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# New World, New War: Understanding Global Jihad

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New World, New War:  
Understanding Global Jihad

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Political Science Honors Thesis  
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May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2009  
Macalester College

## **Abstract**

Scholars tend to explain contemporary conflicts by referring to ambiguously defined processes of globalization. Given this conceptual vacuum, I build a theoretical model that explains the transformation of war through a rigorous analysis of globalization from multiple temporal perspectives. This Braudelian model, which examines the warfighting paradigm, the social mode of warfare, and the historical structure of war, is then used to explain globalist radical Islam. My findings indicate that the emergence of global network societies has had a profound, transformative effect on jihadist violence and, more broadly, on the global mode of warfare.

## Acknowledgments

The completion of this paper has occupied much of my time and energy over the last year, but it would be dishonest of me to take all the credit for the final product. To put it in the most simple terms, I would not have completed this project without the guidance of mentors and support of friends.

First and foremost, I want to acknowledge my advisor, Andrew Latham, who in my second year of college got me interested in contemporary jihadist violence, then last summer introduced me to the fascinating world of war theory, and finally, over the last nine months, supervised the completion of this paper. It has been both an honor and a pleasure to work closely with Professor Latham over the last three years.

My interest in international politics was sparked by Wendy Weber during my first year at Macalester College, and in an appropriate culmination of my time here she served on the faculty panel for the defense of this paper. I have always appreciated Professor Weber's incredible academic insight and her sincere interest in her students, and I am grateful to have had the opportunity to work with her on this project.

David Blaney, the final member on my faculty panel, was a crucial factor in the eventual completion of this paper, providing inspiration when motivation waned and help when problems arose. Professor Blaney has done more for the honors program this year than I think he realizes, and I owe him a huge debt of gratitude.

I have to thank my fellow Political Science honors students, who reassured me when I doubted my ability to complete this paper and provided a necessary dose of humor and sanity along the way. Fond memories of our colloquium discussions, on topics as diverse as international tribunals, remittances, and Turkish Star Wars, will remain with me long after I have forgotten the central argument of this paper.

Finally, I want to thank my friends. Anne Johnson often had to bear the burden of honors induced moodiness and without her I would surely have lost my mind. My roommates had to deal with spontaneous rants related to globalization and war. Tommy Kim was always a critical listener while Jayant Gokhale and Hidemi Tanaka's willingness to share late night beer and food was vital. Hiroyuki Miyake assured me that an honors paper can, contrary to what I sometimes argued, be completed, and Sarah Van Etten's general optimism was a blessing. Jack Eisenberg, Talon Powers, Tommy Kim, and Johan Lorenzen took the time to listen to a mock defense and gave me invaluable feedback. Seeing all these faces at my defense, as well as those of Eleni Zimiles, Matt Seidholz, Andy Ver Steegh, Becca Sheff, Adrienne Christiansen, Toni Shrantz, Munadir Ahmed, Adam van der Sluis, Paul Vasey, and Liza Bear, gave me much needed strength during my presentation and subsequent "interrogation". Thank you all for everything.

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## ONE

### Introduction

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*“War is fought by human beings”*

- Carl Von Clausewitz

A YouTube video titled “Did You Know?” tries to describe the scale and scope of the information technology revolution that began in the final decades of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Created in November 2008 and viewed more than a million times by April 2009, the video is essentially a well-designed presentation of some interesting facts about our contemporary moment. One fact in particular, I think, especially speaks to the much-hyped transition from the Modern or Industrial to the diversely labeled postmodern, globalized, informational, networked world. The video tells us that the radio, first marketed in the 1890s, took thirty eight years to reach an audience of 50 million. The TV achieved the same feat in 13 years and the internet in just four. The iPod, unveiled in 2001, took three years to reach 50 million consumers while Facebook took only two. The video leaves us with the question “What does all this mean?”

This paper is not going to try and answer that question – finding the meaning of globalization is best left to those more philosophically inclined – but it does take seriously the notion that the end of the second millennium marks a time of significant change in social, political, and economic structures. Though magnitude of these changes is much debated, the idea that globalization has had a profound effect on humanity has caught on and been popularized by politicians, artists, news personalities, and scholars.

Globalization theory has been used to explain changes in financial systems, trade relations, international governance institutions, and more. This paper is concerned with the argument that globalization has transformed the institution of war, an idea that sparked a scholarly trend in the late 1990s and continued through the first years of this century. Strangely, these theorists of New War have thus far seemed reluctant to apply their analysis to understand what is perhaps the foremost topic on the current global security agenda – contemporary jihadist violence.

The outpouring of literature in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks (though in all fairness there were notable contributions before 2001 as well) has attempted to explain globalist radical Islam in a variety of ways, and indeed several scholars have placed globalization in a central position when explaining this form of extremist violence. Yet none have offered a rigorous theoretical model for the transformation of violence through globalization and then applied such a model to understand contemporary jihad. This paper thus bridges two bodies of literature, the first focusing on the transformation of war and the second on globalist radical Islam.

The aim of this paper is not to provide a definitive word on either the transformation of war debate or on globalist jihad, but rather to spark a new line of inquiry that may lead to a better understanding of both topics. At present, New War remains under-theorized while globalist jihad remains well described though poorly understood. By first offering a rigorous theorization of the effects of globalization on war and then using this theoretical framework to understand *what* and *how* aspects of contemporary jihadist violence, I hope to make a contribution to scholarship in both fields. In addition, this paper is in some ways a test of globalization theory in general – if



it is true that social life on many different levels is being transformed, then war, understood as a socially embedded institution, must also be undergoing profound change.

My paper leans heavily toward the academic side of political science and I do not deal extensively with policy. As such, the emphasis is on understanding and explaining phenomenon, and not on prescribing solutions to political problems. Nonetheless, it is my firm belief that in order to design effective policy, it is necessary to first have an adequate grasp of the issues being addressed, and as such this paper may be of interest not only to more academically inclined scholars but also to students of international policy.

## **I. Methodology and Roadmap**

The format of my paper somewhat resembles what John Odell has called the disciplined interpretive case study, a method that “interprets or explains an event by applying a known theory to the new terrain” (2002, p. 67). My focus, unlike Odell’s greater concern with the case study, is evenly split between theorizing the transformation of war and understanding contemporary jihad. While the disciplined interpretive case study may spawn “new suggestions for improving the theory” (2002, p. 68), I begin with a theoretical contribution and then move on to my case. The reasons for this approach are fairly obvious – I do not believe current theories of New War are adequate. As I will discuss in the next chapter, work on the transformation of war through globalization tends to under-theorize globalization, ignore non-Western war, and ultimately describe rather than explain contemporary conflict. Given these known shortcomings in the New War literature, it makes little sense to first study a case and then discuss its theoretical repercussions.

In order to build a convincing theoretical framework, it is necessary to begin with a discussion of previous contributions to understanding war and globalization. Chapter two therefore reviews the extant literature on the topic, concluding that an appropriate theory of war transformation must theorize globalization, understand the idea of a segmented globality, and then conceptually isolate different temporal layers through which war can be analyzed. Chapter three then offers such a model, building on Manuel Castells' idea of network societies, Martin Shaw's understanding of segmented globality, and Andrew Latham's Braudelian model of understanding the transformation of war. Combining the work of these scholars, I argue that in order to fully understand the effects of globalization on war, it is necessary to *acknowledge a segmented globality, understand globalization as the rise of network societies, and analyze the warfighting paradigm, the social mode of warfare, and the historical structure of war*. As will be discussed in more detail later, these three units of analysis are analogous to Fernand Braudel's three temporal perspectives - l'histoire événementielle, conjunctural time, and the longue durée.

Chapter four then uses the theory summarized above to understand contemporary jihadist violence. More specifically, I analyze the warfighting paradigm and the social mode of warfare in globalist radical Islam, concluding that *the New War model, appropriately theorized, offers a convincing lens through which we may understand contemporary jihad*. The historical structure of war, while an important unit of analysis, is not utilized in the case study because its depth and scope are too broad. The theoretical chapter discusses the implications of globalization on the historical structure of war at a broader level, and that analysis too is heavily qualified as there is not

enough evidence to suggest that this deepest level of transformation has indeed taken place. The final chapter sums up the work and offers suggestions for future research.

## **II. Defining key concepts – War, globalization, and contemporary jihadist violence**

At this stage, it is important to establish some working definitions for key concepts explored in the paper. Before proceeding further, I feel compelled to restate Charles Tilly's advice on attempts to define large social processes, that "although definitions as such cannot be true or false, in social science useful definitions should point to detectable phenomena that exhibit some degree of causal coherence". (Tilly, 2004, p. 8) In later sections, this paper will further explore the ideas discussed below, but for now these definitions should suffice.

### **A. War**

Understanding war has been a central concern of political scientists since the birth of the discipline. Needless to say, theoretical approaches to the topic have varied over time, developing simultaneously with changes in both world structures and academic trends. Defining war, therefore, is not as easy or intuitive as it may initially seem. The first significant war theorist, Carl von Clausewitz, defined war as both "the continuation of politics by other means" and "nothing more than a duel" (as quoted in Bassford, 2008). Clausewitz's dialectic approach, identifying both the purely violent and the intricately political dimensions of war, is an appropriate starting point in defining war.

Clausewitz draws an important distinction between absolute war and real war. The former, and this is different from similar terms like “total” war, is a theoretical abstraction, an understanding of war as “nothing more than a duel”, or, to put it in the simplest terms, a violent conflict where each side attempts to destroy the other. Absolute war carries no historical, social or political attachments – there are no motives or motivations, no socioeconomic dynamics at play, and certainly no concern for power politics. Absolute war is nothing more than “a wrestling match on a larger scale”, and this is what Clausewitz considers to be the unbending, historically continuous *nature* of war (Bassford, 2008).

The *character* of war, on the other hand, is susceptible to change. This is where war is taken down from its absolute pedestal and discussed as “real war”. Now, war becomes embroiled in history, culture, and society, or, as Clausewitz put it, becomes “the continuation of politics by other means”. In Christopher Bassford’s words, “real war is constrained by the ever-present social and political context, by human nature, and by the restrictions imposed by time and space” (Bassford, 2008).

To understand and define war, we must keep both of these concepts in mind. At its essence, war is always organized political conflict. As such, war has existed since the beginning of human history. Clearly, however, war in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is different from its modern and pre-modern predecessors. Importantly, the character of violent conflict also varies across space. While the task of defining absolute war is relatively straightforward, Clausewitz does not provide us with a framework to examine real war, other than to say it is contextual in every sense, except that it is always violent. In this paper, I treat the *nature* of war as an ontological constant and focus instead on the varying *character* of

war. The project of redefining the nature of war is not mine, and instead I follow Colin Gray's advice that "war should not be approached in ways that would divorce it from its political, social, and cultural contexts" (Gray, 2005, p. 15).

Finally, it is important to define three distinct components of the character of war, as identified by Andrew Latham (2002, 2008, forthcoming). A more detailed discussion will follow in the theoretical framework offered in Chapter three, but at this point it is nonetheless beneficial to establish working definitions for these terms to avoid confusion. First, on the most basic level, is the warfighting paradigm, which deals with the "specific configuration of military technologies, doctrines, and organizational forms" (Latham, 2008, p. 120). This is shaped by both technological conditions and the will and power of human agents. Second, from a broader temporal lens, we can speak of the social mode of warfare. Adapting the work of Kaldor, Latham (2002) defines this as "the way in which a state-society complex organizes for and conducts war" (p. 240). The social mode of warfare thus deals with more than the actions on the battlefield, and includes the socio-economic dimensions of war. For example, a defining feature of contemporary war, as opposed to its previous incarnations, is the important relationship between international weapons markets and private war conducting units. Historically, wars tended to result in a shift toward a more autarkic economy (with trade inside colonial powers considered internal). This change in the economics of war is broader than that discussed in the warfighting paradigm. Finally, and now we enter the realm of the abstract, is the historical structure of war. Seen from the temporal perspective of the *longue durée*, the historical structure of war "is the politico-cultural institution of war itself...the deeply embedded cultural rules, discourses and practices that determine the locus of control of

organized violence, define the nature and purpose of war, and that ultimately set war apart from other forms of politics and violence” (Latham, 2002, p. 247). To put it in different, and perhaps simpler, words, the historical structure of war refers to the place occupied by the institution of war in any given social imagination.

## B. Globalization

Often used but rarely defined, the term “globalization” has become a hackneyed phrase in contemporary academic lexicon.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, few disagree that the contemporary period, identified as beginning with the end of the Cold War, has been one of increasing global interconnectedness. While I am persuaded by the argument that globalization as a historical process began long before the 20<sup>th</sup> century and discuss this point in more detail below, for the sake of convenience, I use the term to refer to the intensification of global communication, political, economic, and cultural networks beginning at some point in 1980s.<sup>2</sup> While there is a tendency to equate globalization with improvements in technology, especially those dealing with communication and finance, the term is better understood as a more sweeping phenomenon, characterized by the increasing pace of modern social life, what David Harvey calls “time-space compression” (Harvey, 1989) and the heightened importance of “rapidly developing and ever-densening networks of interconnections and interdependences” (Tomlinson, 1999, p. 2). Technology, to be sure, has been a major catalyst for globalization, yet to reduce the phenomenon to the realm of technology would be a gross oversimplification.

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<sup>1</sup> Rosenberg (2005) makes this point in especially strong terms

<sup>2</sup> While identifying specific dates and events that mark the beginning of the “era of globalization” is a worthy task being pursued by a number of scholars, it is too tangential to be focused on here.

