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The Cold War and Post-Cold War and Armed Conflicts – General Overview

INTRODUCTION

When writing about the post-1945 military conflicts, first one needs to ask about periodisation, since the post-World War II era is not a single period. Therefore, we have two different stages:

- 1945–1991 – the Cold War, within which at least two years of peaceful coexistence of both systems marked the transition from a classical to a modern military conflict;
- 1991 – now, when bipolarity was replaced by multipolarity and military conflicts differ from the previous ones with respect to their form, e.g. hybrid war.

The second issue is focused on the statistical data through which me might have a deeper insight into the causes and results as well as numbers of conflicts and victims. The problem is that while having access to all the information and looking at it from a global standpoint, one has to ask about the meaning of the term *peace*. Does it have a global, regional or local range? On the other hand, we must answer the question about the number of armed conflicts; in other words, has their number increased or decreased after the Cold War and should we find any trends in armed conflicts then?

The third issue is the categorisation of military conflicts, since we might have a simple overview of them, e.g. the shift from ideological conflicts into religious ones. Typology is the most difficult to make especially bearing in mind that there are no hard criteria or otherwise many reasons of armed conflicts and their character overlap. Any such typology is only a proposal, thanks to which it is important to create a classification of conflicts – to have some order simplifying the problem. Anyway, even at this point it is important to answer the question about the forms of armed conflicts.

These three issues might be helpful to answer several big questions, namely:

1. What were the trends of the military conflicts after 1945 and should we see any important shifts in this matter?

2. To what extent, if ever, does the 21st century mark a turning point within the field of military conflicts?

3. What kind of military conflicts might we see in this century and in the future?

4. How has the global system affected military conflicts?

1945 AND AFTER THE COLD WAR AND BIPOLARITY

The end of World War II marked a definite shift of power onto the United States and the Soviet Union, as well as the division of the world into spheres of influence. This period can be divided into several stages, the first one being 1945–1949, when tension gradually grew (Berlin Blockade, creation of West and East German state, etc.) and when the (actually non-military) confrontation was focused mainly on Europe. This is the period when the US Strategy of Containment was hammered out, paving the way to meet the Soviet global threat.

The next stage is marked by the victory of the communist revolution in China (1949) and the outbreak of the Korean War (1950–1953), ended by the Armistice Agreement (1953). For the first time after World War II, big powers were involved in a real confrontation by proxy, whereas the People's Republic of China (PRC) intervened and supported North Korea by sending special volunteers across the Yalu River. From a general standpoint, the confrontation shifted from Europe to Asia and then the US perception within the Containment Principle was changed from the selected areas of the vital importance to the global division of the world, i.e. communism and the free world. Meanwhile, the Soviet Union's global attitude was based on the assumption that the whole world would have been drifting toward communism which was considered to be the 'wave of the future'. Therefore, the allocation of its interests had a global range.

The third stage spanned from 1953 to 1962, namely from Stalin's death (1953) and Nikita Khrushchev taking over power through the Geneva Conference in 1954 (when the division of Korean Peninsula and Indochinese Peninsula were sealed), the crises in Laos, growing crisis in South Vietnam, Republic of Congo and finally the Cuban Missile Crisis, which might have ended in a nuclear war between the two superpowers. Although the Soviet Union introduced some reforms and the tension sometimes weakened, the entire period was marked by wars on the fringes, reflecting the global division of the world. Especially in this period, the confrontation within the communist bloc started, e.g. the Soviet–Chinese one (ideological conflict often emanating by confrontations on the borderline between both countries) and the crisis within the Soviet sphere of influences, e.g. the Hungarian national uprising or the Polish anti-communist rebellion. And finally, decolonisation must be mentioned since it was aimed against the former European imperial powers and was supported by the Soviet Union, putting the USA in a very uncomfortable position. As an anti-imperial power, the US was sometimes for-

ced to support the violent response of its European allies (e.g. First Indochina War or the French war in Algeria).

The period of 1963–1969 was marked by growing tension within the Soviet bloc, e.g. the Sino–Soviet confrontation and the Czechoslovakian conflict (Prague Spring, 1968). The confrontation between the two superpowers was focused on South Vietnam (Indochina in general), Laos, Africa (since 1960, which was called the 'year of Africa') or the Middle East (Arab-Israeli) conflict, which polarised the world: communism supported the Arab states and the Western world generally supported Israel as the US ally (conspicuous examples are the Six Day War or the Egyptian crisis).

The period of 1970–1979 was generally marked by the global détente (relaxation of tension), in which the Soviet Union gained its superior position especially thanks to the fatal US engagement and withdrawal from Indochina (Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia). The Iranian crisis (Islamic revolution) and the Central American crisis in Nicaragua (later to be extended to Honduras and Salvador) were only the consequences of a weakened or, it might be more accurate to say, transformed global perception of the White House. Especially in this period, the Nixon Doctrine proved to be a new look on the international confrontation which abstained from its ideological basis. US–PRC relations are the best example. Indeed, the recognition of China by the US softened the Soviet Union and shifted the confrontation onto the communist bloc (as it was mentioned earlier, the Chinese challenge for the Soviet Union emerged earlier but it materialised in full swing in this exact period). It would not be an exaggeration to say that a third global power emerged and the bipolarity was no longer so decisive for the world or for global peace. It was then that the Soviet hubris appeared, which resulted in the Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan (1979) – quite the same mistake as the US made with South Vietnam. That meant the beginning of the end of the Soviet ideological offensive. Another war by proxy started.

The period of 1980–1985 witnessed the electoral victory of Ronald Reagan, which brought a new approach towards the Soviet Union. While getting deeper in Afghanistan, the Soviet Union extended its influences onto communist movements in Central America. The new approach of the US to nuclear power, especially the so-called star wars and the arms race, which was aimed at the Soviet Union's economic drainage (since with its irrational, imbalanced economy, the Soviet Union could not compete with the US) as well as the extended Soviet interests marked the turning point of the Cold War. One of the best examples is the rapid US deployment forces (created during the Reagan's time) intervention in Grenada in 1983. The major goal of the US was not the destruction of the Soviet Union, but rather returning to the balance of power and forcing it to respect global diversity. The decrepit Soviet system, with which the aged Soviet leaders could not cope (death of Brezhnev, Andropov and Chernenko, one after another), paved the way for a new approach, especially when Mikhail Gorbachev was elected as the new Soviet leader. In an unfriendly environment (conservative British prime minister Margaret Thatcher, Helmut Kohl in West Germany or François Mitterrand – a socialist but staunch anti-communist president of France), the Soviet Union chose the way of talks and confrontation.

Finally, the last Cold War period of 1986–1991 marked the end of bipolarity. Summit talks in Geneva and Reykjavik were held while the Soviet Union ran its war in Afghanistan, supported the Central American communist guerrillas and was gradually losing its global position. In 1989, the unexpected erosion of the system started; the breakdown of the Soviet bloc in Europe (Poland, Czech Republic, Hungary, East Germany, etc.) spanned from 1989 to 1991. The definite relaxation of tension (a good example of which is the Warsaw Pact declaration, stating that NATO was no longer perceived as an enemy power) ended up with the breakdown of the Soviet system. The withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan was only the symbol of the end of the confrontation. One has to notice that the collapse of the Soviet Union was a surprise for everyone, since the major purpose was only to bring the Soviets to the balance of power. Meanwhile, the course of events put the biggest question mark regarding the new world order and new global problems.

