MARY KALDOR

NEW & OLD WARS

ORGANISED VIOLENCE IN A GLOBAL ERA

3RD EDITION

New and Old Wars

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polity

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Preface to the Third Edition

In recent years, a number of scholars have remarked on what they describe as the decline of war in the twenty-first century, as well as the decline of combat-related casualties. These include the celebrated book by Steve Pinker, *The Better Angels of Our Nature*, the Human Security Report and John Mueller's book, *The Remnants of War*.[1]

What these studies show is a decline in what I call in this book 'old war' – that is to say, war involving states in which battle is the decisive encounter. Indeed, all these scholars base their conclusions on the Uppsala Conflict Data Program in which conflict is defined as involving states and is characterized by a certain minimum number of battle deaths. New wars involve networks of state and non-state actors and most violence is directed against civilians. Some critics of the 'new war' thesis conflate new wars with civil wars and argue that both inter-state and civil wars are declining. But new wars, as I explain in the introduction, are wars in which the difference between internal and external is blurred; they are both global and local and they are different both from classic inter-state wars and classic civil wars.

This tendency to define war as 'old war' obscures the reality of new wars. I do not know whether the number of new wars is increasing or not. Nor do we know the scale of casualties in new wars, although they are almost certainly lower than in 'old wars'. But my point is rather that we need to understand and

analyse this new type of violence. While we should celebrate the decline of 'old war', we cannot rest on our laurels; we need to be able to address the main contemporary sources of insecurity. In large parts of the world – Central Asia, East Africa or Central Africa – people experience great suffering, and this matters whether it is more or less than in the past. Moreover, new wars are associated with state weakness, extremist identity politics and transnational criminality, and there is a danger that this type of violence will spread as the world faces a growing economic crisis. In the context of spending cuts, there is a tendency for governments to cut the very capabilities most suitable for addressing new wars and to protect their capabilities for fighting 'old wars'.

This is why it is important to present a new edition of this book. I have updated the book in places and included new material. The first edition of the book was published before 9/11 and I have included a new chapter on the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. I argue that the 'old war' mindset of the United States greatly exacerbated the conditions for what was to become in both countries a new war. In fact, the experience of the wars led to new thinking in the Pentagon; the revamped counter-insurgency doctrine included ideas such as nation-building and population security and bringing together military and civilian capabilities. But it turned out to be very difficult to change the culture of the military and now the United States has reverted to an 'old war' campaign of defeating terrorists, using, in particular, long-distance air strikes in places such as Afghanistan, Pakistan, Yemen and Somalia. Even though precision has greatly improved and civilian casualties from air strikes are lower than in the past, as I argue in chapter 7, this further worsens the insecurity in these places.

The first edition of this book generated a lively debate about new wars and I have also included a new afterword that deals with this debate. Most of the criticisms question whether 'new wars' are really new or whether they are really war. My point is that they may not really be new and we may decide not to call them war but something is happening that is different from 'old war' and we need to understand it. It is the preoccupation with old war that prevents us from developing policy-relevant analysis.

Since writing the book, much of my work has focused on policy-oriented research and, in particular, developing the concept of human security as a way of addressing 'new wars'. I have not included this research in the book, even though I have updated chapter 6 'Towards a Cosmopolitan Approach', which represented an early version of my ideas on human security. Those who wish to learn more about human security can refer to two more recent books: *Human Security: Reflections on Globalisation and Intervention* and *The Ultimate Weapon is No Weapon: Human Security and the New Rules of War and Peace*, which I co-authored with a serving American army officer.[2]

Like Pinker and others, I greatly welcome the decline of 'old war'. But 'old war' can always be reinvented. Many of the critics point out, rightly, that the wars of the early modern period were similar to 'new wars' before states became as strong as they are today. The process of pacification and of eliminating brigands, highwaymen, pirates, warlords and other private wars was associated with the development of what I call 'old wars' – the wars of modernity of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, as I describe in chapter 2. It was through war that states were able to centralize and control violence. If we fail to address the new wars of today, something along the same lines could always happen again.