Similarly, to treat globalization as a purely economic concept, characterized by the opening up of previously closed markets through free trade, the liberalization of financial systems, increasing privatization and other neoliberal economic acts, is also to consider only part of the whole. There is little doubt that the global economy is increasingly interconnected, interdependent and homogenizing in a capitalist direction. Furthermore, these economic trends have tremendous implications on local, regional, and global social life and thus need to be seriously considered. However, even though there are both overlaps and causal connections directed both ways, it is important to differentiate between the economic side of globalization and the broader social side, of which the economic is one dimension.

A further clarification is necessary here. As Amartya Sen (2002) notes, “globalization is often seen as global Westernization”, as the (sometimes forced) export of Western ideas and ideals and the obliteration of local cultures. This view is both historically and theoretically inaccurate. From a historical perspective, as Sen details, it is a tragic misconception to think of democracy, reason, even capitalism as hailing solely from the West. For a variety of political and historical reasons, perceptions of such concepts have tended to be treated as originating and then being exported from the West, and now, even though the first known republic was in Vaishali, India, and Muslim rulers in medieval times were far more pluralistic than their Christian counterparts, and the first modern scientists worked in Baghdad and Al Andalus, the concepts of “Democracy” and “Pluralism” and “Reason” are considered entirely Western. While I treat the term globalization to refer to the processes begun in 1989-90, I understand the phenomenon as

having truly global roots. In this paper, the term globalization does not inherently carry imperialistic or hegemonizing traits.

A final point on globalization completes this brief discussion of the concept. Deterritorialization, the weakening relationship between culture and place, is an important facet of globalization and holds special relevance to this paper. Like the broader trend of which it is a part, deterritorialization can be traced back through history and the many major human migrations, and thus requires further sharpening when being used in the contemporary context. In this paper, I follow Olivier Roy's lead and use the term to specifically refer to the "blurring of the borders between Islam and the West", to the extent that "Islam is less and less ascribed to a specific territory and civilizational area" (Roy, p. 18). A simple statistic highlights the extent to which Islam has been deterritorialized – it is estimated that up to one third of Muslims live in countries where they are a minority (Roy, p. 18).

### C. Contemporary jihadist violence

Following the attacks of 9/11, there was an explosion of literature on terrorism. More specifically, all forms of social scientists, from psychoanalysts<sup>3</sup> and economists<sup>4</sup> to sociologists<sup>5</sup>, political scientists<sup>6</sup>, and historians<sup>7</sup>, became obsessed with the idea of understanding "Islamic terrorism". Unfortunately, commentators on the subject

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<sup>3</sup> See for example Post's (2007) *The Mind of the Terrorist* and Sageman's (2008) *Leaderless Jihad*

<sup>4</sup> Napoleoni's (2005) *Terror Incorporated* is a good example

<sup>5</sup> For example Roy's (2006) *Globalized Islam*.

<sup>6</sup> Burgat's (2003) *Face to face with Political Islam* and Kepel's (2002) *Jihad: the trail of political Islam* are examples

<sup>7</sup> See for example Cook's (2005) *Understanding Jihad* and Nafziger and Walton's (2003) *Islam at War: A history*



immediately took to using such terminology, thus associating a religion practiced by more than a billion people with the actions of a tiny, non-representative minority. This minority, to be sure, was explicit about its belief that its actions were inspired by Islam, yet to use terms like Islamic terrorism, Islamo-fascism, and Islamic extremism, and thus imply a link between the religion and the barbaric violence carried out by a small minority of its practitioners, seems not only unwise and imprudent but also inaccurate. This terminology, nonetheless, has entered the vocabulary of commentators on the subject and appears unlikely to disappear anytime soon. Consequently, it is important to clearly define the terms used when discussing this form and source of violence.

In this paper, the focus of my study is the violent globalist manifestation of terrorism inspired by radical interpretations of Islam. To further clarify, groups that are composed of Muslims but have local political aims, such as those based in southern Thailand fighting for autonomy or some of Kashmir's separatist organizations<sup>8</sup>, are not considered.

A further qualification regarding an unavoidable bias of scope is important to acknowledge. The literature on contemporary jihadist violence is, not surprisingly, skewed toward understanding Al Qaeda, which is one of a number of groups make up the globalist jihadist movement. While serving as an umbrella organization for other groups and being the largest, most visible, and most influential of the globalist jihadist organizations, it would be inaccurate to treat Al Qaeda as a representative of all such actors. It is therefore important to acknowledge that my contribution to understanding contemporary jihadist violence, being entirely literature based, contains an unavoidable

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<sup>8</sup> I am aware that some of these have merged with more globalist groups, yet there remain a number of organizations that exist solely to create an independent or Pakistani Kashmir.

magnification of Al Qaeda's role. Where possible, I have attempted to diversify the literature by using multiple examples.

When discussing contemporary jihad, scholars have sometimes sought to find the ontological definition of the term. As a Political Scientist, I follow Roy's advice and stay away from seeking to interpret the "True" meaning of the term. Roy argues that what is more important than interpreting religious texts is examining interpretations that result in actions. As such, David Cook's historical analysis of the role of jihad in the history of Muslim peoples is an important work. Cook's work traces the evolution of the meaning of jihad through the history of Islam, acknowledging that there was never a universally accepted definition for the term. At present, the vast majority of Muslims interpret jihad as a peaceful inner struggle, what has been labeled the "greater jihad". In this paper, I deal exclusively with the violent, globalist understanding of jihad that projects itself onto not the individual or even the state but on mankind in general. This specific brand of radical jihadist thought can be directly traced to the placing of violent jihad as a pseudo-sixth pillar of Islam by Egyptian thinker Sayid Qutb.<sup>9</sup> Qutb's writings in the 1960s argued that the Muslim world had reverted to a pre-Islamic state of ignorance, *Jahilliya*. While using many modern examples and discussing the ills of democracy and Westernization, Qutb was also harsh on his predecessors, claiming that in the last few centuries the Muslim community had failed to embrace Islam and make the religion, which he contraposes with materialism, the purpose of existence (Khatib, 2006).

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<sup>9</sup> Cook (2005) considers Qutb the founder of contemporary radical Islam (p. 102). News outlets have also identified Qutb as the philosopher behind Al Qaeda, see for example Irwin (2001).

To reclaim their religion's original divine promise, Qutb advocated an increasingly violent adoption of jihad, beginning with "peaceful proclamation" and following a "logical progression...to warfare on a limited scale, to revenge for wrongs done to the Muslims, to the final stage of unlimited warfare" (Cook, 2005, p. 104). Thus for Qutbists, among whom is Al Qaeda's chief ideologue Ayman Al-Zawahiri, violent jihad is a fundamental attribute of a "true" Muslim.

## TWO

### Reviewing New War

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*The Western world has a real problem with the concept of war these days...military superiority is now highly concentrated; conflict is now highly dispersed.*

- Michael Clarke

In this review of the literature, I trace the evolution of New War theory. I begin by discussing the early contributions that identified changes in the character of war through globalization processes. These first attempts at theorizing late 20<sup>th</sup> century conflict were (rightly) criticized for being empirically imperfect and theoretically unclear, especially with regard to differentiating between the independent and dependent variable. I then move on to consider arguments that better theorize globalization and attempt to place war within the larger social transformations taking place. While useful, we are still left with a largely descriptive, rather than explanatory model. Finally, I look at works that offer a more adequate conceptualization of historical change, so that we may see the *transformation* of war, and explain the different ways in which globalization has changed the character of organized political conflict.

The idea that the institution of war was undergoing transformative change became popular at the turn of the century with the publishing of Mary Kaldor's *New and Old Wars* (first edition 1999). Kaldor argued that globalization had fundamentally transformed the nature and character of war. Since then, a number of scholars have both criticized the idea that war is being transformed and attempted to build on, or at least pursue offshoots of, Kaldor's original thesis. The focus of the literature has shifted from

understanding the *how* and *what* of contemporary war to identifying the (changing) place of war in contemporary world order and society. Ultimately, the detractors have served the important function of forcing the proponents of the larger New War framework to sharpen their arguments by better defining the parameters, addressing empirical errors, historicizing war, and adequately theorizing globalization. Gone are historically inaccurate arguments contending that intra- and trans-state conflicts are unprecedented or that contemporary conflict is bloodier than the modern wars of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>10</sup> Scholars have instead attempted to both further nuance the analysis of contemporary conflict as well as try and place it within the larger sociological context. To put it differently, the New War literature has developed from one that dealt exclusively with particular forms of violence to a broader and more empirically accurate analysis of the consequences of an increasingly globalizing world.

At present, however, there is no universally accepted theoretical framework to approach the transformation of war. Before proceeding to describe such a framework, it is useful to take a look back at how analyses of contemporary war have changed over the last decade. An important caveat must be pointed out at this juncture. Since the mid-1990s, there have been notable contributions to understanding the effects on war of changes in technology (the Revolution in Military Affairs), the seemingly increased prevalence of civil war in the post-Cold War era, and analyses of geographically specific conflicts. I do not directly look at these literatures and am more interested in macro-level approaches to understanding the interaction between war and globalization.

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<sup>10</sup> Booth (2001) and Newman (2004) were quick to point out these shortcomings

## **I. Kaldor, Münkler, Duffield: First attempts at theorizing globalized war**

International Relations (IR) literature in the aftermath of the Cold War was flooded with discussions of monumental changes. Nearly twenty years later, both the nature and extent of the “new” post-bipolar world remains ambiguous. Without the benefit of hindsight, the fall of the Berlin Wall was greeted with grand proclamations of world peace and prosperity, exemplified by Francis Fukuyama’s now cliché declaration that we were witnessing “Not just the end of the Cold War...but the end of history as such: that is, the end point of mankind’s ideological evolution and the universalization of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government” (Fukuyama, 1992, p. xi). Soon enough, though, it became clear that processes of “ideological evolution” were far from complete – violent conflict persisted in Somalia, Sri Lanka, Kashmir, and, perhaps most significantly for Western academicians, Yugoslavia. While some argued that these conflicts were not historically unprecedented,<sup>11</sup> an increasing number of IR scholars, led by Mary Kaldor, contested that the transformation of world order had resulted in (though the direction of causality is unclear) the transformation of war. The era of “Modern” or “Old War”, roughly defined as conflict between formally organized, hierarchically structured and functionally specialized *public* institutions of organized violence – that is, institutions acting on behalf of the state – was, according to Kaldor and others, coming to an end. More specifically, Kaldor maps out three constitutive elements of war that have transformed in the era of globalization:

1. Objectives: Whereas Old War was about defending or improving a state’s position

within the geopolitical sphere, New War is about the pursuit of power “on the basis of

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<sup>11</sup> Chojnacki (2006) and Newman (2004) make the argument that nothing about these wars is new – similar characteristics have existed throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

a particular identity – be it national, clan, religious or linguistic” (Kaldor, 2007, p. 6). To put it a little differently, identity politics replaces state interest as the primary motivator of organized political violence. This shift from state-focused to a more particularistic form of violence, Kaldor argues, is responsible for the seeming increase in forms of violence meant to “cleanse” populations, with genocide being the most extreme outcome.

2. Political Economy: The post-Cold War era, argues Kaldor, has seen the transformation of the Political Economy of war. In the Modern Era, which is to say the time between the end of the Second World War and the collapse of Communism, a breakout of War tended to see countries revert to an autarkic system of rule; the finance and production of war-making units would become almost completely nationalized. As Kaldor identifies, “the term ‘war economy’ usually refers to a system which is centralized, totalizing, and autarchic” (Kaldor, 2007, p. 95). Today’s war economy, on the other hand, is almost entirely the opposite. Belligerents now rely on the international economy for financial, military, and even logistical support. Weapons are more likely to be acquired through illicit international means, with few regions of the world involved in arms manufacturing of any sort. While state armies still exist, with few exceptions these too rely on globalized markets to acquire the means to conduct war. More specifically, the large cache of leftover weapons after the collapse of the Soviet Union, as well the industrial-economic complex that provided these, have turned to private hands. As a result, there is a privatization of

violence, as discussed below. The political economy of war in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is decentralized, privatized, and no longer bound by territorial borders.

3. Mode of warfare: Moving from the sphere of the political economy to a discussion of society itself, Kaldor once again discusses the importance of decentralization. While Modern War was fought between state militaries, the belligerents now are now just as likely to come from the private sphere, with local warlords, paramilitary groups, international terrorist organizations, foreign mercenaries, and peacekeepers becoming players of greater importance. The hierarchical structures that characterized Modern War no longer occupy a central role in the processes of organized political violence. The dispersion of the control of violence from the state to non-hierarchical, networked groups marks a significant shift from Old to New War. In addition, and once again parallels with the political economy of war are evident, belligerents in New Wars tend to disregard territorial state borders and are more concerned with particularistic identities, a reference to the focus on “identity politics” as opposed to state-based structures.

Kaldor’s work quickly became influential in the IR field, yet a number of critics contested the empirical validity and historical accuracy of her claims. Siniša Malešević (2008) nicely summarizes Kaldor’s shortcomings regarding the claimed unprecedented nature of contemporary conflict. Citing the work of Newman (2004) and Kalvyas (2001 and 2006) Malešević (2008) challenges the proliferation of New War and identifies previous conflicts where the defining characteristics of New Wars were apparent. Two



specific criticisms are worth further discussion. First, in response to the notion that wars are more likely to be about ethno/national rather than political interests and that conflict is increasingly decentralized, Melander, Oberg, and Hall (2006) as well as Sollenberg (2007) investigate the impact of wars on civilians. They find that the magnitude of violence (number of civilian deaths) has declined and the civilian-military death ratio has remained a constant 50/50. It must be pointed out though that data regarding war casualties are especially unreliable and Tokaca (2007, cited in Malešević 2008) found the Yugoslav Wars to have a 59:41 civilian: military death ratio. In the Rwandan genocide, the ratio was even more skewed toward the civilian side.

