by armed force.

\textsuperscript{18} Quincy Wright, n.11, p. 91
\textsuperscript{19} Carl Von Clausewitz, n.12, p. 32
War does not, however, occur in a vacuum. The decision to wage it can be and generally is made neither lightly or spontaneously. Before war may be undertaken as an instrument of policy, at least one party capable of waging it must introduce the military option into its policy considerations of an ongoing dispute and must subsequently act by mobilising military forces. These actions are, in effect, the necessary though not sufficient conditions or antecedents of war. By introducing the military option, the nature of the dispute changes fundamentally.

War, therefore, can be viewed as one possible mode of policy activity aimed at effectively and favourably resolving an ongoing conflict of interests. War, hence is but one of numerous conflict procedures as in negotiation, conciliation, mediation, arbitration and adjudication. Richard E. Barringer by devising a method of classifying empirical data to characterise conflict and its stages of development, notes that war is merely a particular subset of the larger set of all conflict modes and conflict as the subset of all disputes between parties capable of waging war in which the military option has been introduced, and at least one party perceives the issues at stake in partially, if not wholly, military terms.  

20 Quincy Wright, n.11, p. 92
21 Richard E. Barringer, War: Patterns of Conflict (Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1972), pp. 16-17
Illustrating it through a Venn diagram, Barringer postulates that the most significant points in the development of hostilities are those at which:

1. a dispute arises between parties capable of waging war;
2. at least one of the parties begins to conceive of the conflict at hand as an actual or potential military issue and takes steps to prepare for that contingency; and
3. other options have been exhausted or abandoned for the while in favour of the military, and organised hostilities occur.

Illustration. 1

Causes of War

Aristotle suggested grouping causes into four categories, which he called material, efficient, formal and final. Similar conditions can be identified that precede war. The 'material' causes are the permissive causes, because they permit war to occur. The

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'efficient' causes are the agents. The 'formal' causes are the essential one and the 'final' causes are the purpose or the intention.

**Illustration 2**

**GROUPING CAUSES INTO FOUR CATEGORIES (ARISTOTLE)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MATERIAL</th>
<th>EFFICIENT</th>
<th>FORMAL</th>
<th>FINAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Permissive)</td>
<td>(Agent)</td>
<td>(Essential)</td>
<td>(Purpose)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Human Nature
- Anarchic System
- Power Groups
- Trouble makers
- Warmongers
- Structural Factors
- Fear
- Gain
- Doctrine

**Human Nature**

Of the many theories that pertain to war, the human nature aspect holds good ground. The popularity of this theory has to do greatly with the Christian tradition. Christian belief holds that human nature is not basically good or even (by itself) capable of becoming good. One practical way in which human nature manifests itself is the inability of human beings to live in harmony with one another. Collective violence, carried out by states against each other, is in the Christian view only a manifestation of this basic individual
nature, because states are composed of individuals. Only when the individuals change will states change.\(^{23}\)

Konrad Lorenz, the noted ethnologist has worked extensively on this particular aspect. He argues that human beings, like other animals, have instincts, which indicate a certain behaviour pattern.\(^{24}\) Among the instincts Lorenz finds in humans is the aggressive one. Which means that one human being when challenged by another will react with and stand to fight. Lorenz further argues that this aggressive instinct is the product of evolution. Traits that survive from generation to generation do so because they are "functional", that is they enhance the ability of organisms possessing them to survive.\(^{25}\)

### Anarchic System

Another permissive cause of war is the international anarchy. The state-system for the last three hundred years has not been well organised to prevent it. In fact the most important principle of the state-system, that of sovereignty, seems to facilitate it. A common impression is that anarchy is the equivalent of chaos and violence but anarchy is simply the absence of a superior authority, and clearly, in international politics, there is no authority superior to the state.

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\(^{23}\) David W. Zeigler, *War, Peace and International Politics* (Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1987), p. 113  
\(^{24}\) Konrad Lorenz, *King Solomon's Ring* (London: Methuen, 1961), pp. 181-185  
\(^{25}\) Ibid., p. 183
All politics is a mixture of conflict and cooperation but international politics has less cooperation and more conflict as has been witnessed in the last three centuries or so. Jean Jacques Rousseau illustrates the state of affairs in international politics through a now well-known fable.\textsuperscript{26} He describes five hunters who join to hunt a stag. They must cooperate to surround the stag. Upon killing it, they will share equally and each will receive enough to feed his family. But then one of the five breaks the ring to pursue a rabbit, which will provide enough food for his own family. The stag escapes and the other four go hungry.

The moral of the story is that placing personal needs over group needs destroys the cooperation and it is because of this that the international system is so fickle and fluctuating. For 300 years the state system has been loosely organised according to certain principles, foremost among them the legal doctrine of sovereignty. The fundamental problem of world politics is that these principles work imperfectly. The principle of sovereignty is not so scrupulously respected that a state can be confident that its borders will never be violated or its political interdependence subverted.\textsuperscript{27} Yet sovereignty is regularly invoked by states when attempts are made to impose some order on international politics through a higher authority. This ideal of the sovereign nation-state is being challenged today both by attempts to control state behaviour through

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{27} David W. Zeigler, n.23, p.106
\end{itemize}
international organisations and by the appearance of new, non-state actors. However, the doctrine of sovereignty, until now at least, has been strong enough to frustrate attempts to prevent the resort to violence among states.

