

The New Wars Approach and the Post-Cold War Conflicts of the Middle East

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Abstract: This study aims to test how the New Wars Theory, a novel argumentative standpoint which examines whether the wars of the current era has undergone a change from the Cold War period in terms of several parameters, fares against the armed conflicts of the Middle East. Noting that the works under the New Wars Theory has tested their arguments in diverse regions other than the Middle East, this paper seeks to provide a contribution to this body of research by analyzing the Cold War and post-Cold War armed conflicts of that area by observing whether there indeed is a transformation of warfare. The research reaches mixed results, as some of the findings support the New Wars Theory while others reveal that under some determinants, no comprehensive shift has occurred.

Keywords: New Wars Theory, Middle East, Armed Conflict, Post-Cold War Period, Transformation

Yeni Savaşlar Yaklaşımı ve Ortadoğu'da Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Çatışmalar

Öz: Günümüz savaşları bir değişime uğradı mı, uğradıysa hangi kademelerde bu değişim gerçekleşti mi veya Soğuk Savaş sonrası silahlı çatışmaları farklı yapan nedir sorularına yanıt arayan Yeni Savaşlar Teorisini Orta Doğu ekseninde test eden bu çalışma, teorisyenlerin iddia ettiği gibi günümüz çatışmalarının Soğuk Savaş döneminden farklı olarak aktör, eylem ve kapsam değişiklikleri olup olmadığını araştıran bir çerçevede sunmaktadır. Kendi oluşturduğu veri tabanı ile Orta Doğu'da 1945'ten 2015'e kadar olan silahlı çatışmaları savaşan taraflar, savaşlardaki amaç, çatışmalardaki yöntem ve alan-süre-kayıp sayıları ile tanımladığı savaşın kapsamı determinantlarını kullanarak Yeni Savaşlar Teorisini bu kritik bölgede test ederek bu yaklaşımın geçerliliğini incelemektedir. Bulduğu sonuçlar, Orta Doğu günümüz silahlı çatışmalarının belirli boyutlarda bir farklılaşmaya gitmekte iken belirli açılardan da tamamen dönüşüme uğramadığını ortaya koymuş ve Yeni Savaşlar Teorisini kısmen doğrulamıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Yeni Savaşlar Teorisi, Orta Doğu, Silahlı Çatışma, Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Dönem, Dönüşüm

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Introduction

The Middle East is definitely among the world's most volatile regions. In the modern era, for instance, during the period between 1945 & 1991, it can be observed that nearly all the states in the region, spanning from Morocco to Afghanistan, has participated into an armed conflict at least once with another Middle Eastern state or non-state actor, which signifies that the area is truly a hot-spot for intense violence. In the Cold War years, efforts to conceptualize and understand these interstate, intrastate, and extrastate wars of the Middle East noted that the scope of those conflicts seems to be immense, and thus, comprehensive data sets were set up in the 1960s to code and determine the causes, the onset, and the implications of these armed conflicts. According to one of those approaches to war, the *Correlates of War Project*, the number of those three abovementioned categories of wars between the years 1816 and 2007 in the Middle East easily exceeds 100 (Sarkees & Wayman, 2010).

A glance at the post-Cold War military conflicts however reveals a discussion which emphasizes an observable change within the nature of the wars of the new millennia, centering on the notion that the world's militarized disputes has moved away from intense & short duration inter-state wars to a more lengthy, intra-state, extra-state, and civil war character, in which rather than traditional Cold War politics, new issues such as ethnicity, religious identity, sectarianism, illegitimacy, and terrorism lay at the core (Münkler, 2009). This notable "shift" from the old type of wars is being deeply scrutinized by an approach called the New Wars Theory, which is an argumentative standpoint that works in tandem with International Relations Theory and Area Studies (Kaldor, 2012). By following the framework of this New Wars approach and after observing that this novel war studies standpoint has examined cases from Europe, the Balkans, Africa, and the Caucasus, but not the Middle East (Kaldor, 2012), this paper, aims to test this approach's assumptions against this untested region, thereby examining the armed conflicts within during the post-Cold War era, and then elaborating whether the nature of these conflicts has indeed changed from the ones of the Cold War.