From a more theoretical perspective, Kaldor's tendency to contrapose her theory of New War opposite only Realist approaches to understanding international conflict greatly weakens her overall argument. At the risk of oversimplification, we can describe Realist explanation of war, and specifically war in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, by starting with the fundamental assumptions of the analytical framework. While the Realist tradition has within itself a number of micro-theories, my summation here follows from Kenneth Waltz' seminal *Man, the State, and War* (1959) and *Theory of International Politics* (1979). Waltz argues that instead of understanding state behavior as a product of either human nature or the nature of the state, it is more analytically appropriate to consider the nature of international politics. Waltz, like Realists before him, sees the sphere in which states interact as anarchical. In this anarchical system, states seek not power, as Morgenthau saw it, but security. War, then, is carried out in order to better secure the state in the order-less system. Seen as such, war is exclusively a public enterprise, carried out for state interest, by state armies, and against other states.

By conflating Old War with Realist inter-state war, Kaldor compromises her own argument. She argues that decentralized, non-state actors are an unprecedented component of war, yet historically oriented researchers like Newman (2004) and Kalvyas (2001) point out the role of decentralized guerrilla tactics in the Chinese communist revolution and the Vietnam War. There is little that defenders of Kaldor's original New War framework can respond with here, as decentralized warfare certainly existed in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, perhaps not in Realist understandings of war, but certainly in the practice of violent political conflict the world over. Kaldor's "Old War" model, biased towards international war, thus fails to address the existence of intra-state conflict in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Needless to say, not all violence is international, and Kaldor could have considered placing her New War analysis in the civil war or even sociological field of study. This is not to say that IR is not the right field for Kaldor, but rather that because she chose to enter this particular debate, her work is susceptible to criticism from different academic fields. Her steadfast desire to discuss New War in post-statist terms, and Old War in exclusively statist terms, weakens her overall argument.

A second and similar major criticism of Kaldor's work addresses her focus on the ethnic nature of conflict, once again referring to the idea that identity politics has resulted in identity-based violence. In an understanding of the international sphere where states are the fundamental units, it is difficult to fit in ethnic violence, yet this does not mean such violence is unprecedented. In summarizing Newman's work, Malešević points out the obvious ethnic dynamics of violence "registered in genocides of Herrerros, Native Americans, Armenians, or Jews in the Holocaust" (2008, p. 99). Again, Kaldor fundamentalists would struggle to defend the idea that there is an increased focus on

national identity in the post-Cold War era. Once more, it seems that Kaldor's tendency to juxtapose her theory against a Realist framework is compromising her argument's persuasive ability. More importantly though, this particular element of Kaldor's framework simply does not stand up to empirical scrutiny.

Despite these legitimate criticisms targeted at the New War framework, the IR field did not shy away from the idea that the institution of war was undergoing transformative change. The notion that the institution of warfare was being fundamentally transformed, at a level beyond the "how and where" of organized political violence, persisted into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. There are now few scholars (if any) that subscribe to Kaldor's thesis in its original terms. Instead, a broader, more macro-level, socio-historical approach to understanding war has taken hold.

For example, Herfried Münkler's *The New Wars* (2005) uses a comparative historical method to more specifically map the elements of war affected by globalization. He concludes, after comparing contemporary war with both modern (1900-1989) and pre-modern (1600-1900) conflict, that New War is defined by de-statization, autonomization, and asymmetry. Münkler argues that while previous conflicts led to a strengthening of state structures, contemporary war tends to result in state decay (de-statization). This is caused partially through the autonomization of violence – the prevalence and relative inexpensiveness of weapons, along with the increasing liquidity of financial flows, has resulted in the creation of conditions where small groups now have the means to carry out violent conduct. While in all previous eras war became an increasingly expensive endeavor, the past few decades have seen a rise in the use of small arms, many of which are leftovers from the Soviet Cold War machinery. Finally, Münkler argues that because

of de-statization and the autonomization of violence, belligerents are now likely to hold asymmetrical objectives and means for war. While old wars tended to be fought between large public armies in the interest of the state, new wars are unlikely to be over statist concerns. States remain important figures in new wars, but more often than not non-state actors are just as likely to occupy a central role.

Mark Duffield's *Global Governance and the New Wars* (2001), though written before Münkler's work, addresses several of the points raised by Münkler and synthesizes them to produce what is perhaps the most persuasive theoretical conceptualization of how new wars are fought. More importantly, Duffield gives us valuable insight regarding the role of global North-South dynamics in the creation and perpetuation of conflict. He argues that the processes of globalization have simultaneously excluded much of the global South from the "capitalist core" while maintaining, "through the spread and deepening of all types of parallel and shadow transborder activity, ...forms of local-global networking and innovative patterns of extra-legal and non-formal North-South integration" (Duffield, 2001, p. 5). Duffield thus argues that new wars are clashes between networks that exist within and across North-South fissures, that transcend local, regional, and national boundaries, that cannot be separated or criminalized from the mainstream, that have "dissolved the conventional distinctions between people, army, and government" (Duffield, 2001, p. 190). Ultimately, Duffield concludes that network wars are existential by nature: "The new wars, as well as requiring the mobilization of networks to realize wealth and provision violence, are similarly concerned with restricting the effectiveness of other networks, taking them over or eliminating them altogether" (Duffield, 2001, p. 190). While Duffield does fall prey to

some of the same criticisms leveled at Kaldor<sup>12</sup>, his analysis is nonetheless valuable as it provides insight into some of the defining antagonisms of the New Wars. The “network war” framework is a significant step forward in understanding the relationship between war and globalization.

Ultimately, however, we must deem Duffield’s framework unpersuasive for three major shortcomings. First, he argues that contemporary conflict can be explained by examining the development of capitalism in a way that consolidates the “liberal world order” at the expense of the “Global South”. While such world systems analysis may be useful, it is misleading to reduce war to materialist considerations. This myopic understanding of war glosses over other important factors, including its political dynamic. Along a similar line of reasoning, the second shortcoming in Duffield’s work is his tendency to criminalize, and thus de-politicize, war. Duffield argues that “violent conflict is synonymous with various forms of deviant or criminalised activity that result in social breakdown”, thus marginalizing the political aspect of war (Duffield, 2001, p. 136). This argument fits into Duffield’s larger network framework, as economic and political considerations are collapsed into one, but there is a risk here in conflating the concepts of war and crime. Criminal acts do not directly involve a political element, and while warring networks may have criminal elements, war and crime are not, as Duffield argues, “synonymous”. Duffield’s final shortcoming is his narrow scope. By focusing on the merger of the development and security terrains, Duffield ignores other possible spheres from which organized political violence may emerge. Duffield’s approach allows

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<sup>12</sup> Most notably, there is no evidence indicating increased civilian participation or victimization, the “people, army, government” dynamic existed in previous wars (Newman, 2004, pp. 184-185), a failure to identify the enormous variation in contemporary conflict

incredible insight into wars that spawn out of the merger of development and security, as evidenced by his Sudan case study, but they cannot explain war in general. More specifically, Duffield looks at wars that are particular to a certain time and place, and thus his framework, while extremely useful, does not offer a complete framework to analyze war.

## **II. Bauman and Beck: A macro-sociological approach**

Zygmunt Bauman (2001) sees globalization in a similar light to Duffield, though he points out that the contemporary era is but a continuation of capitalism's development rather than a decidedly new phenomenon. The contemporary, globalized era of capitalism is, for Bauman, "sorely distorted, one-sided, and incomplete, suffering the consequences of blatantly uneven development" (pp. 13-14). To put it differently, there exists a highly developed global system of market forces and, simultaneously, an underdeveloped and under-coordinated political and social network of dependent bodies. It is in the "virgin space" between these networks where Bauman urges us to look in order to understand contemporary conflict. He adds further nuance to his argument by differentiating between two types of war – those furthering the processes of globalization and those induced by it. Globalizing wars are those that expand the reach of global capital and open previously isolated markets. Somewhat unconvincingly and at the risk of sounding conspiratorial, Bauman argues that these wars are fought on behalf of a capitalist elite pursuing profit maximizing interests (the human rights discourse is little more than rhetorical justification). Globalization induced wars, on the other hand, are in a way more organic.

They are not a cause of or reaction to globalization but, in Bauman's words, its "other face" (Bauman, 2001, p. 19). More specifically, Bauman argues the following:

The paradoxical effect of the globalization of economy is the new and enhanced significance of place: the more vulnerable the place becomes, the more radically it is devalued and stripped of its 'cosiness' (its feeding and sheltering capacity), the more it turns (to use Heidegger's terms) from '*Zuhanden*' to '*Vorhanden*', from a 'given', a matter-of-fact part of being, into an uncertain, easy to lose and difficult to gain, stake in the life struggle. It becomes a focus of intense emotions, hopes and fears which merge into hysteria (p. 19).

The desire to hold on to place in the face of increasing uncertainty is the basis for globalization induced wars.

This increased uncertainty is, for Ulrich Beck, a defining feature of the contemporary era, what he calls the "second modernity" Beck chooses his words carefully and with more purpose than to simply distance himself from theorists of postmodernism. He argues that we are not in an age beyond or after that of modernity, but today's modernity is different from that of the last century. The Darwinian notion of progress, which led many to believe that the world's problems could be overcome through science and rationality, has been challenged by the persistence of poverty and destitution, and indeed the worsening situation of countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, the failure of post-colonial societies to develop/industrialize/Westernize, and the continuation of war and violence in many parts of the world. Consequently, the skeptical eye of the

modern era has turned on itself, with progress no longer being the driving force of society. Instead, with the seeming omnipresence of environmental problems, the unpredictability of terror strikes, and the possibility of modernity-induced disasters, avoiding risk has become the central concern in this second coming of modernity. Unlike wars of the Modern Era, which were fought ostensibly for achieving the greater good, contemporary wars aim to minimize risk. In this “world risk society”, Beck sees the so-called War on Terror as the first war against global risk.

The applicability of the “risk society” framework in understanding contemporary jihadist violence is not obvious, but it is important to understand that, especially in an increasingly interconnected world, international context is important to keep in mind. Acts of terrorism are not exogenous of trends in the West. Understanding global sociological, political, and economic trends and structures will give us valuable insight into understanding jihadist violence. A number of scholars argue that looking at the role of the West in the late- and trans-modern world is especially important as we try and understand contemporary violence, jihadist or otherwise. Additionally, regardless of whether or not one is swayed by Dependency theorists, it is difficult to deny the central role of the United States and Western Europe in the shaping of direct and indirect structures of global governance.<sup>13</sup>

Two major critiques have been leveled at these macro, world-sociological approaches to understanding contemporary conflict; first, the work of Bauman and Beck

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<sup>13</sup> G. John Ikenberry’s influential *After Victory* discusses the creation of international institutions in the aftermath of major war. His analysis of the post-World War II institutions, and how they were designed to consolidate American power by adding some constraints to it is a notable example of such a theory. The end of the Cold War again saw “the West” victorious, but this time international institutions did not immediately adjust, indicating the persistence of a relationship where the West generally and the United States specifically maintain a disproportionately strong position.



is devoid of observed examples. Seeing as the case studies used by Kaldor have been heavily (and for the most part rightly) criticized for being inaccurate and misleading, it is essential that a discussion of real world conflicts, and how they differ from old wars, is undertaken. While both Bauman and Beck make reference to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, neither extensively engages with either conflict. The reader is left to take a somewhat gargantuan leap of faith and take the author's word that wars are either "globalizing", "globalization induced", or "against global risk". Yee Kuang Heng (2006) and Keith Spence (2005) have used Beck's framework by using it to analyze, respectively, the NATO campaign in Kosovo and the U.S. War on Terror. This paper is, to some extent, a test of the applicability of these macro-level analyses of contemporary conflict, though the theoretical model examined is different from that proposed by Beck and Bauman.

A second group of critics argue that nothing about the new wars – neither the premise (the widely transformative power of globalization) nor anything about the institution of war – is necessarily new. While these arguments have been alluded to earlier, they warrant further discussion.

For Rosenberg, globalization theory was a fad of the 1990s and, especially within the IR sphere, has failed to provide any lasting analytical insight. He conducts his "post mortem" of globalization from two levels of analysis. First, Rosenberg argues, as a general social theory, globalization offers nothing that Marxist analysis of capitalism does not already consider. The greater reach of market forces, increased intensity of production, and compromised position of the state are all explained by standard Marxist theories of capitalist expansion. Second, from the level of historical sociology, Rosenberg

dismisses what he calls a central claim of globalization theory: the diminished capacity of the state and the simultaneous erosion of sovereignty. The Westphalian system of understanding states and how they interact, argues Rosenberg, is built on a series of flawed assumptions. For Rosenberg, and here he quotes Teshke, 'the myth of 1648' has so severely skewed theoretical understandings of IR that theorists have failed to accurately conceptualize and discuss the relevant ontological units. In more precise terms, Rosenberg's preferred system of studying IR would place the role of capital as the centerpiece of analysis, rather than assume state sovereignty in anarchical conditions. With this alternative framework, the belief of globalization theorists that international politics was being transformed to a post-Westphalian system becomes almost irrelevant.

It is important to seriously consider Rosenberg's critique of globalization theory as it forces a deeper and more theoretically precise explanation of the phenomenon. Rosenberg's overarching argument, that globalization must be understood in broader historical terms, is compelling, but it does not deny the unprecedented increase in global interdependence and interconnectedness during the last few decades. Rosenberg's assertion, that globalization is an extension of capitalism, does not invalidate the argument that social structures are indeed undergoing transformative change. Scholars such as Bauman and Beck acknowledge this argument and discuss globalization not as an unprecedented historical event but rather as the continuation of processes that have continued at least since the Enlightenment and the advent of "modernity.