**Troublemakers, Warmongers and Power Groups**

War is also the product of certain personal doing. The 'agents' as they are called. An example of this approach is found in many of the histories of W.W.II. Most put the responsibility for the wear on Adolf Hitler and his initiatives in foreign policy. In fact, Allan Bullock, author of one of the most read biographies of Hitler, entitled one of his chapters, “Hitler’s War, 1939”.  

28 Theodore Abel, a psychologist studied the state of the mind of dictators and power groups and stated, “Throughout recorded human history, the initiators of war were individuals and groups who held power…”  

29 His study of twenty-five wars indicated and identified a power group responsible for each war. The W.W.I he attributed to the Austrian power group, composed of the prime minister, the foreign minister and the chief of staff. Abel claims that they had decided to wage war against Serbia as early as 1909 and were only waiting for an occasion, such as the one provided by the assassination of the Austrian heir to the throne.

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29 Theodore Abel, “The elements of decision in the pattern of war”, *American Sociological Review*, vol. 6 no.6, 1941. p.856
In the 1930s between the W.W.I and W.W.II, there was a growing acceptability in the US that a small group of arms manufacturers were responsible for the country in participating in W.W.I known popularly as “the merchants of death”, they were put to congressional hearings by senator Gerald Nye 30 who wanted to create public support for his policy of keeping America out of the world political crisis of the 1930s.

Sometimes the troublemakers are identified as an entire state, although “state” is often only shorthand for the leaders of a state. Germany and Japan were the enemies in W.W.II, the communist Soviet Union was the ‘evil empire’ in the Cold War time. Libya and Iran were the devils for the US and Iraq a disturbing force in the New World Order after the end of the Cold war.

**Structural Factor**

Troublemakers or power groups as a cause to war is specific oriented and cannot be applied in general. At best they can be a catalyst and not a sole originator. The reasons for war go deeper and in terms of analysis can be called the structural factors —- The political, social and class. The theories have won wide followings at one time or another. One of the most important of such was that of Marx. For Karl Marx, mainly the feudal class (19th century perspective) caused war, a class whose prime function was fighting. However, Marx expected war to die out with feudalism. In addition, according to Marx, capitalism (contrary to what many believe of Marx) was essentially peaceful (in the sense

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with war) for it transcended national boundaries and worked to create a single world state. War was bad for business.31

However, Marx view that with the growth of capitalism war would end was proved wrong. Prussia, which was a capitalist society, fought a number of wars in the 19th century. Worse, Prussia seemed to become more, not less, militaristic as its economy developed. In 1914 when the most advanced capitalist state (England, Germany and France) went to war, it was clear that Marx view needed correction. Lenin provided this.

In a way Marx and Lenin were similar. They both saw was as caused by a specific economic class. However, Lenin identified a different culprit, the capitalist class, and particularly the new type of capitalist that had appeared in the later stages of capitalism, the finance capitalist. Lenin’s theory explaining world was expanded beyond Senator Nye’s “merchants of death” theory. It incorporated not only a handful of private manufacturers of arms but also a whole network of bankers, industrialists and government officials. The remedy proposed by Lenin was a radical one —— not just prohibiting arms manufacturing by private individuals but completely reordering society to eliminate any private ownership of property. Only when capitalism is replaced by socialism, Lenin argued will war be eliminated.

31 Marx and Lenin views interpreted by David W. Zeigler, n.23, pp. 118-119
Lenin's contemporary Woodrow Wilson also identified a class ---- the small ruling class of undemocratic countries unanswerable to the public at large, the autocracies. Wilson contrasted autocracies unfavourable with democracies. He connected war and hostilities to autocratic countries and solution to world peace was the flourishing of democracy, as two slogans during W.W.I suggested, 'The war to end all wars' and 'The war to make the world safe for democracy.'

The issues of nationalism also play a structural part in the origin of wars. The wars of Bismarck were fought to create a national state. In 1914 the Austrians went to war with Serbia because of certain nationalist claims and France went to war eagerly to reclaim the provinces of Alsace and Lorraine. In the 1930s, Hitler based many of his claims on the right of Germans to live together in one state. The wars in Korea, The Middle East, Bangladesh and Cyprus have all had national components. Nationalism is often the basis for group's feelings that it is being wronged or that it has a grievance. Other types of grievances may also provide issues for wars: violations of territory or national honours. For example. But States can also desire war not because they feel in the wrong but simply because they desire what someone else has.
Gain, Fear and Doctrine

Thucydides in his classic, 'The History of the Peloponnesian Wars' noted three essential purposes that drive states to war. He identified these as 'ambition, fear and greed' The purpose of gain is seen most unmixed in the wars by which the European powers extended the frontiers of international society to enclose the whole world, and in the subsequent wars for dividing the spoils of the imperialist expansion — those wars with a transparently economic motive, line the Anglo-Dutch wars in the seventeenth century and the Anglo-French in the eighteenth, which Adam Smith ascribed to "the impertinent jealously of merchants and manufacture's."

Fear as a purpose, on the other hand, is rather one of exclusion. Fear is a rational apprehension of future evil, and is the prime purpose of international politics. For all powers at all times are concerned primarily with their security, and most powers at most times find their security threatened. The purpose of fear prompts preventive war as well as defensive war and that in the majority of wars between great powers the aggressor's motive has been preventive.

