



**Parliamentary Control of Security Policy**

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**From Democratic to Parliamentary Peace?  
European Parliaments and the Iraq War 2003**

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## **Abstract**

Referring to Kant, liberal peace theory claims that citizens who are unwilling to risk their lives or spend their money for warfare will induce democratically elected governments to refrain from making risky and costly security policy decisions. Liberal constructivists add the argument that in democracies citizens are socialized to respect the law and refrain from violence; this translates into the civilized foreign policy behavior of democracies. However, empirical research does not seem to give sufficient evidence for this so-called “monadic” version of the liberal/democratic peace.

In our paper we contend that institutional shortcomings of democratic foreign policy-making could be part of the answer to this puzzle. More specifically, we point to the lack of appropriate parliamentary “war powers” to effectively constrain governments’ military interventionism. We present findings of our research project on the parliamentary war powers of the European Union’s member and candidate states at the time of the 2003 Iraq war. By selecting this case we will be able to focus on the variance of institutional checks and balances whilst simultaneously controlling for other independent variables such as citizens’ preferences or the international environment. We discuss how parliamentary war powers can be measured and if, and how, these are linked to the degree of war involvement of the EU-governments.

We conclude that the effects of parliamentary war powers on military interventionism are much more complex than we expected. Our findings support the idea that there are “antinomies” in the theory of the liberal/democratic peace.

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 The puzzle of the democratic peace

Democracies are not pacifist. Democratic nation-states usually maintain armed forces and regularly engage in military action. Nonetheless, democratic peace theory postulates that democracies are somehow more restricted in their use of military force in foreign relations than non-democracies. Proponents of the democratic peace theory usually point to well established statistical findings suggesting that democracies (almost) never fight wars against each other. Levy even claims that the so-called “dyadic peace” among democracies is “as close as anything we have to an empirical law in international relations” (Levy 1988: 662). On the other hand, the majority of scholars rejects the claim that democracies are more peaceful *in general*, regardless of their counterparts, and thus restrict themselves to the “separate peace” of the dyadic version. Most interestingly, in the dyadic version of the democratic peace theory democracy as such does not figure exclusively, not even prominently, as the cause for peace. Alternative explanations include economic interdependence (commercial peace), institutionalized alliance relationships (collective security), or common values and identities (security community) (cf. Risse-Kappen 1995; Russett/Oneal 2001; Mansfield/Pevehouse 2006, 2003; Dembinski/Hasenclever/Wagner 2004). Somehow democracy gets lost in the dyadic version.

The monadic version of the democratic peace challenges the dyadic approach. Most prominently, Rummel (1995), in the title of one of his articles, programmatically states the key message: “Democracies ARE less warlike than other regimes”. The monadic version expects democracies to be generally more restricted in their use of military force in foreign relations. Most importantly, monadic research modifies the dependent variable: while the dyadic version is based on the *dichotomy* of participation vs. non-participation in wars, the monadic version focuses on the *degree* of violence in foreign relations, in other words on the extent of the use of military force. Miriam Fendius Elman summarizes the 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).

However, the critics of the monadic version contend that even if the dependent variable “war participation” is replaced by “degree of violence in foreign relations”, the empirical evidence for the supposed general peacefulness of democracies still does not seem convincing. The expectations of Rummel, Elman and other proponents of the monadic version pale in comparison with the observation, for example, that two of the core countries of modern democracy, the United States and the United Kingdom, led a large-scale, and by all accounts illegal, war of aggression against Iraq in 2003 and in the course of events were responsible for

violations of international humanitarian law such as inhuman treatment of prisoners of war, torture, and attacks against innocent civilians.

But yet, we should not jump to the conclusion to skip the monadic version altogether. We think that in order to be able to solve the puzzle of the expected general peacefulness of democracies we should take a closer look at the independent variable “democracy” as well. Actually, research on the democratic peace so far is based on democracy as a homogeneous category. If political systems meet certain minimum requirements – such as free and fair elections, alternating governments, public transparency of political decision-making, and the rule of law – they are counted as democracies. At this point, the democratic quality of security policy and military deployment decisions is beyond consideration. Therefore, it might be the case that a political system meets the general criteria for being counted as a democracy, even if the government enjoys exclusive decision-making powers on military security issues without being restricted by democratic checks and balances. Damrosch (1995: 193) emphasizes this point and argues that democracies which are not significantly less aggressive or less war-averse have to be treated as a sub-group of democratic systems with anomalies or pathologies.

We think that research on the monadic version of the democratic peace should not only differentiate the dependent variable of “war participation” but also the independent variable of “democracy”. Having reframed the monadic version of the democratic peace, the empirical evidence that democracies *as an undifferentiated group* are not significantly more peaceful than non-democracies suggests that security policy-making is not democratically<sup>2</sup> organized in many democracies. We do not accept the objection that in democracies any belligerent government can be voted out of office, most of all because in contemporary democracies security issues usually do not seem to determine voting behavior.

## **1.2 Parliaments and the Iraq war 2003**

How can we “unpack democracies” (Elman 2002) in terms of the democratic peace? How can we operationalize democratic security policy-making? In developing our methodological approach we benefit from Czempiel (1996). He critically describes the undifferentiated concept of democracy prevailing in the research about the democratic peace, which according to him is based on the unconditional assumption that people have a voice and can participate in all political matters and that people’s preferences will be fully transferred into actual policy. Czempiel regards many democracies as incomplete because of the less than full participation of their citizens in security policy decision-making, which should be essential for a working democratic peace (Hasenclever 2003: 212f.). Czempiel calls for a more

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2 We do not refer to an elitist concept of democratic rule but to a pluralistic understanding of democratic processes (cf. Schmidt 2000: chapter 2.4).

differentiated view on the monadic peace and most importantly emphasizes the relevance of parliamentary checks and balances of executive security policy-making.<sup>3</sup>

In our research project on the “Parliamentary control of military security policy” (paks) we take up Czempiel’s suggestion and focus on the case of 25 national parliaments of the EU countries and their impact on national security policies relating to the 2003 Iraq war. Following Czempiel, we operationalize democratization of security policy-making as parliamentarization. Given that legislatures are responsive to war-averse citizens we test the hypothesis that depending on their powers in security policy-making, parliaments effectively limit the scope of executive security policy. We specifically measure the extent of parliamentary “war powers” and the degree of war involvement in the 25 nation-states of our sample. We then put parliamentary war powers and war involvement in relation. We would like to stress that we regard parliamentarization only as one of several pieces of the puzzle of the democratic peace. Other possible factors might be citizens’ preference formation, media coverage of security policy issues or the structure of political party systems.