In his cleverly titled 2005 essay "Premature Obituaries: A Response to Justin Rosenberg", Jan Aart Scholte recognizes the value in Rosenberg's critique of globalization, but argues that his work is likely to sharpen and expand rather than

eliminate the use of globalization theory in the social sciences. Scholte empirically demonstrates that, contrary to what Rosenberg claims, there has been no slowdown in global financial integration, “nor has globalization receded from academic and policy agendas” (Scholte, 2005, p. 392). From a theoretical level, contrary to Rosenberg’s claim that globalization can be understood entirely as a contemporary manifestation of capitalism, Scholte argues that non-Marxists do offer analytical insight into society and sociology. He gives us the following example: “non-Marxist social psychologists might suggest that the geography of communication (e.g. face-to-face vs. cyberspace) impacts on interpersonal relationships in ways that are not merely a function of capitalist development” (Scholte, 2005, p. 393). Ultimately, while taking Rosenberg’s argument seriously, the widespread acceptance of globalization in both academic and lay circles is justified.

Scholte’s point on Marxist theory does, however, apply to Bauman as well. Bauman’s analysis of war is undiluted in its materialist focus – he considers the flows and distribution of capital to be of paramount significance. Thus he too falls prey to Scholte’s point that other forces, for example new geographies of communication, must be taken seriously. Examining wars as socially embedded institutions, it is too simple to reduce political violence to a response, consequence, or side-effect of economic factors alone.

The second major macro-sociological critique mentioned above, that contemporary war contains no historically unprecedented features, fails to stand up to scrutiny. The argument made by proponents of this thesis is well represented in the work

of Malešević, who concedes that the historical structures within which war has fought have changed, but the institution of war remains fundamentally untransformed. For Malešević, even though “the historical setting of the post-World War II world has substantially transformed the traditional geopolitical goals of nation-states ...both at the national and especially at the international level”, war is still about geopolitical interest. Here, Malešević appears to be conflating the unchanging character of war with the mutable nature of war. While reading Malešević alerts us to the importance of clearly distinguishing between those features of war that are immutable and those that are not, we are nonetheless left to conclude that the broader New War argument must be taken seriously.

To add further, in line with previous theorists, I also consider war to be socially embedded. That is, war is always contextual across time (history) and space (geography). With the vast majority of social theorists agreeing that we are witnessing historically unprecedented “time-space compression” in the era of globalization, it follows that the socially embedded institution of war must also be transformed.

Beck and Bauman, in their larger scholarship and in writing discussed above, have persuasive understandings of globalization in general, yet their theorization of war is unconvincing. There is a major failure in that both fail to address or even recognize the complexity of war. For Bauman, war is simply globalizing or globalization induced, while Beck fits war too easily into his risk framework. While it may be unfair to expect socio-philosophers like Bauman and Beck to provide a satisfying conceptualization of war, ultimately that is what we are after. As discussed in the previous chapter, war cannot be dealt with as a monolithic whole – there are important distinctions between the

warfighting paradigm, the social mode of warfare, and the historical structure of war. These units of analysis will be discussed below in more detail, but with our basic understanding of these concepts from the introduction, it is evident that both Bauman and Beck are most concerned with the historical structure of war. The warfighting paradigm, which tells us how wars are actually fought, and the social mode of warfare, which considers the role of broader social institutions in planning for and conducting war, are largely ignored.

A further point can be made regarding the somewhat clumsy universalization of Beck and Bauman's framework. The centrality of risk and risk management in the West has been well documented, and Shaw (2005), Spence (2005), and Heng (2007) have all used the risk framework to understand *Western* war. Shaw (2005), who takes Beck's work seriously, goes as far as to suggest that risk-transfer is not a central principle in the "national-militarist", "ethnic-nationalist", and "terrorist" ways of war (pp. 62-63). Bauman's conceptualization of war is broader and his globalization/globalization-induced framework can be applied more generally than Beck's risk theory. Yet Bauman's economism remains a fatal flaw and universalizes a particular motivation for war. The notion of globalizing war, for example, seems to paint an overly greedy, almost demonic, picture of Western capitalist networks. Even if one is convinced by this portrayal, Bauman does not do enough to establish the universality of this model. The same applies to the idea of globalization-induced wars, which may be a more globally applicable model but without more detail would require a large leap of faith from the reader. To sum up, Bauman and Beck offer noteworthy analyses of the historical structure of war in the

current era, but their treatment of war as a monolithic, universal institution ultimately leaves their theorization incomplete.

Thus far, the literature discussed fails to offer a theoretical model through which it is possible to analyze the transformation of war. While Kaldor provides a useful description of New Wars, she does not adequately theorize globalization, resulting in an analysis that is empirically rich but ultimately unsatisfying as it fails to address how and why globalization resulted in the transformation of war. To paraphrase Rosenberg, Kaldor's work seems to reflect rather than explain the advent of New War. Duffield's theorization of globalization is far more satisfying, but he is concerned with the specific subset of war that results from the merger of development and security, and thus his framework cannot be applied more broadly. While the notion of "network war" is a useful analytical tool, in order to apply his framework to contemporary jihadist violence we must first develop his theories further. Beck and Bauman are exemplars of globalization theorists. Their work, both the specific pieces discussed here as well as their broader projects, forms a convincing framework regarding both the depth and the scope of globalization. War, however, remains frustratingly under-theorized, and their discussion stays away from discussing the *transformation* of war. Thus we need to look at works that both adequately theorize globalization and provide a framework for analyzing the transformation of war. A complete theory on the transformation of war, for Andrew Latham, "needs to be integrated into a broader framework that reconnects changes in the nature of warfighting to both broader changes in the social organization of

warfare and deeper changes in the nature of war as an historically constructed social institution” (2002, p. 233).

### **III. Shaw and Latham: Theorizing global war, transformation, and history**

Martin Shaw, in his 2005 book *The New Western Way of War*, seeks to illustrate “the relationships between ways of warfighting, military organization, and social and political structures” (p. 29). He is focused on the West, yet he immediately acknowledges that before elaborating on “the New Western Way of War”, it is necessary to discuss a global mode of warfare, even though this may seem counterintuitive at first. Since military campaigns carried out by the West are generally targeted at the non-West and because of the already identified processes of globalization, “there is an overriding case” to “conceptualize Western and non-Western warfare together” (Shaw, 2005, p. 47). In addition, Shaw engages extensively with what David Held et al. call military globalization, a phenomenon characterized by “the worldwide reach of great power rivalry, the development of a global arms dynamic, and the expansion of global governance of military affairs” (Shaw, 2005, p. 48).

Given the above, Shaw proceeds to describe the transition to the global mode of war in the post-Cold War era. He highlights three key occurrences. First, there has been a worldwide transition “from *direct* to *indirect* mass mobilization” (p. 55). This shift from large, centrally organized military units to smaller, decentralized, informal, and underground ones has been made possible by “the Internet, by distributing videotapes and penetrating mass-media coverage” (p. 55). Second, the “general relationship between warfighting and the political, economic, and cultural-ideological domains” has changed,

resulting in war moving from a dominant to a subordinate position with respect to society. Unlike industrialized total war of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, war “cannot override social relations as fully or widely as total war could” (p. 55). Finally, Shaw argues that in contemporary war, belligerents must reckon with “the comprehensive military surveillance of their military ventures by global state institutions, law, markets, media, and civil society” (p. 56). Shaw is making the argument that New War is affected by ‘New’, or globalized, politics, economics, and media.

Shaw’s framework is strengthened by his discussion of “segmented globality”, as this allows him to address how surveillance applies differently in different contexts. Globalization does not, for Shaw, result in the creation of an undifferentiated global socio-cultural whole. Different societal variables affect war differently. For example, Shaw argues that while conflicts around the world may be checked by a trans-national political economy, it is likely that the surveillance of civil society is more critical on the West than on other actors. Through his discussion of segmented globality, Shaw ends up with four “ways of war” – Western, national-militarist, ethnic-nationalist, and terrorist (p. 60). His focus is on the first of the four, and his discussion of global terrorism is ultimately underdeveloped and must be judged unpersuasive. In addition, while Shaw provides us with a worthwhile theorization of the transition to a global mode of war, he does not isolate and discuss the different historical layers from which war must be analyzed. To be more precise, Shaw’s framework is a hodgepodge of variables, and, as discussed by Latham, it may be possible to more accurately discuss the transformation of war if we can distinguish between different levels at which this transformation is occurring.



Writing first in response to works on the Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA), but then in reaction to the “Transformation of War” debate in general, Latham (2002, 2008, forthcoming) discusses the implications of the tendency of the literature to be “historically myopic”. While authors like Beck, Bauman, and Duffield have made some efforts to treat globalization as a historically continuous process, the causal relationship between the transformation of war as a result of world order transformation remains under-theorized. Latham argues that what is needed is a Braudelian approach to understanding how historical processes have affected the institution of war. The central role of Braudelian history in this paper warrants further discussion of the theory, especially as used by Latham.

French historian Fernand Braudel, a seminal thinker in the *Annales* school of historiography, suggests that history should be conceptualized through three temporal lenses. Latham (2002) provides us with both a succinct summary of Braudel’s framework as well as suggestions on how it may be applied to the study of New War. We begin with Braudel. First, at the level of *l’histoire événementielle*, is the series of events that comprise daily life. This may be better understood as “events-time” or “journalistic time” and consists of events that regularly take place at a small scale. Second, the broader and deeper idea of the *conjoncture*, a series of events that can be understood as episodes. *Conjunctural* time thus deals with historical periods, with examples being Romanticism, the Industrial Revolution, or World War II (Braudel as quoted in Latham, 2002). The *conjoncture* can last for periods of time that may vary from a few years (like World War II) to a few decades (the Industrial Revolution), but is defined by a certain identifiable and, to some extent, generalizable set of socioeconomic norms, principles, and

expectations. Finally, the broadest of the temporal lenses is that of the *longue durée*, which looks at history from a perspective wider still than the *conjuncture*, and examines the politics, cultures, and mentalities of a time. Thus, argues Latham, a social scientist using the lens of the *longue durée* “is less concerned with mere events or even medium-term episodes than with the evolution of fundamental social structures that assume a quasi-permanent character” (Latham, 2002, p. 235).

Latham then reads Braudel against Clausewitz to identify and conceptually isolate the various facets of the character of war, that is, those attributes of organized violence that are susceptible to change, in each of the historical units. Here, he makes the critical contribution of identifying the difference between the warfighting paradigm, the social mode of warfare, and the historical structure of war. These three units are analogous to, respectively, *l’histoire événementielle*, conjunctural time, and the *longue durée*.

Latham then goes a step further, describing how each of the three analytical lenses, the warfighting paradigm, the social mode of warfare, and the historical structure of war, can be used to understand the RMA. The RMA, however, was a predominantly Western development, and Latham’s work does not address the *global* nature of changes in the character of war. For example, Latham identifies “precision destruction” as a defining feature of the warfighting paradigm in the current era, and indeed for technologically advanced state militaries this seems to be the case, but it is difficult to see this as a central characteristic of contemporary war in general. It seems necessary, therefore, to synthesize the works of Latham and Shaw, to take history seriously and to address segmented globality.

#### **IV. Conclusion**

There is no doubt that New War theory has come a long way since Kaldor first introduced the concept. We are now at a point where we can build a framework that can describe and, more importantly, explain how globalization has transformed the institution of war. In Kaldor, Duffield, and Münkler, we have exceptionally rich descriptions of how New Wars are fought. Bauman and Beck tell us the (changing) role of war in society. Shaw then explains military globalization and the segmented nature of globality, allowing us to create a model where the way in which wars are fought differs across space, even though there are universal underlying characteristics. Finally, Latham provides a framework through which we can map the ways in which war as a socially imbedded institution has been transformed as a result of globalization. In the following chapter, I combine Latham's Braudelian model with Shaw's understanding of segmented globality to create a theoretical framework that explains the transformation of war through globalization.

## THREE

### Theorizing War and Globalization

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*Toward the end of the second millennium of the Christian Era several events of historical significance have transformed the social landscape of human life. A technological revolution, centered around information technologies, is reshaping, at an accelerated pace, the material basis of society. Economics throughout the world have become globally interdependent, introducing a new form of relationship between economy, state and society...*

- Manuel Castells

In this chapter, I provide a theoretical framework from which we may understand the transformation of war as a result of globalization processes. The literature discussed thus far has provided us with important analytical insights into both war and globalization, and in this chapter I hope to build on the work of Martin Shaw and Andrew Latham to reach an understanding of contemporary war that adequately theorizes globalization and *explains* how this phenomenon has led to the transformation of war. My aim is to create a model that understands the difference between that which is being explained (war) and that doing the explaining (globalization), and engages with the different temporal levels at which both war and globalization function. While the general model provided by Latham is applicable to any historical transformation in the institution of war, I apply his archetype to the present era.

This chapter is divided into two parts. First, I discuss in some more detail Shaw's idea of a segmented globality introduced in the previous chapter. In line with Shaw, I argue that it makes sense to speak of a "global" mode of war, while understanding that important distinctions still exist. Second, I elaborate on Latham's suggested approach,

using three distinct temporal lenses. I discuss the warfighting paradigm and the social mode of warfare with a focus on the contemporary era. While I discuss the historical structure of war, I refrain from commenting on contemporary transformations as they are difficult to identify and, without the benefit of hindsight, difficult if not impossible to analyze.

Before proceeding further, two reminders are in order. First is to recall from the introductory chapter the distinction between the unchanging nature of war and its mutable character. In discussing the transformation of war, I am referring specifically to the character of organized political conflict. Second, along a similar vein, is the treatment of war as a socially embedded, rather than socio-historically aberrational, phenomenon. War is not treated as distinct from the day to day functioning of contemporary global society but rather as deeply intertwined within world order.

