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Review article

TOTAL WAR

Abstract:

Total war continues to be a topic of debate and research in modern conflicts. Technological inventions and the interconnectedness of the global community amplify the effect of the consequences of warfare. We reexamine the totality of modern armed conflicts through an analysis of the achievement and level of destruction that pose new ethical, legal and political challenges. The author answers the questions about: the deep psychological and political implications that extend beyond the battlefield that transmit in depth and encompass the entire (global) society. We define total war through the criteria of: intentional targeting of civilians, civilian resources and infrastructure and the firm control of the population's behavior through the installation of fear, hatred and trauma; through the political attempt through the war to gain and consolidate support among the people, entailing debates about civil liberties and erosion of democratic principles; the treatment of prisoners and the mass executions of the adversary as well as our own insufficiently motivated forces and ideologically unfit population; and a possible cataclysmic scenario of the use of atomic weapons. The analysis emphasizes the complex roles of traditionally non-combatant categories and new technologies and doctrines and their impact on the totality of warfare. The position remains that total war is an ideal concept, but also the unanswered question if there are atypicalities of that concept, which is the deviation from the benchmark for how limited the war and its constituent elements are instead of total. The research concludes that total war changes cultures, geopolitical views and international relations, and that its legacy changes the course of history for generations to come.

Keywords: war total, limited, resources, societies.

Introduction

The phrase total war predates the nuclear age. Its roots date back to the Middle Ages with the way of warfare of the ancient Mongols. Confirmed theoretical considerations in the direction of total war are noted in the 18th century. In the 19th century theorists recognized total war as a special type of warfare. The famous Prussian military theorist and philosopher of war, Carl von Clausewitz (1780-1831), in his capital work "On War", gives the basic definition of war according to which, war is an act of force and there is no logical limit to its application. Enemy fighting forces must be destroyed: ie. they must be brought to such a state that they can no longer carry on the fight...the country must be occupied...it cannot be considered that it (the war) is over until the will of the enemy is broken (Clausewitz 1976, 90) . Of all possible aims in war, the destruction of the forces of armed enemies always looms supreme (Clausewitz 1976, 99). In his announcement of his intention to revise "On War" he points out two leading ideas: first, that there are two kinds of war: total war and limited war, and second, that war is the continuation of politics by other means. In fact, by introducing the concept of absolute war, he overcame the contradiction between war defined as unlimited (total) violence and war defined as a continuation of politics.

The fear of total war seen in the American Civil War was confirmed by the horrors of World War I and World War II in which the dead were estimated at 20 million and 55 million respectively. Although some modern wars have approached these conflicts in terms of intensity, the longevity of the idea of total war is often used to explain/compare to the terminology of "limited war", such as the Korean War (1950-1953) where the use of nuclear weapons were considered as an option, the Vietnam War (1945-1975 against the expeditionary forces of Japan, France and the United States) where the United States included the use of air power to the extent that Vietnam became the most bombed country in history, the Falkland Islands War (1982) or in The Gulf War (1991). In the long history of warfare, it is natural that some wars will be less limited than others. As a criterion of a state's ability to wage total war in modern times, air power was considered the most useful yardstick, because only a few states were able to meet the challenge of combining technical achievements with mass production in this area. But that is only one of the criteria for total/unlimited war.

The term is defined as a war that is unrestricted in terms of the weapons used, the territory or combatants involved, or the objectives set, especially those in which the law on war is rejected. Activities that have characterized total war since the 19th century include: strategic bombing, blockades and sieges of settlements, scorched earth policies, attacks on commerce and merchant shipping, and unrestricted submarine warfare, collective punishment and retaliation against enemy populations, industrial warfare, the use of civilians and prisoners of war for forced labor for military operations, and the non-acceptance of prisoners. The reasons, objectives of the enemies, their culture and history of

previous cooperation, beliefs and values of the time, prospects of victory, the possibility of external intervention and many other factors influence the ways and means of waging total war. So, total war is a relative and not an absolute concept. Total war in the absolute sense would mean fighting without any restrictions as advocated by Ludendorff in the 1920s.