AFTER 1991

This period might be divided into several stages from a political point of view, which might clarify the new types of military and non-military conflicts. Generally speaking, one might say that the 1990s marked the decline of the Russia (which looked for its identity and new position in the world), whereas the United States had to rethink the new world order, especially trying to avoid unipolarity, which would make the US a *global policeman* (as president George Bush Sr. said while intervening in Kuwait and Iraq). This was the last classical war, where one country invaded the other (Iraq-Kuwait conflict, First Persian Gulf War), took place to which the international community responded almost unanimously. But was it the *End of History*, as Francis Fukuyama put it in the title of his book?

The period of so called *interregnum* (the whole decade) was a period of transition and the global role of the US was challenged. *Agenda for Peace* by Butros Butros Ghali (the Secretary General of the United Nations) marked the new approach to global problems. US commanded military international interventions in countries such as Somalia, the intrusiveness of international law and *peace-enforcement* (a new term that emerged after the Cold War), global disasters (no longer only local problems) and the awakening of extreme Islam and Islamic terrorism as a tool of the global confrontation with the Western World (or values) – all of them were new problems for the imbalanced world.

The 21st century started with a new real confrontation. 11 September 2001, the terrorist attack on the World Trade Centre and Pentagon in the USA, changed the world forever. The symbolic words of president George Bush Jr.: "you're either with us, or against us" were just an offer to the whole world – global war against terrorism. For the first time, a state assumed the position of the global leader in the war against terror since, as it was stated, the idea of freedom was attacked and the US had to gain global leadership. This meant the emergence of unipolarity – finally the US assumed the role of a *global policeman* and the Bush Doctrine was proclaimed. The list of *rogue states* was

just a simple consequence. But the Bush Doctrine proved to fail as a remedy for global problems. The first war against Taliban and Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan (2001) was a new type of war with using the most modern technology. It showed that political leadership and decisions affect the type of war and the classical Clausewitz doctrine re-emerged again: "war is politics".

Meanwhile, new powers appeared on the stage. Since 2000, Russia partially regained its global position and although it withdrawn from many areas, it still had and wanted to have its own voice in global affairs. China's positioned has gradually become unquestionable, of course with its own interests not only focused on Asia but Africa and South America as well. The fourth power was and still is the European Union (actually neither federation nor confederation), which is first of all an economic power, since from a military standpoint its power is based on a collective security system, similar to the NATO pact.

Unipolarity proved to be a short-term and rather unsuccessful experiment. It could easily be matched with the concept of Paul Kennedy, who described the syndrome of an "overstretched empire" to what one should add important Kennan's maxim: balance between aims and resources should always be kept, since no one in the world, no matter how powerful they are, cannot afford full self-sufficiency.

With the new world came some new types of interests, very often exercised with different tools. Anyway, the civil wars of the modern world attract attention of some powers and other non-state actors. Syria is the best example. The emergence of the Islamic State (ISIS) means (or meant, since it has been recently dramatically weakened) some kind of modern Holy War against the infidels. Indeed, the religious war laid foundations for the confrontation with the western world, western civilisation, which, as the European Union emphasises, is not religious but secular and within which human rights became some kind of a new religion.

Local wars run by Russia, such as the one in Georgia (Abchasia, Osetia) or against Ukraine (Eastern parts of the country, e.g. Donbas), which is also called a hybrid war, proved to be a new kind of conflict, for which the world has only one answer, namely economic sanctions. For the first time after the Cold War, the world is witnessing a violent border line change (Crimea), which might be considered as a challenge to the global order based on international law. However, this type of conflict shows new methods of military confrontation. Another aspect of the modern war is cyberspace – a war without victims but affecting the state, organisations, generally speaking security, which has had a different dimension since.

STATISTICAL DATA – GENERAL OVERVIEW

At the beginning, it should be emphasised that the classical definitions of military conflict or war are probably no longer applicable to the modern 21st century reality. Since David J. Singer and Melvin Small assumed that an international or national military conflict (or confrontation) can be defined as such only in the case when the number of victims

exceeds 1,000 victims[1]. The question is then that having 999 victims, we might assume that there is no military confrontation. Therefore, the major criteria is the number of victims. In the modern reality when technology assumed priority, the decreasing the number of victims at the expense of achieving the political goal the concept seems to be out of date. The criteria as such should be based on using weapon when matched with political goals.

Nevertheless, the world has recorded its violence since its very beginning. If we assume that the post-war world was peaceful, our perception is, to express delicately, rather distorted. As Conway Henderson pointed out it, is rather an illusion, since only in the 1970s and 1980s, some 25 per cent of humanity was affected by war or violence caused by using power[2]. It is enough to look at the first decade after the Cold War and, let us say, the first years of the American unilateralism (1990–2003) – there were over 40 military conflicts in the world, therefore the term peaceful coexistence (with illusion of peace) might be an adequate conclusion[3].

Alvin Toffler should be quoted to support this idea, since he had pointed out that between 1945 to the beginning of the 1990s, the world witnessed over 150 military conflicts with over 7 million direct victims of military activities and over 40 million of civilians (not to mention displaced persons, sufferings, malnutrition, diseases caused by war, injuries, etc.). Whereas the classical conflicts were focused on the army and 90 percent of the total number of victims were contributed by armed forces and only 10 per cent were civilians, a dramatic shift was caused by World War II, in which 50 per cent of victims were civilians and another half was armed personnel, and then after the global war there was another shift and the number of civilian victims grew to about 90 per cent and the remaining 10 per cent belong to the armed personnel (to make it more conspicuous, it is enough to see the role of modern technology, such as using drones, which trivialised the war and make it look like a computer game where the operator does not take part in any physical violent activity). As Toffler pointed out, only in 1990 (global relaxation of tension) the world witnessed 37 military conflicts. So for 2340 days of the so called peaceful period between 1945 and 1990, there were only 3 peaceful weeks (collected days without conflicts or maybe not registered violent activities)[4].

However, when analysing the problem from the purest statistical point of view, the number of armed conflicts in the world after the Cold War has decreased[5]. But only in 2014 there were 40 armed conflicts in 27 locations, which means an 18 per cent increase in comparison with 2013[6]. This might be to some extent ascribed to the proclamation of the Islamic State (DAESH or ISIS, as it is being called). For the entire period of 1945–2014, there were registered military conflicts in 159 locations[7].

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[1] D.J. Singer, M. Small, *The Wages of War, 1816–1965, A Statistical Yearbook*, New York 1972, p. 19–22.
[2] C.W. Henderson, *International Relations, Conflict and Cooperation At The Turn of The 21st Century*, New York 1997, p. 129.
[3] *SIPRI Yearbook, 2003, Armaments, Disarmament, and International Security*, Oxford 2003, p. 111.
[4] A. Toffler, H. Toffler, *Wojna i antywojna, jak przetrwać na progu XXI wieku*, Warszawa 1997, p. 21–22.
[5] T. Pettersson, P. Wallensteen, *Armed Conflicts, 1946–2014*, "Journal of Peace Research", 14 VII 2015.
[6] *Ibidem*. As the authors pointed out, "This is also the highest number of conflicts reported since 1999".
[7] *Ibidem*.