Research Question

The research query that is intended to be analyzed here rests on the study framework of the New Wars Theory, which examines the variation in the typology of armed conflicts between the pre- and the post-Cold War periods, therefore, accordingly, this paper questions whether the armed conflicts of the

Middle East has witnessed a fundamental change beginning from the 1990s and onwards. In relation with this research question, the paper, in parallel, also conceptualizes the scope of its inquiry to include other sub-research questions that builds upon four major issues, which are: whether the type of combatants in the Middle Eastern wars has undergone any change; whether the implementation or execution of Middle Eastern wars has changed; whether the causes or purposes of the armed conflicts of the Middle East has changed; and lastly, whether the magnitude of the wars have changed in the post-Cold War period. Such a research question was selected since it was observed that additional examination of other regional conflicts such as the ones in South Asia, South and Central America, Eastern and Central Africa, or the Middle East would contribute on enhancing the explanatory potential of the theory, demonstrate the strengths and weaknesses of this novel war studies approach, and reach conclusions that confirm or falsify the existing argumentations.

A Literature Review of The New Wars Theory

It is observed that even though the abstract theoretical development of the New Wars approach is quite recent, this standpoint seems to have created a strong trend, therefore it is possible to observe that the existing literature on its academic scrutiny is absolutely immense, with studies ranging from the analysis of high-tech weapons systems to child soldiers that are included within the scope of this type of investigation (Kaldor, 2013; Mello, 2010). In addition, various International Relations approaches, such as International Political Economy or Critical Theory, and its variants, are also interested in using the New Wars hypotheses in their studies, implementing this approach to develop reasonings regarding human security and emancipation (Welsh, 2008). Despite this broad literature, the seminal studies that scrutinizes on this theory are Chris Gray's "Postmodern Wars", Edward Rice's "Wars of the Third Kind", Kalevi Holsti's "People's Wars", and Kaldor's "New Wars" conceptualizations, which provides argumentations in elaborating the nature of warfare in the post-Cold War era. In relation, this paper moves forward with the observation that among these four studies, it was in Kaldor's argumentation that the post-Cold War conflicts were defined as "New Wars", and that it was in her study that she noted "during the last decades of the 20th century, a new type of organized violence developed in Africa and Eastern Europe... which I describe this type of violence as 'new war'" (Kaldor, 2012, pp. 1-2).

Concerning the multiple works mentioned above, this paper provides a critical literature review on the assertions of these studies on new wars before arguing that even though these approaches produce interesting argumentations, some possesses debatable hypotheses which renders their overall remarks on the change of the typology of wars in the Post-Cold War era as problematic, whereas others provide a coherent framework which is applicable to the Middle East. Accordingly, this paper aims to reveal those frailties within these diverse interpretations and offers to provide a clearer and more comprehensive framework that sets up a foundation for a clearer conceptualization and operationalization to measure the change in the nature of modern wars.

Gray's Postmodern War

One major interpretation of New Wars is the concept of Postmodern War of Chris Gray, who states that “war is undergoing a crisis that will lead to a radical redefinition of war itself, and...this is part of the general worldwide crisis of postmodernity” (Gray, 1997, p. 21). Gray uses that term since he argues that in postmodern wars, technological advancements, especially in digitalized weapons systems and militarized artificial intelligence, has altered “the logic and culture of modern war”, in which, computer-processed information, which he calls “technoscience”, is the “single most significant military factor”, therefore noting that the emergence of numerous and sophisticated human-machine weapons systems, changes the face of war and the conditions of peace (Gray, 1997, p. 21). Additionally, after examining several case studies, Gray asserts that World War II, Vietnam Wars and the Gulf War attract particular scrutiny as these can be identified as direct instances of Postmodern Wars, since they are the examples of major conflicts where weapons of mass destruction, computers, strategic bombing, systems analysis, and artificial intelligence were firstly and extensively used, thence displaying a change in the character of warfare (Gray, 1997, p. 22).

Rice's Wars of the Third Kind

Edward Rice labels new wars as “Wars of the Third Kind” since he focuses on the non-conventional intrastate wars in the postcolonial regions, that is, in the third world countries, and argues that only in underdeveloped countries or in areas of agrarian economies these kinds of wars take place, asserting that, within that atmosphere, “radicalized initiatives” can be pursued by insurgents that employ asymmetric warfare, which is distinguished from the conventional, that is from the first kind, or nuclear, that is, the second kind of

wars (Rice, 1988, p.53). Rice then carefully examines the Chinese Communists' campaigns against the Japanese and the Chinese Nationalists, the Guatemalan and Philippine insurgencies, the Vietnam War, and the Algerian revolt, demonstrating that the failure of governments to understand the conflict's nature led to military and political catastrophe (e.g., the US and France in Vietnam, France in Algeria, The Nationalists in China); before defending that successful counterinsurgency campaigns result only when state's operational capacities are suited to respond to the situation (Rice, 1988, p. 51-53, 78).