### **I. Globalization and a Segmented Globality**

A common understanding of the present era is that globalization leads to two extremes – increased tribalism, characterized by a focus on particularized identities, and unrestrained homogenization through the hegemonic permeation of “Western” culture. Benjamin Barber (1992) labeled this attractively simple understanding of globalization “Jihad vs. McWorld”, and the idea that opposing social forces were dictating contemporary world order gained steam throughout the 1990s. It is impossible to argue against the notion that there exist both tribalist and globalist strains in today’s world, yet it is also flawed to suggest, as Barber does, that these are “the two axial principles of our age”. If we are to take the idea of globalization seriously, then we must accept that there

is a generalizable, rather than contradictory, social force that is affecting change throughout the world. Through this transformative social force, we should then be able to understand both the reversion to particularistic identities and the emergence of a global identity, which Shaw (2000) defines as “a common consciousness of human society on a world scale” (p. 12).<sup>14</sup>

For Shaw, writing in the context of understanding war, the transformative social force that has been emerged worldwide has been surveillance. He writes:

States and other armed actors must make war work in political, economic, and cultural as well as strictly military terms. Wars must play much more by the rules of politics, markets and media: warmaking must *capitalize* on market relations, *exploit* political forms, and *manage*, media. In the end, armed actors must reckon not so much with global governance...but with comprehensive surveillance of their military ventures by global state institutions, law, markets, media, and civil society. The best way of characterizing the new mode of war as a whole is therefore *global surveillance war*. (Shaw, 2005, pp. 55-56)

Shaw then demonstrates that surveillance works in different ways in different socio-cultural settings, with different surveillance mechanisms being important in different parts of the world. While developing in an increasingly global world, the force of surveillance still encounters local power structures, economic systems, cultural practices

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<sup>14</sup> This definition is vastly different from Barber's, but as I have defined globalization in far broader strokes, I think it is only appropriate to move on from his overly economic understanding of the phenomenon

and other variables, and as a result creates several distinct ways of war. Thus, argues Shaw, it makes sense to speak of a *segmented* globality.

On the whole, Shaw's argument is persuasive, that the transformative social force of globalization encounters local structural realities and thus results in different manifestations of war. Surveillance, however, is too specific a phenomenon – it would be difficult to argue that it is the defining element of our present era.

Instead, a broader and more recognizable force, that of time-space compression, will serve us well as we seek to conceptualize globalization. Coined by David Harvey, time-space compression is not an unprecedented social force, indeed he considers it to be a constant through the history of capitalism yet the scale and scope at which it is taking place at present has never before been witnessed. More specifically, time-space compression is now planetary in scale and has led to the decreased significance of distance. This decreased significance of distance, and the consequent wider reach of power, is what I consider to be the most important transformative force of globalization.

What does this mean for a global theory of war? In line with Shaw's argument, given the reduced significance of distance, it makes sense to speak of a global mode of war. A cursory glance at some of today's major warzones – Iraq, Afghanistan, Sudan, Sri Lanka – indicates the presence of worldwide networks. These networks deal in financial, military, ideological, and technological terms and expand across the globe. Thus increasingly war takes place “within the same environments: the same zones of war, the social and political spaces in which armed force is used, and a global political-military environment” (Shaw, 2005, pp. 53-54).

At the same time, as discussed above, time-space compression and global networks collide everywhere with local structures. Power hierarchies, military complexes, economic systems and several other social variables vary across space, and thus we must speak of a segmented globality. Thus from this point on, when discussing the warfighting paradigm, the social mode of warfare, or the historical structure of war, I will assume a segmented globality, a condition where the global social force of time-space compression interacts with different ground realities.

## **II. A Braudelian Model to Understand War**

Understanding large historical transformation is no easy task. While it is somewhat easier to describe characteristics of contemporary war, it is harder to explain how particular characteristics have appeared. Fortunately, as discussed in the previous chapter, Braudel has given us the tools to theorize and thus explain large historical processes. To understand and explain socio-historical transformation, we are advised to look at our subject (war and globalization in this case) from the temporal vantage points of *l'histoire événementielle*, conjunctural time, and the *longue durée*. Latham's reading of Clausewitz against Braudel provides us with the concepts of the warfighting paradigm, the social mode of warfare, and the historical structure of war. In this section, I first elaborate on the three layers at which war is analyzed and then discuss how globalization has had a transformative effect on each.

Before proceeding further, it is important to acknowledge that there are significant overlaps across the three units of analyzing war mentioned above. Technology, for example, is most directly discussed under the warfighting paradigm, yet colossal shifts in



technology may directly affect the social mode of warfare. Along a slightly different line of reasoning, there are also causal overlaps across the three units of analysis. A change in the social mode of warfare may lead to new warfighting paradigm, and the reverse relationship could also arise. Thus it is important to point out that while the warfighting paradigm, the social mode of warfare, and the historical structure of war are here treated as distinct units, the real life manifestations of the three are not discrete.

#### A. Globalization and the Warfighting Paradigm

The events-time mode of inquiry is most concerned with the descriptive elements of a social phenomenon, and it is no surprise that l’histoire événementielle is often called “journalistic” time. The warfighting paradigm thus refers to the way in which opposing groups engage in violence. Latham describes it as the “specific configuration of military technologies, doctrines, and organizational forms” (Latham, 2002, p. 236). Weapons and technology occupy a key role in discussing the warfighting paradigm, but the concept also importantly includes a role for human agents.

A different way to think of the warfighting paradigm is to consider it the “battlefield” aspect of war. Battlefield engagements have changed over time, for example from “the static attritional form of warfighting emblematic of the First World War to the combined arms manoeuvre approach to warfighting that characterized the Second World War” (Latham, forthcoming). Today, through processes of globalization, the battlefield can no longer be thought of as a bounded place where enemies engage in combat but rather as a more unidentifiable and unpredictable space where violence may break out. This is not to say that traditional battlefields no longer exist, or that “the world is a

battlefield”, but rather that because of the growing asymmetry in and autonomization of war, along with the increasing significance of network societies, wars are fought in what Bauman calls the “virgin spaces” between networks.

The unprecedented scale and scope of time-space compression in the contemporary era has led to what Herfried Münkler has labeled the autonomization of violence and a consequent asymmetry in warfighting that seemed to be disappearing during the Modern period. To understand this point further, rich, descriptive works on the transformation of war are most relevant. The previously discussed projects of Münkler and Mark Duffield in particular are useful in explaining the transformation in the warfighting paradigm from the late modern Cold War to the post-Cold War era. Münkler considers the disappearance of the piece of land known as the battlefield to be a result of the *asymmetry* that characterizes New War. He argues that since belligerents are no longer evenly matched, “there are no longer war fronts and...few actual engagements and no major battles” (p. 3). While wars in the high-modern era were conducted by armies that looked similar (though not identical), the availability of cheap weapons and improvements in communication and financial technologies have resulted in the creation of a number of warfighting units that look nothing like Modern armies. Thus wars are fought by state, non-state, and semi-state armies, paramilitary units, warlords, and mercenary groups. Münkler labels this spawning of new violence producing units the *autonomization* of war. Autonomization has created different types of warmaking units, which battle each other in asymmetric wars.

Autonomization and asymmetry are deeply interrelated concepts that characterize the warfighting paradigm of the contemporary era. Both are products of globalization.

More specifically, as Kaldor details, the increased magnitude and velocity of trade in weapons has meant that almost anyone anywhere can become armed. Previously antagonistic groups have now become violently antagonistic. The collapsed Soviet Union left not only a large stockpile of weapons but also a military industrial complex that suddenly lost its only customer. While several of the weapon-making factories collapsed, others landed in private hands and switched to producing light, cheap weapons. It is these arms that have reached violent factions around the world creating new actors that participate in asymmetrical warfare. At the same time, the development of technologies of “precision destruction” in the West has exacerbated the asymmetrical nature of contemporary conflict (Latham, 2002, p. 237). The classic image of recent conflicts may be the AK-47 and a \$400 Russian 82mm Mortar armed fighter being targeted by the \$40 million Predator Drone.

Mark Duffield (2001) makes an important further contribution in theorizing the contemporary warfighting paradigm. While Münkler and Kaldor talk about the role of the globalized economy, Duffield also implicates actors and organizations that are not directly involved in conflict, creating a model of network war. For Duffield, it no longer makes sense to think of armed units as the only relevant actors when discussing organized political violence. Instead, he suggests considering all those actors that are implicated in warfighting networks, including “governments, NGOs, militaries, and the business sector” (p. 13). This idea of network war takes us beyond warfighting considerations and thus serves as an appropriate transition to the discussion of the social mode of warfare.

## B. Globalization and the Social Mode of Warfare

Looking at war through the temporal lens of the conjuncture, the social mode of warfare comes into focus. Broader than the battlefield, the social mode of warfare examines “the complex of social, economic, and deep technological forces that shape the way in which a *society* wages war” (Latham, 2002, p. 241, my emphasis). Processes of time-space compression have resulted in a transformation in the way societies organize for and implement war. Held and McGrew (2007), Shaw (2005), and Latham (2002) have identified the social mode of warfare through most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century as one of Industrialized Total War, a complex that “demanded or threatened the complete mobilization or destruction of societies” (Held & McGrew, 2007, p. 52) and relied on the combination of “mass mobilization-mass production-mass destruction” (Latham, 2002, p. 247). Kaldor adds that the 20<sup>th</sup> century mode of warfare resulted in war economies that were fiercely internalized. States were the major war making units and the entire process of organized violence – from the creation and distribution of weapons to the training of soldiers and the eventual combat itself – rarely saw input from foreign actors.

Globalization has fundamentally transformed this model into one that is characterized by networks that are mobile, fluid, flexible, and often transnational, even global. Duffield’s model builds on the idea of network society popularized by Manuel Castells in the first of his three volume magnum opus *The Information Age* (1996). Castells first discusses the central role of technology in societal structure, noting that “technology does not determine society: it embodies it. But neither does society determine technological innovation: it uses it” (Castells, 1996, p. n5). In the contemporary era, through time-space compression in general but the spread of

information technology in particular, Castells argues that the spatially dispersed network, rather than the territorially contained state or mass of individuals, has come to become the basic unit of society.

Building on this notion of networks, Duffield builds a model that convincingly explains organized violence in what he calls the Global South. Duffield argues that since the end of the Colonial period, networks linking actors in the Global North have strengthened along economic, political, technological and military lines. Simultaneously, while formal networks across the North-South divide remain relatively less formal, they have nevertheless expanded through illicit and mostly illegal “shadow economic activity” (Duffield, 2001, p. 8). Flowing from the North to the South, on the other hand, “the networks of international policy have thickened and multiplied their points of engagement and control” (Duffield, 2001, p. 8). The complex ways in which these many networks interact has resulted in an environment where “the networks that support war cannot easily be separated out and criminalized in relation to the networks that characterize peace” (Duffield, 2001, p. 190) – both weapons and aid come through the same lines. The distinctions between government, financial institutions, militaries, and citizens has evaporated, leaving only networks that, again referring back to Castells, form the basic unit of society.

Network wars are thus fought not just by armed groups but by entire economic, political, and cultural networks. Because the end goal of such wars is to replace one network with another, they tend to be existential in nature. Along a similar line of reasoning, Bauman introduces the notion of globalizing war – that is, wars that are conducted “in the name of the not yet existent but postulated ‘international community’,

represented in practice by ad-hoc, mostly regional coalition of interested partners” (Bauman, 2002, p. 14). We can easily replace the phrase “coalition of interested partners” above with “networks” to create a different piece in the puzzle of the social mode of warfare in a segmented globality.

So far, I have argued that network war is emblematic of the contemporary social mode of warfare and discussed how this form of war manifests itself in the Global South and among capitalist elites, presumably in the North. Citing Shaw (2005), Held and McGrew (2007) add to the analysis, noting that in the West war is “conducted by largely demilitarized societies with limited objectives and precision force” (p. 52). Noting that since societies everywhere are increasingly dependent on global modes of production, disrupting networks rather than destroying enemies is a key objective. Thus not just military but all kinds of social activity – political, economic, cultural – may be either implicated or targeted in New War.

A final note on the social mode of warfare regarding the role of ideas is in order. While traditional political science has tended to submit little explanatory power to agency, it is evident that in this era of globalization the power of ideas has increased manifold. To expand further, through advances in information technology, a much greater amount of information is created and distributed. This information is instantaneously affected by real world events at the local, regional, and global level. While ideas previously began in local environs and then, if they were deemed noteworthy, expanded beyond, today creators of ideas have a much broader base from which to find adherents. The globalization of the local and the localization of the global has led to the increased influence and pervasiveness of ideas. This instantly morphed, globally informed, globally

distributed information has had a key role in the successes of the environmental movement, in the organization of anti-globalization protests, and, as we shall see later, in the creation and then permeation of globalist jihadist violence.

To summarize, through time-space compression processes the Modern and Late Modern system of spatially contained mass organization has been replaced by a globally dispersed system where traditional distinctions between social sectors are no longer as clear. In the contemporary moment, networks that expand across local, national, regional, and global spaces and encompass all forms economic, political, cultural and military activities have become the fundamental units of social organization. Wars are fought not between armed units but by, around, and through entire networks, though the way networks manifest themselves globally depends on local conditions. Networks have also been a powerful source, inspiration, and medium of distribution for ideas, which are now globally created and distributed.

The significance of network society is evident at the level of the conjuncture, and the contemporary moment is best understood as a different episode from that of the Cold War era. But is it appropriate to speak of even deeper structural changes in world order and consequent transformations in the institution of war?

### C. Globalization and the Historical Structure of War

Globalization and the advent of network society have come to define the contemporary episode, but it is unclear that structures that constitute world order have been definitively redefined. Despite trends within academic spheres, I am unconvinced that we have reached the “post-modern” age, primarily because, as discussed at length by Justin Rosenberg and Ulrich Beck, capitalism, though a different kind than that of the

industrial age, remains the central organizing principle of social organization.