We think that the 2003 Iraq war represents a strong case to test the “parliamentary peace” hypothesis, i.e. executive restraint concerning war involvement induced by powerful parliamentary action. First, decision-making concerning the participation in the 2003 Iraq war can be classified as policy planning decision-making in contrast to exclusive and secretive crisis decision-making as well as routine bureaucratic decision-making (cf. Haftendorn 1990). Policy planning decision-making typically involves strong public participation in the political process and is ideally suited for exercising parliamentary control. Second, all over Europe the Iraq war became a hot issue for public debate. In January 2003 *EOS Gallup* conducted a representative opinion poll covering, among others, the countries of our sample. This poll revealed that in all 25 countries at least 60 per cent, in the majority of countries even more than 80 per cent, of those polled opposed a military intervention in Iraq not mandated by the UN Security Council. We conclude from these poll results that in our case one of the crucial conditions for “parliamentary peace”, namely “societal demand for the non-use of force in foreign policy” (Czempiel 1996: 89, translation by the authors) can be considered as given. Thirdly, we expect a large variation in the Iraq war policies of the countries in our sample, ranging from full participation in combat to complete rejection of the war. Fourthly, we proceed from the assumption that parliamentary war powers regarding national participation in the Iraq war greatly differed, not least because the countries concerned belong to different constitutional regimes and to different waves of democratization (Huntington 1991).

In what follows we will present a brief review of the discussion on the relationship between democratic policy-making and foreign policy. We do not attempt to summarize the immense amounts of literature on the democratic peace. We simply want to position our research in the institutional approach of the monadic version of the democratic peace. Then we will substantiate the role of parliamentary control regarding security policy and present our

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3 “Checks and balances have to work in modern political systems marked by party government, even if the control is executed not by the parliament as a whole but by the members of the opposition parties” (Czempiel 1996: 88, translation by the authors).

proposal to measure both parliamentary war powers and the degree of war involvement, which we then apply to the 25 countries of our sample. In the next step we will examine whether, and if yes to what extent, in the case of the Iraq war the specific war powers of the national parliaments examined are tied to the degree of war involvement of the respective governments. Finally, we will identify questions for further research.

## **2. The monadic perspective on the “democratic peace”<sup>4</sup>**

In this section we briefly sketch the theoretical framework of our study. We first present the main features of the research program on the democratic peace. While focusing on the *effects* of democratized foreign policy-making we will elaborate on the rationalist-institutionalist explanations for the monadic version and its recent development.

### **2.1 Main features of the research program on the democratic peace**

For almost a quarter of a century the research program on the democratic peace scrutinizes the relationship between democratically constituted polities and their peaceful foreign policy behavior. Firmly rooted in the philosophical tradition of Immanuel Kant and his essay on the “Perpetual Peace” a huge variety of approaches has emerged during the past decades.<sup>5</sup> As already mentioned in the introduction, they can be grouped into two versions of the democratic peace theory. The *dyadic* version focuses on international interactions and is based on the assumption that democracies do not fight war against each other while at the same time not exhibiting a similarly peaceful foreign policy behavior towards non-democracies. Proponents of the dyadic version attribute the peaceful behavior of democracies mainly to the mutual perception of democracies as democracies. Proponents of the *monadic* version, in contrast, assume that democracies generally behave somewhat more peacefully<sup>6</sup> in their foreign relations, irrespective of their interaction partner’s type of regime.

Both versions refer to rationalist-institutionalist as well as normative-cultural causes of the observed peaceful tendency of democracies’ foreign relations. The citizens’ war-averse preferences which limit the scope for governmental action and the inertia of democratic institutions are at the center of rationalist-institutionalist explanations. Kant already used the argument of rationally calculating citizens perceiving war as a threat to their property and life and hence rejecting it. In addition to the citizens’ war-averse preferences which under the condition of democratic participation enter political decision-making, democratic institutions in general are accredited with constraining effects on belligerent politicians, due to the effects

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4 This chapter has largely been taken from Dieterich (2007).

5 For recent reviews of the research on the democratic peace from a German perspective cf. Geis (2001); Hasenclever (2003); Geis/Wagner (2006).

6 The term peaceful will be used here in the sense of being less willing to engage in warfare as part of a general foreign policy disposition of democracies to prevent violence. To prevent violence, however, does not suggest that democracies, for reason of principle, will not participate in wars. It rather means that democracies do not prioritize the use of military force in their foreign relations (cf. Nielebock 1993: 182). For this weak version of the monadic version of the democratic peace theory MacMillan proposes the term “peace-prone”: “‘Peace-Prone’ refers to the inclination or ‘will’ to peace whilst ‘peaceful’ has the rather different meaning of having attained the state of peace” (MacMillan 2004a: 180, Fn. 2).

of democratic checks and balances and because of the transparency of governmental policy-making (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 and respect for human rights, will be applied to foreign relations accordingly and will thus contribute to a war-averse behavior (Hasenclever 2003: 205).

