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**I. Introduction**

As an important political phenomenon, war contains specific behavioral laws of human society. How to re-understand the form and essence of war is a task full of challenges. Since the formation of the Westphalian system, nation-states have become the main actors in international relations, and the examination of war has mainly focused on armed violent conflicts between state actors — regular warfare . In this regard, Carl Von Clausewitz gave a comprehensive explanation and systematically examined the internal logic of war . However, the shape of war is constantly changing, which undoubtedly places higher demands on theoretical research .

In the first 20 years of the 21st century , the frequency of irregular warfare has increased significantly compared with the past. From the U.S. war on terror in Afghanistan and Iraq to the Russia-Ukraine conflict in Crimea and the Syrian civil war, to the small-scale wars in countries and regions such as Yemen, Libya, Pakistan, the Philippines, and the Gaza Strip, let us think about this issue Provides rich practical basis and research materials. Looking back at the history of war since the Second World War, there are three trends worthy of attention: First, the frequency of wars between countries has dropped significantly since the 21st century , and wars between major powers tend to disappear. Second, the frequency of wars between state actors and non-state actors has increased significantly. Third, in the current international society, the shape of war is undergoing major changes .

**2. Theoretical pedigree of unconventional warfare**

Archaeological research in recent years shows that group conflicts already existed in the earliest stages of human evolution. War accompanies the entire development process of human society, but it has different characteristics in different historical periods. Its participants also include tribes, city-states, empires, nation-states and other organizational forms. To some extent, unconventional methods of warfare have also existed throughout human history. However, unconventional warfare, with nation-states as one of the main subjects, is a political phenomenon that has only appeared in modern times. Therefore, it is necessary to examine existing research to further understand the nature, characteristics, and behavior of unconventional warfare .

**( 1) The nature of unconventional warfare**

Are there any essential differences between irregular warfare and conventional warfare ? Academics are divided on this. Some scholars believe that Clausewitz's theoretical construction of war has a certain time scope and geographical limitations. John Keegan pointed out that as a complex social phenomenon, war is not always rational, nor is it always rule - based, nor is it always political. Indeed, in human history, wars in different regions, different civilizations and different societies are often unique and even have distinct cultural attributes, which are essentially different from wars in modern Europe. Especially after the end of the Cold War, the deepening of globalization has gradually highlighted new forms of low-intensity wars, which do not present the same political nature as before. In other words, due to the relatively low intensity of war, inter-group conflicts present some irrational factors, making war take on a new look that is far different from the past. Some scholars believe that these relatively low-intensity unconventional wars are mostly non-political in nature, and Clausewitz’s thesis on the trinity of wars between states is gradually no longer applicable .

However, most scholars still insist that irregular warfare has not changed the nature of war. Colin S. Gray repeatedly emphasized when discussing unconventional warfare: War is war, its essence remains unchanged, but its form often changes . He pointed out that unconventional warfare is just a form of warfare and does not have much of its own unique essence. In other words, for irregular warfare, some important essences of war will not change, such as the primacy of politics and changeable enemies. These factors will never become obsolete in any type of war at any time. A group of scholars represented by Gray believes that from the perspective of theoretical genealogy, the politics of unconventional warfare does not jump out of Clausewitz's theoretical paradigm, and there is no need to overemphasize its uniqueness .

Western academic circles have traditionally been deeply influenced by Clausewitz, focusing mainly on governments, people, and armies and the rationality, passion, and skills they exhibit, which are less effective in the face of irregular threats from non-state actors. . When sorting out relevant war theories, it is not difficult to find that Clausewitz’s refinement of war does have its limitations, and he lacks sufficient attention to the practice of war outside Europe. Clausewitz's theory has a strong Eurocentrism. In terms of theoretical timeliness, it mainly focuses on the European war practice in modern times. In terms of theoretical practicality, it often ignores the particularities of the world outside Europe. However, current unconventional warfare exists mainly in the world outside Europe and is much broader in both time and space . Of course, we should admit that Clausewitz's theoretical paradigm has a high degree of universality, but we should also pay attention to the limitations of his theory when applying it to specific historical periods and geographical spaces .

**( 2) Characteristics of unconventional warfare**

Some scholars have long noticed that there are some unique characteristics of unconventional warfare and have paid long-term attention to them. Therefore, the academic literature on the characteristics of unconventional warfare is very rich and the research is relatively mature. These studies mainly focus on the subject of war, war intensity and strategic goals. discuss the characteristics of unconventional warfare .

First, the belligerents in unconventional warfare are non-state actors. The U.S. Department of Defense defines unconventional warfare as “ violent struggles between state actors and non-state actors over the legitimacy and influence of relevant populations . ” This definition has certain influence in policy circles and academia . Although unconventional warfare has attracted attention after World War II, its frequency and intensity are still not comparable to conventional warfare. After the "9·11" incident, the role played by non-state actors in wars gradually became more prominent, attracting greater attention from the academic community. Some scholars believe that unconventional warfare mainly includes two categories: people-centered unconventional warfare and anti-terrorism operations. From the perspective of war subjects, there are two main categories of non-state actors: First, terrorist organizations, mainly represented by the " Al Qaeda " organization, whose organizational form and organizational mission are relatively complex; second, anti-government armed organizations, represented by the Chechen rebels Government armed forces and " Islamic State " are represented. The goal of this type of anti-government armed organization is simple and clear, which is to overthrow the existing regime and achieve specific political goals through armed struggle or extreme means .

Second, the intensity of unconventional warfare is low. The intensity of wars has continued to increase in modern times, reaching unprecedented heights by World War II. Behind this, mass politics and industrialization pushed the war from national war to all-out war. In other words , two core factors, the development of the organizational form of nation-states and the technological progress brought about by the scientific and technological revolution in modern times, have promoted the emergence of war in an unprecedented form. After World War II, the emergence of nuclear weapons curbed the intensity of the war to a certain extent. Nuclear weapons are a matter of life and death. Their huge destructiveness and rapid growth in quantity make war an uneconomical choice, and the international community has entered the era of limited war. Despite this, the limited wars during the Cold War still maintained a high intensity. In comparison, the intensity of unconventional warfare in the 21st century is much lower. Specifically, it is mainly manifested in three aspects: First, the intensity of the war at the operational and tactical levels has been significantly reduced. In unconventional warfare, there are rarely battles in which both sides have tens of thousands of troops, let alone a decisive battle in which both sides invest hundreds of thousands or millions of troops. Second, compared with state actors, non-state actors have insufficient resources and institutional capabilities, relatively low scientific and technological levels, and are relatively disadvantaged in the manufacturing and use of advanced weapons and equipment, and their war potential is greatly limited. Third, compared with state actors, non-state actors are less organized, and the violent conflicts they cause have remained at a relatively low level for a long time .

