



Parliamentary Control of Security Policy

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How to Measure War Involvement

**paks working paper 4
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Contents

1. War involvement: the dependent variable of the democratic peace theory	5
2. The utilitarian dimension of “democratic wars”	8
3. The normative dimension of “democratic wars”	10
4. Measuring involvement in the 2003 Iraq War: The time dimension..	12
5. Conclusion.....	14
Bibliography	15

Abstract

The paper deals with the question how war involvement can be measured in terms of the monadic version of the democratic peace theory. First, theoretical issues involved are explained. Chapters 2 and 3 present the details of a typology proposed for measuring war involvement in terms of the rationalist-utilitarian as well as the culturalist-normative explanations for the democratic peace. In chapter 4 this typology is applied to the case of the 2003 Iraq war and the war involvement of 25 European democracies. The paper concludes with a call for a multidimensional and multi-grade measurement of war involvement.

1. War involvement: the dependent variable of the democratic peace theory

What are the effects of parliamentary “war powers” (Hummel/Marschall 2007) in terms of war involvement? The monadic version of the democratic peace theory implies, that nation-states with strong parliamentary “war powers” should be less involved in warfare than those with weak parliaments (but not vice versa¹), given war-averse preferences of the citizens.² The project on parliamentary control of military security policy (paks) at the University of Düsseldorf investigates this hypothesis, taking the involvement of the European Union’s (then) 25 member and accession states in the 2003 Iraq War as a crucial test case. One of the methodological challenges of the project is to determine degrees of war involvement in terms of the monadic democratic peace theory. The following paper introduces the project’s methodology for measuring war involvement. Throughout this paper, the 2003 Iraq war will be used as a reference case.

In order to better understand the methodological questions and problems involved, it might be helpful to start with a summary of the theoretical background.³ Democratic peace theory deals with the involvement of democracies in warfare. The mainstream dyadic version focuses on the so-called separate peace among democracies, i.e. the fact, that democracies (almost) never fight wars *against each other* (hence the expression “dyadic peace”) although they generally participate in warfare (almost) as much as non-democracies do. The monadic version of the theory expects democracies to be *generally* more restricted in their use of military force in foreign relations, not only in relations with other democracies. Most prominently, Rummel (1995), in the title of one of his articles, programmatically stated the monadic message: “Democracies ARE less warlike than other regimes”.⁴

The two versions do not only disagree on the scope of the theory: the separate peace among democracies vs. the general restraint in the use of violence by democracies. They also differ in how they define the dependent variable. From the dyadic perspective, the democratic peace proposition refers to the exclusion of international war from relations among democracies. This is not to deny the possibility of serious conflicts among democracies which indeed can be observed. It simply means that democracies can manage conflicts with other democracies in a non-military way. The dyadic version actually redefines the democratic peace as the security community of democracies. A security community is marked by the permanent, reliable exclusion of military violence among its members whose relations with each other are based on trust and shared values. If trust and shared values among the parties involved do not exist, or break down, war becomes possible. The dyadic version is based on the binary categories of democracy (security community member) vs. non-democracy (non-member) and “stable peace”⁵ (security community exists) vs. “security dilemma”⁶ (no security community). The

¹ Where parliaments have weak war powers, governments will not necessarily be more involved in wars. Rather, the expected effect is that governments can (more) freely decide on the degree of war involvement themselves.

² Cf. Hummel (2006) and Dieterich (2007).

³ Cf. Dieterich 2007 for a more detailed survey of the literature.

⁴ Capitalization in the original text.

⁵ Boulding (1973).

task of measuring war involvement is reduced to determining the threshold when conflicts turn into wars and when democracies get involved into hostilities.

Consequently, dyadic researchers use datasets on war involvement which are based on the concept of a war threshold. The two most popular datasets, the Correlates of War (COW)⁷ dataset as well as the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP) dataset⁸, both define the war threshold in terms of battle-related casualties. Whereas COW puts the threshold at 1,000 battle-deaths, UCDP uses a lower threshold of only 25 annual battle-related casualties. Most importantly, both datasets do not cover different degrees of war involvement beyond the simple category of war participation vs. non-participation. The crucial information simply is whether or not democracies employ military force against each other.

