

Old wars, new wars

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Outline of lecture

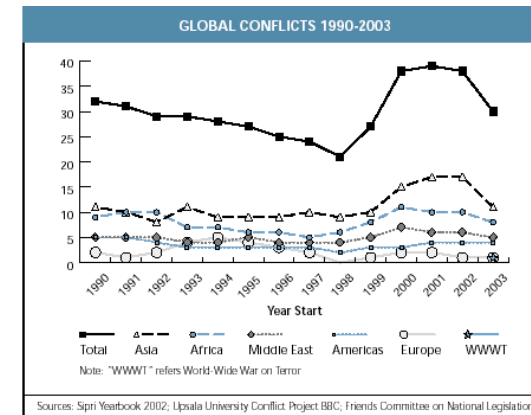
- Introduction: “new wars” all the rage
- Popular candidates for “new wars”
- How to think about wars: (1) Mary Kaldor’s historical sociology of modes of war
- Kaldor’s model of new wars and implications
- How to think about wars: (2) persisting and deteriorating structure of global nuclear system
- Living with old wars and new wars

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Core contemporary forms of security threat from organized violence

- Consequences of break-down of law, organised crime, and terror
- Transnational non-state networks aiming at destabilization of governments
- Wars of always incipient genocide aimed at the reconstitution of the nation-state (internal make-up and borders)
- Wars of imperial intervention
- The re-constituted *imaginary total war* of global scale involving potential nuclear exterminist means and uncontrollable consequences.

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Source: Center for Defense Information, *Defense Monitor*, Volume XXXII, Number 1 • January/February 2003

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News about “new wars” - the good, the bad, and the opportunistic

- Clearly something new
- 911, Bali, Kosovo, Rwanda, Chechenya, Palestine, Sudan, Sri Lanka
- The political and academic uses of novelty
- President Bush
- The terrorism industry
- John Keegan’s slip

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Some popular candidates for “new modes of war”

- multinational humanitarian intervention
- low intensity conflict
- asymmetrical warfare
- RMA
- transnational mega-terrorism
- privatised war
- netwar

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Multinational humanitarian intervention

- models:
- UN-auspiced and/or US-auspiced
 - East Timor
 - Cambodia
 - Gulf War
 - Iraq
 - Kosovo
- all post-Cold War
- but new?

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Long tradition of humanitarian interventions

- Rudyard Kipling:
 - “the white man’s burden” = “the savage wars of peace”
 - “a court-house stands...where the raw blood flowed.”
- France’s “mission civilisatrice”
- questions of legality and honesty of motive equally valid in C.21

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Some c.19th humanitarian interventions

France, Britain	Greece	1827
France, Britain	Kingdom of the Two Sicilies	1856
France, Britain, Russia, Austria, Prussia	Syria	1860
European powers	Crete	1866
	Bosnia	1875
	Macedonia	1877
United States	Cuba	1898 ⁹

The White Man's Burden, 1899

Take up the White Man's burden
 Send forth the best ye breed
 Go bind your sons to exile
 To serve your captives' need;
 To wait in heavy harness,
 On fluttered folk and wild
 Your new-caught, sullen peoples,
 Half-devil and half-child.

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Low intensity conflict

- US Army Field Manual 100-20:
 - ... a political-military confrontation between contending states or groups below conventional war and above the routine, peaceful competition among states. It frequently involves protracted struggles of competing principles and ideologies. Low-intensity conflict ranges from subversion to the use of the armed forces. It is waged by a combination of means, employing political, economic, informational, and military instruments.”
- General Sir Frank Kitson. *Low-intensity Operations: Subversion, Insurgency and Peacekeeping*. Faber and Faber, 1971

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Asymmetrical warfare

- The term "asymmetric conflict" first appeared in Andrew Mack, "The Concept of Power and Its Uses in Explaining Asymmetric Conflict" (London: Richardson Institute for Conflict and Peace Research, 1974).
- Andrew Mack, "Why Big Nations Lose Small Wars: The Politics of Asymmetric Conflict," *World Politics*, 27, 2 (January 1975), pp. 175-200.

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Asymmetrical warfare

- Meaning? Meanings?
 - Strategy
 - Technology
 - will
- Analytical useful?
- US to face mainly asymmetrical warfare for the near future:
 - relative size
 - rationality

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RMA: Revolution in Military Affairs

- digital technologies applied to war
- systems thinking
- implications of technology for military organisation, especially combat:
- Net-centric warfare
- problems;
 - possibilities of CRMA (Counter-revolution in military affairs)
 - shortening lag-times in technology-acquisition cycles

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Transnational mega-terrorism

- different from older forms of terror
 - objectives largely political rather than strategic
 - taking advantage of structure of target societies:
 - open
 - highly interdependent socio-technical systems (Ulrich beck, *Risk Society*).
 - media-saturated
- structure
 - transnational
 - non-state
 - Network
- motives? - rational and usually limited

