The Conduct Of War

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**Preface**

* The conduct of war, like practice of medicine, is an art, aim of statemen and soldier, like doctor, to prevent, cure, or alleviate the wars which inflict the international body. Conduct of both world wars not alleviated but increased the pain, resulted with giving more sense of insecurity. 11
* Conduct of war (techniques and the aims of war) is shaped by revolutions since 1789, decay of aristocracy, advent of democracy, the developments of industry and capitalism, the emergence of the masses and of socialism, the growth of populations and popular press. 12
* Clausewitz warning of grandest act of judgement is to rightly understand the war to engage, is not heeded by leaders of two world wars. Clausewitz remains one of the few who grasped that war “belongs to the province of social life”.
* A war which is not fought in pursuance of a clear and feasible policy will always end in disaster. Nothing is more important than to understand the relation of war and policy, to know what can and cannot be achieved by force of arms and to take account of the ways in which the character of modern war affects international diplomacy.
* Limited wars were possible in the age of absolute rulers. New armies of the Napoleonic age grow immensely in size and military power: the aims for which the war was fought began to change. Aim is not to force the enemy to change its policy, the purpose is the destruction of that government and the absolute surrender of its people.
* Such a concept of war is a disastrous return to barbarism. Each war leads inevitably to a state of instability which will persist and worsen until a new conflict breaks out.

**Limited wars of the absolute kings:** 15

The Thirty Years War and Italian Condottieri

* Wars in Italy during 15th century: human practice, not so brutal. Because mercenaries hired by condottieri see this as art and business. So, they take prisoners instead of killing. Profitable.
* Brutality of Wars of Religion with culmination of Thirty years war (1618-1648). 8M people killed. Absolute kings out of this crisis.

**The Jurists and The Limitation of War**

* Attack on destructiveness of unlimited war.
  + Moderation in fighting. “*De jure belli ac pacis*”. Grotius (1583-1645)
  + Fundamental Law of Nature (endeavour for peace) and Right of Nature (if peace is not possible, use advantages of war, by all means defend yourself). Hobbes, 1651

**Limited Warfare** 21-25

* Troops of 18th century are forced to serve in army, and budget were so limited to have a standing army, there is tacit agreement to shoot above head. Saxe.
* Frederick system to prevent desertion, night marches forbidden, close fight under officer eyes.
* Battles were avoided, manouvering become fashion. Prevalence of sieges to obtain magazines.
* The strategy resorted was to attrition rather than annihilation, not to kill army, attack supply line. War like foxes, rather than lions, 20 sieges, 1 battle. Earl of Orrery, 1677
* Limited warfare. Exhausting enemy’s treasury was a potent a means of winning war. Money, not blood was deciding factor.
* General might avoid engagement, carry war as long as he pleased, Marshal Saxe. Marshal Foch critique of him of being unwarlike. But he also says when opportunity comes, take action. Not content your position of master of the field of battle only, prosecute your victory. Pussue enemy with utmost power.
* The object was not find the enemy and beat, but fight at an advantage, or to subsist confortably.
* Restricted warfare was one of the loftiest achievements of 18th century, with Franch revolution it was lost. Ferrero, 1933