Furthermore, given the irrelevance of some of the early predictions of globalization (the end of sovereignty, the permanent dominance of the United States, the end of mankind's ideological evolution), one has to be especially careful when treading the path of deep, structural or systemic analysis.

Nonetheless, looking at the *longue durée* remains an analytically useful tool and it must be discussed here with regard to war. The *longue durée* allows us to study war not just as a social, political, economic, or military phenomenon, but as a constitutive element of world order. In slightly different words, examining the historical structure of war begins to answer the “big questions” of the ontological meaning and purpose of war in any given historical moment. In this section, I will describe the concept of the historical structure of war and then offer some preliminary insights into how globalization may be transforming this unit of analysis.

Latham considers the historical structure of war to consist of “the cluster of deeply embedded cultural rules, discourses and practices that determine the locus of control of organized violence, define the nature and purposes of war, and that ultimately set war apart from other forms of politics and violence” (Latham, 2002, p. 247). With analytical lens, we are beginning to encroach on the nature of war, its trans-historical elements that define what war means. Latham specifies further that the historical structure of war is made up of three structural elements – the constitutive antagonisms of world order, the political architecture of organized violence, and the institution of war.

The constitutive antagonisms of world order refer to “fundamental configurations of violently conflictual social forces within a given world order” (Latham, forthcoming).



Latham uses “social force” differently than I have above, using the term to refer to discernible organized groups that pursue some reasonably generalizable objective. Importantly, these social forces are the constitutive units of world order – they are the “defining... social relations underpinning global political life” (Latham, forthcoming). Each group will pursue some combination of material and non-material aims, and some of these will likely be hostile or contradictory, creating the conditions of possibility for war. In the contemporary era, the rise of network society can be understood as the emergence of new social forces, but not necessarily new constitutive antagonisms.

Has globalization altered the constitutive antagonisms of world order? It is difficult to say, especially within the framework of a segmented globality. In the West, there is considerable evidence and scholarship to suggest that risk has become a central antagonistic force and a constitutive element of world order. Beck’s idea of risk society discusses the management of modernity induced risk to be a central organizing principle of society. He argues that in world risk society, “risks have become a major force of political mobilization, often replacing references to, for example, inequalities associated with class, race, and gender” (Beck, *World Risk Society*, 1999, p. 4). Shaw builds on this idea, arguing that transferring risk is the central tenet of the Western way of war (Shaw, 2005). Yet Beck himself is hesitant to label the current moment as *postmodern* and prefers the terminology of the *second* modernity. For Beck, risk occupies a central role in social structures as a result of modernity’s skeptical eye turning on itself. The major risks Beck identifies – environmental degradation, global terrorism, poverty etc – continue to be addressed through state based mechanisms. There is reason to continue to critically

analyze possible transformations in the constitutive antagonisms of world order, but it seems premature to conclusively judge them at present.

The second structural element of the historical structure of war is the political architecture of organized violence, which Latham defines as “the historically specific ensemble of war-making within any given world order and the structural or systemic ‘matrix’ within which those units are embedded” (forthcoming). Somewhat more specifically, this involves looking at the role of warmaking units and systems within the larger social order. Here, we can more clearly see the transformative effects of globalization, though again it is important to qualify any talk of large scale structural transformations. As networks erode the organizational principle of the mass (which manifests itself in territorially bound units like the state or the industrial factory), we begin to see the emergence of a new political architecture of organized violence. War can no longer be discussed as a specific form of mass organization and mobilization. It is instead a conflict between networks – territorially dispersed yet ideationally united, combining the political, the economic, the cultural, and the militant, functioning within a social order that doesn’t consist of other similar looking mass actors but rather very different looking networks. The ways in which networks interact is not through hierarchy but rather through decentralized and interspersed mechanisms. Networks often have no individual or group at the helm and therefore lines of interaction (material or social) across networks are multiple and dispersed.

It is important, however, to not overstate the significance of the network. The state, the most important of all modern warmaking units, maintains its central role in contemporary world order. The difference now is that the political architecture of

organized violence consists not just of the states but rather of complex networks of which the state is an important node. It is also important to remember that transformations in the political architecture of war occur at different speeds in different places. Mass units remain more important in some parts of the world and the relative importance of certain nodes in networks varies across space. Yet the emergence of the network as a fundamental warmaking unit is strong evidence that globalization has had a significant transformative impact on the historical structure of war.

The final structural element of the historical structure of war is the institution of war itself, that is “the prevailing set of socially constructed beliefs regarding the ontology, (moral) purpose and meaning of war that is enacted and expressed in any given historical setting” (Latham, forthcoming). The purpose of war and its ontological significance are determined largely by the constitutive antagonisms and political architecture of world order. Here we reach perhaps the murkiest of all territory covered thus far, especially given that I take time-space variation seriously in the segmented globality model. The purpose of war varies significantly across time and space, and to comment on either its legitimacy or its ontological significance is perhaps a task more suited to philosophers than political scientists. Nonetheless, we can refer once again to Beck and his model of risk society to try and understand the contemporary institution of war.

War against risk, risk-transfer war as Shaw calls it, defines the contemporary western way of war. Yet it is more than a definition – limiting unpredictability and fighting to prevent the unexpected seem to be becoming the moral purpose of war. Considering the early 21<sup>st</sup> century military campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq as part of

the war against terror, Beck argues that “the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq were a novelty, because they were the first wars against global risk” (2005, p. 19). Beck argues that the wars were considered legitimate because they attacked a global risk, yet the assertion that these wars were considered morally desirable is certainly problematic. The Iraq War, in particular, faced mass opposition even before military operations began (McFadden, 2003). Similarly, humanitarian war, another mode of organized violence that some argue is legitimate, has faced a number of detractors. It might be that with the critical self reflection characteristic of the second modern age, “moral legitimacy” no longer applies to war.

### **III. Conclusion**

In this chapter, I first described the notion of a segmented globality where the central axis around which local factors rotate is that of time-space compression. As a result, the network has started to replace the territorially contained mass as the central organizing unit of social structure. Networks transcend traditional borders across space and blur distinctions between different areas of social life – the political, economic, cultural, and military can no longer be discussed in discrete terms. The emergence of networks and unprecedented time-space compression in a segmented globality provide the point of departure for my theory of the transformation of war.

War is analyzed from three temporal perspectives - *l’histoire événementielle*, conjunctural time, and the *longue durée*. For each, an explanation of the effects of globalization on respective structural elements is provided. Networks again emerge as central explanatory variables. Globalization is shown to have a significant transformative

impact on the warfighting paradigm and the social mode of warfare, though the effects on the historical structure of war are somewhat more ambiguous.

Does this theory of globalization and the transformation of war stand up to scrutiny? In order to answer this question, I use the theoretical framework discussed here to explain perhaps the most significant manifestation of organized political conflict facing the world – globalist jihadist violence.

FOUR

## Globalist Jihadist Violence

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*“Borders and frontiers are no longer territorial. There is no wall defending the enemy, an enemy that is more often than not too elusive to be named and targeted, an enemy who if he is shadowy is sometimes merely our shadow.”*

- Olivier Roy

The outpouring of literature in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks (though in all fairness there were notable contributions before 2001 as well) has attempted to explain this contemporary jihadist violence in a number of ways: some saw it as the continuation of Islam’s inherently imperialistic ambitions, others saw a “clash of civilizations”, while many were persuaded by the notion that material conditions were to blame. Recognizing that there is no simple explanation for the phenomenon is an important step. A mechanical cause-and-effect explanation will always provide only an incomplete picture as there is no one trigger that has suddenly inspired Muslims to become holy warriors; attempting to identify such a factor is an exercise in futility. The theoretical model offered in the previous chapter allows for a more organic, yet nonetheless persuasive, explanation of this conflict. It should be noted, though, that the focus is more on explaining the *what* and *how* of globalist jihad and less on *why*.

This chapter begins with a discussion of the warfighting paradigm in the contemporary jihadist movement. Following Braudel’s advice, sources used are journalistic and specific events are discussed. The evidence is strong that globalization

and jihadist warfighting are deeply intertwined and networks play a key role. Second, I analyze the social mode of warfare in globalist radical Islam. In the era of globalization, we can see a shift from a focus on the “near enemy” to the “far enemy”, from a hierarchical to a networked mode of organization, and from a localized to a globalized operational base within radical Islam. I also examine the way in which ideas have evolved through and because of time-space compression, and the effects of these on globalist radical Islam. Finally, by discussing an individual case of radicalization, I show how networks and ideas play into the creation of the radical.

Before proceeding further, three qualifications are in order. First and most importantly, the purpose of this section is to apply the model discussed previously to analyze contemporary jihadist violence. The focus is thus not on explaining the motivational forces behind radical Islam but rather understanding *what* and *how*, rather than *why* questions. Second, referring back to the introduction, I will not engage with the Koran, the Hadith, or any other theological texts for two simple reasons; first, I have no training in Koranic studies and second, as Olivier Roy notes, “the key question is not what the Koran actually says, but what Muslims say the Koran says” (2006, p. 10). Finally, the scope of this study prevents an extensive historical analysis of the emergence of the globalist jihadist movement. This chapter takes some brief historical detours, but my engagement with the matter does not do justice to its complexity.

## **I. Globalist Jihad and the Warfighting Paradigm**

The 9/11 Commission Report notes that while fighting against the Soviets in Afghanistan, Osama bin Laden realized the role played by actors located around the globe in the success of the Taliban. Through what came to be known as the “Golden Chain”, a financial network was built that connected Bin Laden’s group to numerous contributors, including individuals, charities, governments, and non-governmental organizations. Bin Laden “drew largely on funds raised by this network, whose agents roamed world markets to buy arms and supplies for the mujahidin, or holy warriors” (National Commission on Terrorist Attacks, 2004, p. 55). Resistance to the Soviets, though certainly supported by state government, including the United States, was not formally tied to any country (Alaxiev, 1988). The rise of the Afghan mujahidin and their eventual success, albeit at tremendous human cost, at forcing the Soviets out paints a classic picture, to use Herfried Münkler’s terminology, of the autonomization of violence.

Al Qaeda, while emblematic of the global jihadist movement, is by no means the only relevant actor. Other factions, sometimes linked to Al Qaeda and sometimes independent, have used similar networks to acquire arms. The Pakistan based Lakshar-E-Taiba (LeT), for instance, which targeted British, American, and Israel citizens in its recent attacks in the Indian city of Mumbai, has shifted from a Pakistani fundraising base to a global one (Bajoria, 2008). The LeT started out with implicit support, both financial and technical, of the Pakistani government, but since 9/11 (after which the government turned hostile to the organization) it has become a more autonomous actor (Bajoria, 2008). Contemporary jihadist violence has gained prominence on the global stage partly because of the autonomization of violent units.



Moving on to Münkler's other analytical insight, asymmetrical warfare has become the norm in the contemporary jihadist movement. This should come as little surprise. Faced with the much larger and better equipped state armies, jihadist factions cannot sustain a "traditional" battle and have thus resorted to attacking at random, often using the highly cost-effective method of the suicide operation. The role of the network can be introduced here, as the martyr/warrior is rarely if ever a lone warrior. S/he is connected to a larger project that consists of other foot martyr/warriors, bomb makers, technical and financial planners, and ideologues. There has been much written about the 9/11 attacks that corroborates the claim that networks occupy a position of paramount significance, so in an attempt to diversify the literature I will briefly discuss the attacks of November 2008 in Mumbai, India. For now, the focus is on the warfighting techniques and tactics employed by the attackers.

The network mode of organization and information and communications technology played a key role in the 2008 Mumbai attacks. The attacks were coordinated in Pakistan and the ten attackers went through a training process that including physical and military training but also scrutiny of the areas they were to attack using Google Earth (Bedi, 2008). Two Indian nationals have been arrested for scouting the target areas and then presumably briefing attackers via informational networks (BBC News, 2009). The ten attackers reached the port city of Mumbai on a hijacked vessel, using GPS equipment to navigate their way and staying in touch with planners in Pakistan using a satellite phone (Shachtman, 2008). Anonymous email accounts using remailers to scramble their traces were used to take responsibility for the attacks. The attackers stayed in touch with planners throughout the incident using cellular phones, an especially useful technology

since the planners were able to update the attackers on the police and army response detailed in the global media and coordinate attacks to extend their duration and magnitude. The role of cell phones has been considered so central to the orchestration of the event that “New York City police officials...are studying the feasibility of disrupting cellphone communications in the event of a terrorist attack” (Baker, 2009).

The cell phones were Chinese made, purchased in Pakistan, using SIM cards from eastern India and possibly New Jersey, and central to an attack on India’s west coast. The attacks were asymmetrical, targeting civilians rather than state apparatus, and conducted by autonomized violence making units. The example of the 2008 Mumbai attacks strongly indicates the globalized, networked warfighting paradigm used by contemporary globalist jihadists. By shifting to a more macroscopic lens, we can now analyze the social mode of warfare in globalist radical Islam.

## **II. Globalist Jihad and the Social Mode of Warfare**

In the previous chapter, I argued that globalization has fundamentally transformed the model of industrialized total war into one that is characterized by networks that are mobile, fluid, flexible, and often transnational, even global. Ideas have also evolved both through these globalized networks and in response to their emergence. This section first details the networked, globalized socioeconomic characteristics of contemporary jihad. I then examine the development of globalist radical ideology, characterized by a focus on the “far enemy”, to replace “near enemy” based local radical views.