Third, in unconventional warfare, fighting for people and political power is an important strategic goal. In the classic guerrilla warfare theory, establishing base areas and working with the masses has always been regarded as the magic weapon for victory. Mao Zedong believed that relying on the masses of the people is the foundation of guerrilla warfare; base areas " are the strategic bases on which guerrilla warfare relies on its strategic tasks to preserve and develop itself, and to eliminate and expel the enemy . " The successful experience of elevating guerrilla warfare to a strategic level, relying on the people, establishing base areas, and finally converting it to mobile warfare has been verified in countries and regions such as Vietnam and Cuba. This strategy rooted in the land and the people is also called " the character of relying on the land " by some scholars . It was only after the Vietnam War that Western strategic circles re-recognized this feature of guerrilla warfare. The reason is that the guerrillas always face the risk of being encircled and suppressed, and survival is their top priority. Therefore, they have a deeper understanding of the importance of relying on the people and the land. Since the 21st century, as the United States and its allies have suffered repeated setbacks in the Afghanistan War and the Iraq War, Western academic and policy circles have once again realized the importance of the people and formed a people-centered approach that focuses on winning the hearts and minds of the people. counterinsurgency strategy. These scholars believe that defeating the irregular enemy on the battlefield is not the most important, but delegitimizing it politically is the key, and therefore the battle should take place in the hearts and minds of the people rather than on the battlefield .

**( 3) Behavior in unconventional warfare**

Since one of the participants in unconventional warfare is a non-state actor, it presents an obviously asymmetric situation. The participants in unconventional warfare are divided into strong and weak ones, and there is a huge gap in strength between the two sides. Therefore, there are two completely different behavioral logics in unconventional warfare, both of which point to the core issue of winning the war by winning the hearts and minds of the people. When academics discuss how to win the hearts and minds of the people, they often focus on whether state actors and non-state actors use violence differently and the strategic interaction between the two .

From the perspective of the strong, in order to attack the weak, they need to change themselves to adapt to the requirements of war. Irregular warfare is essentially a strategic interaction in which strong state actors and weak non-state actors compete to exert their asymmetric advantages. Some scholars pointed out that, generally speaking, the United States' war method is to deal with conventional wars, especially major power wars. The United States has a strategic deficit in unconventional wars, so it needs to adjust itself. Strategically, the United States attempts to combat terrorism through special operations forces, but these efforts have many shortcomings. There are many discussions on this issue in academic circles and will not be discussed here .

non- state actors is different from that of state actors. In unconventional warfare, non-state actors are weak in terms of strength. How can the weak fight against the strong? Based on the differences in research objects, the answers given by different scholars are also different. Some scholars believe that terrorism mainly has five strategies : attrition , spoiling , intimidation , outbidding and provocation . Thomas E. Lawrence believed that the fundamentals of victory in unconventional warfare lie in: mobility, security (in the form of refusing to be targeted by the enemy), time, and doctrine (the idea of turning relevant subjects into friends ) . It should be pointed out that the current proliferation of technology has become an important new feature in unconventional warfare. Scientific and technological progress has led to the rapid development of weapon technology and combat platforms. These innovations have an important impact on the conversion of offense and defense and the victory or defeat of war. In particular, innovations in communication tools and information technology are reshaping the shape of unconventional warfare. Lawrence once said that the printing press is the ultimate weapon in the modern officer's arsenal. This logic is equally applicable today, as the development of information technology is changing the model of propaganda and mobilization. For non-state actors, unconventional media manipulation can serve their organizational legitimacy and war behavior, which is beneficial to changing the unfavorable situation in the war .

Based on the above pedigree of the nature, characteristics and behavioral theories of unconventional warfare, we have a basic understanding of its connotation. There are many names for unconventional warfare in academic circles , such as small-scale warfare, low-intensity warfare, counterinsurgency and guerrilla warfare. Relatively speaking, the connotations of these concepts are not accurate enough. In fact, academic circles have strict definitions of war. One definition holds that a war must include three elements: continuous fighting, organized armed forces, and at least 1,000 war- related deaths within a year. According to the definition of Sweden's Uppsala Conflict Data Program ( UCDP ) , war refers to an organized violent confrontation in which 1,000 or more people die within a year , and at least one of the subjects of the war is protected by international law. recognized sovereign state government or government representative body. Irregular warfare is a type of war that also has the above-mentioned basic elements of war. The author believes that unconventional warfare is a continuous violent struggle between state actors and the armed forces of non-state actors, which can lead to the death of more than 1,000 people within a year. The author will conduct the following research based on this definition .

**3. Basic logic of unconventional warfare**

For a long time, people have understood that war is more about being on the side of the strong or even the winner, and often neglect to observe other dimensions of war. In this sense, the existing traditional examination of war has a clear path and strict system. Some foundational strategists have proposed a systematic ideological system, which can be called the explicit logic of traditional understanding of war. The rise of unconventional warfare allows us to examine war from the perspective of non-state actors, explore and excavate an implicit logic, and open up another research path that has been ignored for a long time .

**( 1 ) Strategic behavior of non-state actors**

As the weaker party, non-state actors can confront the stronger through unique behavioral patterns. Examining the winning mechanisms of non-state actors in wars from the perspective of non-state actors is of great significance to understanding unconventional warfare. Based on the characteristics of non-state actors, this article refines their four main strategic behaviors in unconventional warfare, namely provocation, mobilization, attrition and large-scale campaigns .

The first type of strategic behavior is provocation. Non-state actors generally exist as weak actors and must carefully choose their struggle strategies in order to survive. Among them, provocative behavior by non-state actors is a relatively common strategy, and there are three main ways: First, discourse attacks. Non-state actors often face groups of different cultures and beliefs, so discursive attacks become an important option. Generally speaking, non-state actors tend to create antagonism between the two sides through religious beliefs, civilizational attributes and ethnic conflicts. Second, non-state actors can provoke state actors through terrorist attacks. Non-state actors attempt to gain recognition from state actors through violence. Relatively speaking, terrorist attacks by non-state actors are more flexible and are an option with relatively low political costs. Third, non-state actors can provoke state actors through guerrilla-type attacks. Small, dispersed and mobile guerrilla strikes are an important option for non-state actors. This provocative behavior is characterized by being more difficult to prevent and control, more targeted, and has a more lasting impact on national governance. Comparing the three, discourse provocation is a low-level provocation, terrorist attacks are relatively more intense, and guerrilla attacks are the most intense. The effect of terrorist attack provocations is relatively limited, and countries often do not respond strongly. Guerrilla attacks are more likely to elicit strong responses from countries, and are therefore also a more effective means of provocation .