Given the limitations of total war, the question arises why the idea of total war occupies an important place in the collective psyche of analysts and practitioners?! A recent study suggests that several tendencies drove the “totality” of warfare between 1861 and 1945. (Chickering, 2005). These tendencies were most intense from 1914 to 1945. First, the technological and industrial advances of the period allowed the methods of warfare to become more destructive, allowing for rapid and consistent killing of people. Second, governments were able to mobilize state resources (both through state institutions and private or semi-private actors) and spend them on warfare. Third, the range of military objectives has expanded. According to Imlay (2007, 554), limited goals, such as gaining territories or economic progress, were replaced by the determination to achieve victory, not only as the defeat of the enemy forces but also the replacement of their political regime, which implies a period of post-war occupation. Fourth, the war increased its global domain as more and more states of the world were involved in conflicts originating in European politics.

1. The totality of the First World War

Although the phrase total war was coined by German General Erich Ludendorff in 1918, the fear of such a development has dominated the West since the 1800s. The experiences of the European wars of 1864, 1866, and 1870 encouraged the great powers to believe that any future war between the great powers would be short and decisive. By the start of World War I, the political, economic, social, and doctrinal trends of the 19th century had coalesced into a formula for total destruction. Doctrinally, the armies were convinced of the power of Napoleonic warfare, in which massive armies tend to encircle and destroy the main body of the enemy's army, and then disband the rest of it with political demands. Mass conscription and nationalism enabled mass armies that were transported and supplied with the help of railroads and industrialized economies for mass production. Quick maneuver combined with the killing power of advanced weapons promised a quick victory for the army that could mobilize and transport the fastest and most efficiently. After the experience of Germany's defeat in World War I, former Commander-in-Chief Erich Ludendorff was unconvinced by wartime advocates who argued that certain technologies such as tanks, aviation, or poison gas would bring a quick victory in a future war. he also believed that not even a strategic doctrine of surprise attack could achieve this.

Until the beginning of 1914, unlike the previous Napoleonic era, the battlefield occupied a large area occupied by armies with millions of soldiers¹. The trench positioning was such that there were no flanks that could be bypassed and there was no way to surround the enemy who by this time numbered more than three million soldiers on each side. The speed of movement of armies was determined by the speed of railways and airplanes. At that time, warfare was only partially mechanized. The German army marched in Belgium and France with less than 7,000 motor vehicles, but with 726,000 horses and 150,000 railway wagons (Addington 1994, 104).

Armed with powerful defensive weapons and long-range artillery, trenched and wire-fortified and protected, and well and timely equipped, the defender's army could not be quickly dispersed in Napoleonic fashion. The defense forces had a disproportionate advantage in strength and space, creating a situation in which a stand-off position was simply unavoidable. Once such a stand-off position is created, it is no longer a war of rapid offensives, but a war of attrition of human and economic resources (Quester 1977, 114). Thus, the enemy had to be destroyed with brutal direct attacks that produced a large number of victims, while technological progress was seen as a solution to get out of the stand-off position on the battlefield².

The war also showed how warfare was moving into a new dimension with aviation gaining importance. Aircrafts were used early in the war for reconnaissance and were easily destroyed by the defending forces, but as the war progressed the aircraft were increasingly used for tactical fire and bombing support of ground forces and eventually for bombing deeper behind the front line. A new strategy was adopted in which the bombing of civilians as well as military targets was seen as an essential element of total war on the grounds that causing civilian casualties and damaging enemy civilian infrastructure served both as propaganda and as a means of diverting resources from the front.

Basically the idea of total war refers to the notions of escalation and participation. The fear of escalation comes from the concern that once warfare begins, it is difficult to control. This means that war will intensify in terms of violence (both geographically and in terms of casualties) and in the intensity of warfare, erasing the limits of war. Participation refers to the increased participation of citizens in warfare as soldiers who are willing to fight and die for the homeland, but also as workers willing to help (sacrifice for) the war by working at home (in the homeland). Thus, World War I warfare became more comprehensive in its scale and application. Because it was difficult to penetrate the main battlefield of the war, the geographical scope of the war expanded as the combatants sought to impose additional pressure on the enemy by opening new battlefields of op-

¹ By the winter of 1914, the trenches on the Western Front stretched from Switzerland to the English Channel.

² Germany first used poison gas (asphyxiant mustard gas) at Ypres in 1915, and the British introduced tanks in the final stages of the Battle of the Somme in 1916.

eration, such as Italy, the Southern Balkans, and the Middle East. The expansion of the geographical scope of the war was accompanied by a greater likelihood of targeting civilians who did not participate in the battle. During this period this was seen in the use of unrestricted naval warfare by sinking merchant ships without giving the crew the opportunity to evacuate in lifeboats, as Germany sought to prevent Britain and France from obtaining supplies by sea. And vice versa as the Royal Navy later blockaded German ports preventing Germany from importing food and hastening the German capitulation by creating a food crisis in Germany.