The monadic version of the democratic peace theory hypothesizes that democracies are generally less belligerent than non-democracies, irrespective of the political system of the adversary. Miriam Fendius Elman summarizes the typical monadic expectation that democracies are less violent:

“[D]emocracies [...] do not view war as a legitimate tool of foreign policy, and use force only as an option of last resort; do not pursue risky foreign policies that promise high overall costs; are reluctant to wage wars that they do not expect to win; are quicker to abandon, and are less likely to take on, strategic commitments; do not fight preventive wars; are less likely to initiate crises; and are more likely to employ reciprocating bargaining strategies” (Elman 2000: 92).

The monadic theory shifts the research focus from “democratic peace”, or rather “peace among democracies”, to “democratic wars” (Geis/Brock/Müller 2006). As a consequence, the monadic theory also modifies the dependent variable from the absence of war to war involvement, i.e. the degree of use of military force in foreign relations. It also replaces the simple demarcation of war from peace and of participation in war from non-participation with the concept of a continuum relating to the use of violence. Consequently, the task of determining “war involvement” gets more complex for the monadic analyst.

From the perspective of the monadic theory, assessing democracies’ war involvement should refer to theories of democracy and not to strategic military considerations. We should not ask, for example, how important the deployment of a military contingent is for the war effort, but rather, what this deployment means for the home country of the soldiers. The key question is why democracies should be expected to be “less warlike”. Explanations for the democratic peace include both rationalist-institutionalist and normative-cultural arguments. The war-averse preferences of rational citizens and the inertia of democratic institutions, limiting the scope and speed of government action, are at the center of rationalist-institutionalist explanations. Kant already used the argument that citizens perceive war as a threat to their property and life and hence tend to reject war. Under the condition of effective democratic participation, war-averse preferences of citizens should enter into political decision making and induce governments to back down from war involvement. Democratic institutions, such as checks and balances or the transparency of government policy, are also accredited with

⁶ Herz (1950:180).

⁷ Singer/Small (1972, 1994); Small/Singer (1982); Sarkees (2000).

⁸ Gleditsch et al. (2002)

constraining effects on belligerent politicians (Müller 2002: 54). Normative-cultural explanations for the democratic peace emphasize the specific political culture and socialization prevalent in democracies. They are based on the assumption that values and norms deeply rooted in democratic societies, such as the peaceful resolution of conflicts, respect for human rights, and the rule of law, will routinely be applied to foreign relations and will thus contribute to a war-averse behavior (Hasenclever 2003: 205).

Monadic analysts cannot measure war involvement in an “objective” way, independent of the reference to democratic theory and irrespective of the perspective of affected democratic nation-states. First, the rational citizen is more concerned with the implications of specific military deployments in terms of risks and costs than with considerations of power politics. Therefore the degree of war involvement cannot be deduced from the (relative) size of military deployments. To send an infantry battalion can mean completely different things to different people in different situations. Second, normative-cultural assessments cannot simply be based on “objective” interpretations of what is normatively appropriate based on legal (international law) or philosophical (just war) reasoning. It seems to be more convincing to ask how the affected nation-states themselves frame military issues and what public opinion regards as appropriate.

Unfortunately, the databases commonly used in democratic peace research are usually based on “objective” assessments of war involvement and offer only the dual categories of “participation” and “non-participation”. They are not particularly helpful for the monadic approach. The less intense use of military violence by individual nation-states, which is particularly interesting for the monadic analyst, gets lost by definition or can only be guessed indirectly, for example by using COW data on numbers of war casualties, duration of wars, numbers of parties involved, or type of war.

The 2003 Iraq war illustrates the complexities of determining what exactly war involvement means. Attention has to be paid to the specifics of war involvement: When did the war start? Should we begin with the actual attack on Iraq, or should we treat earlier preparation, justification, and rear logistical support of the war effort as expressions of belligerence as well? When did war involvement begin for individual states? How can we measure escalation and de-escalation of war involvement? Should we distinguish different phases of the war, or types of participation, based on the level of fighting (relating to the risk for the life of the soldiers involved or the financial expenses for the war effort) or, alternatively, based on the legality or legitimacy of military activities?