War of doctrine means a crusading war, war to assert principles and advance a cause. This purpose is a driving mode of ambition. If qualitative change is more important than

33 Quoted in Martin Wright, Power Politics (Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1979), p. 138
quantitative, the striking development in war in the past two hundred years is not its
grousing destructiveness, but the way it has increasingly become the instrument of
doctrinal conviction. To introduce interests into other countries than those which arise
from their our locality is what the purpose of doctrine is or to put it in Arthur Koestler's
language, 'horizontal forces' shake and distort 'the vertical structure of competing
national egotism's.'

The climax of 'stasis' (Greek word for strife within communities)
is when a horizontal doctrine acquires a territorial foothold.

In the various kinds of conflict as reflected through the typology chart (Illustration 3),
each type of conflict has the potential seed to transform the prehostilities to a situation of
complete hostility. Each type of course has various degrees.

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34 Martin Wright, "Wars of gain, fear and doctrine" in Lawrence Freedman, ed., War (Oxford: Oxford
University Press, 1994), p.92
Conflict About Values

Ideological

Ideology is an indispensable part of social and political analysis. Critical theorists of the Frankfurt school of thoughts, like Max Horkheimer and Theodore Adorno regarded as set of ideas that are false or illusory about the social world, while other theorists preferred to think ideology in terms of the inter-relations between symbol and power.

The rise of Nazism, which plunged the world into a bloody and destructive war, demonstrated that political system and relation of power and domination could be interwoven in a complex way with ideas, beliefs and symbolic forms. Hitler advocated the supremacy of the Aryans, the breed of which the Germans were the direct descendants. It was a powerful ideology that mobilised the entire country and secured legitimacy in channelling the entire resource and political system into waging war and establishing the Third Reich.

Power is rarely exercised without some kind of symbolic attribute or support. It is this aspect of power and of social and political life more generally, that has come to define the distinctive importance of ideology.

36 John B. Thompson, Ideology and Modern Culture (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p.27
Karl Marx while rarely using the term 'ideology', yet defined it in an innovative way in course of his deep study on class system. He suggested that, in societies divided into classes, ideas might play an important role in articulating the conflicting aims and interests of different social classes. Ideas may also shape the ways in which individuals perceive the social world and their positions within it, thereby affecting the course of social and political change.

Marx’s view of ideology that animates social or political action can be highlighted with the two profound ‘ism’ that hotly contested with each other in the post W.W.II era. Liberalism and Communism split the world into two camps with equal hostility and disagreement. Each camp, one led by the US and the other by the USSR, asserted the supremacy of their respective ideologies. The US justified its enormous defence expenditure and pacified public opinion by citing the Soviet Union as the ‘evil empire’ and the ‘enemy’ to watch and guard against. Soviet Union viewed on similar lines the expansionist designs of the western forces and forcefully convinced their eastern European allies of the ‘threat perception’. Such was the intensity of this ideological clash that the world through a prolific arms escalation reached a level of total annihilation.

With the breakdown of the Soviet Union and its alliance system marked the collapse of communism as a global challenge to the west and the triumph, in ideology if not in
practice, of a political and economic model of liberal capitalism, which has been described as the “end of history”, ushering in a new world of liberal ascendance.

Belief And Perception

The power of belief and perception, of ideas and of ways of thinking has sown the seeds of rivalry and competition in a subtle but very effective way, as states clashed with each other for dominance in the international arena.

A system of ideas or belief or even a simple slogan or mobilising phrase can effect significant change in the definition of interests, which in turn can influence both individual and group behaviour. Ideas and the conceptual frameworks that accompany them help to frame issues and define what is an important problem. According to Peter Hall, “Ideas have real power in political world, but they do not acquire political force independently of the constellation of institutions and interests already present there.”

In the 90s much of the western and in particular the US media has trumpeted the triumph of liberalism ---- Marx as against market, communism as against democracy, totalitarianism as against pluralism. The entire media (print, visual, films, books and

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magazines) has effectively made mince-meat of the erstwhile Soviet Union and the socialistic system in a way to influence the global economic world into following a pattern of liberalising domestic trade and investment regimes, privatising state-owned enterprises and pursuing a variety of economic reforms.

The conflict that emerges is to what extent the liberal economic ideas can in actuality help the developing world to shake-off its problem. Is it in true sense a virtue for development or just a mean for the developed countries to increase their economic might through a unified global economy?

Moreover, capitalism itself is not a unified concept. As the old bipolar world system broke down, debates over what kind of an international political economy should emerge engrossed the political economists. One group of analysts belief that the New World order is best characterised as a single global system superimposed upon individual nation-states, which are themselves losing importance.\textsuperscript{40} Other analysts belief that the world is breaking up into three blocks centered on the US, Japan and Europe (particularly Germany).\textsuperscript{41} The resulting political-economic zones are said to be furthering differentiated as to the models and styles of capitalism prevailing in these respective zones. Lester Thurow a well-known political economist foresees the world turning into

\textsuperscript{40} Barbara Stallings and Wolfgang Streeck, “Capitalism in conflict?” in Barbara Stallings, ed., Global Change, Regional Response (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 71
\textsuperscript{41} Ibid., p. 72
regional blocks centered on the European Union, Japan and United States. Since the Bretton Wood is dead, he argues that another on similar lines will not come about because there is no hegemonic power in the world today. Consequently, the new rules for those who control the largest market will write the world economy.