In the growing uncivilized character of warfare, governments often did not act with deliberate cruelty, but were carried along by social, industrial, and scientific currents. In general, war mostly involves manpower, material and moral resources of the state. Any target whose destruction promised to weaken the enemy's war effort became a legitimate target. The idea of illegitimate goals and intentions through the criteria of fairness and proportionality has been seen as irrelevant to the conduct of modern warfare. The whole process of warfare during this period was actively followed by state propaganda in order to direct the overall attention to the war on the home front by shaping public opinion to change the approach to support the war effort and it was openly accepted that the entire economy should be adapt to prevail at the front.

1. The totality of the Second World War

For Ludendorff, the key to war between industrialized nations was to carry it to its brutal logical end with the social, economic, and technological trends that had characterized the warfare of the previous century. That is why the war should be characterized by the full mobilization of all the military, economic and human resources of the state. The enemy's civilian population should be deliberately attacked, while one's own civilians will suffer from similar attacks by the enemy. Therefore, the mobilization of the population should include ideological features to sustain the war effort and the political dictatorship to focus all state energy on winning the war. Such elements of total warfare that became prominent in the First World War could again be clearly seen in the Second World War. Once again the states mobilized their military, economic and human resources to the maximum. Recruitment during this period was changed so that, in addition to men, the female population was also included. Women filled the place of men in agriculture and industry, but also served in large numbers in the military ranks in non-combat roles, but in the Soviet military they also served as combatants. Industries and merchant navies were placed under state control and subordinated to military labor. The consumption of food and oil was also rationed. Germany not only relied on its own population and conscripts but also used foreign prisoners of war. This indicates quality and quantity fighting, the key element of total war. Emphasis is placed, firstly, on the material factor such as the number of techniques – more/better resources

will obviously beat fewer/worse resources- and secondly, on the relation between war and society. The resource base of the Allies was truly impressive, with the US alone spending \$82 billion in 1944, compared to the lack of economic mobilization of Germany, Japan, and Italy (Black 2006, 121). The War and Society approach places the explanation of victory on the "home front" and in particular the ability to mobilize the factors of production, especially the workers to produce weapons in time of war. From this perspective the Allies won because their more integrated and peaceful societies enabled them to take part in total mobilization; while the conservative approaches of the Nazis and the Japanese – for example to the employment of women and conquered people³ – contributed to their loss. The social totality of the war was also increased by the systematic use of censorship and propaganda, the promotion of nationalism and the demonization of the enemy, the restriction and imprisonment of groups suspected of having dubious allies such as ideological and political opponents or citizens of foreign origin.

At the strategic and tactical level, World War II saw the application of military doctrines designed to restore the maneuver and offensive capacity that had been inapplicable in World War I. Germany saw dramatic success with its offensive "blitzkrieg" tactics from 1939 to 1941, a success that relied on the centralized operational planning of the tactical potential in combined forces and joint (air-ground) operations that together made maneuver warfare possible. The initial success of the blitzkrieg was due in part to the subordinate doctrines of the opposing British and French armies⁴, but this concept did not lead to a final German victory due to Hitler's subsequent declaration of war on the Soviet Union and the United States of America so that Germany was doomed to a war with little chance. against the ultimate decisive economic power and consumption, especially on the critical Eastern Front. In 1944, the Red Army showed itself to be adapted to what was initially Germany's advantage, that is, the development of good cooperation between armored vehicles, artillery and infantry and by making the latter two particularly mobile, the successful execution of encirclements. The Germans were outnumbered, especially in artillery and aircraft, though not so much as to be obviously decisive. They suffered

³ Nazi racism and the oppression of the Japanese made it difficult for Germany and Japan to extract the profits that might have been expected from their great conquests, and even led to a degree of popular resistance, especially in Eastern Europe and China that diluted Axis military resources.