What about the number of conflicts during the Cold War era? We can only use approximate data, nevertheless even then we can draw some conclusions to see the trends the contemporary world is driven to. According to Mir A. Ferdowsi, between 1945 and 1985 (the last stage of the Cold War), the world witnessed 160 armed conflicts (254 with multiple centres)[8]. At first glance, it might be matched with Toffler's concept.

When looking from a wider perspective and analysing the frequency of wars, the trend emerges and a conclusion is obvious, namely the Cold War represents just an ordinary trend in the whole history of human kind. Even if the number varies from Butterworth/Scranton, according to whom there were 320 armed conflicts, through Kende/Genzel/Fabic – 148 and Genzel/Meyer/Stammer – 159, when juxtaposed with former periods like 12th century to 1925 (Sorokin), when there were 862 registered conflicts, or Richardson, whose research was focused on the period of 1820–1949 and resulted with a number of 317, there is nothing extraordinary in the analysed period[9]. The question is only that in modern times scholars have better tools to record the armed conflicts and better understanding of analysing them.

TYPOLOGY OF POST-1945 ARMED CONFLICTS

There are various typologies of armed conflicts, however here we might base our concept on the very clear criterion, namely the conflict of interests. Needless to say that the post-Cold War reality created new conflicts and therefore it should be mentioned that some elements of the classification should be amended.

Modern armed conflicts should be divided into:

- border conflicts (state vs state),
- conflict on the imposition of power onto another country (e.g. creating the sphere of influence),
- ideological conflicts (the entire Cold War era was based on it),
- religious conflicts (especially visible in the modern world),
- economic conflicts (e.g. taking a natural resource of another country),
- ethnic conflicts (e.g. Bosnia and Hercegovina),
- narco-business (military intervention in Panama in 1989) and organised crime (which has a global range and affects some countries and organisations).

Border conflicts are usually focused on the borderline dispute and the willingness to capture some or entire territory of the enemy. It seems to be a classical conflict, for which the best pattern was Europe. The Franco-German conflict over Alsace-Lorraine is the best example. In modern times, we have seen the Iran–Iraq war (1980–1988; Shat el-Arab River and the correction of border-line) and finally the last such conflict which attracted global public opinion, namely the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990 and 1991,

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[8] M.A. Ferdowsi, "Regional Conflicts in the Third World: Dimensions, Causes, Perspectives", in: *Law and State, A Biannual Collection of Recent German Contributions to These Fields*, Tübingen 1987.

[9] *Ibidem*, p. 29.

when the UN formed an international coalition in order to repeal the Iraqi aggression and liberate the invaded territory of Kuwait. The classical option is represented by the Arab-Israeli conflict (Israel-Palestine or Six Days War, 1967, Yom Kippur, 1973, Golan Heights). One of the most forgotten conflict is the Ethiopian-Somali border war of 1982 (a long-lasting conflict since the early 1970s). The Pakistan-Indian conflict over Kashmir should be considered of particular importance, since the possession of nuclear weapon by both sides created a balance of power that decreased the tension (although sometimes both sides refer to the armed confrontation). Nuclear weapons should be treated as an element of stability and deterrence, thanks to which neither superpower resorted to it during the long-lasting ideological conflict between communism and the capitalist world. An example of a very peculiar conflict is the Falkland Islands invasion by Argentina in 1982. The overseas British territory was invaded by the Argentine military junta led by Leopoldo Galtieri, which caused a war between two US allies – Britain and Argentina. The British government emphasised that it would have never accepted any military solution, only a political one in which inhabitants might express their feelings in democratic referendum. Therefore the war was the only way to repeal aggression and to save the territory of the United Kingdom. Although Britain won the war (a classical pattern of armed conflict), the conflict still exists.

One of the most modern conflicts in this category are: Nagorny Karabach (Armenia--Aserbeijan), South Ossetia and Abkhazia (Russian-Georgian conflict), the annexation of Crimea by Russia (invasion on Ukrainian territory), the Russian intervention in Eastern Ukraine (Donieck and Lugansk oblast and the creation of semi-sovereign units under Russian patronage through referendum). The war entered into the international vocabulary as an example of hybrid war.

Other conflicts over secession of some parts of the territory belong to this category, namely like: Kongo-Katanga (1960–1963) or Nigeria-Biafra (1967). Some are still going on, e.g. Banda Aceh in Indonesia, the Shan state in Burma, the Basque country or Catalonia in Spain.

There are examples of conflicts focused on the imposition of power on other countries. The classical pattern was used by the Soviet Union – both in the pre- and post--Cold War era. Let us just mention the Soviet-Finnish war (1939–1940) with the purpose of the imposition of pro-Soviet government by H. Kusinen in Helsinki. Thanks to the determination of the Finnish, the war ended only with a border-line correction. The same pattern was used by the Third Reich, which created 'friendly' governments allied with Nazi Germany in Norway (Vidkun Quisling), France (Vichy government) or Japan (the pro-Japanese government in China during World War II).

Such pattern was used by the US as well, especially in Central and Southern American countries. That was visible in 1954 in Guatemala, which democratically elected the leftist president Jacopo Arbenz, who was deposed by the military intervention by CIA and US-supported general Castillo Amaz. That was contradictory to the US ideology, which supported the concept of democratic elections. The same happened with the Soviet Union's invasion in Afghanistan in 1979 with the purpose to install the pro-Soviet Babrak Karmal government (actually brought from Moscow). Afghanistan proved to be

a trap for the Soviet Red Army, which was based on classical warfare and unprepared for guerrilla warfare. The political purpose of the Soviet intervention was truly important; it was the need to create a more leftist government against the possible Islamic revolution which emanated from the first Islamic republic in Iran. Since then, the still on-going conflict in Afghanistan has become religious, political and economic. Also in 1979, the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, provoked by the Khmer Rouge, launched an offensive, deposing the bloody Cambodian communist regime setting up in Phnom Penh pro-Vietnamese government of Heng Samrin. The same might be pointed out in Laos, which for a long time had been penetrated by the communist North Vietnam. It was a very conspicuous example of the local Vietnamese Indochinese empire, as Elisabeth Becker put it. The withdrawal of Vietnamese troops in 1992 marked the end of the era of extended Vietnamese influences.

A very modern example could be found in Ukraine with the former president Victor Yanukovich, whose deposition by the Ukrainian revolution in 2014 caused Russian intervention in the form of a hybrid war. The dependency of the former Ukrainian president to Russia guaranteed a semi-sovereignty of the country. The same was visible in the Soviet installation of satellites states in Central Europe (Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Romania, Bulgaria and East Germany) and Soviet interventions in Hungary (1956) and Czechoslovakia (1968). The proclamation of the Brezhnev Doctrine (the Soviet Union's authorisation for using military power in its spheres of influences in the communist bloc in Europe), which was the legal basis for such interventions, paved the way to consolidate the Soviet bloc.

The East-West Cold War confrontation is just a classical pattern of an ideological conflict. The multidimensional range of the conflict is of particular importance. Whereas the communist bloc (the Soviet Union) used slogans such as 'progressive wave of the future', 'national-liberation movements', 'revolutionary forces', 'reactionary forces' or 'imperialistic forces', the West referred to terms such as: 'free world', 'democracy' or 'national forces' (counterbalancing the communist's so-called 'international forces'). Whereas the communist ideology was based on the assumption that it represented the trend of the future, the capitalist world (the US) represented a counteroffensive attitude if not defensive one. This conflict however emanated with a variety of types of armed conflicts on the peripheries.