The most important reason for optimism at the moment is the wave of peaceful protest that started in the Middle East and has become worldwide. It is the rise of civil society that has marginalized Al Qaeda and other extremist militant groups. It is the kind of cosmopolitan politics that I argue, in this book, is key to finding an answer to new wars. Much depends, therefore, on how far this new awakening, as it is often described, produces an institutional response. There is, of course, a huge risk that failure to produce an institutional response will have the opposite consequence. Indeed, at the time of writing, 'old war' thinking, that is to say geopolitical or realist approaches that focus on the security of Israel or the threat of Iranian nuclear weapons, could exacerbate 'new wars' in places like Syria and Iraq. The current brutal repression in Syria is not a civil war; it is a war against civilians and against cosmopolitan politics.

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Abbreviations

ABiH	Army of Bosnia–Herzegovina
ANC	African National Congress
AU	African Union
BRA	Bougainville Revolutionary Army
BSA	Bosnian Serb Army
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CLC	Concerned Local Citizens
CPA	Coalition Provisional Authority
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
ECHO	European Community Humanitarian Office
ECOMOG	Economic Community of West African States Ceasefire Monitoring Group
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EU	European Union
EUFOR	European Force
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GPS	Global Positioning System
HCA	Helsinki Citizens' Assembly
HDZ	Croatian Democratic Party
HOS	Paramilitary wing of HSP
HSP	Croatian Party of Rights
HSR	Human Security Report
HV	Croatian Army

HVO	Croatian Defence Council
ICC	International Criminal Court
ICFY	International Conference on Former Yugoslavia
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDP	Internally displaced person
IDMC	Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre
IED	Improvised explosive device
IFOR	Implementation Force
IFP	Inkatha Freedom Party
IGO	Intergovernmental organization
IISS	International Institute for Strategic Studies
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IRA	Irish Republican Army
IRC	International Rescue Committee
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
ISCI	Islamic Supreme Council in Iraq
JAM	Jaish al-Mahdi (often known as Sadrists)
JNA	Yugoslav National Army
KLA	Kosovo Liberation Army
MIME-NET	Military-Industrial-Entertainment Network
MOS	Muslim Armed Forces
MPRI	Military Professional Resources Incorporated
NACC	NATO Coordination Council
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OAU	Organization of African Unity
OHR	Office of the High Representative in Bosnia–Herzegovina
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PASOK	Panhellenic Socialist Movement (Greece)
PGM	Precision-guided missile
RENAMO	Resistência Nacional Mocambiçana
RMA	Revolution in Military Affairs
RPA	Remotely piloted vehicle
SCR	Security Council Resolution
SDA	(Muslim) Party of Democratic Action
SDS	Serbian Democratic Party
SFOR	Stabilization Force
SIPRI	Stockholm International Peace Research Institute

SPLA	Sudan People's Liberation Army
SRT	Serb Radio and Television station
TO	Territorial Defence Units
UAV	Unmanned aerial vehicle
UCDP	Uppsala Conflict Data Program
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNPROFOR	United Nations Protection Force
UNU	United Nations University
WEU	Western European Union
WIDER	World Institute for Development Economics Research
WMD	Weapons of mass destruction

1
Introduction

In the summer of 1992, I visited Nagorno-Karabakh in the Transcaucasian region in the midst of a war involving Azerbaijan and Armenia. It was then that I realized that what I had previously observed in the former Yugoslavia was not unique; it was not a throwback to the Balkan past but rather a contemporary predicament especially, or so I thought, to be found in the post-communist part of the world. The Wild West atmosphere of Knin (then the capital of the self-proclaimed Serbian republic in Croatia) and Nagorno-Karabakh, peopled by young men in home-made uniforms, desperate refugees and thuggish, neophyte politicians, was quite distinctive. Later, I embarked on a research project on the character of the new type of wars and I discovered from my colleagues who had first-hand experience of Africa that what I had noted in Eastern Europe shared many common features with the wars taking place in Africa and perhaps also other places, for example South Asia. Indeed, the experience of wars in other places shed new light on my understanding of what was happening in the Balkans and the former Soviet Union.[1]

My central argument is that, during the last decades of the twentieth century, a new type of organized violence developed, especially in Africa and Eastern Europe, which is one aspect of the current globalized era. I describe this type of violence as 'new war'. I use the term 'new' to distinguish such wars from prevailing perceptions of war drawn from an earlier era, which

I outline in chapter 2. I use the term 'war' to emphasize the political nature of this new type of violence, even though, as will become clear in the following pages, the new wars involve a blurring of the distinctions between war (usually defined as violence between states or organized political groups for political motives), organized crime (violence undertaken by privately organized groups for private purposes, usually financial gain) and large-scale violations of human rights (violence undertaken by states or politically organized groups against individuals).