### **A. The globalist mode of warfare**

In the previous section, I discussed the Mumbai attacks carried out by LeT. Expanding the depth and breadth of our analysis, a quick overview of the organization resonates strongly with the globalized social mode of warfare discussed in the previous chapter. In an article for the Council on Foreign Relations, Jayshree Bajoria profiles the LeT. Formed in the late 1980s to first recruit men for battle in Afghanistan and then Kashmir, the LeT is the military wing of the larger organization Markaz-ad-Dawa-wal-Irshad. Both organizations have expanded operations in the last decade, and the LeT now operates not only in Pakistan and India but also in Chechnya, Afghanistan, and perhaps even Iraq. As Brajoria (2008) points out, “the group collects donations from the Pakistani expatriate community in the Persian Gulf and Britain as well as from Islamic NGOs, and Pakistani and Kashmiri businessmen”. In addition, Ashley Tellis of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, in prepared testimony to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, notes that not only do Al Qaeda and LeT share similar ideological motivations but also training camps in Afghanistan (Tellis, 2009).

LeT is not alone in being linked to the Al Qaeda network, which acts as an umbrella organization, providing financial, technical, or sometimes solely ideological support to a number of globally based jihadist organizations. The 9/11 Commission Report details the evolution of Al Qaeda, which evolved into central hub of a network of like-minded groups first located primarily in North Africa, then expanding to the Middle East, South Asia, and Southeast Asia. Less formal operations in the West are also discussed in the Report. Flows between these networks take the form of monetary transactions, weapons, tactics, and ideas.

As detailed by Jessica Stern (2003), the birth of Al Qaeda is a story of global networking. In its early years, Bin Laden provided financial assistance to the Egyptian anti-statist group Egyptian Islamic Jihad (EIJ). Led at the time by Ayman al-Zawahiri, EIJ's "original objective was to fight the oppressive, secular rulers of Egypt and turn the country into an Islamic state" (Stern, 2003, p. 28). The failure of state-oriented political Islamist movements, that is movements that sought to establish Islamic states, has been well documented by Olivier Roy in his *The Failure of Political Islam* (1995). To summarize a far more intricate analysis, Roy argues that Islamist movements in a number of post-colonial Muslim majority states failed to offer a viable economic and political model to capitalism and the secular or pseudo-secular state. Consequently, by the mid-1990s there was little popular support for such groups, especially those of the armed variety. As it became evident that the Egyptian political Islamist movement was fizzling out, al-Zawahiri merged his organization with Bin Laden's, with the former providing manpower and the latter the financial means. While EIJ was by far the largest group that merged into Al Qaeda, similar groups in Uzbekistan, Sudan, Jordan, and, as discussed above, Pakistan, as well as South East Asia have become nodes in the network where Al Qaeda is the central hub. Each of these nodes, in cases like LeT where the organization is large enough, often displays characteristics of a network, with actors located in geographically dispersed locations.

Stern discusses the way in which different nodes connect and the key role of the internet, a point picked up by Loretta Napoleoni in *Terror Incorporated*. Napoleoni brings up the distribution of a "terror manual" after the train bombings in Madrid, identifying the justification for such attacks which almost exclusively target civilians.

The manual states that the Madrid attacks, and the earlier 9/11 strike and later London bombings can be justified using a similar logic, are meant “to create a disruption in the stability required for moving the economic sector toward development” (Napoleoni, 2005, p. 209). While the strategy of attacking the economic base of war dates back at least to World War II, the difference here is that in Al Qaeda’s eyes the enemy is not an army or a state but, seemingly, “economic development” in general. The targets for attack are those that upset the functioning of social networks in general – business centers, hotels (in Mumbai but also Jordan and Pakistan), and public transit systems (Madrid, London) have little if any strategic value as targets, yet both the attack itself and more importantly the creation of fear and panic, which seems to be the new strategic objective, can hamper flows across nodes and thus disrupt networks.

Turning now to “home grown terror,” that is the radicalization of young people, predominantly men, who are often born in and live in the West, provides further insight into the role of globalization in the creation and permeation of radical Islam. Roy’s (2006) work on understanding radical Islam (his terminology is “neofundamentalism”) among European Muslims is noteworthy, even though his monolithic understanding of Muslim migrants is problematic. Noting that, “a third of the world’s Muslims now live as members of a minority” (p. 18), Roy’s central argument is that an adoption of neofundamentalism is a result of Muslims trying to assert their identity in a globalized, non-Muslim context. Traditionally, the immigrant experience in the West has been explained through either assimilation (sacrificing unique cultural practices to become Western), multiculturalism (cultural practices remain but groups are segregated, typified by the Dutch policy of the same name from the 1970s to the 1990s), or the idea of a

“melting pot” (immigrant groups interact freely with the host culture and there is no state intervention, the United States being a commonly cited though imperfect example). Arguing that none of these three models explains the experience of modern day Muslims in Western society, Roy suggests that Western Muslims go through a process of individual identity construction. Roy acknowledges that Muslims have lived as minorities in non-Muslim lands for centuries, yet the contemporary experience of deterritorialization is different:

While old minorities had time to build their own culture or to share the dominant culture (Tatars, Indian Muslims, China’s Hui), Muslims in recently settled minorities have to reinvent what makes them Muslim, in the sense that the common defining factor of this population as Muslim is the mere reference to Islam, with no common cultural or linguistic heritage. (p. 232)

The new identity is a hybrid of Western ideas and Islamic principles and this interaction creates a religiosity that stresses “individualisation, the quest for self-realisation, the re-thinking of Islam outside of a given culture, and the recasting of the Muslim *ummah* in non-territorial terms” (Roy, 2006, p. 232). By examining the vast corpus of contemporary Muslim discourse, especially Internet forums, Roy is able to provide ample evidence to support this claim. Given the homogenizing trends that have accompanied the global expansion of Western-style capitalism, a similar logic may also apply to non-migrant Muslims living in the traditional “Islamic World”. The radical, then, can be understood as a reaction to the homogenizing dynamic of globalizing Western capitalism. However, these globalist radical ideas have not organically emerged around the world – there has been a conscious project to spread this ideology. The next section discusses the

emergence and distribution of these globalist radical ideas, which globalization playing both a facilitative and inspirational role.

#### B. Radical ideas and globalization

Contemporary jihadist violence is targeted not at states or armies but at disrupting socioeconomic networks. This is different from political Islamist groups that sought to establish Islamic states. Without getting into theological interpretation, it is still possible to see how globalist jihadist ideas have interacted with and expanded through networks and globalization processes.

In understanding the role of ideas behind contemporary jihadist violence, it is necessary to look at the thoughts of Sayid Qutb, who has been described as the founder of radical Islam (Cook, 2005, p. 102) and the man who inspired Bin Laden (Irwin, 2001). As I am consciously staying away from theology, I will focus on Qutb's general ideas and their influence rather than his interpretation of the Koran<sup>15</sup>. Writing in Egypt in the 1960s, Qutb believed that problems facing Muslims "stemmed from the fact that Muslim societies were no longer ruled by Muslim norms and laws (the *shari'a*) and had become apostate" (Cook, 2005, p. 103). To fix this situation, Qutb advocates placing violent jihad as a pseudo-sixth pillar of Islam, believing that such a move would rid the Muslim world of the ignorance that has caused its decline from world power to periphery.

Qutb's ideas were influential in Egypt and served as bedrock for the Muslim Brotherhood, a group that sought to establish Islamic states in Egypt, Palestine, and, with

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<sup>15</sup> It is worth noting that Qutb, unlike almost all Islamic scholars, focused exclusively on the Koran, disregarding both the hadith and sunnah, which detail the life and words of Muhammad and are generally regarded as key texts

very limited success, elsewhere. Thus Qutb's ideas were initially considered applicable at the level of the state, and it wasn't until the Soviet-Afghan war that they were explicitly expanded to appeal at the global level. Abdullah Azzam had been advocating jihad for the sake of global Islam since the 1970s in Palestine, where his calls for Muslim warriors from around the world were never heeded (Cook, 2005, p. 128). By the time of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, however, global networks connecting jihadists had begun to form and now Azzam became an influential and significant proponent of a global jihad. No longer was the focus on the "near enemy" of the non-Islamic state but instead Azzam envisioned a globalist salvific jihad that would "revolutionize Muslim society and turn it away from failure and impotence" (Cook, 2005, p. 130).

Osama Bin Laden was a student of Azzam and initially adopted many of his ideas, though one of the defining features of the contemporary jihadist movement is its ideational malleability. As discussed by Stern (2003), Al Qaeda's philosophy responds to changing socio-historical context and is open to influence by other, sometimes even non-Islamic, ideas. It is thus not surprising that, responding to interest from increasingly diverse audiences, Bin Laden's calls to holy war have become increasingly wider in their scope. The first, in 1992, "urged believers to kill American soldiers in Saudi Arabia and the Horn of Africa" (Stern, 2003, p. 29). The second in 1996 detailed Western atrocities against Muslims while the third in 1998 specified attacking American civilians rather than soldiers. This shift to targeting civilians has said to have disturbed several radical networks, who began questioning Al Qaeda's legitimacy to call for jihadist war. Then in 2002, Bin Laden's statement to Al Jazeera emphasized "Israel's occupation of Palestinian lands and the suffering of Iraqi children under UN sanctions, concerns broadly shared in



the Islamic world” (Stern, 2003, pp. 29-30). The targets now were expanded further, with the broadly identified “Jews and crusaders” referring to any non-Islamic institution, group, or individual. Appealing to a wider audience with each dictate and expanding the scope of legitimate targets, Al Qaeda’s ideology is clearly not set in stone.

To sum up the evolution of globalist jihadist ideology, early followers of Qutb’s radical Islam, which placed violent jihad as a pseudo-sixth pillar of Islam, were anti-governmental in nature, targeting the “near enemy” of the state. Since then, through the ideas of Azzam and the operations of Bin Laden, radical Islam has become globalist, targeting the difficult to define “far enemy” that consists of states, civilians, and socioeconomic networks considered un-Islamic. The 2008 attacks in Mumbai, conducted by group previously focused on creating an independent, Islamic Kashmir, offers further evidence of this globally aware ideology. The attackers in Mumbai were instructed not to target the police, army, or even Indian civilians, but instead foreigners – citizens of the US, Europe, and Israel (Blakely, 2008). Ideas driving the movement have transformed from anti-statist to globalist, and thus the target is not the state but social networks.

Globalization and networks enable the spread of these globalist radical ideas to all corners of the globe. Groups like Al Qaeda have been able to plant radical imams all over the world, as evidenced by cases like Anwar al-Aulaqi in the United States (Schmidt, 2008), Abu Hamza in the United Kingdom (Casciani, 2004), and Abou Khaled in the Netherlands (Buruma, 2006). It is difficult to imagine such a level of global coordination in an era with less “time-space compression,” to refer back to Harvey’s terminology. In addition, the Internet has played an important role in the dissemination of violent radicalism. The World Wide Web can be used to identify and exploit sympathizers

(fundraise), spread propaganda (recruit and motivate), maintain anonymity, magnify the perception of the power of radical groups, function as a command and control center, and gather information on potential targets (Thomas, 2003). In a 2004 article, Brigit Bräuchler explores how radical Islamic groups consider the Internet an important tool, not only to plan and implement terrorist attacks but even to support the creation of radical thoughts and ideas (Bräuchle, 2004). Bräuchler notes that radical Islamic groups use the Internet to “construct an identity that is congruent with their offline philosophy but extends its reach” (Bräuchle, 2004, p. 267). She proceeds to discuss how, by offering skewed interpretations of religious and historical texts like the Koran and the hadith, as well as contemporary news, radical groups are able to reach “a wide range of people whose perception of Islam is strongly influenced by these presentations” (Bräuchle, 2004, p. 268). It should come as no surprise that the chief webmaster for many Al Qaeda related websites was considered “far more important than any foot soldier or suicide-bomber” (The Economist, 2007). The Internet has allowed contemporary jihadists to convert youth to their radical ideology, communicate while remaining anonymous, and plan attacks without being geographically present.

For a final thought on the significance of ideas in globalist radical Islam, I turn to Hamid Mir, a Pakistani journalist and Osama Bin Laden’s handpicked biographer (Baldauf, 2001). Mir describes Bin Laden as a “cave man” with “an AK-47, a kilogram of grenades, a kilogram of explosives, and a donkey” (as quoted in Baldauf, 2001). For Mir, al-Zawahiri, as the thinker behind Al Qaeda, is far more important than Bin Laden, who’s role is akin to that of a politician. Zawahiri “is not interested in fighting in the mountains. He is thinking more internationally...He was behind the terrorist attacks on

tourists [the 1997 attack in Luxor left 58 dead]. He is the person who can do the things that happened on Sept. 11” (as quoted in Baldauf, 2001). Representing the persuasive and intellectual side of Al Qaeda, it is evident that al-Zawahiri – the visionary of the organization – occupies a position of considerable significance.

Globalization and networks have had a significant impact on the nature, production, and distribution of ideas. Ideas have determined and been determined by the mode of warfare employed in contemporary jihadist violence. Globalist radical Islam works through global networks, making extensive use of information and communication technologies. The aims and means of the movement are increasingly globalist. By analyzing the case of Mohammed Bouyeri, the Dutch Muslim student who murdered filmmaker Theo Van Gogh, we can more specifically see the ways in which globalist networks and ideas combine.

### **III. The case of Mohammed B.**

Mohammed B., as he is most commonly known, seemed by all accounts to be a well integrated Dutch-Moroccan living in Amsterdam. Born to first-generation Moroccan immigrants, Bouyeri went to university, had a Dutch girlfriend, enjoyed drinking beer and smoking marijuana with both other immigrants and ethnic Dutch friends, and seemed like a case of multiculturalism going well. Yet over the course of a year, starting in February 2003, he completely deserted “Western values” and became increasingly radical (Buruma, 2006, p. 192). Not surprisingly, perhaps, this radicalization occurred immediately after a number of personal setbacks: his mother passed away, he was

rejected by a number of employers, and a community center he was working to build was refused funding by the government. He blamed the Netherlands' unfair treatment of Muslims for these events. Around the same time, Mohammed began meeting Abou Khaled, a radical Syrian preacher with possible ties to Al Qaeda. Khaled taught Mohammed B. and his "close circle of like-minded friends," what became the Hofstad Network, a violent, radical version of Islam with a specific focus on hating "the infidels" (Buruma, 2006, p. 211).

