

## In memoriam: Quincy Wright, 1890–1970 —a symposium

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He studied war in pursuit of peace.

In one sense, this memorial issue of *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* in commemoration of Quincy Wright began before his death. My graduate seminar surveying the theoretical literature of international relations suddenly came to life after several weeks in the doldrums when a student, Alan C. Lamborn, presented a critical review of Wright's *The Study of International Relations* (1955). His illuminating examination of field theory exemplified an often forgotten truth, namely that not all wisdom has come to man in the present decade with the latest intellectual and technological innovations. For these students, with two to three years of saturation and maturation in computer-based and statistically oriented research methods, the excitement of discovering Wright and of tracing his pioneering efforts back to the nineteen-thirties was comparable to a major archeological "dig." But unlike a "dig," the man was still alive. Moreover, in today's vocabulary he was both alive and "relevant." Not only was he a pioneer in methods but he was concerned with problems and, more particularly, the ultimate problem: war and peace. We had hardly

completed discussion of this project when I learned of Quincy's death on October 17, 1970.

My immediate response was to initiate a commemorative symposium. It seemed natural to place this in *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* as the publication most specifically addressed to Quincy Wright's major concern and one which he himself had launched with the lead article in the first issue (Wright, 1957). Moreover, as an associate editor and intermittent contributor, his influence on the *Journal* was considerable.

A *magnum opus* or a *Festschrift* is not attempted here. Both needs are being met with more than two dozen of the most renowned names in international political science in a volume long under way by Lepawsky, Buehrig, and Lasswell (1971). Nor did I want a simple eulogy, inevitable as would be the inclusion of such sentiments in any commemorative writing. My notions were mixed but modest. I wanted to provide both a critical perspective and a fresh understanding of Quincy Wright as a gentleman and scholar, as the founding father of contemporary international relations study, as the foremost pioneer in "peace research," and, last but not least, as

perhaps the most inspiring teacher of world politics during the most depressing decades of world-wide and local wars in modern times.

Calling potential contributors in the immediate aftermath of Quincy's death elicited an amazing multiplication of suggestions and leads from person to person for contacts and viewpoints to be solicited. Had these conversations been taped for publication they would have been the most vivid testimony possible to the many facets of his associations and their unbounded affection and admiration for his personal as well as his professional life. My own limitations should be acknowledged. I cannot claim to be a student or an intimate of Quincy Wright. Although we became acquainted when I taught as a beginning instructor at Northwestern in 1951-53, this was not enough for me to know the most obvious choices for commemorative articles or the fullest extent of his own interests to be probed. To those many persons who may properly feel slighted at not having been asked and for various aspects of his life that have been overlooked, I apologize. Fortunately we are including in this issue a partial bibliography of his writings which were most relevant to this journal's perspective, compensating somewhat for the latter deficiency, and the former is certain to be remedied with the forthcoming *Festschrift* volume.

In all fairness to the contributors, it should be noted that they had only six weeks in which to complete their effort, including the Christmas holidays. This constraint assured us of producing a commemorative issue within a respectable interval after Wright's passing, while recognizing it would truncate some articles and eliminate others altogether. Obviously more persons were asked than could accept under these circumstances. Another shortcoming is the somewhat brief handling of Quincy's prodigious work in international law. Learning that the *American Journal of International Law* was simultaneously undertaking a parallel effort, we

deferred to that journal as the more appropriate locale for extended treatment of this subject.

As a final *caveat*, let me say that these articles can not hope either to cover Quincy's full life work or to exhaust his accomplishments. His full bibliography of books, articles, reviews, and public speeches exceeds fifty single-spaced typewritten pages. Moreover, he was an active university teacher for more than fifty years, beginning at Harvard and ending at the University of Virginia, training students at a wide range of schools in between. After his "second retirement," he taught at the University of Michigan Law School and in the department of political science. Already seventy-eight, he evoked glowing praise from students and colleagues for the same breadth of scholarship, facility of expression, depth of analysis, and interest and compassion in others that he had shown over four decades. Thus any person who wishes to plumb the length and breadth of Quincy Wright's work has a long and exciting enterprise for which this memorial issue can merely serve as an initial stimulus.