## 2.2 The monadic “revival” and the dyadic separate peace

For a long time, based on the statistical evidence, the dyadic perspective dominated the research program on the “democratic peace”. Proponents of the monadic version had met with little response, except for few scholars (Rummel 1983, 1985). In the mid-1990s however, new empirical evidence suggesting a general peaceful tendency in the foreign behavior of democracies, started to change things (Ray 1995: 19). Support for the monadic version kept subsequently growing while additional findings supported the original evidence (cf. Rummel 1995; Siverson 1995; Benoit 1996; Czempiel 1996; Elman 1997, 2000; Ray 2000; Russett/Oneal 2001, MacMillan 2003, 2004a/b).<sup>7</sup> In the course of the so-called monadic “revival”, or “turn”, the dyadic line of reasoning on the democratic peace was subjected to criticism for having not been able to deliver a coherent explanation of the *separate* peace among democracies (Geis 2001: 287f).<sup>8</sup>

The revival of the monadic perspective is more than just a “monadic moment”, or so it seems. At least, recent studies on the democratic peace started to differentiate the democratic structures of individual democracies and link the monadic perspective to concepts of foreign policy research (cf. Keller 2005; Russett 2005). Since both versions of the democratic peace theory basically refer to the same rationalist-institutionalist as well as normative-culturalist explanations, they support each other in the long run (Müller 2002: 48) and in the future might be integrated into a comprehensive explanatory framework.

Rationalist-institutionalist studies based on the monadic approach to the democratic peace have identified several factors, which supposedly contribute to a peaceful foreign policy behavior of democracies. These factors include, among others, institutional checks in the decision-making processes (Snyder 1991; Morgan/Campbell 1991; Morgan/Schwebach 1992; Schweller 1992) and the influence of war-averse social groups, which induce political decision-makers to refrain from costly warfare (Rummel 1995; Siverson 1995; Ray 1995; Bueno de Mesquita et al. 1999). Recent studies also focus on electoral incentives (Gaubatz 1999) and on signaling games during crisis that involve political competition between government and opposition (cf. Fearon 1994, 1995; Schultz 1998, 2001).

The observed variance of democratic states’ security policy behavior challenges the monadic expectation of a *general* peacefulness of democracies. The significant, and sometimes even

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7 For a critical evaluation of recent empirical results cf. Henderson (2002: 56ff.).

8 Russett and Oneal (2001: 50) admit that “[if] it were true that democracies rarely fought each other but were not more peaceful in general, we would need a good theoretical explanation for that.”

drastic, differences among democracies with regard to the intensity and frequency of war involvement seem to contradict the monadic version of the democratic peace.<sup>9</sup> Recently, the debate about the obvious deficits of monadic theory building motivated Elman to call for “*unpacking democracy*”. She and other scholars started to skip the homogenous and ideal-typical concept of democracy and analyze the institutional differences among democracies and their effects on foreign policy behavior.

### 2.3 “Unpacking democracy”

In the early 1990s studies linked different foreign policy behavior to institutional differences in foreign policy-making while still leaving the specifics of the causal relationship untouched (cf. Morgan/Campbell 1991; Morgan/Schwebach 1992; Maoz/Russett 1993). At the end of that decade Elman (2000) examined the heterogeneity among democratic systems more deeply from the perspective of the monadic peace. Based on mainstream comparative government literature she distinguishes four subtypes of democracies: “coalitional parliamentary democracy”, “presidential democracy”, “semipresidential democracy” and “Westminster parliamentary democracy” (Elman 2000: 96f.). She explains the outcome of decision-making on the use of military force from the subtype-specific institutional structures, especially from executive-legislative relations:

“Democratic states [...] differ in the extent to which they constrain the executive, and in the degree to which their foreign policymakers view war as a legitimate foreign policy tool. [D]emocratic states can act belligerently when democratic structures allow skewed foreign policy making access to groups who favor the use of force. Specifically, I show how presidential, coalitional parliamentary, Westminster parliamentary, and semipresidential democratic systems [...] influence the autonomy of foreign policymakers, and pose different sets of constraints and opportunities for foreign security policy making” (Elman 2000: 93).

Elman concludes that, for example, war-averse societal preferences will hardly prevail over belligerent executive preferences in Westminster democracies because “[t]he executive can count on legislative approval for its foreign policy positions largely because voting against the government implies handing it over to the opposition.” (Elman 2000: 98). On the other hand she postulates for presidential systems that “war-prone leaders are [...] more constrained because war powers are usually shared by the executive and legislative branches” (Elman 2000: 97).<sup>10</sup> By distinguishing subtypes of democracies based on different executive-legislative institutional arrangements and the resulting different impact of societal and government preferences Elman can show that many foreign policy options of democracies are

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9 As part of a major research program of the Peace Research Institute Frankfurt (PRIF) on the “antinomies of the democratic peace”, Harald Müller (2002, 2004) has analyzed the antinomies of monadic as well as dyadic theory building. He pointed out that individual citizens preferences based on rational cost-benefit calculations and peaceful socialization do not always result in the choice of a war-averse foreign policy but, under certain condition, can support the use of military violence as well (cf. Müller 2002).

10 Elman also concludes that in presidential and coalitional parliamentary systems strong belligerent societal preferences can result in the use of force irrespective of possibly war-averse preferences of the government, because of the powerful influence of the legislature: “In presidential democracies [...] while the executive may not favor aggression, the logrolling of powerful societal groups in Congress may nevertheless lead the state down that road” (Elman 2000: 99).

determined by their constitutional settings. Consequently she presents an analysis of democracies' decision to use military force without referring to the regime type of the nation-state a democracy interacts with (cf. Nielebock 2004: 181).

In addition to Elman Susan Peterson (1995) and David Auerswald (1999) analyze the relationship between institutional structures and the extent of societal influence on foreign policy decision-making. More recent studies not only differentiate democracies according to (sub)system types, but also according to checks and balances governments face under specific political circumstances, such as the election cycle or the specific coalition structure, factors which are thought to have an impact on the foreign policy behavior (cf. Prins/Sprecher 1999; Palmer/Regan/London 2004). Ireland and Gartner (2001) conclude that minority governments do not initiate violent conflict as easily as majority or coalition governments because in minority governments the executive faces much more political veto players limiting the executive's chances to realize its preferences.

Research on the democratic peace has rarely addressed the specific role of parliaments so far. Dan Reiter and Erik Tillman (2002) started to uncover evidence suggesting peaceful effects of democratized foreign policy-making with special reference to the role of parliaments. In their study they distinguish democracies according to the specific "foreign policy power" of their parliaments, i.e. their powers to influence and control foreign policy-making and the probability that such a system initiates war.