What kind of capitalism will emerge will depend upon the belief, ideas and perception, as Thurow puts it, "America and Britain trumpet individualistic values: the brilliant entrepreneur, Nobel prize winners, large wage differentials, individual responsibility for skills, easy to fire and easy to quit, profit maximisation, and hostile mergers and takeovers —— their hero is the Lone Ranger. In contrast, Germany and Japan trumpet communitarian values: business groups, social responsibility for skills, teamwork, firm loyalty, industry strategies and active industrial policies that provide growth. Anglo-Saxon firms are profit maximisers; Japanese business firms plays a game that might better be known as "strategic conquest". Americans believe in "consumer economics", Japanese believe in "producer economics."\(^{43}\)

\(^{43}\) Ibid., p. 32
**Conflict About Means**

**Institutional Mechanism**

The only intergovernmental organisation with universal membership is the United Nations. Ever since its conception and formulation in 1945, the organisation has been the locus for new institutional initiatives on a global scale. Its very objective has been defined in the statement; 'We the peoples of the United nations determined: To save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind." The UN was also created to be 'a centre for harmonising the actions of nations' in solving international problems and creating the economic, social, cultural and humanitarian conditions for a peaceful world.

However, in its objective the UN has been constantly thwarted first by the East-West rivalry which emerged after the W.W. II and then by the super-power rivalry of the Cold War time. The North-South divide and dispute which disturbed the functioning of the UN started from the end of the colonial era which now has expanded to issues of development and ecological consideration. With notable exceptions, the general efforts to improve human well being in the social and economic spheres, through various 'development decades' took second priority to short term political consideration.  

44 Article I of the UN Charter
It can be argued that despite resistance by sovereign states and political discord, the UN has made some achievement on the ideals of its foundation, i.e. advancement of human rights. Why the UN has fallen short of being a totally effective organ lies in the fact of what the realist theorist call the state supremacy. Interest of the states has frequently been a thorn in the advancement of UN’s objectives. The Security Council which is the “primary organ for the maintenance of international peace and security”, mirrors the clash of power-interest between the western camp led by US (which includes UK and France) and the erstwhile USSR. The Council became a house of wax melting frequently to the power diatribe of the permanent members.

Now with the end of the Cold War and decline in the superpower rivalry (with the breakdown of the Soviet empire), the UN as some analyst suggest is in a better position as never before. This however, seems far from true. The old contentions has been replaced with a new set of problems and tensions, primarily emanating from the ‘North-South’ differences and particularly in the area of environment and sustainable development concern.

While it cannot be disputed the importance of UN in dealing with problems that are too large to be handled by any state or even by any limited group of states, it however, also cannot be disputed as to the new tensions and disagreement over interpreting the

46 Chapter V of the UN Charter
environmental concerns. Each state views it on its own perspective about the magnitude of such a worry. This is one of the primary reasons as to the failure of any effective treaty on a global scale. The Rio-declaration has failed to take-off the way the agendas predicted simply because independent states are still molded in the cast of national interest and national consideration.

As the 21st century approaches, the UN as an effective institutional mechanism is solidly confronted by the dividing interest of states and the need for a collective action to cope with the plethora of complicated and inextricably linked problems.

National security has invariably been a stumbling block to an effective UN policy, specially regarding a conflictual situation. There are other reasons as to why states are not genuinely co-operative with the UN. Three prominent explanations can be cited:

1. States are embedded in their culture, language and traditions. Because they are, makes them resistant to as well as skeptical to UN's or any other institutional policies.

2. States fear disruption of their economic system, the kind that they assume suits them.

   The European 'common market' has frequently witnessed disagreement. Like wise the GATT and now WTO.

3. States fear superimposition from powerful countries. The western economic powerful countries, specially the US are regarded with suspicion.
Technological Transfer

Immense disparity in the level of income and in the standard of living among people is the most disturbing issue facing mankind. It is a problem which the combined effort of the industrialised 'North' countries have yet to come to terms with when dealing with the 'South' developing countries. Unequal distribution of resources, cultural differences, population explosion and various beliefs all add to the existing disparity.

One important approach to this problem has been to initiate development in those countries, which lack the basic infrastructure of industrialisation. Transferring technology from the developed countries to the under-developed states has been seen as a viable solution, the effectiveness of which is debatable. Here in lies the conflict of perception between the advanced 'North' and the under-developed to developing 'South'.

In the days of the colonial rule, the British, Dutch, the French and Belgian empire heavily exploited the resource potential of their colonies. Technological advancement, which came about through the industrial revolution, was the mean to fulfil an end objective. The colonial powers plundered and savaged the wealth of their colonies without any intention of sharing their technological know-how with the native people. Now in a world where the importance of interdependency is reasoned as never before, these same colonial powers who have become the rich industrialised 'North' countries look towards and often
than not thrust development policies to the 'South' countries so that a sustainable level of resource utility is maintained.