On the positive side, my appreciation and gratitude to those who could respond is, I know, shared not only by the readers of this journal but also by Quincy's widow, Louise, and his son, Christopher. Two outstanding persons in their own right, their activities and interests in international affairs are nonetheless so intimately bound with those of Quincy as to be mutually interdependent. I would also like to express my appreciation for the generous help and advice they both rendered in the planning of this issue, despite its rude intrusion on their more immediate personal concerns.

Our contributions vary in length and intimacy. The personal profile is sketched by William T. R. Fox who places Quincy Wright's work in the context of his family and early life. Further reminiscences from William B. Ballis, Robert Angell, Inis L. Claude, Jr.,

and Percy Corbett enlarge this perspective. Abdul M. Abbass links his teacher's interests with the tough, practical realities of war and peace in Indochina and the Middle East. Kenneth W. Thompson moves to the wider context of Quincy's heritage for international relations studies, while Robert C. North approaches this problem through the many-faceted prism of *A Study of War*. Harold Jacobson reminds us of Quincy's earlier pioneer study of mandates and its contribution to international organization studies. Frank Klingberg shows the stamp of Quincy's model on his theoretical interests while Raymond Tanter and James Rosenau team in a critical exegesis of Quincy's own theories. J. David Singer links the past with the future in pointing to the path opened up by Quincy Wright and where it suggests we go from here. Finally, Clinton F. Fink and Christopher Wright present a statistical and graphic overview of Quincy's career, together with the selected bibliography mentioned earlier.

One article is virtually a reprint of Karl Deutsch's introduction to the second edition of *A Study of War*. Written in 1964, it expressed with such pith and quiet passion Quincy's role and relationship to the field as to merit reproduction with only minor editing. Equally important, it urged that Wright be considered for a Nobel Peace Prize. By 1970 this idea had been embraced by fifteen preeminent American scholars, formally organized into a nominating committee with Karl Deutsch and Carl J. Friedrich as co-chairmen. Excerpts from their letter of nomination in support of Quincy's qualifications, together with the list of sponsors, speak eloquently of his unique role in "peace research":

Dr. August Schou  
General Secretary  
Nobel Peace Prize Committee  
Norwegian Nobel Institute

Dear Dr. Schou:

I am writing you as the chairman of the committee now being formed in order to nominate Profes-

sor Quincy Wright for the Nobel Prize for Peace in 1970. During the last 30 years, Professor Quincy Wright has done more than any other scholar to promote the cause of peace by means of fundamental research in political science, international law, and the social sciences. More than any other living scholar, he may be considered the founder of systematic research for peace. The Peace Research Institutes now developing in many countries represent later stages in a trend to the start of which Wright made a decisive contribution.

Quincy Wright's most important scholarly contribution is his monumental work, *A Study of War*, first published in 1942, and re-published (revised and with a new chapter) in 1965 by The University of Chicago Press. This book represents the most serious and sustained research effort undertaken thus far, to bring together the knowledge of social scientists, historians, and students of politics on the causes of war, and on possible ways to abolish war as a social institution.

Other works by Quincy Wright, continuing his efforts in the same direction, include his book *The Study of International Relations* (1955), the symposium *The World Community* (1948), and his editing, jointly with C. C. Lienau, of the major papers of the late pioneer of peace research, Lewis F. Richardson, in two volumes, *Arms and Insecurity* (1960) and *Statistics of Deadly Quarrels* (1960); Wright played a key role in bringing these papers to the attention of contemporary social scientists.

In the area of peace research, Quincy Wright wrote one of the most important of the early essays on organized peace research (Wright, 1954) for which the Oslo Institute awarded him first prize in its world-wide contest. Quincy Wright's most recent publication, with significant proposals for peace research is *On Predicting International Relations: The Year 2000* (1969-70).

In his field of political science, Quincy Wright has been a leader of international stature. For many years Professor at the University of Chicago, he was President of the American Association of University Professors, 1944-46, of the American Political Science Association, 1949-50; of the International Political Science Association, 1950-51; and of the American Society of International Law, 1955-56.