The studies presented so far reflect only one of the numerous strands of the research program on the democratic peace. But already this survey illustrates two points: First, when trying to account for the variance of democracies' foreign policy behavior, any typology of democracies has to differentiate the meaning of the "democracy" variable. The insights into the processes and dynamics of different democratic decision-making institutions suggest that there is indeed a relationship between the shape of democratic decision-making structures and the degree of war involvement. Second, typologies of democracies still seem too vague to cover the specifics of parliamentary checks and balances vis-à-vis governmental security policy-making. We think that monadic research could benefit from policy specific typologies of democracies based on the respective role parliaments play in this policy area. This is what we will propose in the following chapter. We are convinced that systematic and comparative studies of parliamentary control powers relating to security policy-making could be a valuable complement to the study of the democratic peace and could help us to understand the puzzling foreign policy behavior of democracies regarding armed conflicts.

### 3. Parliamentary “War Powers”

#### 3.1 Measuring parliamentary power

In order to test our hypothesis of the parliamentary peace we have to determine the policy specific power of parliaments. Unfortunately, there are hardly any studies on which we can draw in order to examine the parliamentary peace. So far the literature of comparative parliamentary research has marginalized foreign and security policy issues and largely ignored parliament’s role in foreign and security policy-making, with the exception of the US Congress (Lustgarten/Leigh 1994; George/Morgan 1999).<sup>11</sup> The literature abounds in statements pronouncing a “decline of parliaments” (Beyme 1998) or diagnosing an executive-oriented “new raison d’état” (Wolf 1999, 2000)<sup>12</sup> which renders parliaments almost powerless. Only recently scholars of the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) started to doubt the alleged weakness of national parliaments in security policy-making and asked which institutional conditions make parliaments weak or powerful (Barbé/Herranz 2005; Bono 2005; Born/Hänggi 2004, 2005; Maillet 1999; Siedschlag 2001, 2002; Wagner 2006a, 2006b).

In trying to measure security policy-related parliamentary power we could take the US Congress as a benchmark because the parliament of the United States is commonly regarded as prototype of a powerful legislature, especially in foreign and security policy-making. In 1973 Congress passed the *War Powers Resolution* (WPR), which stipulates

“[T]hat the collective judgment of both the Congress and the President will apply to the introduction of United States Armed Forces into hostilities, or into situations where imminent involvement in hostilities is clearly indicated by the circumstances, and to the continued use of such forces in hostilities or in such situations.”<sup>13</sup>

Pursuant to the WPR, US Congress claims far reaching rights to approve deployments of US forces abroad, to order withdrawal of US forces, and to be informed by the President on deployment plans.

However, upon closer examination it does not seem helpful to take the security policy power of Congress as a benchmark. First, the WPR has been constitutionally disputed from the beginning. US presidents keep on insisting on their constitutional role as commanders-in-chief of the armed forces and tend to evade the stipulations of the WPR. The Supreme Court has refrained from deciding on the constitutionality of the WPR so far. US constitutional lawyers as well disagree on the scope of Congressional authority over deployment of armed forces (Damrosch 1995: 192). Second, unlike in most European democracies, in the

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11 Our brief review of the literature refers to general studies of parliamentarism, because systematic research relating to the security policy role of parliaments is more or less confined to the case of the United States Congress. For the war powers of the US Congress cf. Holt (1978); Blechman (1990); Briggs (1991); Kittel (1993); Westerfield (1996); Dahmer (1998); Boylan (2001); Prins/Marshall (2002); Grimmert (2002); Hendrickson (2002); Kremp (2003); Howell/ Pevehouse (2005).

12 Kaiser (1996: 324); Seidelmann (1997: 123); Beyme (1998); Wolf (2000). These statements form part of a general discourse on deparliamentarization. The weakening of national parliaments is attributed to domestic developments as well as processes of European integration and globalization, cf. Andersen/Burns (1996); Zürn (1998, 2000). However, theoretical arguments as well as empirical evidence suggest that we should not expect the end but rather a transformation of parliamentarism, cf. Marschall (2002) for more references.

13 War Powers Resolution Sec 2(a); cf. Kittel (1993: 50).

presidential system of the United States both the president and the Congress are elected by the people; both can claim the same democratic legitimacy and both should be responsive to citizens' aversion against war. Finally, the special international status of the United States as the only remaining military superpower further disqualifies referring to the US Congress as a benchmark case for other democratic parliaments.

The Geneva-based research center „Democratic Control of Armed Forces“ (DCAF) has taken up an alternative approach. DCAF researchers Hans Born and Heiner Hänggi (2004, 2005) examine the *resources of parliamentary control* regarding participation in multilateral peacekeeping operations and study the constitutional and legal rights as well as the budget and staff capabilities of national parliaments. Wolfgang Wagner (2006b) focuses on legal provisions for parliamentary involvement in decisions regarding the deployment of national armed forces abroad.

## **3.2 A new typology of parliamentary war powers**

We think that the proposals presented so far do not suffice to operationalize what we call – following the terminology of the WPR – parliamentary “war powers”: the capabilities of national parliaments to transfer citizens' war-averse preferences into security policy decisions. Existing proposals cover only less violent peacekeeping missions or focus exclusively on deployment laws. We decided to develop these concepts further by including three new angles to be examined: First, we operationalize parliamentary war powers in a more comprehensive way and include supplementary capabilities as well as functional equivalents for the participation in deployment legislation. Second, we also cover the case of massive use of military force and its domestic implications because of its crucial importance in terms of the democratic peace. Finally, we use a refined concept of parliamentary control, combining control as limitation of the scope of executive leeway and control as co-decision-making by parliaments. We develop our definition of parliamentary war powers referring to what parliamentary studies know as the four “functions” of parliaments (Marschall 2005: chap. III.2), here understood as four power resources. Accordingly we distinguish the legislative, control (in the narrow sense), communication, and election/dismissal resources of parliaments in security policy-making.