That resulted in the Soviet Union finally supporting all international leftists movements (in whatever sense they could be understood), e.g. in Angola, Mozambique, Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Egypt, Libya, Vietnam, etc., through which was finally trapped in the so called overstretched empire syndrome, repeating the mistakes of imperial powers in the 20th century. The ideological conflict existed even within communism, since practical elements prevailed in the policy of Communist China (possession of nuclear weapon). The ideological basis being questioned by China drove both communist states onto the conflicting road, which resulted in many border-line incidents.

One might find ideological roots in the war in Vietnam. The country, divided into communist North and non-communist nationalist South, became a battlefield. Although years later, the former US Secretary of Defence Robert S. McNamara stated that the biggest mistake the US committed was the assumption of North Vietnamese affiliation

to the Soviet Union whereas the real purpose for the North was the unification of the country divided by international powers, where communism was only a tool. On the other hand, the US intervention in South Vietnam had only defensive assumption – to contain communism without unification[10].

RELIGIOUS CONFLICTS

Although it was assumed that the European civilisation in the modern era (16th – 17th century) was marked by religious conflicts and religion made the sense of existence (unlike the Roman world, which was based on politics, and the modern world, which is based on economy), the question reappeared again in the modern times. The confrontation between Christianity and Islam can be traced back to the Medieval times (Arabs on the Iberian Peninsula, Charles Martel and Poitiers (732), Crusades, Turkish empire, etc.) the so-called religious awakening of Islam seems to be the major element of the confrontation. Still, religious conflicts are very close to ideological ones and are very fierce, since it is a style of living, rules, values and structures that create the society and individual identity.

One of the most important points of view is represented by Samuel Huntington and his *The Clash of Civilization*[11]. It was first published in 1992 as an article, and later was developed as a book, as it expressed the classical approach towards the understanding of the modern world. At the beginning of the post-Cold War era, Huntington predicted the new conflict that was on the horizon. Unlike Francis Fukuyama, whose concept of the end of history, which meant the whole world, would be living peacefully because of democratic values, Huntington wrote about religion which replaces ideology[12]. Later on, at the beginning of 21st century, the so-called neo-conservatists from the US (Paul Wolfowitz, Paul Kagan, Norman Podhoretz, etc.) absorbed his concepts for implementation of unilateralism and the explanation of the global mission of the US to supervise world order. One of the most persuasive arguments Huntington used was that of the offensive power of Islam and defensive power of the Western Christian civilisation.

When DAESH or the Islamic State (ISIS) was proclaimed, a new dimension of conflicts arose. For the first time, the self-proclaimed caliphate in Iraq by Abu Bakhr al--Baghdadi took a leadership in the religious crusade against so-called infidels. Indeed, religion replaced global communist ideology, which staunchly believed in its mission. No matter who and how had the interests in keeping the Islamic State alive (it is crumbling today), the state representing extreme orthodox Islamic beliefs (salafits) created its bridgeheads in many parts of the world, e.g. in Libya, Syria, Kenia or Nigeria and

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[10] As it was later proved after the fatal coup d'etat, the person who killed president Ngo Dinh Diem was Nguyen Khanh – the new South Vietnamese president who wanted to reunify the country under the auspices of the Saigon government, and that caused the US military intervention in South Vietnam. The war was run within the Containment Principle, and therefore it was aimed to repeal the aggression from within South Vietnam and not to switch the war onto North Vietnam, which means no unification.

[11] S. Huntington, *Zderzenie cywilizacji*, Warszawa 2000.

[12] F. Fukuyama, *The End of a History and the Last Man*, New York 1992.

it referred to terrorism as a method of fighting, giving a new meaning to international terrorism. It attacks infidels everywhere in Australia, USA, Europe, Africa, etc., giving the impression of being everywhere and ready to sacrifice until the world is converted.

Whereas during the Cold War religious conflicts were sporadic and did not attract public attention, soon after they re-emerged as one of the pivotal. The former Yugoslavian state and its split is the best example. In the disastrous period of 1991–1995, the former Yugoslavian state went through the period of several conflicts, namely political, economic, ethnic and religious ones. In Croatia, the Russian Orthodox Serbian minority proclaimed its own state with Knin as a capital within the new Croatian state. Simultaneously, in Bosnia and Hercegovina there were three religions to be confronted, namely Russian Orthodox Serbian, Christian Catholic Croatian and Bosnian Islamic belief. While the religion laid foundations for ISIS in Bosnia, religion in general became a criterion of identity within a conflicting country.

The next example is Afghanistan and Pakistan, where the Taliban movement used to be very influential, especially when those ruling Afghanistan hid Osama bin-Laden who was personally responsible for the World Trade Centre terrorist attack in 2001.

Economic conflicts are the most frequent conflicts in the post-1945 period. Usually they are identified with poverty, which inspires countries to refer to violence in desperation. Indeed as German scholar Herfried Münkler pointed out, there is a correlation between poverty and neighbouring wealth, which very often generates civil conflicts[13]. As it was mentioned before, the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait was caused by the need of compensation of financial costs of Saddam Hussein's war against Iran (1980–1988). It often happens that civil war is transformed into an international conflict when foreign powers interfere or intervene, supporting one of the fighting factions. An example is Sierra Leone in the 1990s, when it was marked by the protracted civil war. Indeed as Münkler pointed out, the seed of a conflict is not real but potential wealth.

One of the most dangerous phenomena is the intervention of transnational corporations into domestic state affairs. An example might be the putsch prepared in the 1990s by a private company in Equatorial Guinea. Nevertheless, the detection of such activity is one of the most difficult.

Ethnic conflicts are the most complex of all, mostly because they overlap with others, e.g. in Bosnia Herzegovina, although the term ethnic cleansing was strictly affiliated with that war. Indeed it was a paradox that the term was used against Bosnian Muslims, who could not be treated as an ethnic group but a religious one. Moreover, Bosnian Croats and Serbs identified themselves through the lens of religion and state affiliation.

Some of the problems exist until today, adding complexity to violent conflicts, e.g. the Kurdish ethnicity (Iraq, Iran, Turkey and Syria), which is a political problem. The most violent outbreak of ethnic conflicts in the post-Cold War era was in Ruanda and Burundi in 1994 between the Hutu and Tutsi tribes. Many experts point out that this conflict can be traced to the colonial period and the post-colonial era,

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[13] H. Münkler, *Wojny naszych czasów*, Kraków 2004.

when the artificial border-lines had been defined. An example of a non-violent conflict but a long-lasting and smoulder one is in Belgium between the Wallon and Flemish communities.

Especially after the Cold War, narco-business became very conspicuous. The practice was used extensively by imperial powers in the 19th century, especially in China (Opium Wars). In the modern world, the example of Panama and its president Manuel Noriega, against whom the US sent special forces in 1989, accusing him of drug-dealing on a big scale, can be pointed out. Noriega was brought not to the International Court but the US court, which means that he was sentenced according to US law. Soon the problem of Colombia and Medellin Cartel emerged as one of the most powerful ones; Mexican cartels proved to penetrate American drug market and usurp the political right to fight the US to sell drugs and destroy the American population. However it seems to be the only subterfuge to cover the real criminal activity.