The second strategic behavior is mobilization. In unconventional warfare, the strategic mobilization of non-state actors mainly has two dimensions: human mobilization and economic mobilization. Overall, non-state actors can mobilize human resources through two broad strategies. First, media propaganda is an important means for non-state actors to mobilize manpower. Non-state actors understand the importance of media propaganda and have developed a well-organized propaganda system. In terms of technical means, these non-state actors attach great importance to the latest Internet technology and use virtual communities and social new media to promote their ideas. In terms of propaganda content, they advocate nationalism and religious ideas, trying to win support and win over people's hearts through differences between different countries and regions, cultures and civilizations. In terms of mobilization channels, non-state actors try to establish elaborate social networks and a set of personnel training and distribution mechanisms. Second, non-state actors can mobilize manpower through aggressive tactics. Some scholars believe that extremists can force the government to respond through radical behavior and inspire public support for extremism. This stimulation may originate from anti-terrorism operations or the resulting change in people's assessment of the government's motives. In areas with complex ethnic relations, serious religious conflicts, and severe polarization between rich and poor, non-state actors are more likely to mobilize manpower through radical measures .

Economic mobilization is another important method of mobilization. Maintaining stable economic sources is a prerequisite for the survival and development of non-state actors, so the collection of taxes, black income and resource plunder have become indispensable means. Represented by the " Islamic State " , non-state actors will control a certain territory and population, and the taxes levied on the controlled territory and population are the core part of their fiscal revenue. Black revenues are also an important source of finance for non-state actors. In terms of specific sources of funds, they can obtain large amounts of wealth through extortion, robbery, kidnapping, and trafficking in human organs. In terms of channels, non-state actors often have a complete chain of illicit funds that can circulate funds through the international financial system. These extreme methods and secretive ways of extracting wealth provide non-state actors with relatively stable economic sources. Resource plunder cannot be ignored either. Non-state actors will also make full use of the resources in the territories they control and exchange for necessary foreign exchange reserves and strategic materials through international trade .

The third strategic behavior is attrition. In conventional warfare, war of attrition is a relatively common form of war . In the Vietnam War, Vietnam was the weak side. Although the casualty cost of the war of attrition was very high, this strategic choice was conducive to increasing the domestic political costs of the United States. It was a helpless but effective grand strategy. In unconventional warfare, wars of attrition between non-state actors and states are far more complex than between states. Relatively speaking, non-state actors mainly have three methods: First, terrorist attacks. Terrorism has multiple social functions such as exerting political pressure on a country and consuming its strategic resources. In other words, the implementation of terrorism can be seen as a strategy of struggle that continuously consumes the strategic resources of the target country. The second is violence. Non-state actors can also choose violent acts to disrupt normal economic life and social governance, and undermine the country's political order. The third is guerrilla warfare. In some countries with serious governance problems, rebellions and even guerrilla wars often emerge. Most guerrilla wars are low-intensity and small-scale and cannot subvert the existing political power. However, they often become a chronic disease of the country and consume a large amount of strategic resources. For example, the Tamil Tigers have been a persistent problem for the Sri Lankan government for more than 20 years . This war of attrition has created a lot of trouble for the Sri Lankan government .

The fourth strategic behavior is to launch a large-scale campaign. In addition to low-intensity confrontations, high-intensity large-scale battles are also an important choice for non-state actors. Large-scale battles have certain requirements on strength and timing, and their occurrence frequency is relatively low. However, large-scale battles often become the focus of both sides and determine the outcome of the war. If the war is won, non-state actors can significantly weaken the military power of state actors. They can also occupy important industrial and economic centers, control strategic locations and populations, and provide a solid foundation for their subsequent development and growth. There are two situations when large-scale battles break out between non-state actors and states: The first situation is when state actors gain the upper hand and take the initiative to attack non-state actors. The United States fights the Taliban and al-Qaida in Afghanistan , fights insurgents in Iraq, and Since 2014 , the Iraqi government forces' attacks against the " Islamic State " in Mosul are all of this nature. The second situation is when the strength of non-state actors reaches a certain threshold, and they can gather enough troops in a specific area to proactively launch a large-scale campaign .

**( 2 ) The winning mechanism of non-state actors**

Sorting out the behavioral logic of non- state actors, it is not difficult to discover their winning mechanism. Generally speaking, the winning mechanism of non-state actors mainly includes two parts .

First, enhance self-strength through unconventional means. Non-state actors use specific methods to provoke, mobilize, consume or launch large-scale battles against state actors, which arouse the anger of state actors to a certain extent and aim to expand political influence and express their views through these behaviors. Specific political demands and the creation of anger to direct confrontational behavior between groups. If the strength or size of non-state actors is taken into consideration, non-state actors with different strengths and weaknesses have obvious differences in their strategic choices. On the one hand, non-state actors have different strategies for dealing with governments. When attacked by state actors, weaker non-state actors are more likely to escalate violence. The logic behind this is that escalating violence can maximize the costs for state actors due to their weaker power and attract more support and sympathy through enhanced self-exposure. On the other hand, when state actors escalate violence, stronger non-state actors are generally less likely to use violence against civilians. How do changes in the strength and weakness of non-state actors affect their strategic choices? Mao Zedong had a more dynamic view on this issue. He believed that as strength grew, the guerrillas would gradually transform into regular armies, and guerrilla warfare would develop into mobile warfare, ultimately winning the war. Of course, this point of view is to examine the vertical evolution of the same force. However, not all armed organizations will develop and grow, and most non-state actors will find it difficult to develop to the stage of seizing power through conventional warfare .