⁴ The Allies outnumbered the Germans in the number of tanks in the First World War and moreover their tanks were of better quality, but the weakness in French doctrine was that the tank was seen only as a support weapon for the infantry, while the Germans now (1939- 1941) concentrate tanks in armored divisions that carry out rapid mechanized attacks. Germany further integrated the rest of its military power in support of ground attacks. Thus, the German Luftwaffe was designed to provide tactical support to the army, a feature that would take away the advantage in the strategic bombing campaign against Britain in 1940-1941, but which would make it extremely effective in the blitzkrieg campaigns of 1939 to 1941.

more from the consequences of the “no retreat” orders, which effectively took away their mobility. However, Germany’s strategic problem of fighting on a dual front against the American and Soviet superpowers along with mass and industrial power proved to be extremely decisive. Technological advances before and during the war were crucial in a way that had not been seen before⁵.

In the Second World War, in contrast to the First World War, the conflict of ideologies and the demand of the Allies for unconditional surrender as opposed to fighting the war to the very end on both the European and the Pacific battlefields was much more pronounced. The terrible casualties and losses of the war made it simply impossible to achieve more limited military objectives. Hence, “the goals to be achieved expanded to meet the costs incurred” (Weltman 1995, 135).

Unlike the First World War where the bombing of civilians was a secondary tactic in support of the ground fight, in the Second World War it became one of the primary military strategies. This points to a key feature of total war, which is the blurred distinction between the civilian and military spheres. Ordinary citizens get involved in fueling the war only to later become the target of large scale and mass violence. For example, in the Second World War when great atrocities were committed by the Japanese army on Chinese civilians, or on the Eastern Front in the fight between the Germans and the Soviets where civilians died en masse and were killed, as well as in the case of the atomic bombs dropped on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki on August 6 and 9, 1945 to force the Japanese government to end further resistance in the Pacific. In the last example, actually the need to save the lives of American soldiers⁶, that is to make the war less expensive for one side, will initiate the use of atomic weapons and the indiscriminate mass killing of Japanese civilians. Heavy Japanese and American losses on Iwo Jima, Okinawa, and Luzon early in 1945 suggested that an Allied invasion of a Japan suicidal determined to keep fighting would be quite costly. The Japanese Home Army was poorly trained and equipped and lacked mobility and air support, but defensively it would have had the capacity to inflict high casualties⁷, especially since it was not clear how to obtain unconditional surrender (as another characteristic of total war) which was

⁵ So, for example, radar helped the RAF win the Battle of Britain in 1940, and nuclear weapons played a major role in Japan’s unconditional surrender. German technological advances, such as the Messerschmitt 262 fighter plane, the V-1 cruise missile, and the V-2 ballistic missile, became operational too late to affect the outcome of the war.

⁶ The goal of then US President Harry Truman was to save as many American lives as possible, while being guided by human feelings for the women and children of Japan.

⁷ As early as April 1945, General Douglas MacArthur pointed out that his troops had not yet engaged the Japanese properly and that when this happened they (his troops) would suffer heavy losses.

actually the goal of the Allies⁸. The use of atomic bombs was the key element in weighing against the need to wage a particularly heavy series of invasions and exploitation campaigns on Japanese home soil. Compared to later developments in nuclear warfare technology, the small stockpile of bomber-launched atomic bombs that the United States possessed in 1945 were of low ability, but still sufficient for the result. The destruction was such that this looked like total war, and such was the logic of subsequent planning for nuclear war, but then in 1945, atomic bombs were practically a particularly destructive product of industrial warfare, used as a tool of limited war to achieve the goal of total war through unconditional surrender without resorting to fighting to the very end. Atomic bombs as limited warfare may seem paradoxical today, but in that year it was possible. In part, this is a product of the one-sided nature of the abilities of the Allies and the Axis. Both the Germans and the Japanese were also interested in developing an atomic bomb, but neither made progress comparable to the Americans. If they possessed atomic bombs, the attitudes of the governments of Japan and Germany indicate that they would have used them. This points to the possibility of all-out war in the form of a nuclear exchange, although most likely the availability levels and delivery systems of the bombs would not be strategic or operational, but still enough to inflict fear and affect morale.