THE COLD WAR – COSTS OF ARMAMENTS

Table 1. The US and USSR costs of armaments (1948–1990) in bln USD

Years	USA	USSR
1948–1957	339.0	221.3
1958–1967	535.6	511.3
1968–1977	1.682	1.522
1978–1987	1.994	1.364
1988–1990	838.3	395.4

Source: based on the author's research.

When talking about Cold War armed conflicts, the potential of both sides must be confronted so as to understand their possibilities and the balance between aims and resources.

Table 2. Number of nuclear warheads in the world (2006)

Country	Number of nuclear warheads
Russia	16,000
USA	9,938
China	420
France	350

Country	Number of nuclear warheads
Israel	75–200 (?)
Britain	200
India	70–120 (?)
Pakistan	98–112 (?)
North Korea	1–10 (?)
	27,350

Based on *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* (the number of nuclear warheads possessed by North Korea for 2017 is estimated between 10 to 16, North Korea's capability updated by Terence Roehrig, *Japan, South Korea and the United States Nuclear Umbrella, Deterrence after the Cold War*, New York 2017, p. 87).

Note the biggest arsenal of the USA and Russia after the arms control treaties of the late 1980s. That might give some sort of awareness of the potentials of both superpowers during the Cold War, although during the Cuban Missile Crisis USSR was estimated to have no more than 300, while the USA was in possession of around 3,000 – based on the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*.

THE COLD WAR AND THE WORLD ON THE VERGE OF GLOBAL NUCLEAR CONFLICTS

The East-West confrontation was at least balanced by two nuclear superpowers, which were ready to run the so-called war by proxy. Supporting their allies, the superpowers tried to avoid real confrontation, being aware of the consequences of using nuclear weapons (no matter whether it was tactical or strategic). Nevertheless, there were moments when the world found itself on the verge of a real global armed conflict with the potential use of weapons of mass destruction (WMD).

The case of the Korean War is an interesting one. The division of the Korean Peninsula was a result of a bilateral Soviet-US pact of 1945[14]. The 38 parallel was a temporary demarcation line and the 1950 was the year when the unified elections might have been held. The Soviet Union, which was not interested in any kind of expansion onto the Korean Peninsula, accepted the provisions. It was focused on China and Japan. On the other hand, the most important country in the Asia Pacific for the US was the Republic of China, which was just entangled into the new phase of civil war between

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[14] The Moscow Conference of Foreign Ministers with the participation of the United States, United Kingdom and the Soviet Union, which was focused on the Far Eastern affairs. The US and the Soviet Union agreed on setting up the Joint Commission whose task was to make recommendation so as to form a single government for Korea, see R. Leckie, *Conflict: The History of the Korean War, 1950–1953*, New York 1962, p. 34.

the nationalist government of Chiang Kai-shek and the Chinese Communist Party led by Mao Zedong and Japan. The Policy Planning Staff led by George Kennan divided the world into five industrial centres, namely: the Soviet Union and its satellite states, the USA and the Western Hemisphere, Western Europe and its colonial peripheries, Germany and central Europe (treated as the centre of European mainland, not Soviet satellite states) and Japan, for whom China played a vital role as a natural resources area[15]. As Kennan stated, the US and the free world (at that time, the term was rather rarely used) are under the control of four of them and the loss of any of the area beyond US interests (the so-called non-industrial area) did not adversely affect global position of the US.

Meanwhile, the pro-Soviet government was installed in North Korea under the leadership of Kim Il Sung, who very quickly proved to be one of the brightest leader to grab the power over northern part of peninsula under the supervision of Soviet occupation forces under the command of general Terentij Stikov. Between 1945 and 1948, Moscow itself did not have any particular plans for Korea, so the creation of the pro-Soviet government in North Korea was welcomed, but without any further plans for military expansion or support of Kim's plans[16]. Proclamation of the North Korean state in 1948 as well as the Republic of Korea in the same year under the leadership of Syngman Rhee did not mark a real armed conflict.

Kim Il Sung had been trying to approach Stalin for some time to convince him that the South is weak, the communist movement is powerful and the national uprising against American occupied forces would have immediately broken out once North crossed the demarcation line. Stalin's approval in late 1949 paved the way for Kim to prepare for war.

To understand the complexity of the issue, one has to bear in mind the general confrontation between the East and the West. The civil war in China in 1949 reached its final point. The proclamation of the People's Republic of China (PRC) in October 1949 marked the communist bloc to gain more power and might have inspired other countries (especially the communist rebellion in Phillipines Hukbalahap and Indochina). The crumbling French empire in Indochina did not guarantee the United States to keep the position of the so-called free world in Southeast Asia. Actually, the term 'free world' might have appeared in 1949 after Chinese Communists had gained control over China. Then, the whole concept of the five industrial centres failed and the new approach appeared, namely the document called National Security Council 68 (NSC-68), which finally stated that the world was divided into two blocs – the Western world (free world) and the Communist one. The division simplified the question of the confrontation[17]. The United States supported the non-communist regimes whereas communism (the document never used the term the Soviet Union) was an aggressor against the free world and

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[15] J.L. Gaddis, *Strategie powstrzymywania*, Warszawa 2006, p. 27.
[16] A. Lankov, *The Real North Korea, Life and Politics in the Failed Stalinist Utopia*, Oxford 2013, p. 2–3.
[17] https://history.state.gov/milestones/1945-1952/NSC68

had to be contained in any parts of the world. The syndrome of the extended interests and extended deterrence appeared.

Communism gained its power through nuclear weapons, when in 1949 the Soviet Union proclaimed it was in possession of WMD, breaking the US monopoly. All the events contributed to the rather bleak perspectives for the United States.

The outbreak of the Korean War on 25 June 1950 marked the turning point in the Cold War. The US as well as the international community were caught by surprise and the march of the North Korean army was so quick that in September 1950 they reached the line of the Naktong River on the so called Busan Perimeter protected by only one RoK division supported by the US troops sent from Japan. The North possessed 95 per cent of the Korean Peninsula. Indeed, the Korean War sparked a real confusion, since the United Nations took command thanks to the extraordinary session of the Security Council held the same day the North's aggression and decided to intervene as international peace forces under the command of the United States.

General Douglas MacArthur, who was in charge of commanding the international UN forces, proved to be innovative and set up a plan of a special military operation in Incheon. The famous landing of the US troops in September proved to be a masterpiece of military art. Cutting the front into two pieces, the UN troops launched their quick march towards the North with the aim of achieving the Yalu River (the borderline between North Korea and China) and unifying the country. That was the moment when China reacted, sending over 400,000 volunteers under the leadership of general Peng De-huai, pushing the UN forces back towards the former demarcation line and soon capturing Seoul again (for a short time).

It was a truly decisive moment for the Cold War. Once the Chinese troops crossed the Yalu River, the whole concept of the war of containment reappeared and general MacArthur' request for nuclear weapons (a tactical one) to be used against Communist China was an argument for president Harry S. Truman to dismiss him. The profound hatred between MacArthur and Truman was a public secret, but the request gave Truman the chance to get rid of the person who might have entangled the US in a nuclear war[18].