The Hofstad Network of the Netherlands centered around Khaled and its members consisted mostly of second generation Muslim immigrants, but it was involved in flows that transcended national borders. It is believed that "Hofstad was connected to networks in Spain, Morocco, Italy, and Belgium, and it was planning a string of assassinations of Dutch politicians, an attack on the Netherlands' sole nuclear reactor, and other actions around Europe" (Leiken, 2005). European intelligence has also found links between Hofstad and a group that bears key responsibility for the Madrid train bombings and the Casablanca attacks in 2003 (Leiken, 2005). Khaled arrived in the Netherlands on a mission to expand globalist radical Islam, and in Bouyeri he found a willing disciple. Bouyeri turned to the internet to pursue his interest in jihad, and soon he was hosting meetings where downloaded videos of executions in the Middle East and other similar propagandistic material were shown. He also began maintaining a website where he would post ideological tracts (Buruma, 2006).

Yet despite Mohammed's increasing devotion to globalist radical Islam, he "remained incredibly Dutch", and here is an appropriate point to introduce a discussion of ideas (Buruma, 2006, p. 213). Unlike previous historical eras, where the individual was

unlikely to encounter ideas outside of those available and relevant to her/his immediate environs, the globalization of information technology has allowed for the widespread dissemination of a multitude of ideas and ideologies. Mohammed seemed attracted to globalist jihad but retained a fiercely liberal understanding of the key role of the individual and thus his approach to violence came from a very individualized internalization of jihadist Islam. For Mohammed, this was not a fight for Islam in Israel or Chechnya or Iraq, but rather in the Netherlands. As he stated during his trial, Mohammed could not live in a liberal democratic society because free speech allowed people to insult Allah and the Koran (Buruma, 2006, p. 189). Yet it was exactly through the political liberties afforded to the Dutch that Mohammed planned on waging his larger battle. He wrote:

Since the Dutch political system encourages its citizens (especially the alochtonen, the Muslims) to take an active part in the problems of society...people did indeed rise to take on social responsibilities. Such people not only shouldered responsibilities for The Netherlands, but for the whole world. They will liberate the world from democratic slavery (as quoted in Buruma, p. 217).

As Buruma notes, despite his pessimistic view regarding the state of Islam in the world, Mohammed believed that “rescue was at hand” because “the knights of Islam would rise from...the Netherlands” (Buruma, 2006, p. 217).

In November 2004, Mohammad B. shot and killed the controversial and provocative filmmaker Theo Van Gogh, who had earlier made a film, *Submission*, which

was highly critical of Islam. Stabbed into his chest was a letter, written in a Dutch that had been through “several layers of awkward translation...much of Bouyeri’s knowledge of radical Islamist rhetoric came from English translations of Arabic texts downloaded from the internet” (Buruma, 2006, p. 4). The letter was addressed to Ayaan Hirshi Ali, a fervently anti-Islamic Dutch politician, and directly threatened Dutch politicians, the Dutch state (which was “controlled by Jews”), America, Europe, and infidels in general (Browne, 2004). The investigation into the murder later found a CD-Rom at Bouyeri’s house containing videos of jihadist violence. The CD-Rom was edited in London and the videos, which included the execution of American Daniel Pearl, were from a Saudi Arabian website (Buruma, 2006, p. 4).

The case of Mohammad B. serves to demonstrate the role of networks, technology, and ideas in globalist radical Islam. Part of what Roy calls the deterritorialized Muslim population, Bouyeri, under the tutelage of a Syrian preacher, linked into a network that spread around the globe and had a globalist agenda. His actions, while local, sought to resonate with a much wider population, thus his claim that his target was not just Van Gogh but the Dutch state, Europe, America, and infidels everywhere. Studying the processes of globalization provides useful insight into *what* contemporary jihadist violence is and *how* it came about.

#### **IV. Conclusion**

The warfighting paradigm adopted by contemporary jihadists is globalist in nature. Networks play a key role, linking together actors in geographically discontinuous

regions from various socioeconomic backgrounds. The targets chosen for attack are rarely military. The purpose of these attacks is not to “defeat” the enemy but rather to disrupt networks. As such, random and suicidal operations are especially effective, causing fear and panic and hampering the continuation of daily life. Targeting hotels, economic hubs, and transportation systems seems to be especially preferred. The cost of attacks is minimal and represents an asymmetrical opposition to the technologically advanced and/or manpower intensive armies of states. Easily available information technology is used extensively and flows across globally located actors take the form of arms, finances, and ideas.

The way radical groups organize for and implement war further supports the central role of globalization processes. Networks are created through interpersonal interactions as well as anonymous association over the internet. These networks have brought together several previously discrete actors. Both through these networks and because of them, radical Islam has increasingly become more globalist not only in its nature but also in its outlook. Anti-governmental Islamist groups have shifted focus to the “far enemy”, attacking global socioeconomic networks instead of local governance structures. Through networks and the unprecedented expansion of information technology, radical ideas have reached individuals in all corners of the globe.

The case of Mohammad Bouyeri, a radical Dutch Muslim who murdered filmmaker Theo Van Gogh, supports the arguments above. Bouyeri directly targeted a local celebrity, but he saw his enemy in global terms. Linked to a jihadist network by Syrian preacher, Bouyeri looked to the internet for inspiration and documented the evolution of his ideology on a personal website. Bouyeri assassinated Van Gogh in a

public place in broad daylight, maximizing the creation of fear and panic. Mohammad B., it is appropriate to say, can be studied as a symbol of the New War.

The goals of radical Islam have evolved from being anti-governmentalist, focused on establishing Islamic states, to globalist, aimed at establishing Islam at the center of the world system. The targets attacked are no longer state related but rather civilians and networks that have become central organizational units in the contemporary era. Attacks are more symbolically than strategically important (though destroying symbols is its own strategy) and intended to disrupt the risk management principles that have, according to Ulrich Beck, become the basic tenets of present day societal organization. Globalist jihadists are not, like their Islamist predecessors, hierarchically organized but rather diffuse and protean. Globalization has both enabled the creation of globalist jihadist networks and influenced its evolving ideology.



## FIVE

# Conclusion

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*Every war is different, every war is the same.*

- Anthony Swofford, *Jarhead*

### I. Summing Up

An appropriate theory for the transformation of war through globalization should explain how globalization processes have affected change in the institution of war. By approaching the subject from three temporal perspectives, it is possible to identify and specify the nature and change in the transformation of war in the contemporary era. Furthermore, it is important to consider agency, and thus an analysis of war must also discuss the role of ideas. This paper has attempted to build such a model. However, a theoretical framework is useful only if it helps us understand what it is trying to explain. By applying the model developed earlier to contemporary jihadist violence, perhaps the primary topic on the contemporary security agenda, it is evident that globalization has indeed had a profound effect on war.

I began this project by pointing out the distinction between the unchanging nature of war and its mutable character. I then discussed the role of globalization processes, specifically the rise of network societies and the role of information technologies, in transforming the character of war. Using a Braudelian model, I approached the subject of war from the temporal perspectives of l’histoire événementielle, conjunctural time, and the longue durée. The analytical units specific to war that spawned out of Braudel’s lenses

were the warfighting paradigm, the social mode of warfare, and the historical structure of war. Globalization has deeply affected change in the warfighting paradigm and the social mode of warfare. There is also evidence that from the perspective of the *longue durée* war may be undergoing transformation, though it is too soon to reach definitive conclusions on this matter. Given the broad historical nature of the *longue durée* and the relative recency of the globalization phenomenon, analyzing the historical structure of contemporary jihadist violence would be unwise at this time.

Examining contemporary jihadist violence from the perspective of *l’histoire événementielle* and conjunctural time, it is evident that this New War analysis helps explain *what* this form of warfare is and *how* it occurs. Globalization has both enabled the creation of globalist jihadist networks and influenced its evolving ideology. Radical jihad is globally oriented and functions through networks, making extensive use of information and communication technologies. The following table summarizes some of the ways in which the transformation of war through globalization manifests itself in contemporary globalist jihad.

<b>Unit of Analysis</b>	<b>Effects of Globalization</b>	<b>Contemporary globalist jihad</b>
<i>Warfighting Paradigm</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Asymmetry</li> <li>• Autonomization</li> <li>• Globally oriented through transnational networks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cost effective methods like suicide attacks</li> <li>• Globally orchestrated</li> <li>• Arms and finances flow between, across, and through networks</li> </ul>
<i>Social Mode of Warfare</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Networked, linking military, political, economic actors</li> <li>• Ideas evolve through and because of networked organization</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Globally located networks bringing together financiers, ideologues, foot soldiers</li> <li>• Shift from statist to globalist ideology</li> </ul>
<i>Historical Structure of War</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risk as constitutive antagonism?</li> <li>• Decentralized political architecture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not specifiable</li> </ul>

The framework discussed above is worth pursuing further, yet there are two shortcomings that need be addressed. First, network theory in general remains a fledgling approach that requires further theorization. Castells' work, first published more than a decade ago, has spawned noteworthy offshoots in diverse fields including urban sociology and cultural sociology, yet with the exception of Duffield's work there has been little theoretical analysis of network war. The role of communications technology is rarely discussed by scholars of war outside the narrowly focused "strategic studies" field, where nothing beyond the warfighting paradigm is considered. It is likely that as the scale and scope of social transformation through the rise of network societies becomes better understood, scholars of war will further explore the deeper and wider implications of networks.

A second area where the Braudelian model of this paper does not help us is in understanding the motivations, the *why*, of contemporary jihadist violence. The *what* and *how* questions are important, to be sure, but there is much about this movement that we cannot understand. It may be that because networks can bring together discrete individuals, it will become more and more difficult to answer the *why* questions regarding social movements. In somewhat more specific terms, social movements in previous eras were generally united by a common cause, a motivation around which people were mobilized, but because of the rise of networks it may be that individual rather than group motivations need to be examined. A more likely and feasible task may be to look at specific groups. We may, for example, be able to generalize across radical jihadists in England, but their motivations could be very different from those of radical jihadists in Pakistan.

Addressing these above two shortcomings would greatly improve the New War framework, though it is difficult to see how, with regard to the second point above, a structural approach can address motivation. Perhaps that task is better left to psychoanalysts, especially given the increased individualization that characterizes new social movements. Political science in general has yet to properly understand globalization, with the focus being on either *l’histoire événementielle* or the *longue durée*, while it may be that conjunctural analysis is most useful.

## **II. What next?**

The broadly defined New War framework has come a long way since it was first proposed in the 1990s. In the aftermath of 9/11, it had somewhat diminished in popularity as scholars chose alternative methods to explain contemporary jihadist violence. This paper indicates that, adequately theorized, the notion that globalization has transformed the character of war deserves further exploration. The warfighting paradigm and the social mode of war in the contemporary period are likely to be affected by globalizing contextual forces. My study examined an explicitly globalist form of violence, but I would predict that even more territorially contained conflicts, for example in Sri Lanka, Palestine, and Mexico, may be better understood through the framework offered here. Work by scholars like Duffield and Kaldor has previously discussed the role of global networks in local conflicts, and in taking segmented globality seriously the next step would be to discuss particular examples of New War.

More specifically with regard to the conflict addressed in this paper, there is a need to better understand the ideological evolution of globalist jihad. With rare

exceptions, efforts at understanding contemporary jihadist violence rarely seek to explain why and how the ideology became globalist. There is an unnecessary tendency to either essentialize the “Muslim World” and treat it as a monolithic, historically continuous whole, or to ignore the role of ideas altogether. The development of *globalist* ideology is not purely a theological matter and deserves further analysis through the tools of political science and sociology. The role of history and context must be considered when discussing both globalization and war, or for that matter any socially embedded institution.

Policy oriented scholars may also seek to examine the political implications of New War. There is little doubt that network societies and globalized information technologies are here to stay, so reversing this trend is an unlikely solution. By understanding how New Wars like globalist jihad work, it may be possible to more effectively design policy and governance structures. Scholars like Ulrich Beck and David Held have begun advocating for a more consciously promoted cosmopolitan system of global governance to effectively manage an increasingly globalizing world, though far more research on the matter is needed.

The tendency of policymakers to focus on analyzing phenomenon in the immediate term, using the time frame of l’histoire événementielle, is worth commenting on. While there is no doubt that some problems need immediate, effective, and efficient responses, in general an approach more in line with conjunctural analysis may be useful. New War is a case in point, where focusing on immediate actions may detract from long term solutions. It appears increasingly likely that the state in its 20<sup>th</sup> century form may be unsuitable to govern today and tomorrow, and the sooner that policymakers and policy

thinkers realize this the better. Acknowledging that historical processes are far too complicated to be addressed with quick-fix policies would add some much needed humility to the work of policy designers.

To paraphrase Manuel Castells, the contemporary moment is one of incredible change across the social landscape. Through processes of time-space compression, human activity at many levels – economic, cultural, political – has been transformed in a number of ways. War, as a socially embedded institution, has been caught up in the tide of globalization and undergone a shift at least at the level of the warfighting paradigm and the social mode of warfare. The effects of globalization at the level of the long durée, both specific to war and more generally, are more ambiguous, and it is necessary to be careful and specific when discussing socio-structural transformation.

The speed, scale, and scope of globalization are not fully understood, neither is the trajectory of social life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The ways in which social phenomenon are transformed through globalization is likely to be explored for years to come, and I can think of no better way to conclude than to restate the provocation from the YouTube video cited at the start of this essay, and urge scholars to take up the challenge of responding: What does all this mean?

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