In what follows, the multi-dimensional typology of measuring war involvement developed by the paks project will be presented. Chapters 2 and 3 will introduce the rationalist-utilitarian and the culturalist-normative dimensions of the typology. Chapter 4 will deal with the application of the typology to the case of the Iraq war. It will be argued that war involvement also includes a time dimension because it means different things in different phases of the war.

2. The utilitarian dimension of “democratic wars”

The first part of the paks typology of war involvement covers the rationalist-utilitarian dimension. Here the degree of war involvement has to be measured according to expected, or actual, costs and risks involved for the citizens. A summary of this typology can be found in table 1.

It seems reasonable to assume that citizens in “post-heroic societies” (Hugh Smith 2005) put the highest price on the life of national soldiers. Accordingly, military missions which claim the life of some of the soldiers deployed or which at least put their life at significant risk, have to be treated as highest degree of war involvement. These missions usually involve ground combat operations and risky operations by special forces.

Since the Cold War has ended, the wars democracies are typically involved in usually are highly asymmetrical. Their air and naval forces are technologically advanced in such a way that these forces can operate with impunity and almost no risk for the life of the soldiers deployed. However, such high-tech warfare has become extremely expensive (cf. table 2), and this is exactly the reason why wars have become so asymmetrical - few states, and no non-state war actor, can afford the expenses to maintain and deploy high-tech forces. Prototypical cases for this kind of “safe”, but extremely expensive warfare are the Allied air attacks against Iraq in the Gulf War 1991, US cruise missile strikes in Afghanistan and Sudan in 1998 after terrorist bombings of two American embassies, NATO air attacks in the Kosovo war 1999 or Israeli naval attacks against Lebanon in 2006. Thus the deployment or use of air and navy capabilities constitutes the second highest category of war involvement in the utilitarian paks typology.

Table 1: Paks typology of war involvement: utilitarian perspective

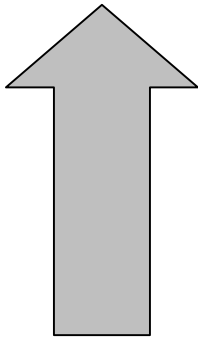
(1) conventional warfare / ground forces	<i>combat troops with a high personal risk</i>	<p style="text-align: center;">high</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">low</p>
(2) asymmetrical warfare / air and naval forces	<i>combat troops with a low personal risk but high financial burden</i>	
(3) rear support, peacekeeping and reconstruction / rear ground troops	<i>low financial burden but some personal risk</i>	
(4) logistical support	<i>low financial burden, no personal risk</i>	
(5) no war involvement	<i>no direct costs</i>	

Table 2: Financial costs of war involvements including ground, air, or naval combat, for the United Kingdom

£5 billion for Iraq and Afghanistan (2002-2004)
 £2.5 billion for the 1991 Gulf War (1991)
 £866 million for the 1999 Kosovo War (1999)
 £429 million for the Bosnia War (1993-1995)
 about £1 billion for the Falklands War (1982).

Source: Times Online, December 1, 2004,

<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/iraq/article397905.ece>

The third category involves operations, which are less risky and less costly than categories one or two. Democracies willing to “show their flag” in the conflict zone but not willing to take high risks or to bear high expenses usually deploy non-combat ground forces, preferably to “safe” areas. These forces include, for example, military engineers, medical teams, units for clearing mines, specialists for nuclear, biological and chemical weapons reconnaissance, or logistical experts. They are on the ground and they provide rear support for the war effort, but they are not involved in the risky and expensive fighting.

The fourth category relates to the sharing of military, logistical, or infrastructural burden(s) caused by the war without deploying forces abroad. These activities focus on transport of troops and military supplies, including the use of military bases on national territory, air, ground or naval transit, and provision of maintenance services. These activities involve less expenses and practically no risk.

Finally, the fifth category is reserved to those states that do not provide any military support for the war and that are not letting any party of an armed conflict use the national territory for military activities. This corresponds to the status of neutrality which in international law⁹ means that a neutral state does not participate in an international war between other nation-states and observes an impartial treatment of the belligerent states.