'South' countries differ on this matter and their national resource becomes an issue of sovereignty, the exploitation of which lies within their jurisdiction. For some developing countries the natural resource they command becomes an important tool in the trade-off with the developed countries. Technological transfer is one of the products of this diplomacy along with financial assistance.

The transfer of technology, however, has its facet, which invariably brings in disputable issues between the 'sender' state and the 'receiving' state. The main obstacle that comes into contention is the question of skilled labour force, the social, cultural and political factors.

The line of divide that assumes great difference is the mismatch between motivations and goal hierarchies and the social context of the country that receives the technology. Principles of management, notions of efficiency and goals of profitability constantly clash with each other when a transfer of technology takes place.

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47 Manas Chatterji, ed., Technology Transfer in the Developing Countries (Hong Kong: Macmillan, 1990), p. 5
48 Ibid., p. 6
The rationality for aid rests on a basic proposition: that pre-industrial economies (less developed and developing countries) can be assisted on to a course of dynamic economic and social transformation through the provision of judiciously applied external resources. For the convenience of 'development' aid was a must and for the convenience of the rich industrialised countries a constant flow of money from their budget was a mean to exercise influence in the political, economic and social structure of the developing countries. Overtly aids from donors have moralistic strings attached to it; covertly aids have been an instrument of influence and power dominance.

While aid became a western foreign policy tool, the receiving countries, however, did not concretely feel the fruit of it. Poverty, starvation, breakdown of social structure and political inadequacies constantly plaque the under-developed world, specially the sub-Saharan countries. In view of this, aids today has acquired a broader and more versatile basis like emphasis on the fundamental changes in the economic structures of the recipient state and more importantly in policy environment.

Aid today apart from the humanitarian and emergency assistance has strings of conditionalities attached to it, i.e. the terms and conditions under which project and non-

project aid is provided and disbursement authorised. Agreement on the conditionalities as imposed by the donor states on the receiving developing states brings forth the strands of dispute. One particular area of frequent disagreement is the understanding of ‘projects of development’ by the developing countries. Since projects by its very nature are capital intensive (requiring huge money) depending on bi-lateral and multi-lateral financial help, the most probable disputes are in aspects of economic rate of returns, socio-economic cost-benefit analysis, impact on beneficiaries, environmental consequences and sustainability of outputs.

In the contemporary world politics, issues of sustainable development and preservation of resources has made foreign aid a crucial component in achieving the policies of the developed countries. Aid as a means to eradicate numerous problems also becomes an effective bargaining chip in the development dialogue between the ‘North’ and ‘South’ countries. How much to give and how to give consistently pricks the dialogue and places interdependency at a crucial juncture.

50 Ibid., p. 102
51 Ibid., p. 94
Conflict About Relatively Assessed Goods

Hegemony

The earliest understanding of this term can be found in Thucydides classical work, 'History of the Peloponnesian Wars',52 and a later reconceptualisation of the term can be attributed to Antonio Gramsci in his 'Prison Notebooks.'53 Right from the 5th century BC to the present times, hegemony has helped to explain the relationship between power, stability and order in international relations, like the debates on the great powers hegemonic rise and fall. Historical instances of hegemony include Britain in the 19th century and the Soviet Union in the communist world between 1917 and 1989. Also included in the understanding of the concept is the hegemonic rivalry between the US and Soviet Union during the post-W.W. II period, which popularly came to be known as the Cold War.

Many thinkers specially the classical realist like Machiavelli and E.H. Carr identify hegemony as a balance of forces under specific historical conditions. The Marxist ontology of hegemony, on the other hand, is a social totality — the elements being social forces and social structures. However, both the realists and Marxist’s approach stress the dynamics of power, production and the state in given orders.54

52 Thucydides, Op. Cit. 32
Each of this perspective, nonetheless, defines hegemony about different conceptions of agency. For classical realism it is the dominance of the state exerting hegemony over others like: Athens, Rome, Britain and the US. The counterparts in Marxism are social classes or historical blocks, drawn from one or a combination of states. In both approaches the ruling classes or elite's exercise hegemony and leadership by articulating and synthesising conceptions of general interests, so that their material power is embedded in, and strengthened by political consent.55

Hegemony can be said to be achieved in a negative sense also, i.e. when no credible alternative has emerged to challenge the prevailing order, that is, when no counter hegemonic tendencies or movements have begun to materialise. A hegemonic international order can be achieved when the major institutions and forms of organisation —economic, social and political as well as the key values of the leading elements in the dominant state become models for emulation in subordinate states.

Evidences to this can be seen in the post-1945 capitalism. The patterns of emulation are stronger in the developed states than in the less developed. In the former, liberal democracy and the rule by consent generally characterise political life, with economic policy subordinated to the needs of capital.56 Hegemony is thus embedded in the ideas,

55 Ibid., p. 385
institutions and practices of a system, which formally separates politics, economics, and state from civil society.

Hobbes understanding of hegemony especially through his deep reading of Thucidides work, which he also translated, helps in a great deal to understand hegemonic tension and rivalry in the world after 1945. The emergence of the super-powers and colonial decline of Britain brought into the international arena two state actors — the US and the USSR, each behaving like Hobbesian egoistic individualists in a state of international anarchy. The enormous rivalry between the super-powers concerned failed to reach the level of direct confrontation owing to the fact of balance of power. This equilibrium came about due to the fact of two hegemonic actors operating simultaneously in the existing time.