Holsti's People's Wars

Kalevi Holsti's standpoint displays that new wars are "primarily guerilla campaigns fought by militarized communal groups against either government forces or other militarized groups within the states", in which "the line between combatant and noncombatant is blurred", while arguing that contrary to the state-centric and industrialized wars of the early 20th century, in People's Wars, "there are no explicit fronts, uniforms, or territorial limits" which enables singling out objectives and purposes other than asymmetric warfare or instigating terror (Holsti, 1996, p. 29, 36-38). Further, Holsti emphasizes that there exists "a growing problem of increasing weak states", thereby asserting that wars between states "have been declining", whereas indicating that this decline specifies that internal wars are "on the rise". Holsti's argument rests on the observation that in the post-colonial era many weak states have risen due to the lack of a uniting identity which signals that their administrations have little legitimacy thence paving the way for ethnic conflict or civil wars (Holsti, 1996, p. 119).

Kaldor's New Wars

Mary Kaldor's approach puts forth several parameters so that the difference between new and the old types of armed conflicts can be made explicit. The first parameter that she scrutinizes is the status of the warring actors, in other words, their identity, while mentioning even though the combatants in the old wars were mainly states and wars were fought between the "regular troops" of states, new wars, on the other hand, are armed clashes between or among a combined "network of state and nonstate actors, that is, "regular armed forces, mercenaries, jihadists, warlords, paramilitaries" (Kaldor, 2012, p. 2). Secondly, Kaldor distinguishes the new types from the old wars via the goals or purposes of the combatants who are in conflict, arguing that while the old wars were "fought for geopolitics", new wars "are fought in the name of identity", in

which the parties, rather than aiming to pursue “programmes and policies in the broader public interest”, fight “to gain access to the state for particular groups” such as in the name of tribe, sect, religion, or ethnicity (Kaldor, 2012, p. 2-3). Thirdly, another parameter that Kaldor uses to differentiate new wars from the old ones is the methods employed in war, on which, she emphasizes that in the old encounters, battles and capturing territory through military means were essential, while that in the new wars, “battles are rare and territory is captured through political means, through control of population,” as well as directing violence against civilians rather than enemy armed forces (Kaldor 2012, p. 3). Lastly, the fourth determinant which Kaldor uses to separate new wars from the old is the “forms of finance”, that is, the argumentation that even though “old wars were financed largely by states through taxation” and via mobilizing the population, new wars revolve around “private finance, including loot, pillage, kidnapping, smuggling of oil, diamonds, drugs, and people” in addition to the continuation of violence (Kaldor, 2012, p. 3).

A Critique

After examining the argumentations of the four major works and their hypotheses regarding the concept of New Wars, it is possible to observe that all of these standpoints has their strengths and weaknesses in analyzing the concept of change that is occurring in the nature of wars of the post-Cold War era, therefore granting the opportunity to assert that there stands a potential for refinement related to operationalizing the perception of variance in analyzing the armed conflicts after the 90s. Thereby, this critique aims to assess those argumentative pros and cons to lay the ideational foundations of a more comprehensive research design that could mend those frailties that resides within the existing New Wars approaches, so that it is possible to produce a clearer picture in measuring the transformation of the character armed conflicts.

Firstly, if the arguments of Gray are scrutinized, it is possible to state that although his work touches upon a significant factor, that is, the condition of technology in news wars, when the developments in military history is examined, this factor even though does determine a shift in the nature of wars, it is dominant rest on this singularity displays that any attempts of its application to a larger framework would produce incomplete or frail deductions. The argument revolving around the issue of technological advancements changing the nature of armed conflict seems sound at an initial look, since, when the evolution of the implementation of wars are examined,

amplifications in firepower, mobility, communication, and transportation systems has made an impact on the nature of wars, increasing their magnitude, destructivity, and economic repercussions. For instance, it can be observed that mass production technologies during World War I has enabled the complete utilization of the concept of total war, granting industrialized states the ability to amass huge resources of material and manpower over lengthy frontlines, making rapid victories to be impossible since huge artillery and infantry reserves stood well behind the lines waiting to react to any breakthrough. However, the development of the tank and mechanized armored personnel carriers in the 1930s triggered a change from static warfare to mobile warfare, enabling the conduct of offensive operations with a lesser cost of human lives.