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Privatised war

- mercenaries in history
- Private armies
- private security forces
- contractors
- military as sub-contractors (eg TNI-AD for Exxon and Freeport)
- *The Criminalisation of the State*

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Netwar

- not equivalent to “net-centric warfare”
- stresses the concept of networks as a central new form of social organisation
- benign and malignant versions
- Not just terror networks: criminals, revolutionaries, non-violent anti-globalists, religious
- leaderless, sprawling, non-hierarchies.
- new doctrines, technologies and structures
- see John Arquilla and David F. Ronfeldt, **The Advent of Netwar, RAND Corporation, 1996,**

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How to think about wars:

- but how should we think about war?
- see Colin Gray on the eternal truth of Clausewitz on the **constant nature** of war and the **contingent and changing character** of war
- Gray and similar have a lot to say, but to be useful Clausewitz has to be seen in a set of wider contexts historical, sociological and moral.

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(1) Mary Kaldor’s historical sociology of modes of war

- Early work on “modes of warfare”
 - development of Karl von Clausewitz, *On War* (1832)
 - historical evolution of war in western societies
 - alignments of types of war, types of state, relationship to economy
 - against Marxism: autonomous logic of the mode of warfare.

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Crucial formative period for classic western concept of armies coincides and interacts with:

- the emergence of the sovereign state-system
- internal pacification of states
- monopolization of control over violence by the state
- surveillance of population to establish tax base
- social contract between dominant and subordinate groups underpinning legitimate state authority
- International law, including laws of war
- and most importantly, “the great divide”:

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The “great divide”: distinctions underpinning modern war

- public vs private; state and non-state activity
- internal vs external; inside and outside sovereign territory
- distinction between private economic activity and the state under capitalism, and the removal of force from economic life
- civil vs military; domestic non-violent social intercourse and external violent struggle
- legitimate bearer of arms, vs criminal, cf non-combatant

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Key variables in the historical evolution of classical and modern war

- Type of polity
- Goals of war
- Type of army
- Military technique
- War economy

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The evolution of old wars (Kaldor)

	<i>17th and 18th centuries</i>	<i>19th century</i>	<i>Early 20th century</i>	<i>Late 20th century</i>
<i>Type of polity</i>	absolutist state	nation-state	coalitions of states	blocs
<i>Goals of war</i>	reasons of state; dynastic conflict; consolidation of borders	national conflict	national and ideological conflict	ideological conflict
<i>Type of army</i>	mercenary /professional	professional/ conscription	mass armies	scientific-military elite
<i>Military technique</i>	use of firearms, defensive manoeuvres, sieges	railways and telegraph, rapid mobilization	massive firepower; tanks and aircraft	nuclear weapons
<i>War economy</i>	regularization of taxation and borrowing	expansion of administration & bureaucracy	mobilization economy	military-industrial complex

The shifts from modern war to total war

- shift from the potential within Clausewitzian war
- C20 mobilization of national energies
 - mass production, mass politics, mass communications
 - weaponry and social organization bring C20 war close to Clausewitz’s “absolute war”
- necessarily genocidal character of total war
- erosion of rationality of war for states
- bloc formation - erosion of the “external”
- 50 years of the Cold War as “**the imaginary war**”

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Kaldor's model of new wars

- What are the core forms of violence we face today, and how are they to be understood in terms of the kinds of variables that Kaldor used to make sense of the emergence of the modern mode of war and its mutation to the total mode of war?

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Core contemporary forms of security threat from organized violence

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Other pressing challenges to the traditional security agenda

- transnational crime
- transnational terror networks
- genocidal intra-national wars
- traumatised polities in the aftermath of "wars on terror"

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Some common elements of these "new wars"

1. Blurring of distinctions between war, crime, terror, and violations of human right
 - genocides
 - ethnic cleansing
 - organised rape as a tool of politics
 - war as a direct way of political mobilising
 - terror as spectacle

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2. Cultural, moral and policy erosion of the Great Divide between “inside” the nation-state (characterised by peaceful order and social contract) and “outside” (characterised by possibility of war and anarchy)

- terror and war inside
- outside as refuge and resource for war-makers
- borders often irrelevant (not always just “civil wars”)

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- Privatisation of violence
 - from above - deliberate creation and use of terror forces
 - from below - emergence of gangstas
- Criminalisation of the state
 - quasi-states
 - direct appropriation of state resources
 - state functions to support criminal actions

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3. Accelerated by globalisation

- economic relations
 - migration, transnational financing, collapse of states from pressure of international organisations
- culture (media imaging, rapid communications),
- policy (spill-over effects, demands for dealing with common humanity)

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4. Reversal of war and state-building model

- historical model of positive feedback between wars and state-building in European state-system
- conditions of globalisation and constant external intervention makes politically-controlled national economic development difficult
- leading to further impetus to weakening of the state, and vulnerability to those who would attack the state’s monopoly of legitimate violence.