Hegemony fluctuates with the changing power balance, rise, and fall of empires. Paul Kennedy explains the idea of cycles of rising and declining hegemony and a transition to a posthegemonic era.\(^{57}\) Thinkers in the US have frequently associated hegemony with international economic order.\(^{58}\) Market orientation, capital goods and favourable traded conditions through political clout has been the ingredient for the US to maintain its hegemony. In order to sustain this it has frequently clashed with the Soviet Union on issues of dominance and influence. Many in the academic domain of international relations have stressed the importance of this hegemonic rivalry in maintaining global


\(^{58}\) Stephen Gill, n. 54, p. 386
order. The present day international conflict and turbulence, confusion and disorder according to the same thinkers are owing to the complete hegemonic decline of the Soviet Union and the absence of balance of power.

Hegemony is simply the acceptable face of dominance and it declines when other states have sufficient power to challenge it. While on the one hand US hegemony appears less based on universal interests and consent and more on unilateral applications of its economic and military, on the other hand owing to the cumulative and conjectural changes that have served to transform the conditions of existence, is rapidly eroding the hegemonic structures associated with Pax Americana. In a rapidly changing world order the forces of American hegemony is constantly colliding with the forces of a progressive and multi-polar world.

The conventional understanding of hegemony and the potency to ignite conflict will assume less of its meaning and lethality as the world moves into the next century with new threat perception and reality. At best hegemony will have the capability to create disputes and the inability to transform it into hostility in wake of a multi-dimensional and collective world.
Security

As a key concept security commands a great disciplinary power. Maybe no other theoretical notion in world affairs has that kind of puissance. From time immemorial people have always alienated their fears, rights and power to gods, emperors and sovereign states, all in order to secure from the uncertainties. In the name of security billions have been spent on the development of weapons of destruction and millions have been killed.

In its most fundamental understanding, to be secure is to feel free from threats, anxieties and dangers. Like individuals who respond to insecurity in an unnerving way, so do states. In this sense that is at a subjective level security depends on the perceptions state have of their position in their environment, not on an objective view of that environment. Just like individuals, states too differ in tolerance for uncertainty, their ability to live with anxiety and their capacity to cope with pressure. States are not perfectly secure or completely insecure, but rather experience either condition in degrees. One state’s security can be the other state’s insecurity. The concern that states have for their security stems from the nature of the international political environment. Since international politics is anarchic and that there is nothing above the authority of the state to enforce laws or resolve disputes, hence in this kind of realm, states are first and foremost concerned with their safety. A concern for survival breeds a preoccupation with security.
At the minimum, the ability to enjoy a reasonable degree of security requires that a state be certain either that it can dissuade other states from attacking it or that it can successfully defend itself if attacked. A concern for security immediately gives rise to a focus on military power and arms escalation follows.

Thucydides classical work explains through the threat perception of Sparta over Athens rising power that a concern for security must ultimately focus on the potential physical danger to a state that is posed by imbalances in military power. A state fashions the military power it deploys from many elements: the economic wealth of a nation, the quality of its political leadership, the cohesiveness of the polity, the motivation of its citizens, the nature of its military leadership and so on. It was the growth in Athenian wealth and financial and naval power, together with the democratic nature of Athens that enabled Athens to deploy an ever more threatening military force. Athens was a more dynamic society than Sparta, and that was reflected in the growth of its over all power. At the end of the day security demands military power sufficient to dissuade or defeat an attack; but so many non-military elements are required to generate effective military power that a concern for security can never be restricted solely to the final military end product.

59 Thucydides, n.52, p.143
States historically have never restricted their security purview simply to their armies. In the name of security, great empires have been formed and relentlessly expanded, hegemonic wars have been waged, economic self-sufficiency has been sought after, crushing armament’s races have been entered into, innumerable interventions into the affairs of other states have been undertaken, alliances have been formed and broken and great religious and ideological crusades have been launched.

In the 19th century, Britain established a potent force in the northeastern part of Africa so that it could protect its sea route and trade prosperity through the Suez Canal to India. All this was done for security reasons in order to safeguard British interests. Like wise, Japan in the 20th century went on an annexation spree — it conquered Korea and Manchuria, waged war against China, conquered South-East Asia and the Dutch East Indies all in the name of creating a co-prosperity sphere that could make her (Japan) secure against external threat. After the W.W.II, the Soviet Union annexed and conquered states in central and Eastern Europe in order to create a communist block so that it could ward off the threat from the West. United States waged two wars in Korea and in Vietnam to check the spread of communism. The arms race between Soviet Union and US, which eventually led to acquiring nuclear warheads, was done in order to make each secure from the other. In the grand sweep of history almost the entire range of state behaviour has been, in one way or another, justified in the name of security.
The dominant centre-less dominant periphery configuration of the erstwhile Cold war period stands in extreme contrast to the present post-Cold War time in which the centre, the bipolarity so to say, has diffused. The diffusion of power into new political, national and economic constellations has in the process decentred security. In the light of this, the Security Council in its January 31 declaration of 1992 acknowledged that threats to international peace and security could come from "non military sources of instability in the economic, social, humanitarian and ecological fields." The declaration enumerated in a way that the conventional traditional thinking of security has to be reshaped, remoulded, and reconsidered bringing into attention a series of environmental issues underpinning material welfare.