In most of the literature, the new wars are described as internal or civil wars or else as 'low-intensity conflicts'. Yet, although most of these wars are localized, they involve a myriad of transnational connections so that the distinction between internal and external, between aggression (attacks from abroad) and repression (attacks from inside the country), or even between local and global, are difficult to sustain. The term 'low-intensity conflict' was coined during the Cold War period by the US military to describe guerrilla warfare or terrorism. Although it is possible to trace the evolution of the new wars from the so-called low-intensity conflicts of the Cold War period, they have distinctive characteristics which are masked by what is in effect a catch-all term. Some authors describe the new wars as privatized or informal wars;[2] yet, while the privatization of violence is an important element of these wars, in practice, the distinction between what is private and what is public, state and non-state, informal and formal, what is done for economic and what for political motives, cannot easily be applied. A more appropriate term is perhaps 'post-modern', which is used by several authors.[3] Like 'new wars', it offers a way of distinguishing these wars from the wars which could be said to be characteristic of classical modernity. However, the term is also used to refer to virtual wars and wars in cyberspace;[4] moreover, the new wars involve elements of pre-modernity and modernity as well. A more recent term used by Frank Hoffman, which has gained widespread currency, particularly in the military, is 'hybrid wars'[5] – the term nicely captures the blurring of public and private, state or non-state, formal and informal that is characteristic of new wars; it is also used to refer to a mixture of different types of war (conventional warfare, counter-insurgency, civil war, for example) and, as such, may miss the specific logic of new wars. Finally, Martin

Shaw uses the term 'degenerate warfare', while John Mueller talks about the 'remnants' of war.[6] For Shaw, there is a continuity with the total wars of the twentieth century and their genocidal aspects; the term draws attention to the decay of the national frameworks, especially military forces. Mueller argues that war in general (what I call old wars) has declined and that what is left is banditry often disguised as political conflict.

Critics of the 'new war' argument have suggested that many features of the new wars can be found in earlier wars and that the dominance of the Cold War overshadowed the significance of 'small wars' or 'low-intensity' conflicts.[7] There is some truth in this proposition. The main point of the distinction between new and old wars was to change the prevailing perceptions of war, especially among policy makers. In particular, I wanted to emphasize the growing illegitimacy of these wars and the need for a cosmopolitan political response – one that put individual rights and the rule of law as the centrepiece of any international intervention (political, military, civil or economic). Nevertheless, I do think that the 'new war' argument does reflect a new reality – a reality that was emerging before the end of the Cold War. Globalization is a convenient catch-all to describe the various changes that characterize the contemporary period and have influenced the character of war.[8]

Among American strategic writers, there has been much discussion about what is variously known as the Revolution in Military Affairs, or Defence Transformation.[9] The argument is that the advent of information technology is as significant as was the advent of the tank and the aeroplane, or even as significant as the shift from horse power to mechanical power, with profound implications for the future of warfare. In particular, it is argued that these changes have made modern war much more precise and discriminate. However, these apparently new concepts are conceived within the inherited institutional structures of war and the military. They envisage wars on a traditional model in which the new techniques develop in a more or less linear extension from the past. Moreover, they are designed to sustain the imagined character of war which was typical of the Cold War era and utilized in such a way as to minimize own casualties. The preferred technique is spectacular aerial bombing or rapid and dramatic ground manoeuvres and most recently the use of robots and UAVs (unmanned

aerial vehicles) especially drones, which reproduce the appearance of classical war for public consumption but which turn out to be rather clumsy as an instrument and, in some cases, outright counterproductive, for influencing the reality on the ground. Hence Baudrillard's famous remark that the Gulf War did not take place.[10] These complex sophisticated techniques were initially applied in the Gulf War of 1991, developed further in the last phases of the war in Bosnia–Herzegovina and in Kosovo, and, most recently, in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and also Pakistan, Yemen and Somalia.