**Rebirth of Unlimited war**

* Philosophy of man is born free, and everywhere he is in chains, Rousseau, Social contract, 1762, laid the foundations of French Revolution. Defending sovereign rights of kings (1792 France declared war on Austria, who calls action to protect king of France) or popular right? Wars became much barbaric, free people unleash their emotions. 26-29
* Doctrine of the freedom of man produced a new kind of war: people war. The wars off people begin with revolution-Foch, 31
* Convention compulsory levy of 500K men. Return to tribal warfare[[1]](#footnote-1) with national footing. War became total, all population on it, levied young men, women work in hospitals, all infrastructure is used to support warfare against enemies, From unlimited war to total war of WW2, where the aim is to massacre civilian populations. Strategic aim. In 150 years conscription had led the world back to tribal barbarism. 31-33
* French revolution is less with new methods, but by transforming system to the state of nation, other governments tried to meet with ordinary means. Cclausewitz, den Foch, (Assymetry of action). New era of national wars, not goals of dynastic interest but propagation of phil ideas, independence, individual fortune. Foch, 34
* Propaganda unleashed the beast in man. Frech royalist du Pan,
* Conscription changed the basis of warfare. Now battle issought, losses can be replaced with others, expendable men, 30K in a month, Napoleon 35
* Change in mil admin and logistics: no more tents, bivouck, long columns split into divisional columns enabling concentration during or before battle. 36
* Conscripted army defect: less prone to peace, war became new normal. Pyscho error: imagining the victory brings security. Bad legacy of revolution so far. 37
* How democracy yielded its expression in war? Democratic values expected to give vice versa. Toynbee question, spencer explain this by evolution of human nature, in the beginning code of enmity towards outside, code of amity inside. External self-defence, internal cooperation. Question remained unanswered. 37-41

**Napoleonic warfare**

* French revolution is done without in place military power in turn created an anarchy. Energy of this anarchy directed outwardly in the form of foreign war. Which is unlimited in nature, with violating neutral territory, plunder and seeking out enemy and destroying aim. This is shown in first campaign of Napoleon in Italy. 42-44
* Elements of Napoleonic warfare: 44-48
  + **Unity of command:** 
    - First necessity, Napoleon
    - In its full sense: pol-mil under one man like Napoleon in 1800
    - Full unity may possible when pol decisions match with mil ones
    - In military ops I only consult myself, on diplomacy everybody, Nap
  + **Generalship and soldiership::**
    - Essential quality of general is resolution. See thing with your own eyes, not by others.
    - Success in war depends on *coup d’oeil,* and sensing psychological moment in battle. If attack at Austerlitz 6 hours early I would lost.
    - It is will, character and audacity that made me who I am
    - Stimulate vanity, increase credulity at the expense of fear, to the profit of confidence, converts a prudent and cautious creature into ***warrior***. A man who is willing to sacrifice his life for a cause (glory of nation and esteem of comrades) he does not understand.
    - He appealed to their sense of glory not to pockets. In fire, riding to ranks and shouting unfurl the standards. In Italy we were always 1 against 3, but the man has confidence on me. Moral force more so than numbers decides victory.
    - Personal touch between officers and men was the secret successful leadership.
  + **Planning:** single autocrat, enables to transfuse the genius into plans, as the war longer and complex lack of comprehending sub became problem. Ahaed planning, worst condition, Nothing is gained at war except by calculation. Reflexion and meditating. Exploration is directed to points to explore doubtful points.
* **The principles of Napoleonic war:** A study of his campaigns reveals 5 principles.48-52
  + **Reliance on offensive:** I think like Frederick, one should always be first to attack. At the opening careful to advance or not. Once decided never to stop. He systemized pursuit, difficult only 4 times accomplished: Rivoli-1797, Austerlitz-1805, Jena-1806, Echmühl-1809.
  + **Rapidity to economize time:** Marches are war. Aptitude for war is aptitude for movement. In the art of war, as in the mechanics, time is the grand element between weight and force.
  + **Surprise:** Unexpected concentration of forces on the battlefield, strategic surprise rather than tactical. Marengo-1800, Ulm-1805, Jena-1806, beginning of Waterloo-1814. Strategy: is the art of making use of time and space. My attention is more to time, because we can recover.
  + **Concentration:** The army must be assembled and the greatest force possible concentrated on the battlefield. Assemble: the art of disposing of troops is the art of war. Distribution of forces in such a way that they can unite in a few days. The first principle of war is that one should only engage in battle when all troops can be united on the battlefield. The art of generalship consists, when inferior in numbers, being superior to him on the battlefield. Inferior force, if correctly assembled, will generally defeat a superior force that is not.
  + **Protection:** he never engaged purely defensive battle. because of his inferiority 1814 he assume straitegic defensive, it consist rapid marches and attacks. All offensive is done with protective principle. The whole art of war consists in a well reasoned and circumspect defensive, followed by rapid and audacious attack. Establishing in rear of army a place de campagne, which cannot be surprised. Protective cavalry conceal his plan and movements.
  + Defensive warfare does not exclude the attack any more than offensive warfare excludes the defence.
* **Defects of it**, 52-58: Doing everything himself, combining duties of commander in chief and chief of staff. Napoleon’s marshals not brought to command, but to obey, they were followers and not leaders. many raised in rank for dynastic, pol, personal reasons. Continental system of blocade to England, who raised coalitions against France. It deprived the continental nations of goods. Wrong policy. They were ready to align with England rather than France. Russia break blocade, Moscow campaign starts.

