

**Summary**

**Chapter 5: War and Its Causes**

*EQ: Why is war a persistent feature of international relations?*

* There are many kinds of interstate conflicts, or conflicts between states, including interstate wars, militarized international disputes, and extra-state wars.
* Interstate wars have many causes:
  + At the individual level, misperception and stress, groupthink, and risk-taking and over-optimism by leaders are all potential causes of war.
  + At the state level, domestic economic systems and domestic political institutions can cause war.
  + At the international level, anarchy can be both a permissive condition for war and a possible propellant of conflict.
* Internal war, such as civil war or inter-communal war, is another major type of conflict and, via processes like contagion and the internationalization of civil war, can become a major source of international conflict
* Internal wars also have many causes:
  + At the individual level, greed and grievance are the two primary causes of war.
  + At the state level, the degree of inclusiveness of different elements in the control of the state and the capacities of the state are the two primary potential causes of internal war.
  + Lastly, at the international level, interstate wars, colonialism and its aftermath, and the Cold War have all affected internal wars
* The lethality and incidence of internal and interstate wars has increased and decreased over time. While incidence of interstate wars generally increased from 1816 to 1999, it has decreased recently. Similarly, lethality in interstate wars peaked between 1900 and 1949, largely due to the two world wars, and has since declined.