I share the view that there has been a revolution in military affairs, but it is a revolution in the social relations of warfare, not in technology, even though the changes in social relations are influenced by and make use of new technology. Beneath the spectacular displays are real wars, which, even in the case of the 1991 Iraq war in which thousands of Kurds and Shi'ites died, are better explained in terms of my conception of new wars. In this third edition, I have added a new chapter on the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan to show the clash between what I call technology-updated 'old war' and the 'new war' in both places.

The new wars have to be understood in the context of the process known as globalization. By globalization, I mean the intensification of global interconnectedness – political, economic, military and cultural – and the changing character of political authority. Even though I accept the argument that globalization has its roots in modernity or even earlier, I consider that the globalization of the 1980s and 1990s was a qualitatively new phenomenon which can, at least in part, be explained as a consequence of the revolution in information technologies and dramatic improvements in communication and data processing. This process of intensifying interconnectedness is a contradictory one involving both integration and fragmentation, homogenization and diversification, globalization and localization. It is often argued that the new wars are a consequence of the end of the Cold War; they reflect a power vacuum which is typical of transition periods in world affairs. It is undoubtedly true that the consequences of the end of the Cold War – the availability of surplus arms, the discrediting of socialist ideologies, the disintegration of totalitarian empires, the withdrawal of superpower support to client regimes – con-

tributed in important ways to the new wars. But equally, the end of the Cold War could be viewed as the way in which the Eastern bloc succumbed to the inevitable encroachment of globalization – the crumbling of the last bastions of territorial autarchy, the moment when Eastern Europe was 'opened up' to the rest of the world.

The impact of globalization is visible in many of the new wars. The global presence in these wars can include international reporters, mercenary troops and military advisers, and diaspora volunteers as well as a veritable 'army' of international agencies ranging from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as Oxfam, Save the Children, Médecins Sans Frontières, Human Rights Watch and the International Red Cross to international institutions such as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the European Union (EU), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the African Union (AU) and the United Nations (UN) itself, including peacekeeping troops. Indeed, the wars epitomize a new kind of global/local divide between those members of a global class who can speak English, have access to the Internet and satellite television, who use dollars or euros or credit cards, and who can travel freely, and those who are excluded from global processes, who live off what they can sell or barter or what they receive in humanitarian aid, whose movement is restricted by roadblocks, visas and the cost of travel, and who are prey to sieges, forced displacement, famines, landmines, etc.

In the literature on globalization, a central issue concerns the implications of global interconnectedness for the future of territorially based sovereignty – that is to say, for the future of the modern state.[11] The new wars arise in the context of the erosion of the autonomy of the state and, in some extreme cases, the disintegration of the state. In particular, they occur in the context of the erosion of the monopoly of legitimate organized violence. This monopoly is eroded from above and from below. It has been eroded from above by the transnationalization of military forces which began during the two world wars and was institutionalized by the bloc system during the Cold War and by innumerable transnational connections between armed forces that developed in the post-war period.[12]

The capacity of states to use force unilaterally against other states has been greatly weakened. This is partly for practical reasons – the growing destructiveness of military technology and the increasing interconnectedness of states, especially in the military field. It is difficult to imagine nowadays a state or group of states risking a large-scale war which could be even more destructive than what was experienced during the two world wars. Moreover, military alliances, international arms production and trade, various forms of military cooperation and exchanges, arms control agreements, etc., have created a form of global military integration. The weakening of states' capacity to use unilateral force is also due to the evolution of international norms. The principle that unilateral aggression is illegitimate was first codified in the Kellogg–Briand pact of 1928, and reinforced after World War II in the UN Charter and through the reasoning used in the war crimes trials in Nuremberg and Tokyo.