### **3.2.1 Legislative and budgetary war powers of parliaments<sup>14</sup>**

Since we are primarily interested in war involvement, we focus on the question to which extent parliaments participate in decision-making concerning the deployment of military force. In order to assess the degree of legislative war powers, in principle, we have to check each individual case and find out whether and how parliaments are involved when the respective government plans to send troops into military action. In doing so, we have to check several provisions. First, we have to ask whether and at which stage a government must consult with parliament on a planned deployment of troops. We take it that *ex ante*

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14 Chapters 3.3.1 to 3.3.4 have been largely been taken from Hummel/Marschall (2007).

consultations on the deployment of military forces indicate a higher degree of parliamentary power than ex post consultations, simply because the crucial decisions have already been made once the government has deployed troops; it seems to be more costly to suspend a deployment decision after the troops have been mobilized than to veto such a decision in advance.

Second, we have to ask to which extent parliaments are involved in the decision-making process and whether or not parliamentary participation is mandatory. We have to distinguish between different modes of participation, ranging from mere consultation to strong co-decision powers of the parliamentary body. We also have to take into account the majorities required, because quorum provisions determine the capability of parliamentary minorities to block decisions. Moreover, it seems important to check whether legislative rights are limited to decisions regarding national troops or whether they also apply to foreign troops using national territory, airspace, bases or facilities or to national participation in multilateral military missions (NATO, United Nations, OSCE, EU). Parliamentary power to decide on deployment matters could also seriously be curtailed by emergency provisions or exception clauses. We consider neutrality provisions as part of legislative war powers, if they are based on acts of the parliament and if parliament can abolish these provisions. Neutrality provisions could be regarded as a kind of structural veto of parliaments against war involvement and hence constitute a powerful tool of legislatures. Constitutional provisions on neutrality or disarmament could even supersede legislative action of parliaments on deployment of troops. Therefore, a mere lack of deployment laws does not necessarily indicate weak parliamentary war powers.

In addition to co-deciding on the deployment of troops, parliaments can also influence military actions by using its “power of the purse”. Deploying troops is expensive, and these operating costs, if to be covered by the national budget, usually have to be approved by parliament. If parliament refuses to release the money needed for military activities, the government can be severely restrained in its capacity to deploy troops.

### **3.2.2 Control war powers of parliaments**

Control is one of the core concepts of parliamentary democracy, being part of the complex structure of checks and balances. To monitor the activities of other institutions at any stage has become one of the most prominent parliamentary functions. The power of control is tightly connected to sanctioning powers, since control without threatening sanctions lacks effectiveness. Resources of control can be linked to other functions of parliament (election, legislation) or can be activated by parliaments by addressing non-parliamentary institutions like the courts or mass media.

There is a multitude of parliamentary control resources. Accordingly, the measurement of the power of control must take into account the many different controlling options of parliament. First, we have to analyze which instruments parliaments can use for controlling the executive. The wide-ranging repertoire of parliamentary control tools includes traditional procedures by which parliament and parliamentarians can interrogate the government, for example in form of a “question time” or different forms of questions to the government. Special investigation

committees are supposed to be particularly effective means of control. Standing committees also play an important role in controlling the government; committee members, being policy specialists, can much more profoundly scrutinize and criticize governmental action in the respective policy area. For our research project it seems to be specifically relevant whether or not the respective parliament has standing committees on foreign affairs and/or defense. Moreover, we have to take into consideration whether parliaments, either via committees or via plenary assemblies, have the right to summon members of the government and to which extent they have access to governmental documents. Finally, in some political systems parliaments can resort to judicial review by bringing governmental decisions before courts, although, of course, they cannot be sure about the courts' final rulings.

Second, we have to ask exactly which parliamentary unit can make use of these instruments of control in the field of military security policy. Once again, in order to determine the policy-specific parliamentary resources, we have to find out what kind of majorities or minorities can use which instruments of control. In parliamentary democracies, it is usually the opposition, who executes the power of control. More specifically, we have to find out which means of control single parliamentarians or minority groups within parliament have at their disposal. Such provisions might reduce or strengthen the effectiveness of the different instruments of control significantly.

Third, another differentiation concerns the timing of parliamentary control powers. We can distinguish between control accompanying governmental activities and control taking place after governmental decisions have been implemented ("ex post"). Ex post control seems to be less effective than control carried out "just in time". On the other hand, confidentiality provisions can counterbalance and restrain parliamentary control powers. Especially in the field of military security policy governments tend to withhold information with the justification of national security requirements.

### **3.2.3 Communication war powers of parliaments**

To communicate between those who decide and those who are affected by decisions is one of the core functions and at the same time a key power resource of parliaments, although difficult to operationalize. In early parliamentarism debating and discussing issues of general interest perhaps constituted the most essential purposes of parliamentary bodies. Originally parliamentary discourse meant pondering decisions, presenting arguments in favor of and in opposition to proposals and at the end finding the best answer.

"Communicative action" in this Habermasian meaning yields parliamentary power: By discussing pro and con arguments parliaments can compel the executive to provide good reasons for its decisions. While governments might tend not to discuss military and security policy issues in public, parliaments principally are made to discuss all areas of governmental activities including the deployment of troops. By exercising their communicative function, modern parliaments rely on the cooperation of mass media. Only if parliamentary communication is transferred into the realm of public debate beyond the parliamentary arena, parliament's communicative power resources can be fully activated.

In order to assess the communicative powers of parliament we have to determine the competences of parliaments to put governmental plans for deploying troops on the agenda of plenary debate. We have to identify which parliamentary player can set the agenda of parliament, more specifically, whether and how far parliamentary minorities can use the communicative resources of parliament. Effective instruments to put military decisions on the agenda include urgency debates, in which the plenary assembly discusses an urgent topic on short notice. On the other hand, parliamentary debate could also provide an opportunity to the government or the governing coalition to mobilize public opinion for their deployment plans.<sup>15</sup> But in any case parliamentary debate offers the opposition parties in parliament a chance to criticize governmental policy and present policy alternatives.