Apart from atomic weapons, the temptation to attack civilians in World War II was aided by general advances in military technology, which enabled the strategic bombing of Dresden, Coventry and Osaka during the war. As a result, World War II became the first conflict since the European Thirty Years' War in which the number of civilian casualties exceeded the number of military casualties (Imlay 2007, 556). Opponents' cities and populations were deliberately attacked in order to break the enemy's will to resist by destroying its economy and massacring its population. Destroying the enemy's production capacity will undermine the ability of his forces to operate effectively. This logic culminated in the systematic surface bombing of civilians, but strategic bombing did not always achieve the dramatic effects that were intended. Casualties between the attacking aircrews were extremely high, forcing both the Germans and the British to carry out their attacks at night making precision bombing impossible. The Allies had to win the battle in the air first before the invasion of Europe that would follow a few months later. At this stage of the war, the bombing of enemy fighter production facilities, which required high precision strikes, became a matter of great urgency. In the final months of the war on European soil, as German air defenses were increasingly suppressed, the Allies shifted their attacks to key production facilities, such as oil refineries. These attacks proved more

⁸ At the Potsdam Conference, Allied leaders issued the Potsdam Declaration on July 26, demanding the unconditional surrender and occupation of Japan, the loss of Japanese overseas possessions, and the establishment of democracy in the country. The threatening alternative was "swift and utter destruction," but on July 27 the Japanese government decided to ignore the declaration.

effective in undermining Germany's military capacity than previous attacks on its full economic capacity.

World War II was global in its scale, and naval power was more important to the outcome than it had been in World War I, because as island nations, both Britain and Japan were more dependent on resources imported by sea. In the Battle of the Atlantic, Germany attempted to stifle the Anglo-American war effort by destroying merchant ships bringing supplies, weapons, and troops across the Atlantic and into the Mediterranean. In 1942 1,664 merchant ships worth 8 million tons were sunk by German U-boats, while the latter's losses were less than those newly commissioned – 58 lost by the second half of December, against 121 newly completed – and for the first time, there were enough U-boats to organize complex patrol lines along convoy routes in the North Atlantic. Accumulated experience increased the effectiveness of the Allies in convoy escort and air support, resulting in better floating formations and anti-submarine tactics. Although ultimately unsuccessful, the German submarine campaign was close to success. The level of US shipbuilding capacity, and the subsequent ability to produce more than just replace losses, was crucial for the US to secure and later use naval superiority in the Pacific with a naval and submarine campaign to break the Japanese war effort. In the summer of 1945. Germany was successful in the early part of the war because its land-based air power compensated for its naval weakness. British naval losses from German air raids in the Cretan campaign were befitting a "blitzkrieg". Similar losses were a feature early in the Pacific War when Britain lost two battleships to Japanese bombers in early 1942. Only after the Allied fleets were reinforced with effective anti-aircraft weapons and secure frequency transmission protection were the navies able to resume their offensive role.

The early stages of the Second World War showed that both on land and at sea, having achieved military superiority, or at least denying it to the enemy, is a prerequisite for a successful military operation. Air power alone could not guarantee victory, but its absence certainly guaranteed defeat. Resources are clearly part of the equation here, as was the ability to drop supplies by parachute into British defense zones on the India-Burma border in 1944, and the advance of Australian forces in New Guinea that same year.

Unlike World War I, in World War II amphibious operations were essential to the outcome of the war on both the European and Pacific battlefields. Amphibious landings took place in North Africa, Sicily, Italy, and France, which allowed the Allies to gain strategic initiatives, and the American island campaigns in the Pacific strategically outplayed Japanese forces in the region, ultimately moving American forces close enough to Japan to launch conventional and nuclear attacks on the Japanese home islands. In both anti-submarine and amphibious offensive campaigns, the role of the aircraft carrier was crucial. In World War II, there were five major aircraft carrier battles in the Pacific War, as well as twenty-two other naval battles.

In contrast to the Pacific, where the dominance of the sea was decisive for the ultimate Allied victory, on European soil, Soviet military offensives were decisive, such as the famous battle for Stalingrad in the winter of 1942/1943, which actually represents a turning point in the Second World War⁹. In this operation the Soviets will benefit mainly from their accumulation of forces as a result of the rebuilding and development of the ammunition and tank industry. The timely evacuation of Soviet industrial plants just before the German advance was the greatest achievement that reflected the control exercised by the Soviet government. The Soviet advantage in this operation was also increased by the success of their planning and preparations and due to the poor quality of the decisions of the German Central Command¹⁰, including the positioning of the key flank positions of the weak Romanian forces.

World War II would also usher in another innovation in warfare in the form of wide-range paradrops. These operations were essential to the German conquest of Crete (Operation Mercury) in 1941, the Allied invasion of Normandy as well as the Allied crossing of the Rhine in 1945. The failure of the major airborne Arnhem operation in 1994 (Operation Market Garden) and the heavy German losses in the capture of Crete will be a demonstration of the limitations of such forces and a lesson that no further such large-scale offensives should be conducted with such forces¹¹.