At the same time, the monopoly of organized violence is eroded from below by privatization. Indeed, it could be argued that the new wars are part of a process which is more or less a reversal of the processes through which modern European states evolved. As I argue in chapter 2, the rise of the modern state was intimately connected to war. In order to fight wars, rulers needed to increase taxation and borrowing, to eliminate 'wastage' as a result of crime, corruption and inefficiency, to regularize armed forces and police and to eliminate private armies, and to mobilize popular support in order to raise money and men. As war became the exclusive province of the state, so the growing destructiveness of war against other states was paralleled by a process of growing security at home; hence the way in which the term 'civil' came to mean internal. The modern European state was reproduced elsewhere. The new wars occur in situations in which state revenues decline because of the decline of the economy as well as the spread of criminality, corruption and inefficiency, violence is increasingly privatized both as a result of growing organized crime and the emergence of paramilitary groups, and political legitimacy is disappearing. Thus the distinctions are breaking down between external barbarity and domestic civility, between the combatant as the legitimate bearer of arms and the non-combatant, or between the soldier or policeman and the criminal. The bar-

barity of war between states may have become a thing of the past. In its place is a new type of organized violence that is more pervasive and long-lasting, but also perhaps less extreme.

In chapter 3, I use the example of the war in Bosnia–Herzegovina to illustrate the main features of the new wars, mainly because it is the war with which I was most familiar when I originally wrote this book. The war in Bosnia–Herzegovina shares many of the characteristics of wars in other places. But in one sense it is exceptional; it became the focus of global and European attention during the 1990s. More resources – governmental and non-governmental – have been concentrated there than in any other new war up until the current wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. On the one hand, this means that, as a case study, it has atypical features. On the other hand, it also means that it became the paradigm case from which different lessons were drawn in the post-Cold War period, the example which has been used to argue out different general positions, and, at the same time, a laboratory in which experiments in the different ways of managing the new wars have taken place.

The new wars can be contrasted with earlier wars in terms of their goals, the methods of warfare and how they are financed. The goals of the new wars are about identity politics in contrast to the geo-political or ideological goals of earlier wars. In chapter 4, I argue that, in the context of globalization, ideological and/or territorial cleavages of an earlier era have increasingly been supplanted by an emerging political cleavage between what I call cosmopolitanism, based on inclusive, universalist, multicultural values, and the politics of particularist identities.[13] This cleavage can be explained in terms of the growing divide between those who are part of global processes and those who are excluded, but it should not be equated with this division. Among the global class are members of transnational networks based on exclusivist identity, while at the local level there are many courageous individuals who refuse the politics of particularism.

By identity politics, I mean the claim to power on the basis of a particular identity – be it national, clan, religious or linguistic. In one sense, all wars involve a clash of identities – British against French, communists against democrats. But my point is that these earlier identities were linked either to a

notion of state interest or to some forward-looking project – ideas about how society should be organized. Nineteenth-century European nationalisms or post-colonial nationalisms, for example, presented themselves as emancipatory nation-building projects. The new identity politics is about the claim to power on the basis of labels – in so far as there are ideas about political or social change, they tend to relate to an idealized nostalgic representation of the past. It is often claimed that the new wave of identity politics is merely a throwback to the past, a resurgence of ancient hatreds kept under control by colonialism and/or the Cold War. While it is true that the narratives of identity politics depend on memory and tradition, it is also the case that these are 'reinvented' in the context of the failure or the corrosion of other sources of political legitimacy – the discrediting of socialism or the nation-building rhetoric of the first generation of post-colonial leaders. These backward-looking political projects arise in the vacuum created by the absence of forward-looking projects. Unlike the politics of ideas which are open to all and therefore tend to be integrative, this type of identity politics is inherently exclusive and therefore tends towards fragmentation.