### **3.2.4 Election/dismissal war powers of parliaments**

Election resources of parliaments are primarily important in form of “dismissal” powers. Except for Cyprus the EU-25 are parliamentary systems in which the government depends on parliamentary backing. In parliamentary democracies, parliaments cannot always elect the head of government, but always have at least the power to dismiss the prime minister or chancellor. Similarly, in semi-presidential systems some parliaments have the right to “impeach” the directly elected president.

Regarding semi-presidential systems, we have to be very careful in determining who exactly has the power to decide on military issues within the executive: the president directly elected by the people (and therefore more difficult to dismiss by parliament) or the prime minister being dependent on the support of a parliamentary majority. The answer to this question basically determines the election resources of parliament, for a prime minister’s dismissal usually is much easier to accomplish than the impeachment of a president in a presidential or semi-presidential system.

The power to remove the chief of the executive branch from office is a general source of power and not specific for military policy-making. In terms of policy specific powers the parliament's right to demand the dismissal of the ministers, or secretaries, of defense and foreign affairs is particularly important. Parliaments having granted this power will be stronger because they can target sanctions specifically at individual government members responsible for security issues without having to use the big stick of forcing the complete government to resign. On the other hand, the executive often can neutralize the power of parliament to dismiss the government by the executive right to dissolve parliament, either directly or by forcing a vote of confidence.

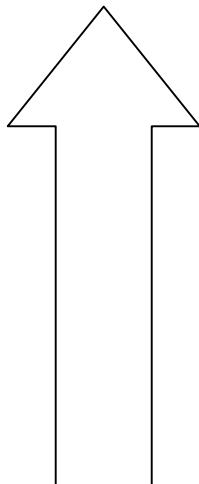
### **3.2.5 A typology of democracies according to parliamentary war powers**

We propose to distinguish five subtypes of democracies according to the scope of parliamentary war powers (table 1). In order to classify specific cases we use a decision tree starting with legislative war powers and successively taking into account the other war powers.

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15 Cf. the much documented “rally-round-the flag effect” (Baum 2002; Lai/Reiter 2005).

**Table 1: “paks” typology of parliamentary war powers**

Degree of parliamentary war powers		
(1) comprehensive	prior parliamentary approval required for every governmental decision relating to the use of military force; parliament can investigate and debate use of military force	 <p style="text-align: center;"><b>high</b></p>
(2) selective	prior parliamentary approval required for governmental decisions relating to the use of military force but exceptions for specific cases (foreign troops on national territory, minor deployments, arrangements with international organizations); parliament can investigate and debate use of military force	
(3) deferred	ex post parliamentary approval, i.e. parliament can demand troop withdrawal; parliament can investigate and debate use of military force	
(4) basic	no parliamentary approval but deployment notification to parliament required; parliament can investigate and debate use of military force	
(5) deficient	no parliament-related action required for use of military force; no specific parliamentary control or debate relating to the use of military force	

We attribute the highest grade of democratization (“comprehensive war powers”) to political systems where parliaments participate in each individual decision on the use of violence in foreign relation and have the power to effectively block any war involvement, by deployment law, budgetary powers or neutrality provision. The second highest grade of democratization is attributed to parliaments, which in principle have to approve the deployment of armed forces ex ante, but do not decide on each case of war involvement. Therefore, the government may under certain conditions bypass parliamentary decision-making. The third category is formed by parliaments, which cannot veto war involvement ex ante, but can terminate it ex post. We label this subtype “deferred parliamentary war powers”. The fourth grade of “basic war powers” refers to any national parliament which the respective government is obliged to inform about the deployment of armed forces but otherwise does not have the powers to veto, or terminate, war involvement. The lowest degree of “deficient war powers” marks parliaments whose governments not even have to inform about the deployment of armed forces and hence do not have specific security policy related powers.

We checked the degree of parliamentary war powers for the 25 European democracies of our sample as of spring 2003 in order to later link the results with the involvement in the 2003

Iraq war. We decided on individual classifications based on detailed reports for each parliament. Since early 2003 parliamentary war powers have changed in some cases so that these countries would have to be reclassified in an updated version of our typology.

**Table 2: Typology of national European parliaments according to their war powers in 2003**

<b>comprehensive</b>	<b>selective</b>	<b>deferred</b>	<b>basic</b>	<b>deficient</b>
AUT	DEN	CZK	BEL	CYP
EST	IRE	SLK	ESP	FRA
FIN	NED		POL	GBR
GER	SWE		POR	GRE
HUN				
ITA				
LAT				
LIT				
LUX				
MAL				
SLO				

Table 2 presents the distribution of the countries of our sample according to our typology of parliamentary war powers. The table reveals some remarkable findings: the biggest group of parliaments can be found in the “comprehensive” category which not only includes the smaller European countries like the Baltic states but also the parliaments of Germany, Italy, Hungary and Austria. Three national parliaments are classified as “selective”, whereas the exceptions from ex ante parliamentary approval differ in each case: the minimum number of troops to be deployed in the case of Ireland’s parliament (Oireachtas), the purpose of forces deployment in the case of the Danish parliament (Folketinget), and both in the case of Sweden’s parliament (Riksdagen). The smallest group can be found in the deferred category with only two national parliaments. Among the members of the “deficient” category we find the French National Assembly and the Greek Parliament, but, possibly surprisingly, also the mother of modern parliamentarism, the British House of Commons.

According to the monadic version of the democratic peace theory we expect that war involvement of countries whose parliaments’ war powers are classified as “comprehensive” is significantly reduced under the condition of a clear opposition to war involvement prevailing among the citizens to be represented. Under this condition parliaments as institutional veto players are supposed to hold back governments willing to participate in war. This hypothesis is put to test on the case of the 2003 Iraq war where we ask to what degree European countries had become involved into that conflict.

## 4. European involvement in the 2003 Iraq war

The literature so far hardly differentiates the “democracy” variable but also pays little attention to a more detailed operationalization of “war involvement”. Statistical studies on the democratic peace routinely rely on the Correlates of War (COW) database, which, however, only offers the dichotomous categories of “participation” and “non-participation”. The less intense use of military violence by individual nation-states which is essential for the monadic perspective can only be determined indirectly by using COW data on numbers of war casualties, duration of wars, numbers of parties involved, or type of war. At least the COW researchers try hard to carefully differentiate interlocking or interconnected wars.