Second, impose costs on state actors through unconventional means. Examining the strategic behavior of non-state actors, it is not difficult to find that their fundamental purpose is to increase the strategic burden on the country and force it to agree to negotiate or withdraw from the war. Therefore, continuing to escalate and burden state actors through violence and war is its primary goal. In other words, the strategy of terrorism is to consume state power and impose the costs of government rule or foreign occupation. According to the research of Robert Pape , suicide terrorist attacks are a strategic behavior and the choice of the weak in situations of power imbalance. Its strategic logic is to force modern democratic countries to make concessions on national self-determination in order to Withdraw the invading army. Therefore, the behavioral logic of non-state actors is based on precise and rational calculations. Since war is asymmetric, non-state actors are in a very difficult position, and to some extent it is a battle of wills between them and state actors. Non-state actors are stronger than states in terms of will and resilience, so they can exert sufficient strategic pressure on states and consume their strategic will in wars. If the strategic will of non-state actors is strong enough, then increasing the domestic political costs of state actors to shape their internal political preferences and ultimately achieve their political goals will be a feasible option for seeking final victory. It should be pointed out that compared with the purpose of state actors to eliminate effective forces, the motivations and means of choice of non-state actors are more complex. Moreover, from its violent behavior to guerrilla warfare to large-scale battles, the higher the intensity of the confrontation, the more consistent its internal logic is with Clausewitz's judgment .

non- state actors can successfully provoke states depends on the state actors themselves and their strategic choices. On the one hand, political factors influence how states respond to the behavior of non-state actors. Leaders of democratic countries are more susceptible to the influence of domestic society. If they respond weakly, they often have to bear high domestic political costs, so they tend to choose hard-line strategies. On the contrary, authoritarian countries have an easier time responding to public opinion, so they have more room for strategic choices, allowing them to make political compromises and choose relatively soft responses to a certain extent. On the other hand, the specific response method of state actors is also very important. Whether the state adopts strong military strikes or other violent actions directly affects the final outcome of the interaction between the two. Some scholars believe that when the strong adopts military strikes and the weak adopt guerrilla warfare, the weak often win the war; when the strong use violence and the weak use military counterattack, the strong often lose the war. Therefore, state responses need to be taken into account when discussing non-state actors .

To sum up, non-state actors can confront state actors through a variety of means. They themselves also know that they have no guarantee of victory in a war with state actors. Therefore, they try to prolong the war as much as possible by retaliating against state actors for military strikes. time, increasing the war costs and domestic political costs for state actors to maintain a state of war, becoming a basic choice to expand the chances of winning a war. In its internal logic, this is a situation of the weak versus the strong. Since the weak and the strong have different interests in survival, there are also important differences in their behavior patterns .

**( 3) The nature of unconventional warfare**

If we say that the explicit logic of war reflects mankind's attempt to understand the laws of war and rationally understand the mechanism of war, it also reflects the process of rational arrangement of the armed forces of modern countries. Then excavating the overlooked hidden factors and exploring and understanding the implicit logic of war provides an indispensable perspective for us to think about the complete form of war. The nature of unconventional warfare can be examined from the following three dimensions .

First, unconventional warfare is the militarization of the weak, and the status of non-state actors in war increases. In other words, modern warfare is tilting towards the weak in some aspects and areas. The evolution of international society has made some important trends more obvious: First, modern countries are increasingly sensitive to the casualty rate of war. In modern wars, the public is paying more and more attention to casualties in wars. If there are heavy casualties in wars , politicians often have to bear huge political costs, which undoubtedly exacerbates the vulnerability of state actors in unconventional wars. Second, changes in the form of social organizations make the government more susceptible to domestic social constraints. Technological progress has accelerated the speed of information transmission, the development of associations has enhanced the cohesion of the people, and the global trend of democratization has deepened. These factors make it easier for non-state actors to influence the outcome of wars by shaping the internal ecology of state actors . Third, the international society is becoming more civilized and its operation and maintenance are increasingly based on rules. For major countries, failure to respect rules and keep commitments is a costly choice. In war, the traditional rules of war constrain the country's choices, but non-state actors can ignore the traditional rules of war and use unconventional means instead. These three factors enable non-state actors to exploit the weaknesses of state actors in war and increase the probability of the weak defeating the strong .

Second, unconventional warfare is essentially a struggle of the weak. There are often a large number of social struggles in international and domestic societies, which become an important factor in shaping political consequences. Even farmers with the least organizational skills still have various forms of resistance in their daily lives. This kind of resistance and non-cooperation creates specific political and economic forms. At a higher level, strikes, protests, revolutions, democratization and war are all more important social movements. They are based on changes in the external environment of society and give potential actors opportunities, thus forming social structures, individual interests and collectives. The complex interaction of many factors between identities constitutes the so-called politics of resistance. Since the state controls the organs of violence, the politics of resistance is the interaction between the government and the protesters . Within its scope, once the force of resistance breaks through the constraints of the existing political system, it will become a force that challenges the existing system. Insurgency and wars against insurgency have always been social forces that reshape history. For non-state actors, in irregular warfare they are more inclined to exert pressure on state actors at the level of costs and rules of struggle. On the one hand, state and non-state actors have different concerns about costs in unconventional warfare. In an asymmetric war, the strong gains less from the war and therefore has higher political vulnerability; on the contrary, the weak's victory or defeat is related to its life and death. In other words, from the perspective of relative power and relative interests, when the cost of war rises to a certain level and touches the political cost bottom line of the strong, the war often ends in the victory of the weak. The same logic applies to unconventional warfare. On the other hand, non-state actors are not restricted by rules in war, while state actors are more restricted. This means that non-state actors can break through the normative limitations of modern warfare, and their strategic and tactical choices are more diverse and richer than those of state actors. These two characteristics give non-state actors the capital to use the small to make the big and use the weak to defeat the strong .

Third, irregular warfare can be seen as an anti-globalization force. If unconventional warfare is put into a more macro perspective, it is also shaped by anti-globalization. Globalization will bring free flow of production factors, open markets and free trade, but it will also bring about a series of problems, such as trade protectionism, resistance to immigration and populism. Specifically at the regional level, globalization has caused some vulnerable groups to be double oppressed and plundered by regional powers and foreign powers, forcing them to self-aggregate, integrate and strengthen. It is not difficult to find that globalization has brought about two diametrically opposed social results: First, globalization has expanded the boundaries of non-state actors and improved their status in global governance. Second, globalization also enhances the control power of state actors in certain dimensions. It is therefore a two-way interaction with corresponding political consequences. From the perspective of the negative effects of globalization, it has eroded traditional political boundaries and inspired an anti-globalization force that can release relatively negative factors such as terrorism, extremism and nationalism, prompting some non-state actors to use force to against state actors .

**4. Unconventional warfare shapes the shape of war**

Conventional war is still the mainstream of war, especially in the current context of intensified competition among major powers. However, the war practice in the past 20 years has demonstrated the important historical status of unconventional warfare. To what extent have irregular warfare changed the shape of warfare? Due to the unique behavioral patterns of non-state actors in war, the combat methods in unconventional warfare have caused tremendous changes in the shape of war .

