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The international political economy of war,  
critical theory and change: addressing the root  
of armed conflict.

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## Abstract

An accurate understanding of the causes of armed conflict is essential for both its prevention and resolution. The most prominent theories of contemporary conflict, those developed since the Second World War, are reviewed in Chapters I and II. The insight gained through all these years of research and debate is invaluable and of great use. However, many questions regarding the explanation of armed conflict remain unanswered. As conclusions are not definitive, a critical assessment of these theories from an international political economy perspective is carried out in Chapter III. This approach highlights important questions to be included in the research on the causes of war: the significance of history, and in particular the global political and economic interconnections in the formation of the structures of society, when studying social phenomena; the central role of cultural and social particularities in the configuration of social conflict; the essential inclusion of the structural dimension in giving an account of the underlying causes of war; and the need for approaching armed conflict with the clear intention of promoting the change of all those aspects of our society, culture and system that contribute to the outburst of social violence and all its human and material costs.

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