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5. The flood of small arms

- globalised armed markets, legal and otherwise
- most deaths caused by small arms and light weapons
 - no global regulation
- Easy access to such weapons lead to a shift in military advantage against well-armed and trained troops
 - little training required
 - highly destructive in quantity
 - cheap and easily obtained

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6. Terrorism as “new war”

- continues to the challenge to conceptualisation of modern war
- Kaldor has engaged with each successive expression of new wars, refining the the approach, re-thinking, including the shift to mega-terrorism:
 - religious/ethnic
 - terror as political mobilisation
 - transnational and networked
- clearly an expression of globalisation

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How to think about wars: (2) persisting and deteriorating structure of global nuclear system

- but this is not all there is to global conflict today.
- What does Kaldor leave out?

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The nuclear omission

- For all of its virtues and achievements, Kaldor’s search for the novelty of the present situation masks the element of continuity.
- Ignores a great deal at the global level and regions other than Europe
- What is left from the older system that she depicted so well as “the imaginary war”?
- In fact the nuclear system is at least as threatening as any time during the Cold War except the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1961.

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Centrality of the nuclear threat masked by new wars and the miasma of “WMD”

- the “displacement” effects of “WMD”
- the problem is still nuclear: all of it.
- whose nukes are the problem?
- how does the structure of the nuclear system relate to Kaldor’s model of modes of war?

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How much autonomy is there in the mode of war?

- Kaldor’s anti-marxist stress on the autonomy of the mode of war (see key variables)
- clearly the new wars and terrorism reflect aspects of the re-organisation of global society under way, but not yet complete
- next step: autonomous characteristics and pressures from the remaining and developing global nuclear system

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- What does the global nuclear system look like?
- Is there anything new there?
- How are we to think about it?
- Cf the work of Paul Bracken and Peter Hayes.

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Nuclear shifts

- Incomplete wind-up of the Cold War duopoly and Soviet nuclear state
 - Scattering of knowledges and technologies
- Increasing pace of second- and third- tier proliferators
- US nuclear weapons development
- US shifts in treaty and doctrine and “speakability”
- Absence of public opinion restraints

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Hayes: Nuclear weapons now exist in a global system constituted of:

- Great nuclear and conventional powers [United States and its allies; Russia, China]
- Non-nuclear states locked in conflicts [past: North Korea]
- States engaged in traditional nuclear and conventional high-risk standoffs based on deterrence by retaliatory threat with constant danger of preemption; [Israel; India and Pakistan] and
- States with no need for nuclear defence [New Zealand; Mexico]

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Four nuclear trends (Hayes)

- Cold War three way stand-off now cooled to a background variable
- Regional conflicts producing small nuclear powers seeking deterrence against neighbours or interventions by nuclear powers
- Transnational groups seeking nuclear weapons
- RMA makes it easier for great powers to extend deterrence without nuclear mass destruction
- Separately relatively harmless; together increase complexity and decrease predictability (see Bracken for case)

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Paul Bracken on the Second Nuclear Age

- defining feature:
 - Proliferation of nuclear weapons outside the dynamic of the Cold War
- far more uncertain for all players
- completely unknown situation

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Six characteristics

1. An n-player game
2. Nuclear weapons and state making
3. Historical timing
4. Asian roots
5. The cost of defence
6. Second mover advantages

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An n-player game

- Cold War was a bilateral contest
 - Much thinking about the dynamics of that competition assumed two player game
 - Pathological strategic dynamics of n-player games
 - E.g. Martin Shubik's *truel*: a duel between three players:
 - Who shoots first? What is the cost of waiting?
 - No rational solution without an account of communication, trust and commitment

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- In case of international nuclear security, also no “rational” solution in extremely complex situations
 - Strategic stability, deterrence, bluffing and war avoidance all become problematic
- Result is extreme uncertainty

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Some further differences (Bracken)

- Centrality of bomb-making to state-making and national identity
 - Problem of dismantling supportive institutions
- As late-comers they face resistance from the established nuclear powers
- Distance from the rational strategic cultures of the US and Europe that generated the first nuclear age.
 - Asymmetries and hierarchy of globalization

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- Higher marginal costs for new nuclear states, but achievable by marginalizing domestic forces
 - Implications for force structure and hence options in conflict
- Second movers have “call” options:
 - Some can have the capacity to build a nuclear weapon without exercising it immediately

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Persistence of the state of nuclear terror

- classic state in Cold War, reborn :
 - Terrorized misrecognition/*meconnaissance* of the nuclear facts of life
 - Simultaneously knowing dread coupled with an averting of the eyes that amounts to various forms of denial
 - Supported by social structures of media and education
 - Crucial to the maintenance of national security postures in democratic states.

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Living with old wars and new wars

- clearly, the Kaldor concern with new wars sits alongside the continuing and increasingly unstable nuclear security structure.
- terrorism and netwar immediate and lasting, but every reason to think that the threat of total war remains, albeit framed by new structures of globalisation.
- Need to address both sets: not *one or the other*, but *both/and*.

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