Given this framework, does this type of argumentation accurately indicate that technology has prompted a shift in the nature of warfare? With a closer look it is possible to assert that rather than the sole technology itself it was the presence of other factors, that is, the perception of the military-political elites, their war aims, and the creative utilization of production capacities vis a vis the developments in the battlefield has actually changed the course of the war, since it should be remembered that it is the ideational element that triggers a change in technology and its effective utilization in warfare. As another critique, it is possible to provide a counter argument in the sense that during the Cold War and in the conflicts of the post-Cold War era, it was possible to observe that through the sales in the global arms market or through the capture of weapons caches, some combating groups were able to use both obsolete and sophisticated weapons in combination, that is, those actors were able to use both new and old types of arms through utilizing them without changing their fighting styles. Afghan guerrillas using high-tech missile systems against Soviet troops in Panjshir Valley is an example to this counter-argumentation. Thence, it is possible to observe that Gray uses a single type of variable, giving too much emphasis on technology and technoscience, and mainly disregards the variation of actors and their political aims under the conditions of war, and misinterpreting the issue that technology is merely a tool in war which is only a single factor that makes an impact on the character of war.

Secondly, when the stipulations of Rice are examined, it is possible to observe that he has a somewhat successful grasp of the conflicts that took place in the Third World countries during the Cold War with a special emphasis given to the nature of the wars as state vs. non-state in character. In a detailed scrutinization given upon the goals and methods of non-state actors fighting

the state actors, Rice notified the importance in the conduct of asymmetric conflicts in new wars. Nevertheless, it can be argued that even though Rice's analysis sounds solid for the wars of the post-colonial period in the Cold War, he neither provides an argument concerning the changing typology of wars that would occur after the Cold War, nor an account on how those new types of wars occurs between states, or between developed states with sophisticated technologies and conventional troops. In other words, Rice, while accurately capturing the Wars of the Third Kind, fails to give an account on the post-Cold War conflicts of the First Kind, which, for instance was seen during the Gulf Wars. In addition, it is possible to argue that Rice's approach is also further debatable, since it is possible to assert there is a disregardment of the fact that certain combatants employ asymmetric methods only due to external and internal pressures, such as material, personnel, training, tactical vision, or logistical incapacities, and that, they would turn to symmetric warfare when they acquire adequate military & training that would elevate them to fighting on the terms of their superior enemies. There are enough examples to support this assertion such as ISIS' capture of US and Iraqi Army material in Mosul, the defection of Syrian military staff which possessed armored or mechanized forces and forming the Free Syrian Army, the Islamic Front's capture of Syrian military bases which included tanks or other sophisticated conventional weapons, and the material capacity of Tamil Tigers, whom even possessed airplanes and submarines (Hashim, 2019; Lalwani, 2017). This would mean that war would turn from third kind into first kind when the actor's capacities change, which disrupts Rice's argument. Hence, deeper factors lying at the fundamentality of wars are needed to be examined so that a more comprehensive methodological framework could be assembled that could be used to produce argumentations that displays variation in armed conflicts.

When the interpretations of Holsti are examined, it is observed that these works, when compared to the argumentative frameworks of Rice and Gray, provide a clearer and a more comprehensive approach to explain the wars of the post-Cold War era, since they scrutinize upon many factors that has an effect on the changing character of wars. It was observed that Holsti, to explain the novelty in these post-Cold War conflicts, investigates the actors, that is, whether they are states or militarized communal groups, examines the nature of the war, which he discusses to be mostly guerilla campaigns, deliberates the magnitude of wars, which seems to be not confined with borders and territories, assesses the objectives of the combatants which are mainly terror and fear, and lastly inspects the methods used by the warring sides. Even

though producing a frail argumentation concerning the origin of these wars by claiming it to be due to weak states, or the inability of states in preventing or stabilizing domestic violence, and disregarding external factors, socio-economics, or ideology, Holsti's framework provides a coherent interpretative context and categorical framework in a methodological sense where wars of the post-Cold War conflicts of the Middle East can be examined to assert that whether their characteristics have changed.