**( 1) The shape of war is becoming increasingly unclear**

War is a political act. State actors are rational in war and are affected by cost-benefit calculations. The outcome of a war mainly depends on the means that state actors have in the war and the strength of their willpower during the war. At this point, irregular warfare does not change the nature of war. Although there are certain regularities in war, and human rationality can recognize and utilize these regularities, there are also great uncertainties, and various unpredictable possibilities will arise. The greatest uncertainty comes from the difficulty of predicting willpower. . In addition, emergencies, major changes and minor errors will occur during the war, and these factors will have an uncertain impact on the entire war .

unconventional warfare , the shape and boundaries of war are becoming increasingly unclear. In the past, we could clearly distinguish whether a type of war was a conventional war or an unconventional war. However, after the "9·11" incident, the United States launched a series of wars on terrorism, and people suddenly discovered that the shape of war began to undergo important changes. The subsequent Russia-Ukraine conflict in Crimea and the Syrian civil war have become difficult to define with a single name. We must admit that a new form of war has emerged. It may have existed in history, but it has never shaped the shape of international conflicts as profoundly as it does today. This form of war is called hybrid war by American scholar Frank G. Hoffman . Some scholars believe that hybrid war can be defined as a country's battles accompanying " failed states " to maintain stability, security, and reconstruction activities. From a process perspective, hybrid warfare encompasses all dimensions of modern warfare, including conventional warfare, unconventional tactics and forms, acts of terrorism, violence and criminal activities. This type of war, with blurred boundaries and more integrated combat styles, is a new challenge for major powers. Although most unconventional tactics and forms of terrorism follow the political logic of war, there are also a large number of non-political behaviors in unconventional warfare, and emotional and instinctive factors also play an important role. If we step out of the category of national sovereignty and face the space beyond national interests, the characteristic that war is a manifestation of culture will become increasingly prominent .

Generally speaking, the increasingly unclear shape of war has three consequences: First , the drive of emotional and instinctive factors as well as current technological progress have intensified the destructiveness and cruelty of unconventional warfare. Second, offense and defense in warfare continue to evolve. Whether in suicide bombings or in urban warfare, individuals with only loose or no ties to non-state actors can be extremely destructive, placing new demands on warfare. Offense and defense between state actors and non-state actors are on the rise alternately. State actors must constantly adjust their strategies and tactics and rapidly develop new combat weapons to adapt to changes in the battlefield environment. Third, to deal with unconventional warfare, state actors need means other than war. In conventional wars, the surrender of a country meant the end of the war. In unconventional wars , the key to solving the problem is to help countries with low state capabilities and chaotic social governance to establish strong governments, maintain basic social order and social justice, and erode the social foundation created by unconventional wars .

**( 2) The difference between victory and defeat in the war becomes blurred**

Under the explicit logic of war, there are two representative established paths for our understanding of war. From the perspective of Clausewitzian philosophy, “ War is an act of violence that forces the enemy to obey our will . ” Under this philosophy, war has two basic propositions: First, the dual characteristics of war, that is, both sides in the war are trying to win, and the victory of one party will become the defeat of the other party. Second, the political nature of war means that war is a serious means to achieve serious political goals, and its various external manifestations are just means and tools. Clausewitz believed that under this logic war was still an extremely hostile act of violence. In this violent confrontation, state actors should focus on identifying the opponent's strategic focus, then mobilize all available forces, follow the principle of concentration of forces, and completely defeat the enemy through decisive battles. In Sun Tzu's view, victory in war relies more on resourcefulness than decisive battles, which is a major disagreement with Clausewitz's views. In Sun Tzu's philosophy of war, " the whole country is the first priority, and the destruction of the country is the second. " Therefore , " the enemy must attack with troops and plan. " In war, one should pursue the goal of conquering the enemy without fighting. This is a strategic logic that pursues low cost. It should be pointed out that the views of Sun Tzu and Clausewitz are not diametrically opposed. Sun Tzu also agrees with the importance of frontal combat, but he pays more attention to the dialectical relationship between regular soldiers and unexpected soldiers. These two approaches believe that a country pursues victory as its ultimate goal in war. In most wars, whether through "conspiracy " or direct decisive battle, the outcome of victory or defeat is clear and can be judged .

with these two paths, irregular warfare has some important changes. On the one hand, unconventional wars are often caused by the difficulty in effectively integrating domestic forces, leaving non-state actors in a leaderless situation. Although its leaders have certain control over the core parts of the organization, their control over peripheral organizations is often symbolic. In other words, non-state actors are diverse, and most of their signals are not single and continuous but multiple. Even the behavioral signals displayed in the form of war are often contradictory and chaotic. This directly causes the behavior of state actors in war to become a self-set pattern , such as visual behaviors such as how much territory to recapture, which strongholds to occupy, and what strike measures to take, rather than deterministically determining how many enemies are annihilated and whether the opponent is defeated. Defeat, in this sense, the winning or losing dimension of traditional war is gradually eliminated. On the other hand, in traditional wars, the combat principle of strategic decisive battle is often regarded as the norm, but in non-traditional wars, this combat principle has been subverted. Liddell Hart keenly observed this change. He believed that the most basic concept of strategy lies in " strategic action " rather than " battle " . Mao Zedong believed: " The basic principle of war is to preserve oneself and destroy the enemy. " Therefore, a war of attrition and a war of annihilation are equally important, and the two have a dialectical relationship. " Hit and run " tactics can not only produce better political results , but can also avoid mass casualties. Hart's views are fully reflected in the current situation of unconventional warfare .

**( 3) War is becoming more and more flattened**

The flattening of war is mainly manifested in three aspects: First, the organizational form of non-state actors is relatively flat. The national liberation movements after World War II also triggered some irregular wars. In these irregular wars, the organizational form of non-state actors was generally similar to that of the state, and they pursued the establishment of an organizational system with centralized power. Since the 21st century , the organizational systems of non-state actors such as terrorism and extremist forces have shown a trend of flattening, which is completely different from most non-state actors during the Cold War. Represented by " Al Qaeda " , the expansion of its organizational system mainly relies on two channels: radical armed organizations that seek refuge in " Al Qaeda " and individuals cultivated and inspired by " Al Qaeda " ideology. The various components of these non-state actors are highly independent and lack vertical political authority .

Second, the military organizations of state actors are also becoming increasingly flatter. Since the 21st century , the external threats faced by state actors have changed. Coupled with the endless emergence of technological innovations, the military organizations of state actors have also gradually transformed. This is mainly reflected in three aspects: First, disruptive technologies are reshaping the military organize. Information technology, artificial intelligence, new materials, space technology, and drones have brought about a new military revolution and shaped weapons and equipment, strategies and tactics, military organizations, and military theories. They have also had a profound impact on the shape of war and combat principles. Second, the chain of command of state actors is shortening. Traditionally, the command system of state actors has many levels of command and a long chain of command, which is relatively long and complex and not flexible enough. Facing the challenge of unconventional warfare, state actors must reform their command systems and shorten their command chains to deal with more decentralized and civilian non-state actors. Third, military organizations are becoming synthetic and modular. Especially after the information technology revolution, the rapidly developing information technology has provided technical guarantee for the synthesis and modularization of military organizations, breaking the barriers between services and departments, and military organizations have become increasingly flat .