Throughout his life, Quincy Wright has taken the side of peace in the political decisions of his time, even where this implied disagreement with the current foreign policies of his country. In the 1920's he opposed the prevailing American policies of political isolation and favored United States membership in the League of Nations. In the 1930's he opposed Nazi and Japanese aggression, supported the Span-

ish Republic, and favored United States collaboration for collective security against fascism. Unlike some of his colleagues, Quincy Wright was an anti-fascist before it became fashionable to be one. During and after World War II, he supported the United Nations, and opposed the growing rigidity of the foreign policies of the United States and the Soviet Union during the years of the "cold war." He was from the outset an active opponent of the United States war in Vietnam, challenging its supposed legal basis as well as its asserted morality, justice, or political rationality. On all these issues, whether his views prevailed or not, his public stand and personal commitment have carried weight with many. Like Ralph Bunche and Martin Luther King, Quincy Wright has helped to change the mood of his epoch and country. It was Quincy Wright's quiet work, together with that of many other scholars, which helped prepare the intellectual and moral climate in which opposition to the war in Vietnam—and to any war like it—is gradually becoming the majority view of the American people.

Our nomination of Quincy Wright also raises a question of principle. To be abolished, war, like cancer, must be understood in its causes. Thus far, Nobel Prizes for Peace have been given to statesmen and to public figures, appealing to public opinion in ways promoting peace, often in connection with specific political issues. It is good and right that such efforts were honored by your prize. But should not the cognitive side—the creation of knowledge relevant to the fostering of peace—also be honored from time to time by your Peace Prize?

In combating illness, the Nobel Prize for Medicine rewards the creation of new knowledge and the making of new discoveries, far above any concern for their application. The promoting of peace, the will and skill to apply whatever useful knowledge we have is certainly important, but is the discovery and creation of such relevant knowledge not equally important?

Your committee could exercise leadership and give a positive answer to these questions by awarding the Nobel Prize for Peace to Quincy Wright, who has contributed both to the knowledge for peace and to the willingness of many students and readers to act on this knowledge.

In so doing, you would honor not only an outstanding individual but all those who are trying to serve peace through working in the social sciences.

Yours respectfully,

Karl W. Deutsch, President  
American Political Science Association

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Although the nomination failed, at least one member of the committee has pressed for a posthumous award. J. D. Singer, in a letter dated October 22, 1970, to *The New York Times*, noted, "Whereas many scholars and statesmen have *speculated* about the causes of war, he set out on a systematic search for the hard *evidence*. . . . More than any other human being before him, he saw the need and developed the basic intellectual strategy by which we might move from the lamenting of war to its understanding and possible control" (italics in original).

One might challenge the nomination of an academician whose tangible accomplishments appear to be primarily books and articles for a peace award in a world torn by war and literally threatened with ultimate extinction. But surely pioneering in constructive

effort at analysis and prescription for peace justifies recognition, just as the Nobel award to Dr. Martin Luther King recognized singular leadership achievement in coping with the agonies of racism, although he did not end racism in America. Similarly, in terms of absolute achievement Wright failed to bring peace to the world. No war against which he inveighed ended because of his efforts nor can it be confidently claimed that any wars were averted because of the insights illuminated through his work and that of his students. Indeed, World War II seemed a grotesque mockery of the years of research represented by *A Study of War* (1942). Moreover the "postwar" (*sic!*) quarter of a century has witnessed the devastation of entire countries (North Korea, South Vietnam) in addition to repeated outbreaks of less intensive and extensive conflicts, all meticulously catalogued in Appendix C of his second edition.