In a world war, the way a military alliance was applied also determined (un)success. Germany and Japan were unable to form a military partnership or provide mutual economic assistance to match that of the Allies. German plans for war with the US had little prospect of Japanese help and preferred to focus on the possibility of using naval power to exploit Vichy regime bases in North Africa or the Canary Islands, or even long-range bombers, multi-stage rockets, space bombers or submarine-launched missiles. Such plans included attacks on New York and Washington. The ineffectiveness of German and Japanese attempts at naval cooperation, which included the delivery of German technology, showed that although such cooperation was possible, it did not achieve much. In fact, the loss of Japanese offensive capability as a result of the sinking of several of their aircraft carriers at Midway made the idea of joint action with the Germans infeasible. At the level of great powers, there is also a significant gap in hostilities. Contrary to Hitler's hopes, Japan did not attack the Soviet Un-

⁹ Named Operation Uranus – the encirclement of the German Sixth Army in and around Stalingrad in November 1942.

¹⁰ The final decisions were taken personally by Hitler, who did not allow flexibility in the defense against the “Red Savage Horde”.

¹¹ The limitations related to the inability of the airborne forces, which were mainly lightly armed, to hold off the armored mechanized forces on their own until additional anti-armor combat forces arrived. These negative parachute experiences contributed to parachute offensives not being regular activities in the period after the Second World War until their return again in the Anglo-French war against Egypt in 1956.

ion after Hitler declared war on the United States following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, and the two powers did not go to war until 1945. It reduced the problem of both sides being stretched on too many fronts¹². But there was also a problem with Germany's alliance system in Europe. Italy would not enter the war until June 1940, when Mussolini sensed the possibility of a German victory in the Battle of France. Additionally, the extent to which Italy's resources were subsequently mobilized was insufficient to sustain the Italian Empire, let alone support Mussolini's expansionist ambitions against Greece, Egypt, and the British colonies bordering Italian East Africa: Sudan, British Somalia, and Kenya. In Italy conscription was avoided, supplies limited, the economy was not militarized and the totality of Italian fascism was often overestimated. In general, Italy drained the German military system as did many Eastern European allies. The Allied invasion of Italy in 1943 it did not lead to a fight to the very end as one would expect from an total war, but to the rapid ouster of Mussolini and the establishment of a government seeking peace with the Allies. Although the Italian Fascists would continue the fight to the end, with large numbers of fighters fighting the Resistance in a low-level counter-insurgency conflict, the defense of central and northern Italy against the Allies would still rely on the Germans¹³.

Overall, the actions of both sides in World War II were undertaken in response to political and military pressures that the conflict created or exacerbated. But the nature of the response was also influenced by the national characteristics of the belligerents and by basic approaches to warfare rooted in past experiences. By the end of the war, all major powers agreed that combined arms systems, or joint warfare, was the key to success in modern industrial warfare.

2. The totality of war in some of the modern armed conflicts - a different dimension of total war

There are five basic characteristics of total war: total aims, total methods, total mobilization, total control, and total change. In practice, war in modern times has marked a sure approach to greater totality, without ever reaching it. The totality of warfare can be calculated by many factors, including the type of weapons involved and/or used, the strategy and tactics used, the state resources involved, the extent to which every human and material resource of the adversary can be seen as legitimate aim and the extent to which social and cultural pressures can oppose unrestricted warfare. In total wars, governments have as many demands on their citizens as they are ruthless on their enemies. Citizens of the state are obliged to serve in the armed forces and to participate in the

¹² Unlike Japan and the Soviet Union, Germany could not really do anything about China, so Hitler did not declare war on China.

¹³ Similarly, military, political and economic support from Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia and Croatia proved to be of limited value to Germany and quickly evaporated when the war went badly.

production of war material, civil and political rights are limited, the economy is subordinated to military labor, and any weapon, no matter how indiscriminate in its action, is horribly used with all viable or psychological means against the armed forces and industrial capacity contributing to the enemy's war effort. Such intentions have culminated in Cold War plans to inflict genocidal "guaranteed destruction" by retaliatory nuclear attack. Beginning with the US policy of inflicting massive nuclear retaliation, large-scale war planning during the Cold War included the arithmetic (through game theory) of nuclear use from the moment of the Soviet acquisition of nuclear weapons in 1949, and even more so, from the subsequent US and Soviet intercontinental missile deployments, to a mutual nuclear "exchange", in which millions of people would instantly die, creating a situation in which, in the words attributed to then-Soviet Prime Minister Nikita Sergeevich Khrushchev, "the living will they envy the dead." Apart from the planned use of nuclear weapons to destroy the civilian population, they were also integrated into the tactical and operational plans of action against enemy armed forces. As a result, any war between NATO and the Soviet Union would be very different from the fight between Germany and the Soviet Union (set apart by the number of civilian casualties) in World War II (Black 2006, 158).