The Korean War was the breaking point of the Cold War. It was the first war by proxy on the Communist side. The Soviet Union's participation was especially through air force – 64th Fighter Corps[19], material aid and political global support. On the other hand, the war (only five years after World War II) was marked by atrocities and massacres such as the notorious Bodo League Massacre (60,000 to 110,000 victims)[20], altogether the victims of the conflict are estimated around 2,5 to 3 million, which shows the scale of warfare. The tactics of the war have to be emphasised. The conflict was a rather classical one, without resorting to guerrilla warfare, which proved truly effective during the war on the Indochinese Peninsula during the French First Indochina War

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[18] https://www.airspacemag.com/military-aviation/how-korean-war-almost-went-nuclear-180955324/
[19] S. Sewell, *Soviet Air Order of Battle, Korea 1950–1953*, Koreawar.com.
[20] *Korea Bloodbath Probe Ends*, "The San Diego Union Tribune", 10 VII 2010.

1946–1954. That was regular warfare with frontlines and using classical equipment. The possibility of using nuclear weapons made all the sides to be aware of the possible massive destruction, therefore the US switched onto the Containment Principle, while the Soviet Union abstained from direct confrontation with the US. That proved the global balance of power.

However, the Korean War has never ended and the Armistice Agreement from 1953 is still binding, although it sanctions are only a temporary solution. Still no peace agreements have been signed on the Korean Peninsula. The so-called Neutral Nations Supervisory Committee is the international body to supervise the Demilitarised Zone (DMZ) and is a separated body from the UN Command – today UNCMAC (United Nations Committee, Military Armistice Committee). Nuclear weapons cause many issues, the balance of power in the case of WMD was abused since in 1991 the South Korea was denuclearised (tactical weapon) and North Korea has recently successfully completed its nuclear programme – estimated to be in possession of 3–12 nuclear warheads (including Hwasong 15 Intercontinental Ballistic Missile) and over 600 missiles. Nevertheless, nuclear war is of very low probability.[21]

CUBAN MISSILE CRISES, OCTOBER 1962

The world was on the verge of nuclear war. The turn of the 1950s and 1960s was marked by many crises which could have led the world onto the road of open nuclear confrontation. In order to understand the situation, one has to bear in mind the several crises that president John F. Kennedy inherited in 1961 from president Dwight D. Eisenhower. Indochina was the first one, especially South Vietnam and Laos. The peculiar situation there was marked by the eastern part of the country to be penetrated by North Vietnam, the involvement of so-called Soviet military advisers supporting the left-wing faction in Laos and the Vietnamese ally, as well as the US involvement in surveillance missions and the support of the right-wing faction. The second crisis was a typical post-colonial one, namely Congo, where the Marxist government under the auspices of Patrice Lumumba might have taken over and the secession of the Katanga province took place – all of that required intervention of the UN. The Berlin crisis in 1961 seemed to be of vital importance since East Germany and the Soviet Union ordered the Western allies to leave the Western sectors of Berlin, as according to international agreements, they could not aspire to be the capital of any of the new German states. Finally, the Berlin Wall was erected by the German Democratic Republic and it became the symbol of the Cold War and the confronta-

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[21] Indeed the problem is more sophisticated. South Korea is within the so called extended deterrence strategy which is based on the US protection guarantees for Japan and South Korea. This means both countries are dependent in this case from their ally. In case of South Korea possession of its own nuclear weapon is excluded since that means the withdrawal from the Non-Proliferation Treaty, 1975 (NPT) and to follow North Korea. Many possibilities are described by Terence Roehrig, *Japan, South Korea and the United States Nuclear Umbrella; Deterrence after the Cold War*, New York 2017, esp. p. 150–152.

tion between the East and the West. Moreover, it caused many propaganda issues for the East, which had to block the tide of refugees who, as the US press called it, voted by foot, choosing the West as their destination (between 1945 and 1961, over 4 million East Germans left the GDR).

The Cuban missile crisis had a different dimension, since again it put the world on the verge of nuclear destruction. From strategical point of view, the United States protected the Western Hemisphere as its traditional sphere of influences and prevented it to be penetrated by any hostile power. The crisis started during the last period of Eisenhower's presidency and it was inherited by John F. Kennedy. For the Soviet Union, the possibility of installing nuclear missiles just 150 km from the US shore was a chance to gain a threshold on the Western Hemisphere and to threat the US. The Soviet support for Fidel Castro's revolutionary movement was the effect of the strategic position of Cuba rather than the Cuban Marxist regime. However, the United States was involved in a top secret operation against Castro, supporting and supplying the counterrevolutionary movement which was trained by CIA especially in Guatemala. The infamous Bay of Pigs Invasion in April 1961 (just 3 months after Kennedy gained power) proved that the US was unprepared for confrontation by proxy.

Meanwhile in 1962, the US surveillance missions discovered that the Soviet Union installed nuclear missiles on Cuba. The United Nations proved to be a battlefield when the Soviet representative could not answer a simple question regarding the Soviet resent by proxy on the island. For president Kennedy, the Cuban Missile Crisis was of vital importance since it not only might have abused the balance of power or the US position, but it also adversely affected his chances for re-election. Trying to avoid the direct confrontation, the US Navy was ordered to surround Cuba and proclaimed a quarantine (it avoided the term blockade), ready not to allow the Soviet ships to deliver equipment and additional devices for the nuclear missiles to be displayed on the island. The standoff caused the tension to grow and the possibility of nuclear war reappeared since both sides were adamant in their positions.

Finally, the solution was found and the United States agreed to dismantle some missiles from Turkey and the Soviet Union pledged to dismantle its nuclear missiles in Cuba, which remained a communist, Marxist and pro-Soviet regime.

Paradoxically, Cuba as the second example of nuclear war possibility has remained a communist country until today. It is a relic of Cold War. Although the country was deprived of nuclear weapons together with North Korea, the Cuban case should be perceived as the possible nuclear confrontation between the East and the West and the symbol that the real crisis found a temporary but in reality a long-term solution.

TYPES OF POST-WORLD WAR II CONFLICTS

The criteria we may classify modern wars are based on the range of armed conflict, the type of weapon used in the conflict, the duration of a conflict and the character of warfare.
• Global wars – although they seem to pass away like the global conflicts (World War I and II), in modern times the example of George Bush's Doctrine to fight global

terrorism might be considered as the new approach to global conflicts in general (also, Islamic extremism claims its right to a global war against infidels). Nonetheless, there are some similarities of both approaches, e.g. the willingness of imposition of the system on a global scale. An important difference is that unlike the classical global conflicts with victims counted in millions (World War II had over 55 million), the modern ones are based on terrorist activities, subversive activities or (in the case of war run by a state like the Persian Gulf War of 1991) high-tech weapon with surgical precision to minimise the number of victims. Nevertheless the weaker side may refer to guerrilla warfare against a big superpower – the Soviet war in Afghanistan or American in Vietnam are the best examples.

• Total war – the post-war world does not know such a pattern, but the Third Reich and the Soviet Union in Stalinist times is noteworthy. Whereas the Third Reich offered its own population total destruction or the death of their country and the nation, the Soviet attitude was quite a different one – never to openly claim the total character of its war against capitalism. The similarity is based on the assumption of a total mobilisation of the country's resources, both economic and social. A total mobilisation of the Soviet Union meant the subjection to one main purpose – imposing its ideology globally. The phenomenon of permanent revolution laid foundations for such an approach.