**Clausewitz**

* Clausewitz 60-61
  + Distinction between two kinds of war: total aim, overthrow of enemy is seek; restricted aim: modifications in place is found in war definition: continuation of politics.
  + On war is not a study based on Napoleonic wars. It is a pseudo-philosophical exposition on war interlarded with valuable common-sense observations.
  + He assumed on Kantian lines (Graham), existence of absolute form of war, towards which all military operations should be directed. In brief, the ideal of the sum total of war, which in his mind he related to Kant’s *Ding-an-sich* (Thing-in-itself[[2]](#footnote-2)). This conception was a yardstick to measure all activities. He resorts it again and again, gets confused with its measurements, then abandons them for common sense. Confusion occurs if this is not kept in mind.
  + He foisted absolute concept on to Napoleon[[3]](#footnote-3) because of his offensive emphasis: misled and indirectly responsible for unlimited warfare in 20th century[[4]](#footnote-4).
  + But his penetrating relationship of war and policy, he never been excelled, even more important today. Lack of appreciation more potent factor of unlimited war than his absolute concept.
  + Bulk of On War is remotely related to the higher conduct of war and is now obsolete.
* **War** 61-62
  + Duel on an extensive scale,
  + Act of violence intended to compel our opponent to fulfil or will
    - Violence is the means- extreme: must push to its utmost bounds
    - Submission to our will is the object-aim to extreme: disarm or overthrow
  + This insistence of violence misled readers.
  + Once frees himself from philosophy, he says war is made with reality not with abstractions.
  + War in human activity is like gambling. Art of war has to deal with living and with moral forces. So it will never absolute. Province of danger, uncertainty, chance. War belongs to social life. It is a conflict of great interests which is settled by bloodshed. Because he uses absolute war to denote Napoleonic warfare as well as in its philosophical sense of a “conflict of forces left to themselves and obeying no other but their own inner laws, many of his followers misled.
* **Reasons to give up fighting, suspension n hostilities:**
  + Common sense: when it had enough of it. 62
  + Clausewitz: mutual destruction, is reduce war to tamed by: fear and indecision native to the human mind. Second: imperfection of human perception and judgement, 3th: greater strength of defence216-219,

1. Armed hordes, every man is warior, entire tribe engages in war, warfare is total. Agricultural civilisation made distinction between warrior, food-producer, non-combatant. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Bana veya algıladığım haliyle değil, kendinde nasılsa öyle olan şey. Bakan bizler görünüşü görürüz aslında sense ettiğimiz her şeyin içini değil, özünü değil, görünüşünü sense ederiz. Bu sense edilen şeylerin kendi içinde bir varlık olduğunu ispatlar. Ama biz sadece sense edilebileni sense ederiz. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Napoleon brought warfare swiftly and ruthlessly to state of absolute perfection. War, in his hands, was waged without respite until the enemy succumbed (Clausewitz, 1989, p. 580). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. But he qualifies this by saying this cannot be applied evey war in history, even to the warfare of Napoleon. Interplay of possibiliteis, limitations of human will modify its form to limited sense. But he insists to use this kind of conception as a measurement or point of reference to evaluate the condition in war. Natural inertia to overcome vast array of factors creates a barrier to reach absolute form of war(Clausewitz, 1989, pp. 580–581). [↑](#footnote-ref-4)