Other war statistics are more sophisticated. Some of them include wars other than international wars and militarized disputes below the threshold of war defined by a minimum number of war-related casualties. Only such detailed information uncovers the changing intensity of the use of military violence and help us, for example, to differentiate the successive phases of the Iraq war, i.e. the infrequent bombing of Iraq by US and British air forces up to 2003, the full-scale conventional international war of coalition forces against regular Iraqi forces from March to May 2003 and the successive insurgency and civil war with involvement of external forces since June 2003.

While acknowledging the progress made by statistical databases and standardized records of wars, such as COW, UCDP/PRIO<sup>16</sup>, AKUF<sup>17</sup>, or COSIMO<sup>18</sup>, systematic statistical research on war involvement still does not meet the requirements of monadic research. These datasets usually do not cover costly and risky security policy action – according to the Kantian calculation of the rational, war-averse citizens – such as financial contributions to warfare or the deployment of non-combat troops to supposedly non-combat zones, e.g. reconstruction or medical teams. Nor is normatively motivated war-aversion fully covered. From the perspective of normative-cultural explanations of the democratic peace war involvement does start with the deployment of troops but also includes activities completely ignored by the conventional databases, such as military supply and logistical support, clearing of mines, nuclear, reconnaissance units for biological and chemical weapons, military intelligence, permission to use bases, or to military transit. Multilateral military action so common among democracies raises another problem: does membership in a coalition or alliance automatically mean war involvement, if this coalition or alliance is fighting a war? Similarly we could ask whether political support for war, for example by official statements, should be treated as war involvement, at least from a normative perspective. In the case of the Iraq war the importance of these considerations becomes obvious, when we ask question such as: Which country was

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16 The Centre for the Study of Civil War at the International Peace Research Institute, Oslo (PRIO) and the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP) at Uppsala University maintain the joint UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset, cf. Gleditsch/Wallensteen/Eriksson/Sollenberg/Strand (2002) and <http://www.prio.no/cwp/ArmedConflict/>.

17 The Arbeitsgemeinschaft Kriegsursachenforschung (AKUF), the Working Group on the Causes of War and Armed Conflict, is part of the University of Hamburg, cf. <http://www.sozialwiss.uni-hamburg.de/publish/Ipw/Akuf/index.htm>.

18 The University's of Heidelberg's COSIMO 2.0 database includes information on far more than 500 conflicts with over 2,500 phases, cf. <http://www.hiik.de/kosimo/index.html.en>.

involved in the war and when did national involvement in the war start exactly? Which of the parallel, and partly overlapping, multilateral missions (UN missions, coalition warfare, NATO training mission, NATO operation for the defense of its member-state Turkey) should be counted as war involvement? To put it briefly, research on the democratic peace does not match the complexities raised by these questions about war involvement, at least from the perspective of the monadic approach.

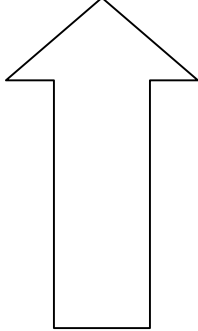
Consequently, we developed our own typology of war involvement skipping the usual dichotomy of “participation” vs. “non-participation” in war. Instead we classify the involvement of European states in the 2003 Iraq in successive grades, referring to a continuum of increasing war involvement (table 3). At this stage of our research we focus on the rationalist-utilitarian perspective of war involvement only, but we will later add another typology in order to cover the normative perspective on war involvement as well.

According to the rational-utilitarian perspective the degree of war involvement depends on cost-benefit calculations. For our purposes it will be sufficient to classify the degree of war involvement according to the expected, or actual, burden in terms of costs and risks. We assume that the life of national soldiers have a particularly high value in the calculations of “post-heroic societies” (Smith 2005). Furthermore, the estimated financial costs of war involvement very much depend on which branch of the military forces is deployed. The deployment of the air force or the navy is much more expensive than the deployment of ground forces. Finally, the estimated costs of war involvement will rise if ground troops are deployed to combat zones. Calculations for the costs of war involvement will also differ depending on whether they cover expected costs before the start of the war or actual costs during military action.

We do not factor in arms transfers. They should rather be treated as a separate policy issue because they are governed by a separate (parliamentary) legal regime and because they entail specific 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.

Finally, financial war contributions 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 acknowledged as equivalent to the deployment of troops. But the legal regime for such financial contributions is yet another one 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 we omit the consideration of such payments in our typology.

**Table 3: “paks” typology of war involvement**

Degree of war involvement: utilitarian perspective	
(1) ground forces <i>(combat troops with a high personal risk)</i>	<p><b>high</b></p>  <p><b>low</b></p>
(2) air and naval forces <i>(combat troops with a low personal risk but high financial burden)</i>	
(3) 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>	

We distinguish five successive degrees of war involvement. Following Kant we assume that modern warfare is always a negative-sum game for democracies and start with “no war involvement” as the least costly degree of war involvement. In the order of rising costs we regard “logistical support” as the next category. It involves low financial costs and practically no risk for national troops and citizens. The category “rear ground troops” follows. The deployment of military engineers or medical teams to non-combat zones usually entails moderate costs as well as some personal risks for the soldiers deployed. The deployment of “air and naval forces” might be very expensive but in the asymmetrical warfare democracies are typically involved in pilots and navy soldiers usually face a very low personal risk for their lives, the 1991 Gulf War and the 1999 Kosovo War serving as prime examples. The most costly degree of war involvement, at least from the utilitarian perspective of citizens, is the deployment of “ground forces” for combat, because they involve a high personal risk for the soldiers deployed.