Third, the forces of state actors and non-state actors are dispersed during combat. Contrary to the principle of concentration of forces in conventional warfare, unconventional warfare requires the dispersion of forces. Weak non-state actors have survival as their first principle, so strategic flexibility becomes a top priority. Mao Zedong believed that compared with conventional warfare, guerrilla warfare requires more flexible use of troops. The guerrillas can be used dispersedly , that is, using the tactics of " breaking them into parts " ; they can also be used intensively, that is, using the tactics of " breaking them into parts " . Switching between the two tactics is the main method of combat in guerrilla warfare. Hart also believes that both sides in guerrilla warfare need to adhere to the principle of " fluidity of force " and that concentration of forces in a narrow sense is useless. Current unconventional warfare basically follows these two principles. The organization of non-state actors is inherently flat. They adhere to flexible tactical principles and conduct relatively dispersed violent attacks and small-scale battles. They use more flexible and unconventional combat methods to fight against state actors and continue to consume their opponents. the power of. There are two main reasons for this: First, non-state actors often have few troops, so they are unable to use force on a large scale; second, unconventional warfare generally adheres to the principle of " hit and run " and pursues strategic and tactical strategies. flexibility. Of course, this flattening only occurs at a specific stage. When the balance of strength between the two sides changes, the combat methods will also be adjusted accordingly .

**( 4) The ethics of war are eroded**

After the Second World War , with the establishment of a set of international systems and international norms, international society as a whole has become more regularized and the world has become increasingly peaceful. However, some characteristics of unconventional warfare have gradually reduced the ethics of war and become a phenomenon that cannot be ignored in international politics .

First, the regularization of war has been challenged. In inter-state wars, the countries participating in the war generally follow certain rules. No matter whether it is the outbreak or end of the war or the way of fighting, national actors cannot ignore international rules. However, in unconventional warfare, the ethics of war diverge between state actors and non-state actors. Compared with state actors who follow basic international rules, non-state actors have relatively weak war ethics and often ignore existing international rules. Qiao Liang and Wang Xiangsui have been aware of this problem after the Cold War. When answering how to deal with the powerful military power of the United States, they proposed the concept of " unrestricted warfare " to use unconventional means to deal with conventional wars. In unconventional wars after the 21st century , non-state actors do fight against state actors based on this principle. As a result, the previous rules of war are gradually broken in these wars .

Second, since non- state actors are not restricted by borders between states, they often take on the characteristics of cross-border actions, and it is difficult for them to apply the rules between state actors. The geographical boundaries of unconventional warfare tend to be blurred, and the degree of intervention by extraterritorial forces has deepened. For example, the Syrian civil war is largely a proxy war. The cross-regional mobilization of non-state actors highlights that terrorist organizations and extremist organizations have broken through the barriers of sovereign states and begun to conduct cross-regional strategic mobilization at the regional and even global levels .

Third, in irregular warfare, there are numerous violations of the laws of war and domestic laws, especially by non-state actors. Non-state actors are less constrained by international norms. Not only do they engage in a large number of violence and massacres, but they also engage in criminal activities such as human trafficking, extortion, robbery, kidnapping, and resource plunder. Violations of the laws of war and domestic law in conventional warfare are relatively rare .

In summary, the strategic behavior of non-state actors as the weaker party in asymmetric wars is significantly different from that of state actors, which has led to changes in the shape of war. In other words, the fundamental driving force for wars to shift from clear boundaries to blurred boundaries is the rise of unconventional warfare. It was unconventional warfare that occupied an increasingly important position in the entire dimension of war that broke the existing pattern and revealed the original hidden logic of war .

**5. Unconventional warfare under great power competition**

In recent years, great power competition has once again become a theme in international politics. So will unconventional warfare fade out of the stage of history? Will great power war become the mainstream of war practice in the international community? the answer is negative. The intensification of great power competition does not mean that unconventional warfare has subsided. To some extent, great power competition has even provided new strategic space for unconventional warfare .

**( 1) Competition among major powers intensifies**

After the end of the Cold War , the international community has been in a period of peace and development for a long time, and the rules of international society have become increasingly deepened. At the beginning of the 21st century , the world entered the era of war on terrorism due to the "9·11" incident . However, competition among major powers is currently intensifying, which is mainly reflected in three aspects .

First, the traditional arms control system has been impacted and has collapsed. The United States withdrew from the Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems as early as 2002. In 2019 , it withdrew from the Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces Treaty and the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (referred to as the Iran Nuclear Deal). It may also withdraw from the United States in the future. The new Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty signed by Russia and Russia. Against this background, nuclear proliferation has expanded in the international community: the North Korean nuclear issue is difficult to resolve and the peninsula peace process has stalled. Once North Korea acquires nuclear weapons, nuclear arms control in the Asia-Pacific region will face huge challenges; the United States has withdrawn from the Iran nuclear agreement Later, Iran's development of nuclear weapons has become a predictable result. What is even more serious is that in areas such as hypersonic weapons, electromagnetic weapons, drones and network security, the international community still lacks corresponding arms control mechanisms .

Second, China and the United States run the risk of slipping into an arms race. Over the past 20 years or so, China has been committed to promoting military modernization and has made great achievements. After Trump took office as President of the United States, he chose to increase military investment and vigorously develop armaments in an attempt to maintain the United States' military superiority. The U.S. Department of Defense stated in its fiscal year 2020 budget proposal: " Containing or defeating great power aggression is a fundamentally different challenge than the regional conflicts we have faced over the past 25 years with ' rogue states ' and violent extremist groups. The FY 2020 budget is an important milestone in meeting this challenge and providing the more lethal, agile, and innovative joint force the United States needs to compete, deter, and win in any high-level potential combat in the future. Resources. " In terms of military strategy , the U.S. strategic elites try to maintain the military advantages " eroded by China " and enhance the U.S.'s competitive advantage in military power .