In the contemporary world security structured on conventional patterns does not have the power to directly lead hostilities but because countries are still very much paranoid over security and threat perception, hence it has the potency to lead to direct disputes.

**Sovereignty**

The future of the world based on integration and interdependence and its success is directly related to the meaning and the understanding of sovereignty. Sovereignty as a basic idea and ideal in international relations strongly persists. The clash of sovereign wills in international life gives rise to ceaseless conflict, as scarcity in relation to relative power and prestige, as well as with respect to resources and markets, leads to fierce
competition among states, giving international relations its zero-sum history and reputation, and accounting for the prominence of war.

Taking realist thinking into consideration, sovereignty assumes the highest political pedestal. For in an anarchic global set up nothing can be greater than the state. There is no state beyond the state. Yet for several centuries the state system has needed to endow agreements among its sovereign members with reliability for sovereignty if carried too far, undermined the reliability of mutually beneficial interaction among states. In view of this, laws on international level started emerging in order to regulate certain state behaviour, which was thought to be detrimental to the world at large. In the present century international laws and sovereignty has clashed with each other on an enormous degree as the complexities of international life has increased.

Challenges to the conventional understanding of sovereignty arise from the normative as well as functional pressures. On the normative level the experience of Nazi atrocities against Jews led to a tremendous concern for humanitarian issues. On a functional level, interdependence and globalisation have made it impractical to view the world as consisting of territorial units each exerting supreme authority within its borders, but not elsewhere.

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Sovereignty and sovereign rights are emphasised as means to protect the weak against the strong. Even the UN Charter acknowledges the principle of sovereign equality and respect of "domestic jurisdiction." Yet global politics has been dominated by the strong states asserting rights and influence over the weak states with repeated interventions, aggressive wars, cultural propaganda and economic conditionalities.62

In the contemporary times cultural influences along with economic power has tremendous impact on shaping human tastes and values. Madonna, Mickey Mouse and McDonalds are global phenomena, which cuts across all sovereign barriers and makes the entire meaning of sovereignty weak. The question that comes up is whether any government can insulate their populations from influences. The efforts are growing less effective and run counter to democratising demands that are growing more difficult to resist.

There are have been many attempts in the history of political and legal thought to reconcile such kind of conceptual and operational tensions as mentioned above though without much convincing power. The reason for this is that the fundamental claim of sovereignty is its emphasis on unrestricted governmental authority within territorial boundaries. If such authority exists, then wider obligations of the state are problematic. If such authority is denied, then sovereignty itself seems abridged. Indeed, if the state no

62 Ibid., p. 853
longer is entitled to exercise such authority or fails to do so in practice, then it becomes misleading to retain sovereignty as a descriptive term. In this lies the true element of conflict — on how far it can be extended and in how far it can be restricted.

**Conflict About Absolute Assessed Goods**

**Resources**

History indicates that conflicts have arisen over resources and nations have waged battles over it. This has been essentially motivated by the desire for land and natural resources. It has been suggested that during W.W.II, Italy, Germany and Japan were driven to extreme extent in their acquisition for resources and that in the Vietnam conflict, the US was motivated as much by its desire to protect its access to rubber, rice and tin as was its intention to check the spread of communism. The other dimension of conflict centering on resources is such social conflicts like ethnicity and the majority-minority social set-up. In the contemporary world much of the tension stems from the competition over vital resources like fresh water, rivers, fertile lands and strategic minerals. Conflict takes shape wherever countries hold incompatible positions about the way in which a common resource is to be used. Resources owing to its quantifiable ability have played a leading feature in national security concept of many countries. That Shatt-al-Arab waterway was the bone of contention between Iran and Iraq, which led to a bitter eight years war.

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between them. The dispute over the waterway transformed the war into one of strategic, security, hegemony and religious justification. Such is the potency of a scarce resource.

Bangladesh animosity over India, which led to complete uncooperative relations between them, stemmed from the sharing of the Ganges water. So important was this to Bangladesh that their entire national security perspective was shaped by the flow of the Ganges water, no bilateral talk could assume importance without this particular matter being settled. It was, however, in December 1996 that a final settlement to the issue was worked out.

The entire Middle-East politics apart from the historically rooted differences between Israel and the Arab countries is also the product of the sharing of the river Jordan. Accessibility to fresh water assumes more important than oil in the region. Water has often been seen as the primary strategic factor behind the military and political maneuvering of the countries in the region. The kind which Karl Wittfogel has described as the “hydraulic theory of politics.”

This theory explains Israel’s hydraulic imperative, i.e. the quest for water essential to national survival. The critical factor of water makes it increasingly difficult for Israel to relinquish its occupation of the West Bank, which accounts for more than a third of its

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renewable water. Likewise, Golan apart from its strategic importance to Israel is also the vital area for the headwater of the Jordan River and the main pumping station for Israel national water carrier.65

The importance of a resource can be used as an effective tool in dealing with relations between the states in international politics. In wake of Yom Kippur war (as the Israeli describe it), the Arab states collectively combined to use oil (the region’s most important resource) as a deadly weapon against the western powers in order to pressurise Israel. The oil embargo shocked and crippled the world and awakened them to the idea of an energy security. Since then the Arab world have tie and again threatened the rest of the world with oil blockade though it has to be said that the world at large has effectively channeled other alternative resources and is not as vulnerable as it was in 1973.