There are two aspects of the new wave of identity politics which specifically relate to the process of globalization. First, the new wave of identity politics is both local and global, national as well as transnational. In many cases, there are significant diaspora communities whose influence is greatly enhanced by the ease of travel and improved communication. Alienated diaspora groups in advanced industrial or oil-rich countries provide ideas, funds and techniques, thereby imposing their own frustrations and fantasies on what is often a very different situation. Second, this politics makes use of the new technology. The speed of political mobilization is greatly increased by the use of the electronic media. The effect of television, radio or videos on what is often a non-reading public cannot be overestimated. The protagonists of the new politics often display the symbols of a global mass culture – Mercedes cars, Rolex watches, Ray-Ban sunglasses – combined with the labels that signify their own brand of particularistic cultural identity. The use of mobiles and/or the Internet and social media hugely contribute to the construction of political networks.

The second characteristic of the new wars is the changed mode of warfare[14] – the means through which the new wars are fought. The strategies of the new warfare draw on the experience of both guerrilla warfare and counter-insurgency, yet they are quite distinctive. In conventional or regular war, the goal is the capture of territory by military means; battles are the decisive encounters of the war. Guerrilla warfare developed as a way of getting round the massive concentrations of military force which are characteristic of conventional war. In guerrilla warfare, territory is captured through political control of the population rather than through military advance, and battles are avoided as far as possible. The new warfare also tends to avoid battle and to control territory through political control of the population, but whereas guerrilla warfare, at least in theory as articulated by Mao Tse-tung or Che Guevara, aimed to capture 'hearts and minds', the new warfare borrows from counter-insurgency techniques of destabilization aimed at sowing 'fear and hatred'. The aim is to control the population by getting rid of everyone of a different identity (and indeed of a different opinion) and by instilling terror. Hence the strategic goal of these wars is to mobilize extremist politics based on fear and hatred. This often involves population expulsion through various means such as mass killing and forcible resettlement, as well as a range of political, psychological and economic techniques of intimidation. This is why all these wars are characterized by high levels of refugees and displaced persons, and why most violence is directed against civilians. Behaviour that was proscribed according to the classical rules of warfare and codified in the laws of war in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century, such as atrocities against non-combatants, sieges, destruction of historic monuments, etc., constitutes an essential component of the strategies of the new mode of warfare. The terrorism experienced in places such as New York, Madrid or London, as well as in Israel or Iraq, can be understood as a variant of the new strategy – the use of spectacular, often gruesome, violence to create fear and conflict.

In contrast to the vertically organized hierarchical units that were typical of 'old wars', among the units that fight these wars is a disparate range of different types of groups, such as paramilitary units, local warlords, criminal gangs, police forces, mercenary groups and also regular armies, including breakaway

units from regular armies. In organizational terms, they are highly decentralized and they operate through a mixture of confrontation and cooperation even when on opposing sides. They make use of advanced technology even if it is not what we tend to call 'high technology' (stealth bombers or cruise missiles, for example). In the last fifty years, there have been significant advances in lighter weapons – undetectable landmines, for example, or small arms which are light, accurate and easy to use so that they can even be operated by children. Modern communications – cellular phones or computer links – are also used in order to coordinate, mediate and negotiate among the disparate fighting units.

The third way in which the new wars can be contrasted with earlier wars is what I call the new 'globalized' war economy, which is elaborated in chapter 5 along with the mode of warfare. The new globalized war economy is almost exactly the opposite of the war economies of the two world wars. The latter were centralized, totalizing and autarchic. The new war economies are decentralized. Participation in the war is low and unemployment is extremely high. Moreover, these economies are heavily dependent on external resources. In these wars, domestic production declines dramatically because of global competition, physical destruction or interruptions to normal trade, as does tax revenue. In these circumstances, the fighting units finance themselves through plunder, hostage-taking and the black market or through external assistance. The latter can take the following forms: remittances from the diaspora, 'taxation' of humanitarian assistance, support from neighbouring governments, or illegal trade in arms, drugs or valuable commodities such as oil or diamonds or human trafficking. All of these sources can only be sustained through continued violence so that a war logic is built into the functioning of the economy. This retrograde set of social relationships, which is entrenched by war, has a tendency to spread across borders through refugees or organized crime or ethnic minorities. It is possible to identify clusters of war economies or near war economies in places such as the Balkans, the Caucasus, Central Asia, the Horn of Africa, Central Africa or West Africa.