Third, the attention of major powers has shifted from unconventional wars to conventional wars between major powers. In recent years, the United States has tried to reassess its future war posture and shifted its attention to major powers such as China and Russia. Amid competition among major powers, the U.S. military has gradually shifted its attention from unconventional warfare to conventional warfare between major powers, and has re-emphasized large-scale combat operations. In the 2017 edition of " FM3-0 : Operations Outline," the U.S. Army emphasizes the importance of preparation and training for large-scale combat operations. The U.S. Navy also believes that the U.S.’s maritime dominance is being tested by the return of great power competition and that it must improve its surface power and revitalize its maritime control capabilities. What needs to be emphasized is that the pressure from major powers to deal with conventional wars has always existed in the past, but this time the United States has elevated it to a strategic level and given it a priority. For the US military, in the face of the rise of China and Russia, it must either make contingency plans for a protracted major power conflict, or ignore this possibility and hope for a good outcome. In the strategic competition between China and the United States, the United States is preparing for a possible high-intensity military confrontation with China in the future, and the potential geographical area for confrontation is the South China Sea. On September 30 , 2018 , the USS Decatur and the Chinese destroyer Lanzhou met. The two ships were only 41 meters apart. The two ships almost collided and caused a military conflict. This sounded the alarm for China and the United States . . The United States has been proactively preparing for possible military conflicts in the South China Sea and China's deployment of advanced " anti-access " and " area denial " weapon systems . On March 26 , 2019 , Philip Davidson , commander of the U.S. Indo - Pacific Command , stated in the House of Representatives that the U.S. military must “ be able to defend its own power and project power to ensure that any opponent can cannot achieve dominance in the Indo-Pacific region . ”

**( 2) Great Power Competition and Unconventional Warfare**

In the era of great power confrontation, unconventional warfare will still occupy an important position. We must also see that as the information technology revolution is in full swing, the advantages of state actors over non-state actors in certain fields are increasing. As Michael Howard puts it, technological advancements have led to a so-called " war revolution " in U.S. military equipment , allowing the United States to monitor and block its adversaries' communications to gain the upper hand. This is in line with the general direction of current scientific and technological development. The manpower, material resources and time required for scientific and technological innovation and industrial development are beyond the reach of non-state actors. The entry threshold for high technology is getting higher and higher, and it is increasingly concentrated in a few large countries. State actors are at an absolute disadvantage in technological competition . In unconventional warfare, major powers have an advantage in offense and defense due to their technological superiority. Great powers can reverse the unfavorable situation on the battlefield by developing new weapons. In other words, the current era is conducive to offense .

Does this mean that non-state actors are at an overall disadvantage? Not exactly. It must be noted that state actors also have certain vulnerabilities in war. First, great powers also have organizational and technological vulnerabilities. Societies of state actors are generally open and pluralistic, and lack sufficient cohesion when facing non-state actors. For the military, blind pursuit of new technologies will lead people to become addicted to technology, thereby forming technological dependence. High-tech weapons and communication systems are vulnerable, and if they fail on the battlefield, there will be serious consequences. Secondly, although unconventional wars are less intense, they are more frequent and are a common political phenomenon in the international community. Keegan believes that future wars will occur in very remote places, but the military has not yet acknowledged this. It should be noted that as the intensity of strategic competition increases, major powers may shift their military attention to competing for these marginal areas, leading to an increase in unconventional wars. Finally, in an era when great power wars are returning, how to deal with unconventional wars still poses a huge challenge to the great powers. After the "9·11" incident, wars continued between the United States and non-state actors . On February 29 , 2020 , representatives of the United States and the Afghan Taliban signed a peace agreement in Doha, the capital of Qatar , under which the United States will withdraw its troops from Afghanistan in phases. By political standards, the U.S. war in Afghanistan ended in failure. In fact, so far, major powers have still not found good means to deal with unconventional warfare .

However , what is certain is that great power competition will not weaken the status of unconventional warfare, and may even highlight its unique strategic significance to some extent. Specific to China and the United States, the probability of a large-scale military confrontation between the two sides is very low. In the strategic competition between China and the United States, unconventional warfare will have a very special status. The basic logic is that long-term confrontation between major powers requires competitors to seek asymmetric advantages. As a result, two forms of military confrontation may emerge between major powers .

The first form is that major powers may engage in low-intensity military conflicts. In addition to competition in the economic, political and high-tech fields, the great power competition led by the United States also occurs in the military field. The US military is currently advancing the " grey zone " strategy. In the past few years, the US military has gradually realized that there are still some " grey areas " between war and peace . It must be tactically flexible to respond to competitors' " gray area " strategies, and at the same time actively promote its own " gray area " strategy. Respond to your competitors' challenges through a variety of tactics. In maritime security competition, the United States chooses a " gray zone " strategy based on its understanding of China's military strength in an attempt to offset China's " gray zone " advantages. Some scholars believe that the United States has adopted six types of " grey zone " strategies against China: narrative war, issue linkage, civil intervention, free navigation, forward presence, and military alliance. These actions by the United States are conducive to enhancing its strategic flexibility and helping it cope with China's growing military power. However, these actions also increase the risk of regional conflict. The United States chose the " grey zone " strategy mainly based on the consideration of maintaining asymmetric advantages. In strategic competition, whether for a stronger country or a weaker country, the pursuit of asymmetric advantages requires flexibility. This has happened before in the history of the United States. During the Eisenhower administration, the United States launched a large-scale retaliation strategy in an attempt to deter the Soviet Union through the advantage of nuclear weapons to reduce the cost of confrontation and thereby gain the initiative. However, this made the United States unable to respond to the diverse military strategies from the Soviet Union and lost strategic flexibility. In response to the Soviet military strategy, the United States finally abandoned its large-scale retaliation strategy and introduced a flexible response strategy. The form of military confrontation between great powers in the new era is not unconventional war in nature, but it is also very different from the conventional war between great powers. This kind of conflict has a hybrid aspect, and is close to conventional war and irregular war on the spectrum. intermediate form. This form of conflict will significantly increase the frequency of unconventional wars, which will not only occur in the " grey areas " between major powers , but are more likely to occur in peripheral areas outside the major powers .

The second form is that major powers carry out proxy wars in other regions. The cost of direct military confrontation between major powers is huge, and wars between nuclear powers have become extinct . If there is a military confrontation between major powers , it may be a short-lived conflict in a specific region, on a specific issue, and proxy war therefore becomes a reasonable choice and a logical strategy and tactic. Among them, some non-state actors have become important weights for major powers, and unconventional warfare has become an indispensable policy option for major powers. For some non-state actors, they will also seek asymmetric advantages by leveraging major powers to achieve their political goals. In the past 20 years, from Afghanistan to Iraq, from Ukraine to Syria, from Libya to Yemen, proxy wars have become a means for countries to achieve political interests. Take Iran as an example, it is trying to promote a " proxy " strategy in the Middle East . With its strong support, the Houthi armed forces in Yemen, Hezbollah in Lebanon, and Iraqi militias have all become important forces in Iran's non-state actor network, making great contributions to Iran's expansion of regional influence. Different countries have different reasons for using proxy wars: for powerful countries represented by the United States, the reason for choosing proxies is very simple, that is, the cost is lower and there is no need to pay the price of casualties; for weaker countries, In other words, because they lack the ability to project military power, influencing the situation through proxies is often their only option. In the context of great power competition, most proxy wars are unconventional wars. This form of war must attract our attention .