Arms transfers are not included in the typology. They should rather be treated as a separate policy issue because they are governed by a separate legal regime and because they entail different cost-benefit calculations and hence are treated differently in public discourse. For example, because of the jobs in the national armament industry, citizens could regard arms transfers as a benefit in a strictly utilitarian calculation. Moreover, financial war contributions

⁹ The most important legal document regarding neutrality is the Hague “Convention Respecting the Rights and Duties of Neutral Powers and Persons in Case of War on Land” of October 18, 1907. It forbids belligerents to “move troops or convoys of either munitions of war or supplies across the territory of a neutral Power” (Art. 2), to “Erect on the territory of a neutral Power a wireless telegraphy station or other apparatus for the purpose of communicating with belligerent forces on land or sea. the use of the territory of a neutral states; Use any installation of this kind established by them before the war on the territory of a neutral Power for purely military purposes, and which has not been opened for the service of public messages” (Art. 3). On the other hand, a neutral state must not allow any of these acts “to occur on its territory” (Art. 5). Art. 7 of the convention explicitly states that a neutral state has no obligation to prevent arms exports to the belligerents. Originally, these provisions applied only to cases where all states concerned were parties of the Hague convention, but later neutrality law increasingly became regarded as customary international law.

to other countries should also be taken into consideration. Such contributions, for example, played a major role in the 1991 Gulf war and, in terms of alliance burden sharing, have been justified as equivalent to the deployment of troops. But the legal regime for such financial contributions differs from security policy-making as well, and, besides from that, it seems extremely difficult to determine exactly whether specific financial transfers should be counted as war contributions or rather be accredited to other policy areas such as development aid, humanitarian assistance, support of international organization, or compensation payments related to arms deals or military bases. Therefore such payments are not included in the paks typology.

3. The normative dimension of “democratic wars”

Normative explanations of the democratic peace are based on the assumption that dominant societal norms have an impact on foreign policy-making in modern, civilized democracies, i.e. that democratic institutions (including parliaments) will press governments to respect the cultural and normative consensus of civil society, including the respect for international law (especially the Charter of the United Nations), the tradition to subject the use of military means to the criteria of just war¹⁰ (cf. table 3), and the legacies and political culture traditions of the national history of democratization. However, the application of these norms to specific cases is not necessarily self-evident. As Müller (2002) has convincingly argued, there are antinomies to the democratic peace including democracies’ normative orientations. This means that the liberal democratic culture provides arguments against as well as in favor of war involvement. For example, liberal democratic societies usually reject the use of military violence for power politics, but tend to accept, or even call for, the use of military violence for humanitarian purposes (Jentleson 1992). Additionally, from a social constructivist point of view it seems to be plausible to regard these norms more as a kind of vocabulary for arguing in democratic political discourses than as objective and unambiguous rules for behavior.

Table 3: Just War Principles

<i>Jus ad bellum</i> principles	<i>Jus in bello</i> principles
1. Just cause/intention	1. Just authority
2. Just authority	2. Non-combatant immunity
3. Last resort	3. Proportionality
4. Proportionality	4. Prohibited targets
5. Probability of success	5. Prohibited weaponry

Source: Møller (2000: 2)

If democratic norms are based on social discourses, then the restraining effect of norms on war involvement has to be measured in relation to the prevailing normative attitudes

¹⁰ The just war criteria include criteria for deciding whether or not it is just to start a war (*jus ad bellum*) and criteria for deciding whether or not the conduct of the war is just (*jus in bello*).

among citizens, not according to independent legal or ethical reasoning about appropriate foreign policy behavior. Public opinion poll results can be used in order to assess prevailing normative attitudes. If the prevailing opinion among the public is clearly and consistently against involvement in a specific war (as it was the case for European societies' attitudes to the Iraq war 2003), normative war involvement can be measured as the difference between the prevailing war aversion of the citizens and the foreign policy stance of the government to this war.