• Nuclear war – still only a bleak assumption since the nuclear bomb was used only once, in Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945, and it accelerated the end of World War II in the Pacific area. There are two terms indissolubly connected with the term of nuclear war: deterrence and Mutual Assured Destruction (MAD). There were several times when the world faced the possibility of using nuclear weapon during the Cold War – during the First Indochina War, when it was suggested to use it against Vietnamese Communists (then called Viet Minh) at Dien Bien Phu, then during the Korean War, when after the Chinese communist aggression in 1950 (so called Chinese volunteers) general Douglas MacArthur requested president Harry S. Truman to be given a permission for using it against Beijing, and the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962 when global nuclear war was of highest probability.

In the modern world, the problem of nuclear weapons seems to concern the Korean Peninsula again – this time the North Korean leader Kim Jong Un is in the possession of the weapon of mass destruction and tries profit from it. Up to now, nobody has even mentioned of using it, the political problem is the denuclearisation.

Although the use of nuclear weapons is still unlikely, the countries which own it are: the US, Russia, Israel, Great Britain, France, India, Pakistan, China and North Korea. Nuclear weapon guarantees the states' position in International Relations and therefore is treated rather strictly from a political standpoint.

• Conventional warfare – typical warfare where the confrontation between all the sides is visible. The purpose is to fight the enemy's army, conventional weapon is used and the engaged sides follow their tactics. It uses battlefields as the war theatre where the armies clash. Conventional warfare only slightly touched civilians, therefore a minimum number of civilian victims is its characteristic feature. The major purpose is to beat the enemy and force them to surrender. Many wars on the fringes during the Cold

War used conventional weapons, although the direct clash of enemies was not seen since then. Therefore as such it is considered to be a relic.

• Non-conventional warfare – first of all, it is usually a protracted conflict (spanned in time) with the purpose to reduce military capabilities of the enemy and therefore force them to be subservient or gradually exhaust forces. Although it is assumed that the aims of such warfare are still unclear, it has to be pointed out that there are many examples of political purpose as such. Very often it refers to subversive activities and guerrilla warfare, e.g. the war in Vietnam (1959–1975), the Algerian War (1954–1962), the war in Laos (1959–1975), the Soviet war in Afghanistan (1979–1989) and today's conflict in Eastern Ukraine, African wars in the 1990s, e.g. in Sierra Leone, or the Yugoslavian war in the first half of the 1990s, the Northern Mali conflict or the conflict in Yemen. The contemporary war in Syria is an exception, since it uses terrorist activities and guerrilla warfare as well as conventional Syrian state forces and referring to non-conventional weapon, e.g. chemical ones.

• Hybrid warfare – typical of the post-Cold War era, especially for the second decade of the 21st century (although Chechnya in 2002 is considered to be a predecessor of hybrid war)[22]. As such it can be seen in Eastern Ukraine, where cyber war is one of the few elements, others being guerrilla attacks, terrorism and propaganda (although propaganda accompanied many of the modern conflicts). It uses irredentism, separatism and civil war. Irregular activities are mixed with regular ones, but all the methods are accepted. Protracted warfare is typical and, similarly to guerrilla warfare, it is aimed at the exhaustion of the enemy.

• Low tension war – the protracted armed conflict in Northern Ireland within which terrorism was widely used and it focused on people and the property of the enemy (here England). With a relatively low number of victims, it lasted from the late 1960s to the mid-1990s and it ended definitely when the Bush Doctrine was proclaimed.

• Civil war – usually a very bloody conflict which might include fighting factions, where the purpose is to gain power; often the fighting sides are supported by external powers like during the Cold War (Afghanistan in the 1990s, Sierra Leone, Eritrea, Liberia in the 1990s). Many such conflicts show that the war is a purpose in itself; war is a business and a style of living, e.g. Somalia: a protracted conflict without any particular purpose.

• 4th generation wars – The term was used for the first time by William S. Lind[23]. It is the type of war where one of the sides is a non-political subject or a non-state actor (organised crime like in Mexico). And they make wars in the Third World to be protracted, and according to Lind some 25 per cent of such conflicts spanned over a decade. The classical example of such war was the Spartacus uprising in ancient Rome (73–71 B.C.), when rebellious gladiator regiments pillaged Italy without having a real purpose of war.

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[22] W.J. Nemeth, *Future War and Chechnya: A Case for Hybrid Warfare*, Monterrey, California 2002, http://calhoun.nps.edu/bitstream/handle/10945/5865/02Jun_Nemeth.pdf?sequence=1.

[23] *Understanding Fourth Generation Warfare*, 15 I 2004, https://original.antiwar.com/lind/2004/01/15/understanding-fourth-generation-war/.

But while an organised state can manage rebelled forces, the modern statehood seems to be rather helpless confronting them. It is the result of some kind of erosion of the state monopoly of power (even changing the model of the state). The purpose is the war itself. The Modern Iraq state is the example. After the destruction of the old statehood in 2003 by the US, Iraq attracted many forces trying to find their own position within the political environment after the US withdrawal (and earlier as well). Although in 2003 George W. Bush Jr. proclaimed the end of the war, that was only a unilateral proclamation and it fell within the classical model of war. Wolfgang Sofsky's term *savage war* is the most adequate. On the other hand, the Lebanon conflict (1975–1990) or the separatist movement on the Philippine island Mindanao reflect this kind of war.

TRENDS IN MODERN WARS IN THE SECOND DECADE OF 21ST CENTURY

The diagram below shows trends of modern armed conflicts during and after the Cold War. Whereas the number of interstate conflicts dramatically decreased, the intrastate number of conflicts have increased.

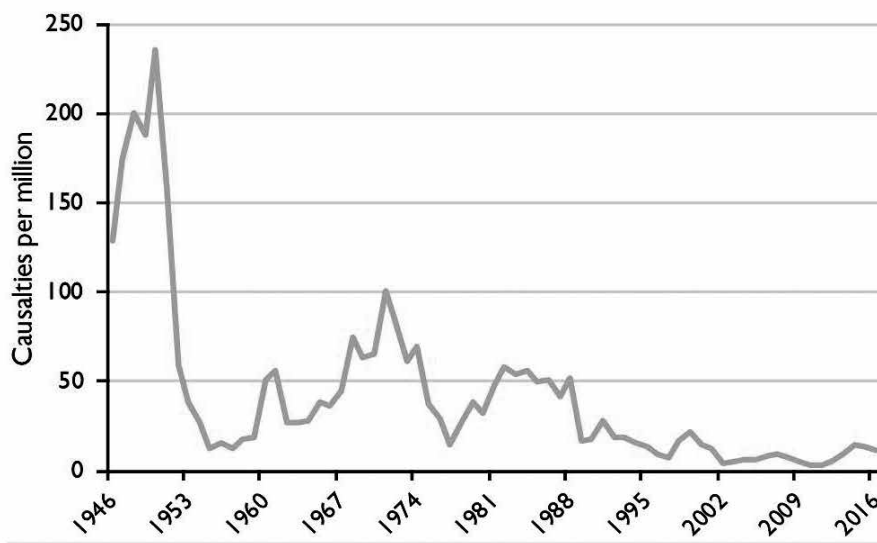**Figure 1. Number of armed conflicts by type (1946–2016)**
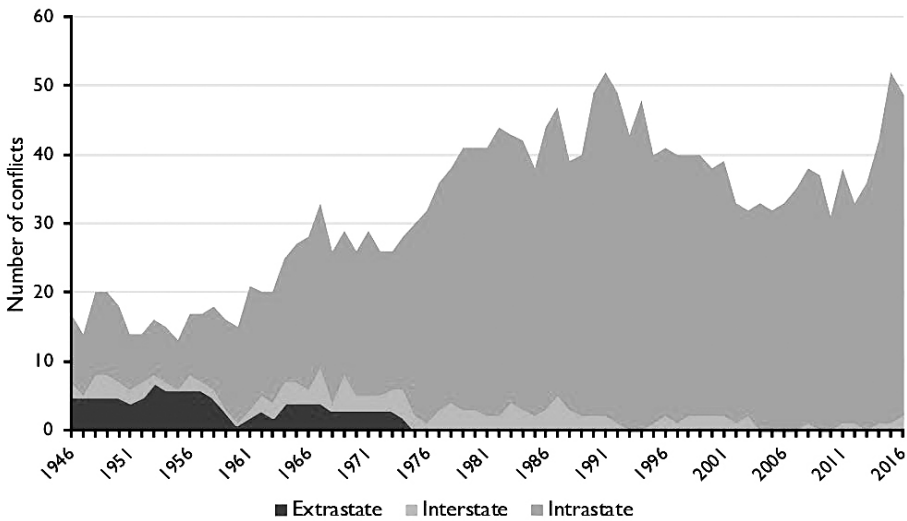
Source: K. Dupuy, S. Gates, H. Nygard, I. Rudomfsen, S.A. Rustad, H. Strand, H. Urdal, *Trends in Armed Conflicts, 1946-2016*, 12 VI 2017, https://reliefweb.int/report/world/trends-armed-conflict-1946-2016.