Neither Wright nor his critics were blind to the ambivalence between his hard-headed empiricism and his recurring optimism which bordered at times on utopianism. Especially before 1960, there seemed to be a continuing contradiction between his data-based analyses of past wars and his expectant prescriptions for future peace. His remarkable self-critical appraisal, "Commentary on War Since 1942," concludes his second edition of *A Study of War* with a suggestion of flagging optimism in the face of recurring wars and near-wars in the age of intercontinental missiles and thermonuclear weapons. Thus he remarked, "Conditions of peace can never be taken for granted. They will have to be continually reconstructed and maintained by human efforts. *Peace is artificial; war is natural*" (1965, p. 1518). I have italicized the implicitly pessimistic portion for which I believe there is no precise precedent in his earlier volume, at least in such an unqualified statement. No more pregnant point for terminating his provocatively titled Appendix D, "Inventions,

Explosions, and Explorations, 1945-64," might be conceived than his stark concluding entry: "10-16-64 Communist China explodes an atomic device" (p. 1551).

Indeed, one suspects that Wright could have been among the most eloquent sceptics in argument against awarding the Nobel prize for his work and its effect on world peace. He was no institutional, legal, or moral ostrich who stuck his head in academic sand in order to avoid harsh reality. Scattered throughout the text, footnotes, and appendices of *A Study of War* is explicit, occasionally sardonic and caustic, acknowledgment of the practical obstacles to organizing for peace. Speaking of the alleged utility nuclear weapons are supposed to provide as a "balance of terror" against general war, Wright remarked, "This theory attributes a degree of rationality, restraint, and efficiency to governments which can hardly be anticipated" (p. 1524 *n*). Yet this did not deter him from arguing that a "rational solution of the problem of war lies in an effective international law of peaceful co-existence and an effective international organization to maintain the law and to provide for both collective security and for human progress" (p. 1530-31). In short, to acknowledge reality was *not* to despair of correcting it through appeal to man's reason.

Continuing his exercise in self-criticism, Quincy Wright's review of the original *A Study of War* highlighted its "uncertainty" on one question central to his "rational solution" posited above—namely, how gradual or rapid must be the transition to "effective international law [and] organization." By 1964 he felt more certain, admitting, "The policies needed for the more radical changes toward a federation of nations maintained by centralized military power or a harmonious community of peoples maintained by a universal spirit of brotherhood are so divergent from the present policies of government that they seem impracticable at the present time" (p. 1531). As for

trends in the role of international organization and law in curbing war, he contrasted his earlier identification of "hostilities which were recognized as legal states of war or . . . which led to important legal or political results" as irrelevant "to hostilities since 1945. There have been no legal states of war since that date (p. 1544)." Again, his earlier table had indicated "the article of the League of Nations Covenant under which disputes were brought. [However] in many disputes before the United Nations, it is not clear which article is invoked, and no indication on this matter is made in the present table" (p. 1552). One suspects he delighted in detailing the perversity with which man struggled to discipline himself while indulging in the economic and emotional gratifications of weapons and war.

But still he persisted. He knew that in 1964 total expenditures of the world for general international organizations amounted to "17 cents per capita of the world's population as compared with \$40 per capita for national defense" (p. 1558). Yet he could also calculate that these expenditures for international organization had "multiplied five thousand fold since they began with the establishment of the Universal Postal Union in 1870 . . . continuous by geometric progression, the expenditures multiplying by ten every twenty-five years." Quincy Wright was not one placidly to predict the probability of peace. Indeed, his scholarly pessimism on predicting war emerged strongly in his second edition. "The probability that a pair of states will be involved in war is now less a function of the aspects of distance—strategic, psychological, or other—between the two states than a function of the situation of the world as a whole. This situation is so unstable that it defies prediction" (p. 1533). I would disagree, particularly on the rationale offered, but the point is that he did not stop here. He insisted on combining scholarship, logic, and appeal to

man's better instincts in eschewing simple determinism and in attempting to fashion paths to peace.

One final quotation appropriately spans the two sides in Quincy Wright's approach, explicitly acknowledged in his own words: "Only by recognizing the mathematical truism that the whole is greater than its parts and the religious suggestion that he who would save himself must lose himself can states realize both security and independence in the atomic age" (p. 1534). After five decades of prodigious pioneering in international relations, Quincy Wright has left us. However, his heritage of mathematical methods and religious dedication to peace research is the most fitting monument one could devise as a model for all who labor in his shadow.

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