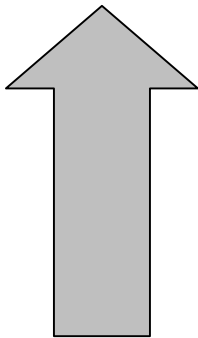
Based on these methodological considerations, the normative paks typology of war involvement is designed to cover cases where the prevailing majority among citizens regards the war as unjust. For European societies the Iraq war has been such a case. The results of an international EOS Gallup opinion poll conducted in January 2003 (EOS-Gallup Europe 2003) revealed that although two thirds of the Europeans polled agreed that Iraq posed a serious threat to world peace, 82 percent would not support their countries' participation in the US-led military intervention without UN mandate. On the level of individual states, a clear majority of at least 60 percent in every state of the EU-25 opposed war participation without an UN mandate.

Like the utilitarian typology, the normative paks typology is classified into five successive degrees of war involvement. Table 4 shows these categories for cases where a prevailing majority among citizens regards the war as unjust. The first category covers cases with the deepest gap between the normative positions of civil society and government. It includes cases where the government actively justifies a war and national involvement in it in defiance of a clear public opposition to this war. The second category is a weaker version of the government-society gap. Governments belonging to this category neglect public opposition, but justify the war more cautiously and hesitate to commit themselves to active war involvement. The third category includes any government whose position to the war is, perhaps deliberately, diffuse or fragmented, so that it can neither be classified as disregarding nor as supporting prevailing normative positions of the citizens. This category is called the Schwejk category, a term which has been inspired by a literary figure created by the Czech writer Jaroslav Hašek. He satirically describes the adventures of Schwejk, a common soldier of the Austro-Hungarian army during the First World War who cannily manages to escape deployment to front-line combat while always looking like a faithful servant to his country.

The fourth and fifth category include governments that basically conform with prevailing public opposition to the war. However, those which only cautiously and rather passively oppose the war are put into the fourth category of mere supporters of prevailing public opinion, while those actively criticizing the belligerents and clearly rejecting any war involvement are classified as active promoters of societal norms.

Classification of countries for the case of the Iraq war could be based, for example, on the participants of the Azores summit in March 2003 or the initiators of the so-called "Letter of the Eight" or the "Vilnius declaration" (first category), the lists of additional members of the Coalition of the Willing or the lists of additional signatories of the pro-war statements mentioned (second category), or the participants of the so-called Brussels "praline summit", held by Belgium France, Germany, and Luxemburg at the end of April 2003 (fifth category).

Table 4: Paks typology of war involvement: normative perspective

	<i>if prevailing majority among citizens regards the war as unjust</i>	<p style="text-align: center;">High</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">Low</p>
(1) defiance of societal norm	active justification of war and war involvement	
(2) neglect of societal norm	cautious approval of the war, hesitant position to war involvement	
(3) “Schwejk” category	diffuse or fragmented position to the war and to war involvement	
(4) support of societal norm	cautious opposition to the war	
(5) promotion of societal norm	active criticism of the war, clear rejection of war involvement	

4. Measuring involvement in the 2003 Iraq War: The time dimension

There are several reasons why the time dimension of war involvement should also be taken into consideration. First, belligerency starts well before the actual combat. In terms of costs involved as well as in terms of international law, the forces build-up in the conflict region and the display of and threat to use force have already to be treated as acts of war. From the monadic perspective of the democratic peace, these activities can be regarded as belligerency.

Second, wars can change in terms of risks and costs for the countries involved or in terms of normative assessment by the citizens concerned. A presumably short high-tech war can turn into a seemingly endless and drawn out insurgency, as happened in Iraq after the fall of the Iraqi government. A war can change in normative terms as well, for example, in the case of the Iraq war, from an illegal intervention into a stabilization and occupation operation.

Third, several political systems include war powers provisions which give the executive a free hand regarding the use of forces for a limited period of time, say 60 or 90 days. Therefore, parliamentary or other democratic controls of war involvement can be legally effective only weeks after the start of hostilities.

Fourth, before actual combat starts, the costs and risks of war involvement can only be estimated very roughly. When the war has progressed, citizens can get a more precise notion of the actual costs and risks of war involvement.