**6. Conclusion**

21st century , conservatism, nationalism and extremism have become important social forces. Under their influence, unconventional warfare has become an important political phenomenon and has posed severe challenges to the international community. For major countries in the international community, this phenomenon deserves special attention. According to what was mentioned above, unconventional warfare has a certain historical background and social foundation. As the United States adopts a contraction strategy and reduces its involvement in the Middle East, the great power factors behind unconventional wars in the Middle East have declined to a certain extent. At the same time, the war in Afghanistan, the war in Iraq, and the political turmoil and civil wars since the changes in West Asia and North Africa have released to a certain extent regional conflicts that have accumulated over a long period of time. The intensity of unconventional wars may decline to a certain extent in the future. However, unconventional warfare has not ended. It will still maintain a considerable proportion and intensity, and there is a risk of it intensifying again in the future. In the face of great power competition and the challenge of unconventional warfare, great powers must make corresponding adjustments in their military systems, military doctrines, strategies, tactics, and weapons and equipment .

First, the military system must be reformed in a timely manner to balance the relationship between unconventional warfare and conventional warfare. War is an external driving force for organizational innovation. Under huge external pressure, countries must innovate political and social organizations. After the "9·11" incident, the United States was committed to reforming its military system and adjusting its national defense system to meet the requirements of counter-terrorism. The lessons of the United States also tell us that while attaching importance to unconventional warfare, we should also take conventional warfare into consideration. The current international security environment is diverse and complex. Therefore, the construction of military systems must meet the characteristics of flexibility and speed, and form " modular " combat units that are smaller, faster, and more tactically flexible, and can be flexibly combined and combined according to changes in the external environment. Be flexible and adapt to your opponent's adjustments. The new form of war also requires the country to reform its organizational culture, form a tradition within the military that focuses on actual combat, and encourage officers at all levels to combine practical experience with theoretical creation. In addition, the command system should be improved and a joint command structure should be actively established. Taking the U.S. military as an example, the combat command chain consists of three levels: the highest command authority, joint combat commands, and military components, in which the joint combat commands play a key role. In terms of crisis response and operations, the joint command system is more centralized, which is conducive to improving the combat capabilities of the troops and is the basic guarantee for winning modern joint operations .

Second, we need to develop some new military theories applicable to unconventional warfare. The innovation of war has great international political significance. Taking the Napoleonic War in history as an example, nationalism, popular politics and modern ideology have shaped the overall purpose of war, and the industrial revolution has reshaped the shape of war. History tells us that major powers must keep pace with the times and keep up with the forefront of world military theory to cope with the challenges of a complex world. It is undeniable that the current concept of conventional warfare still firmly occupies the mainstream of military doctrines in various countries, and countries still place the construction of traditional military power at the core. Especially after Trump came to power, great power competition has intensified again, and conventional military theories on great power war will return to the center of the stage of theoretical innovation. However, it must be noted that the probability of war between major powers is still very low, and small-scale unconventional wars are the norm in the international community. The biggest problem facing traditional military power is that it is tailor-made for large-scale wars, so it faces many difficulties when conducting small-scale wars. Therefore, when dealing with small-scale unconventional wars, major powers need to innovate military doctrines and develop great-power war theories that suit their own national conditions. The academic and policy circles should also discuss relevant military concepts in a timely manner and conduct in-depth research on the latest forms of warfare .

Third, strategies and tactics should be adjusted to deal not only with conventional wars, but also with irregular wars. Great powers must also keep up with the trend of military confrontation in the new era and develop strategies and tactics suitable for great power competition in the new situation. In future wars, major powers must handle battles in multiple fields such as land, sea, air, space, network, and electromagnetic fields. It is also necessary to integrate personnel, weapons, networks, and sensors from all services to improve the level of information warfare. At the same time, in the information age, the public is more easily mobilized, and social organizations are also experiencing new development trends. In the context of the new era, the traditional tactics of using large-scale troops to suppress the military power of non-state actors and then concentrating firepower on strikes are no longer effective. The tactics used by state actors to combat non-state actors need to be reformed. Paying attention to intelligence work and carrying out targeted killings through special forces or drones have become important tactical means in unconventional warfare. Especially in modern urban warfare, due to the complex urban structure, numerous buildings, large and complex population, and the accelerated changes in modern weapons technology, the warring parties alternate between offensive and defensive tactics. For major powers, they must adopt new tactics, develop new weapons, and adapt to the tactical evolution of non- state actors .

Fourth, develop special weapons and equipment to deal with unconventional warfare. Due to the special nature of unconventional warfare, weapons traditionally used in conventional warfare are either inapplicable or difficult to function well in unconventional warfare. Therefore, major powers should develop special weapons and equipment suitable for unconventional warfare. For example, in terms of intelligence collection and analysis, higher-precision reconnaissance satellites and drones, image and data analysis technology, positioning and tracking technology, etc. are needed. In terms of combat, we need to develop individual combat weapons, communication equipment, robots and drones, etc. . The development of these new weapons in response to unconventional warfare is conducive to changing passive to proactive and changing offensive and defensive postures in war .

currently two historical trends in the world that deserve attention: First, ethnic politicization and ethnic conflicts have become increasingly serious and have weakened national governance. A fragmented national structure is more likely to turn ethnic differences into unconventional wars; second, The return of great power competition has caused major powers to refocus their strategic resources on traditional warfare. How to balance the challenges brought by these two trends is crucial. Focusing on one at the expense of the other is not conducive to safeguarding national interests. For China, it must actively participate in the strategic competition between major powers and cannot ignore non-traditional threats. In recent years, with the rise of non-traditional security threats, China's national security is facing severe challenges. Therefore, it is necessary for China to adjust its military organizational form, innovate military doctrine, practice new strategies and tactics, and develop new special weapons and equipment to eliminate the threat of unconventional warfare. Facing the threat of unconventional warfare to China has become an unquestionable and increasingly important issue. Recognizing this has far-reaching significance for us to adjust national strategies and tactics according to current conditions .

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