Because the various warring parties share the aim of sowing 'fear and hatred', they operate in a way that is mutually reinforcing, helping each other to create a climate of insecurity and

suspicion – indeed, it is possible to find examples in both Eastern Europe and Africa, as well as Iraq and Afghanistan, of mutual cooperation for both military and economic purposes.[15] Often, among the first civilians to be targeted are those who espouse a different politics, those who try to maintain inclusive social relations and some sense of public morality. Thus, although the new wars appear to be between different linguistic, religious or tribal groups, they can also be presented as wars in which those who represent particularistic identity politics cooperate in suppressing the values of civility and multiculturalism. In other words, they can be understood as wars between exclusivism and cosmopolitanism.

This analysis of new wars has implications for the management of conflicts, which I explore in chapter 6. There is no possible long-term solution within the framework of identity politics. And because these are conflicts with extensive social and economic ramifications, top-down approaches are likely to fail. In the early 1990s there was great optimism about the prospects for humanitarian intervention to protect civilians. The concept of 'Responsibility to Protect' developed by the Canadian-sponsored International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty in 2001 was approved by the United Nations General Assembly in 2005 and has received considerable emphasis within the United Nations.[16] However, the practice of humanitarian intervention was, on the one hand, subverted by what happened in New York on 11 September 2001 and the subsequent War on Terror. And, on the other hand, the development of Responsibility to Protect is, I would argue, constrained by a kind of myopia about the character of the new warfare. The persistence of inherited mandates and the tendency to interpret these wars in traditional terms, has been the main reason why humanitarian intervention has often failed to prevent the wars and may actually have helped to sustain them in various ways – for example, through the provision of humanitarian aid, which is an important source of income for the warring parties, or through the legitimation of war criminals by inviting them to the negotiating table, or through the effort to find political compromises based on exclusivist assumptions. Even in cases where the goals are clearly humanitarian, as in the Kosovo and Libya wars, the means are often those of updated old war with problematic consequences.

The key to any long-term solution is the restoration of legitimacy, the reconstitution of the control of organized violence by public authorities, whether local, national or global. This is both a political process – the rebuilding of trust in, and support for, public authorities – and a legal process – the re-establishment of a rule of law within which public authorities operate. This cannot be done on the basis of particularistic politics. An alternative forward-looking cosmopolitan political project which would cross the global/local divide and reconstruct legitimacy around an inclusive, democratic set of values has to be counterposed against the politics of exclusivism. In all the new wars there are local people and places that struggle against the politics of exclusivism – the Hutus and Tutsis who called themselves Hutsis and tried to defend their localities against genocide; the non-nationalists in the cities of Bosnia–Herzegovina, particularly Sarajevo and Tuzla, who kept alive civic multicultural values; the elders in Northwest Somaliland who negotiated peace; the civil society groups in both Iraq and Afghanistan who insist on the idea of Afghanistan and Iraq. What is needed is an alliance between local defenders of civility and transnational institutions which would guide a strategy aimed at controlling violence. Such a strategy would include political, military and economic components. It would operate within a framework of international law, based on that body of international law that comprises both the 'laws of war' and human rights law, which could perhaps be termed cosmopolitan law, and it would put emphasis on various forms of transitional justice. In this context, peacekeeping could be reconceptualized as cosmopolitan law-enforcement. Since the new wars are, in a sense, a mixture of war, crime and human rights violations, so the agents of cosmopolitan law-enforcement have to be a mixture of soldiers and police. I also argue that a new strategy of reconstruction, which includes the reconstruction of social, civic and institutional relationships, should supplant the current dominant approaches of structural adjustment or humanitarianism.

The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan are good illustrations of the way in which misperceptions about the character of war exacerbate 'new wars'. The fall of the Taliban in December 2001 seemed to offer a new model of how to defeat authoritarian regimes. In Iraq, the Bush administration believed that they

could apply this model and defeat Saddam Hussein rapidly, using new technology to substitute for manpower, and install a new regime, along the lines of the occupation of post-war Germany and Japan. But in both countries, they found themselves caught up in an ever-worsening new war spiral, involving both state and non-state actors, identity politics, a criminalized war economy and growing numbers of civilian casualties. This is the subject of chapter 7, which has been written especially for this new edition.