Table 4 presents our classification for the war involvement of our sample’s cases. Please note that it covers only the period of the international war fought between coalition forces led by the United States and the United Kingdom against regular Iraqi forces.<sup>19</sup> When exactly did the Iraq war start? Armed hostilities officially commenced on March 20, 2003. However, preparation for war started in the United States on October 11, 2002, at the latest, when Congress passed the *Joint Resolution to Authorize the Use of United States Armed Forces Against Iraq*. On May 1, 2003, US President Bush announced the end of major combat

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<sup>19</sup> The US military termed this operation „Operation Iraqi Freedom“.

operations in Iraq. On May 22, 2003, the United Nations Security Council passed a resolution noting down the responsibilities of the occupying forces for the security of Iraq.

**Table 4: Typology of European involvement in the Iraq intervention (March-May 2003)**

ground forces (1)	air and naval forces (2)	rear ground troops (3)	logistical support (4)	no war involvement (5)
POL GBR	DEN ESP	CZE LIT SLK	BEL EST FRA GER GRE HUN ITA LAT NED POR	AUT CYP FIN IRE LUX MAL SLO SWE

**5. Combining parliamentary war powers and war involvement**

We now have two typologies, which we can relate to each other: the typology of national European parliaments according to their war powers in 2003 and the typology of European involvement in the Iraq intervention (March-May 2003). Our central hypothesis was that legislatures are responsive to war-averse citizens and, depending on their powers in security policy-making, tend to effectively limit the scope of executive security policy, i.e. the degree of war involvement. This hypothesis can be rephrased and specified for our case study: based on the strong aversion of citizens all over Europe to the international war of coalition forces against Iraq in 2003, countries where parliaments had strong war powers in that particular period are expected to not, or only marginally, have been involved in that war.

We do not expect any significant pattern for countries whose parliaments have low war powers because in these cases parliaments cannot limit governments’ scope of action. As far as domestic political constraints are concerned, these governments can without restraint decide on war involvement. Please note that our hypothesis cannot be reversed: states with weak or powerless parliaments in terms of war involvement need not necessarily be highly involved in war. But if our hypothesis is correct, no country with strong parliamentary war powers should be among the countries strongly involved in the Iraq war.

**Table 5: Parliamentary war powers and national involvement in the Iraq intervention (March-May 2003)**

		typology of parliamentary war powers				
		<i>comprehensive</i>	<i>selective</i>	<i>deferred</i>	<i>basic</i>	<i>deficient</i>
typology of national involvement in the Iraq intervention	<i>ground forces</i>				POL	GBR
	<i>air and naval forces</i>		DEN		ESP	
	<i>rear ground troops</i>	LIT		CZK SLK		
	<i>logistical support</i>	EST GER HUN ITA LAT	NED		BEL POR	FRA GRE
	<i>no war involvement</i>	AUT FIN LUX MAL SLO	IRE SWE			CYP

Table 5 at first glance confirms our hypothesis. High parliamentary war powers in fact are associated with a low degree of war involvement leaving almost no case in categories 1 to 3 of the war involvement typology. Just about all countries with strong parliamentary war powers provided at maximum logistical support for the war. The United Kingdom and Poland are the only countries of our sample that actually got involved with ground troops in this stage of the Iraq war, and in both cases parliamentary war powers are classified as “deficient” or “basic”, as we would have expected.

But the table also reveals that Lithuania and Denmark do not fully match our expectation – the Danish parliament approved deployment of naval forces in spite of an overwhelming public opposition. The United Kingdom offers another puzzle. Although Prime Minister Blair was not legally obliged to seek the approval of the House of Commons for sending combat forces to the Iraqi battlefield he asked parliament for a vote. Like in the Danish parliament, the majority of the House of Commons supported a high level of war involvement irrespective of public opposition. But these are not the only puzzles that remain and hopefully will motivate further research.

## 6. Conclusion and future research perspectives

Based on the debate about the democratic peace we examined the relationship between parliamentary war powers and the degree of war involvement. We developed a typology of parliamentary powers, specifically related to security policy-making, which we used to classify the national parliaments of our sample. We have found a wide range of parliamentary war powers and were able to identify best practice as well as worst practice cases from the perspective of the democratic peace. We also developed a typology for the “degree of war involvement” being our dependent variable. Having employed both typologies to the case of the 2003 Iraq war we found our expectations were largely supported by the empirical evidence.

Although the methodological approach employed points to the validity of the expected pacifying effect of parliamentary war powers, there is still considerable research to be done to further develop and refine our approach:

1. Our research design could be applied to more cases, i.e. to more instances where democracies had been confronted with the decision to deploy military force. This would hopefully support our findings beyond the case of the Iraq war 2003. Admittedly, this raises the problem that citizens’ preferences cannot always be expected to be as clearly war-averse as they were in the case of the Iraq war. Additionally, it could be very instructive to study the relevance of parliamentary war powers regarding the subsequent withdrawal of troops in the case of the Iraq war or in similar situations.

2. The “correlations” emerged in our study do not prove causal relationship. Therefore we hold it necessary to take a closer look at decision-making processes before and in the course of the Iraq war by means of “process tracing”. In doing so we should focus on parliaments with strong war powers. While we know that these states were not, or were only insignificantly, involved in the war, we cannot be sure whether or not parliaments have actually scaled down governments’ war plans and whether or not a restraint observed has to be attributed to parliamentary impact.

Future case studies might also address additional puzzles and questions. For example, it remains unclear whether, and how, “attitude” or “willingness” affect, neutralize, or even pervert the institutionalized powers of legislatures relating to security policy decision-making. Nor do we know exactly what role the respective political party systems or coalition governments play in regard to the democratic peace, how election cycles affect the exercise of parliamentary war powers in political decision-making, or to what degree path dependencies and specific constitutional features (for example neutrality provisions) support or impede the functioning of the parliamentary peace. The British case raises the question whether parliaments actually widen, rather than limit, the scope of governmental action by serving as providers of political legitimacy. The German case is in need of further research because Germany is engaged militarily in numerous conflict regions in spite of a powerful parliament in terms of deployment decision-making. Finally, we also should ask how alliance commitments or progressing European integration affect parliamentary war powers. In the end many puzzling questions remain. They call for more research on the parliamentary peace.

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