Strategic minerals like uranium and copper have time and again demonstrated its vitality especially in the continent of Africa. The continent drew interest before the Europeans occupied it. The industrial revolution in Europe sparked of a series of exploration right till the heart of the continent. Africa became the place where Europeans got things: slaves for plantations, food for industrialised countries whose people were leaving the land for the factory and precious and strategic minerals like gold, silver, copper and uranium. The

65 Thomas Naif and Ruth Matson, Water in the Middle East: Conflict or Cooperation? (Boulder: West View Press, 1984), pp. 182-183
demand for raw materials led to a bloody politics of dominance between Britain, France and Belgium. Each set up its colonies which invariably contested against the other.

The Congo crisis in the early 1960s almost threatened the international institution of UN to a complete ineffectiveness and drew tremendous western power rivalry along with the predictable super-power conflicting position. At the heart of the matter was the copper rich belt of Katanga and its desire for a separate entity, prodded by Belgium that had relinquished its colonial attachment of Congo. For Congo to part with the rich mineral territory of Katanga was unacceptable, as was Belgium’s disapproval of Katanga joining Rhodesia. The strategic importance of copper dictated proceedings. Power struggle, tribal rivalry and bloodshed were the next result.

The competition for a resource or its extreme scarcity can directly lead to state confrontation/hostilities — the seeds are very potent, more so in regard to water dispute. According to many analysts, several hot spots areas around the world centres on water issues. Peter Wallensteen in his study on conflict notes that the materialisation of a scarce resource into conflict needs three essential requirements: organised actors, a minimum of one incompatibility in their objectives and their conscious behaviour to achieve the goals.

66 Peter Calvocoressi, World Politics Since 1945 (Singapore: Longman, 1989), pp. 376-379
The scarcity of a resource has the potential to split two or more communities and ensue open hostility. It can also act as a catalyst in organising groups/communities who are divided on lines of religious, class, race, into militancy. Such kind of rivalry, as Wallensteen puts it,\textsuperscript{67} happens in a situation in which two or more parties strive and compete at the same moment to get hold of the same set of scarce resource. Apart from the scarcity and the diminishing nature of resources and group rivalry over it, the other factor is the control of such resource by an external power. Conflicts, which concern the external control of natural resources, can be exemplified by the way forest wealth is used by jungle tribes on the one hand and urban middle class populations on the other.

For the former a forest represents a way of life, for the latter a forest represents simply a valuable resource. Urban groups might not even be aware that a forest could be survival zone for a particular group of people. The conflicts resulting from such clashes of interests are fundamental. They represent two different paradigms of development: growth and modernisation versus ethno-development or in spatial terms, functional versus territorial development. Increased resource scarcity and competition for scarce resource is inherent in modern development. This competition sometimes leads to ethnic conflict resulting in ethnocide or exodus of marginalised groups like the jungle tribes and nomads.

\textsuperscript{67} Peter Wallensteen, "Environmental destruction and serious social conflict: developing a research design" PRIØ Report, no.3, 1992, p. 49
**Territory**

Territory is the most basic origin of state behaviour. Territorial claim, territorial defence and territorial disputes has dominated international politics and marred state relations to the extent that nations have fought wars.

Territorial issues in contemporary politics has the potential to breed direct hostilities specially when it is governed by its natural resources like strategic minerals, energy sources, water and the usability of the land itself. Apart from the resource importance that is attached to a certain territory, aspects like strategic-security assume an important feature in state relationship. The Siachen glaciers is an absolute barren territory and is an example of how security perception can draw countries, in this case India and Pakistan, into protracted conflict featuring direct hostilities. The net result has been a drain on the economy of the two countries and a great number of casualties. Yet, in the game of one-upmanship and matters military and security, the Siachen territory becomes a certain defensible area for India in order to thwart any aggressive designs of Pakistan.

Three different types of disputes and hostilities can be identified: A ‘positional dispute’, which derives from the uncertainty over the exact location of boundary lines. A ‘functional boundary dispute’, which involves disagreement over the utilisation of a transboundary resource and a third kind, i.e. ‘territorial disputes evolving from the social-
systems', which relates to the competition and rivalry of community with similar ethnic and cultural background against another.  

This particular feature of territorial conflict is rampant in international politics. Ethnic conflict generates a large flow of an oppressed and subjugated community who invariably cross over the neighbouring countries in search of safety and security. Examples of such are the ethnic Indians in the Terai region of Nepal, who keep crossing over to India; the Chakmas who have constantly caused bitter relationship between India and Bangladesh; the Karen rebels in Burma who cross over to Bangladesh and Thailand; the central African states of Zaire, Rwanda and Burundi is in total dishannony owing to the conflict between the Tutsi and Hutus.

Gaining and acquiring territories was the key element of aggrandisement. State power was directly related to territorial hold. The power of the Roman Empire lay in the expansion of its rule, Napoleon had a dream to acquire the entire of Europe and waged wars between 1796-1815 in hope of attaining it. In the present time also, territorial importance lies on it being a testimony of state power and also on its resource ability.

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