In the final chapter of the book, I discuss the implications of the argument for global order. Although the new wars are concentrated in Africa, Eastern Europe and Asia, they are a global phenomenon not just because of the presence of global networks, or because they are reported globally. The characteristics of the new wars I have described are to be found in North America and Western Europe as well. The right-wing militia groups in the United States are not so very different from the paramilitary groups in other places. Indeed, in the United States it is reported that private security officers outnumber police officers by two to one. Nor is the salience of identity politics and the growing disillusionment with formal politics just a Southern and Eastern phenomenon. The violence in the inner cities of Western Europe and North America can, in some senses, be described as new wars. The suicide bombers responsible for the attacks of 7 July 2005 on London were, after all, home-grown. It is sometimes said that the advanced industrial world is integrating and the poorer parts of the world are fragmenting. I would argue that all parts of the world are characterized by a combination of integration and fragmentation even though the tendencies to integration are greater in the North and the tendencies to fragmentation may be greater in the South and East.

Since 9/11 it has become clear that it is no longer possible to insulate some parts of the world from others. Neither the idea that we can re-create some kind of bipolar or multipolar world order on the basis of identity – Christianity versus Islam, for example – nor the idea that the 'anarchy' in places such as Africa and Eastern Europe can be contained is feasible if my analysis of the changing character of organized violence has some basis in reality. This is why the cosmopolitan project has to be a global project even if it is, as it must be, local or regional in application.

The book was originally based on direct experience of the new wars, especially in the Balkans and the Transcaucasian region. As one of the chairs of the Helsinki Citizens' Assembly (HCA), I travelled extensively in these areas and learned much of what I know from the critical intellectuals and activists involved in local branches of the HCA. In particular, in Bosnia–Herzegovina, the HCA was given the status of an implementing agency of the UNHCR, which enabled me to move around the country during the war in support of local activists. I was also lucky enough to have access to the various institutions responsible for carrying out the policies of the international community; as chair of the HCA, it was one of my tasks, along with others, to present the ideas and proposals of local branches to governments and international institutions such as the EU, NATO, the OSCE and the UN. More recently, I have been involved in projects aimed at supporting civil society in Iraq and Afghanistan. As an academic, I was able to supplement and put into context this knowledge through reading, through exchanges with colleagues working in related fields and through research projects undertaken for the United Nations University (UNU), the European Commission and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).[17] In particular, I have been greatly helped by the newsletters, news digests, pleas for help and monitoring reports that now can be received daily on the Internet.

The aim of this book is not simply to inform, although I have tried to provide information and to back my assertions with examples. The aim is to offer a different perspective, the perspective derived from the experiences of critically minded individuals on the ground, tempered by my own experience in various international forums. It is a contribution to the reconceptualization of patterns of violence and war that has to be undertaken if the tragedies that are encroaching in many parts of the world are to be halted. I am not an optimist, yet my practical suggestions may seem utopian. I offer them in hope, not in confidence, as the only alternative to a grim future.

2

Old Wars

As Clausewitz was fond of pointing out, war is a social activity.[1] It involves the mobilization and organization of individual men, almost never women, for the purpose of inflicting physical violence; it entails the regulation of certain types of social relationships and has its own particular logic. Clausewitz, who was arguably the greatest exponent of modern war, insisted that war could not be reduced either to art or to science. Sometimes he likened war to business competition, and he often used economic analogies to illustrate his points.

Every society has its own characteristic form of war. What we tend to perceive as war, what policy makers and military leaders define as war, is, in fact, a specific phenomenon which took shape in Europe somewhere between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries, although it has passed through several different phases since then. It was a phenomenon that was intimately bound up with the evolution of the modern state. It went through several phases, as I have tried to show in table 2.1, from the relatively limited wars of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries associated with the growing power of the absolutist state, to the more revolutionary wars of the nineteenth century such as the Napoleonic Wars or the American Civil War, both of which were linked to the establishment of nation-states, to the total wars of the early twentieth century, and the imagined Cold War of the late twentieth century, which were wars of alliances and, later, blocs.