As a consequence, Cold War warfare capabilities at a level that would certainly justify the definition of total war – as any nuclear conflict, although likely to be brief, would be intense and widespread and would involve the deliberate targeting of cities with the intent of achieving high civilian casualties – did not lead to such a conflict. That indeterminacy, especially the failure to move from capabilities and doctrine to conflict, is in some ways also characteristic of the so-called age of total war¹⁴. In this age the superpowers warred with each other through their participation in proxy wars, the massing and development of armies, and diplomatic stalemates. In the case of proxy wars, each of the superpowers supported its allies in conflicts with powers allied to the other superpower, such as the Vietnam War and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

In the period of modern armed conflicts, the following are characterized as total wars: Arab-Israeli War 194-1949. (Naor, 2008), Iran-Iraq War 1980-1988. (Farzanegan, 2021), and Russia's invasion of Ukraine 2022-present (Danylyuk V, 2022). In addition to these, there are other trends of unrestricted warfare in modern history, but, in general, total war remains an ideal type, because in addition to a series of available circumstances that are unattainable in reality, in practice, limitations are always imposed during warfare. In practice, wars almost always fall short of totality in one or more dimensions such as geograph-

¹⁴ Taking the example of World War II, the apparently inevitable ideological and/or geopolitical inclination toward war—most obviously, the German attack on the Soviet Union in 1941, and on the other hand the Japanese attack on the United States—was not matched by a Japanese attack on the Soviet Union, nor with a previous Soviet attack on Germany, although both were considered, and the Soviet Union did not attack Japan until 1945.

ical scope, weapons used, mobilization of national resources and population, strategizing, etc. For example, although they could have been used, some available armaments were not used, as in the case of the United States in the decision not to use nuclear weapons in the Korean War. Why some weaponry is not used is a matter of debate. According to some analysts, the limited use of poison gas in World War II reflects the power of normative constraints on belligerents. Others argue that it was due to a pragmatic concern for the unpredictable effects of the gas.¹⁵ Another way of interpreting why war is not total is because no belligerent can use all its resources in warfare. Even in World War II, belligerents mobilized between $\frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{2}{3}$ of the labor force and spent $\frac{3}{4}$ of the national output on warfare (Overy 2005, 154). Thus, a more useful approach in the study of total war is to analyze the varying degrees of intensity of various indicators of warfare, such as the effort and resources expended in the gains or losses of war (Imlay 2005, 556-567).

In that sense, if we use total war only as a term to explain or compare with limited war, then the question arises, what is the line between limited war and total war?! One of the ways to elaborate such a vague border is through the number of human lives lost. But does this parameter also apply to class warfare?! This assumed logic of class warfare has been seen in the West through the internal politics of the Soviet Union. Government-tolerated terror and starvation killed at least 11 million people in Stalin's peacetime (non-war) years of 1924-1941 and 1945-1952. In this case, the secret police were the army of this war, a key prop of a government that routinely used violence. Apart from those who were killed, a large number were imprisoned in labor camps which in some ways were essentially concentration camps, for the condition of the prisoners in this civil war was undoubtedly worse than that of the captured soldiers in many of the conflicts. Similarly, the Chinese Communist State was violent from the beginning. The Law on Agrarian Reform of 1950 it was employed at the cost of the lives of 200,000 to 2,000,000 (according to various estimates) landowners and another 800,000 in other campaigns of the early 1950s against counter-revolutionaries, capitalists and corrupt cadres (Black 2006, 156).¹⁶ A decade later, Pol Pot's attempts to transform Cambodian society between 1976 and 1979, also in the wake of a civil war, led to the mass killing of those who did not fit his mold. Such recurring episodes (though not on this level) are a reminder that the treatment of civilians, viewed from the perspective of total war, is not a separate problem for proponents of revolutionary warfare, nor a problem confined to formal periods of war. In other words, for the revolutionary state, as for

¹⁵ As a result of meteorological influences even the own forces were affected by the effects of the gas.