Taken together, the Iraq war should be differentiated into three phases for the year 2003:

- (1) pre-invasion war preparations;
- (2) the invasion or international war phase;¹¹
- (3) the post-invasion insurgency.¹²

In the case of the Iraq war, the pre-invasion phase, including the visible threat to use force, dates back to fall 2002 or at least to early 2003. The UK and the US conducted a bombing campaign against Iraq months before tanks crossed the border on March 20, 2003 (Michael Smith 2005). US Congress passed a joint resolution on October 11, 2002 authorizing the US President to use military force against Iraq. In early 2003 the Anti-Iraq coalition began its forces build-up in the Middle East, including deployment of troops from European bases which involved transit through the territories of several European states. At the same time, NATO debated about support for the defense of its member-state Turkey during an eventual invasion in neighboring Iraq. From 2001 to the 2003 Iraq war nuclear, biological and chemical reconnaissance units of NATO countries were deployed to Kuwait as part of Operation Enduring Freedom. Their status as part of the Iraq war 2003 has been disputed.

The international war of US-led coalition forces officially started on March 20, 2003. There are several possibilities to date the end of the international war phase. On April 15, 2003, the coalition forces stated that the Iraqi government had ceased to exist and that the war was effectively over. On May 1, 2003, US President Bush in a dramatic show on a US aircraft carrier declared the end of major combat.

Shortly after the invasion, the Coalition Provisional Authority took over as effective government of Iraq. On May 22, 2003, the UN Security Council adopted resolution 1483 in which the Council stated the responsibilities of the occupation powers for the security of Iraq. The coalition leaders invited other nations to participate in what the stabilization and occupation operation. Independent from the Coalition forces, the United Nation Security Council, by resolution 1500 of August 14, 2003, established the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), including military personnel.¹³

¹¹ CNN has archived its extensive coverage of this phase of the Iraq war at <http://www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/2003/iraq/>.

¹² BBC News offers a good chronology of events since the fall of the Saddam Hussein government on "Timeline: Iraq after Saddam" at http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/4192189.stm.

¹³ On 14 August 2004 the NATO Training Mission-Iraq (NTM-I) was established, adding another military element to the Iraq war.

5. Conclusion

The task to measure war involvement from the monadic perspective of the democratic peace theory becomes very complex, as soon as several dimensions and grades of involvement are to be taken into account. But, on the other hand, only such detailed assessment of war involvement will make it possible to check the validity of the hypothesis that the specific degree of democratization of foreign and security policy-making correlates with the extent of war involvement. The methodology proposed in this paper also seeks to contribute to social constructivist studies of international relations by relating war involvement to the subjective perceptions of the citizens instead of the seemingly objective assessment of the independent expert.

There are still some open questions with regard to the general applicability of the methodology proposed in this paper for measuring war powers: Can the methodology be applied beyond the case of the Iraq war for which it has been designed? Do citizens care about minor cases of the use of military force? Should war involvement in Afghanistan be related to war involvement in Iraq? Can members of military alliances stay out of wars other alliance members are involved in? Hopefully, these and other questions will be taken up in future research.

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Parliamentary Control of Security Policy (paks)

Despite strong public disapproval (see EOS-Gallup Europe's International Crisis Survey of January 2003) several of the 25 current member states of the European Union (EU-25) actively participated in the US-led war against Iraq. This contradicts the (monadic) theory of democratic peace reaching back to Kant, which expects war-averse public majorities to be able to use democratic institutions to effectively constrain their government's security policy.

Within our project the democratization of security policy will be operationalized as parliamentarization. Since there is hardly any comparative research on the role of parliaments regarding security policy matters, as a first step of the project, the scope and impact of parliamentary control over security policy matters will be operationalized as "index 1". Using "index 1" the degree of parliamentarization of security policy will be measured for the EU-25. The foreign policy behavior of the EU-25 governments will then be measured on the basis of yet another index for the "burden of war participation in terms of the democratic peace" ("index 2"). Data for index 2 will be collected for March 2003, when the UN Security Council did not grant a mandate to the coalition forces and when the military campaign started, as well as for summer 2003, after the international war had ended and the UN Security Council had legalized the occupation regime. Subsequently, the two sets of data will be correlated in order to identify significant patterns of association between the two variables "degree of parliamentary control over security policy" and "burden of war participation in terms of the democratic peace".

We appreciate funding for the project by the German Research Foundation (DFG). The project has started in February 2006 and will be completed in September 2007.

paks working paper series

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