According to the Centre for Security Studies research issued in 2017 as *Trends in Armed Conflict, 1946–2016*, the increase of instability and violence has been explained by the ISIS activity which as a state (although unrecognised) spanned through the ter-

ritory of Syria and Iraq, and which has been responsible for global violence in Syria and Iraq, but also in Libya, Turkey, Afghanistan and in other countries such as: Cameroon, Jordan, Libya, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, Russia, Syria and Yemen. Jordan and Pakistan were recorded as new IS conflicts[24]. The conclusion is interesting, namely: "while the number of conflicts is concerning, we are not witnessing a spread of conflict to many new geographical areas, or a proliferation of entirely new conflicts, but rather the rise of new actors and motivations for conflict"[25].

Moreover, having a rather violent impression of the modern world, when looking at the death rate it the decreasing number of direct victims seems striking whereas data regarding people affected by the warfare is still relatively flexible and far from unanimity.

Figure 2. Battle deaths per 1000 people (1946–2016)

Source: K. Dupuy, S. Gates, H. Nygard, I. Rudomfsen, S.A. Rustad, H. Strand, H. Urdal, *Trends in Armed Conflicts…*

In the future, the number of armed conflicts is not expected to increase; some regions and states would be affected and the number of such has a tendency to shrink. Finally, the authors conclude: "The severity of these conflicts, and whether they continue, is shaped by a number of factors, including: the number of actors involved in the conflict, their relative strength, the type of warfare, the nature of foreign intervention, and porous bor-

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[24] K. Dupuy, S. Gates, H.M. Nygård, I. Rudolfsen, S.A. Rustad, H. Strand and H. Urdal for Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO), *Trends in Armed Conflict, 1946–2016*, 22 VI 2017.
[25] *Ibidem.*

ders. Given these factors, we should expect to see the wars in Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Ukraine, and Yemen to continue into the near future"[26].

CONCLUSIONS

After two big global military confrontations, there seems to be a return to a local range of war. The bipolar system was based on the presumption of nuclear warfare, which produced Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD), which indeed supported, if not created, the global balance of power. Although war on the fringes (peripheries) was quite big in numbers, it was local and not massively destructive.

The shift after the Cold-War marked a new type of warfare employing the most modern technology which has been used with so-called surgical precision, diminishing the numbers of victims. Simultaneously, protracted wars emerged (not a very new phenomenon), but with rather most conspicuous frequency. On the other hand, the ideological confrontation was replaced by the religious one. In spite of the new dimension of the global conflict, the number of armed conflicts (e.g. during the Cold War) did not dramatically change. Therefore, the 21st century cannot be called as the turning point.

New military conflicts include non-state actors, which means that the state as an institution lost its monopoly for violence. On the other hand, the aforementioned protracted armed conflicts often represent war itself. However, hybrid war should be mentioned as an accurate example of the employment of various types of tools. Cybersecurity became one of the pillars of security itself and cyberwar might affect the structures of the enemy without causing physical victims.

And the last issue is the global system. Unlike the Cold War, which was based on bipolarity and to a large extent on the balance of power and the predictability of the confronting powers, the new multi-polar system is based on the balance of power of four superpowers who cannot perfectly control the globe, which leads to the creation of a less stable system to some extent. Religious confrontation, especially visible in the example of ISIS, is reflected by more frequent terrorist activity, which does not cause so many victims as a classical conflict. The armed conflicts of the 21st century differ in some types of warfare but also in trends and frequency.

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Zbrojne konflikty podczas zimnej wojny i po niej – zarys ogólny

Głównym celem niniejszego eseju jest analiza trendów konfliktów zbrojnych podczas zimnej wojny i w okresie następującym po niej. Niezmiernie ważne jest, aby zdefiniować konflikty zbrojne i wojny, ponieważ można je postrzegać w różny sposób. Autor położył nacisk zarówno na typologię, jak i na dane statystyczne, aby zilustrować częstotliwość występowania konfliktów zbrojnych w obu okresach.

Tekst jest studium porównawczym obu okresów, dzięki któremu można wyciągnąć wnioski dotyczące problematyki z okresu 1945–1989 oraz po roku 1989. Jednakże nowe

typy konfliktów, podobnie jak nowe podejście do nich jako nowego zjawiska, zostały jedynie zarysowane.

SŁOWA KLUCZOWE

zimna wojna, konflikty zbrojne, typologia konfliktów zbrojnych, broń jądrowa, broń konwencjonalna, wojna partyzancka, konflikty zbrojne po zimnej wojnie

The Cold War and Post-Cold War Armed Conflicts – General Overview

The major purpose of the essay is to analyse trends in the Cold War and post-Cold War armed conflicts. It is important to bear in mind the necessity of definitions of armed conflicts and wars, etc., since it might be understood in different ways. The author emphasised the typology of armed conflicts in the Cold and post-Cold War era as well as statistical data so as to illustrate the frequency of armed conflicts in both periods.

The article presents a comparative study of both periods so as to draw a conclusion regarding the problem in the period of 1945–1989 and post-1989 periods. However, the new types of conflicts as well as the new approach towards them as a new phenomenon has only been touched.

KEYWORDS

Cold War, armed conflicts, typology of armed conflicts, nuclear weapon, conventional weapon, guerrilla warfare, post-Cold War armed conflicts

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Przetłumaczył na język polski następujące pozycje: Maldwyn Jones, *Historia USA* (*History of the USA*) (1998), John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategie powstrzymywania* (*Strategies of Containment*) (2006), Robert Owen, *Chorzy u władzy* (*In Sickness and in Power*, 2010). Obecnie współpracuje z koreańskim odpowiednikiem „National Geographic Traveler".

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He translated into the Polish language: Maldwyn Jones, *Historia USA*, 1998 (*History of the USA*), John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategie powstrzymywania*, 2006 (*Strategies of Containment*), Robert Owen, *Chorzy u władzy* (*In Sickness and in Power*) 2010.

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