¹⁶ In the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (1966-1969), capitalist and bourgeois values were rejected and under the "Sixteen Points" violent effort adopted in 1966 education, literature, art and everything else that was not in accordance with the socialist economic structure were transformed.

someone who commits terror, all time is a period of internal and international conflict and everyone is a fighter. The tradition of revolutionary warfare may not appear to be extinct from the perspective of left-wing radicalism, but this is only true if that warfare is defined in traditional Marxist or Maoist terms, as socially conscious proletarian mass violence. But Mao-Tse-Tung's engagement based on popular guerrilla warfare has become less relevant in an increasingly urbanized world.

The treatment of civilians is the key criterion for characterizing the age of total war. It is the merit of the ideology in the conflicts from 1918 to 1945 and culminated in the genocide of the Holocaust. The Holocaust is a distinctive and horrific combination of racial nationalism and anti-Semitism of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, with the ideological divide from 1918 to 1945 and the industrialized killing that characterized the development of economic capabilities and military thought and practice. However, the ethnic killings of the 1990s, especially but not only in Rwanda, where an estimated 800,000 Tutsi were killed in 1994, as well as the civil war in Sudan in the 2000s, indicate that large numbers of civilians can be killed without any connection to the ideological divisions of the early 20th century. Moreover, the rate and nature of killing in Rwanda indicate that an industrial process is not a necessary condition for mass killing.¹⁷ This is also a form of total war that is much more modern than World War II, but it is not industrial.

With a vision of the global domain of war in the future, Asia is instructive with the possibility of a conflict between the US and China, which would indicate that there are limits to the definitions of all total wars by 1945. Although China and Japan put a lot of effort into their mutual conflicts between 1937 and 1945, and much damage was done to the Chinese population, neither was in a position to command a force that today both China and the United States could deploy. Add to this the instability that may arise from North Korea's nuclear ambitions and Russia's current threats to use operational and tactical nuclear missiles due to the violation of its "red lines" by some of the Allies¹⁸, then there is no room for calm, but a reminder that total war probably lies in the future.

3. Instead of conclusion – Atypicality of the concept of total war

In total war, victory and defeat act as absolute, measured according to the obvious criteria such as the defeat and capitulation of armies and the conquest of territories, which should be complete and unconditional (using terms equal to completeness). Thus, in the conventional sense, war is a matter of how best to achieve these goals, to achieve the effect, that is, the full result. But such

¹⁷ Many of those massacred were killed with machetes and farming tools such as hoes.

¹⁸ Reaction of the Russian diplomacy to the statements of France and Britain from 05.05.2024. on sending troops to Ukraine and helping in the destruction of strategic infrastructure on the soil of Russia.

an emphasis leads to neglecting the atypicality of the endings of those cases that were considered the most typical examples of total war. The modern perception of the conflicts is largely shaped by the experiences of the Second World War, by the insistence of the Allies on unconditional surrender of the Axis and by the cataclysmic fate later in 1945, through the fall of Berlin and the use of atomic weapons against Japan. Such an emphasis leads to the neglect of how atypical the endings of wars can be, in this case with Japan, which in 1945 surrendered without an invasion of its main islands and with Japan still in control of much more territory than it had occupied before the attack on Western Allies in 1941, including Malaya, Java and Sumatra. Many wars ended in less than complete victory, especially after 1945, such as the Korean, India-Pakistan, Arab-Israeli, and Iraq-Iranian wars. Even Israel's victory in the Six Day War in 1967, generally seen as a smooth triumph, ended with Israel not controlling Cairo, Damascus or Amman. This war ended without even an end in terms of the Arab surrender that Israel demanded, mainly because the Israeli army's reliance on reservists made the country unable to afford a sustained high level of confrontation. Moreover, in addition to the refusal of Egypt and Syria to accept Israel's gains and negotiate peace, the terrorist response of the Palestine Liberation Organization-PLO intensified even more.

Whatever the result in practice, however, the understanding of total war in the terms of a campaign, that is, an operational approach, is too narrow. Instead, it is much more appropriate to understand war as a cultural process that focuses on the imposition of will. Although the idea of total war is a dominant feature in the literature analyzing warfare, it is a confusing and useless concept. Since, in reality, war will never be completely total, arguing about how close it can come to that ideal is pointless. Simply put, war is either total or it isn't.

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