Kaldor provides a similar categorical framework resembling Holsti, in which she also examines the nature of the actors, their goals and purposes, and their methods employed in war. Although her hypotheses arising from such assumptions seem to be faint, for instance arguing that battles are rare, territory captured by political means rather than military action, or the addition of a financial variable which seems difficult to assess accurately without any field research or intelligence report, her approach to the changing characteristic of war is still applicable, thence providing an opportunity for an application to investigate the change in the wars of the Middle East.

The Research Design

This paper aims to assess whether the wars of the Middle East has undergone a change as the scholars of the New Wars argue so considering other regions. However, taking into consideration that the existing conceptualizations and operationalizations regarding the observation of variation in the types of wars within the Post-Cold War domain are somewhat debatable in their application, this paper aims to produce its own methodological framework that builds upon Kaldor's & Holsti's approaches with the addition of various modifications, and implements a data set based case study approach to observe whether the military conflicts of the Middle East did change and whether there are clear patterns of change that signify a variance in the concepts of the nature of the participants, the goals of the combatants, the methods used in wars, and the magnitude of the armed conflicts.

Methodology

Embracing a basic hypothesis-testing case study, within which the main aim is to test the assumptions of the New Wars Theory on the post-Cold War conflicts of the Middle East, and observe whether there has been a change in the characteristics of war, for the sake of precision and exactitude, the paper aims to use a framework that resembles that of Kaldor's and Holsti's interpretations of the New Wars approach, and it also aims to make use of a simple data

analysis approach by constructing its own data table as a means to testing the validity of the new wars hypotheses. This data analysis begins by examining the wars and conflicts of the Middle East from 1945 to 2015. Such a temporal domain was selected so that it would be possible to observe the changes in the characteristic of war by looking at whether within that time frame, actors, their methods, their goals, and the magnitude of wars, has underwent any change. The spatial domain for the paper is determined to be the conventional Middle East and North Africa region rather than the greater Middle East, that is, the scope of the study encompasses an area from Morocco to Iran, including Turkey as its northernmost edge and Yemen as its southernmost edge. Lastly, the paper aims to examine the cases in an overall manner and not in detail; hence, it intends to find broad changing patterns or major observable emerging trends in the character of wars of the Middle East between the aforementioned years.

Conceptualization and Operationalization

As it was mentioned above, the paper examines the variation of the characteristic of wars using four determinants. These are the combatants, the goals/purpose of war, the patterns of prosecution & methods of war, and the magnitude of war. These four factors were selected since it was observed that Holsti's and Kaldor's frameworks granted an applicable foundation, in which they have also examined the change of the nature of wars occurring within these similar dimensions. This research however disregards Kaldor's financial variable since it is perceived that this category cannot be operationalized, that is, it cannot be measured accurately as it is difficult to trace and verify the funding of the combatants and their sources of revenue.

This research takes the actors or participants of wars as the combatants who are engaging in the conflict. These sides are conceptualized as being three in nature, that is, they are elaborated as being tribal, state, or non-state in character. Those three concepts were selected since it was observed that other than state and non-state actors, tribes also did actually constitute an important place in the dynamics of wars in the Middle East, taking part in many of the armed conflicts. Additionally, for reasons of clarity and cohesiveness, the paper disregards dividing non-state actors into further groups, yet it is still acknowledged that a more comprehensive study can detail out the non-state actors according to their religious identity, political alignment, or social community.

Concerning the goals of the participants, the paper assumes that there exist five diverse reasons behind the purpose of wars that are taking place in the Middle East, and these were conceptualized as being political, ideological, geopolitical, economic, or territorial in nature. Political wars are conceptualized as conflicts that erupt for political reasons such as independence, challenging the existing order, to preserve the political order, or for alliance commitments. Ideological wars are determined to be as clashes arising from ideological divergences such as religious differences or factions such as Islamists vs. secularists. Geopolitical wars are coded as wars that are triggered by both sides aspiring to conquer or capture a critical geography, such as islands, straits, or basins. Reasons for economic wars were conceptualized to be for economic resources, such as oilfields, water resources, or trade routes. And lastly territorial wars are armed conflicts that arise from pure greed of conquering territory or to settle territorial disputes by reclaiming them.

Patterns of execution and the methods employed in war is the third parameter used in this research framework and it is conceptualized to be implemented between regular troops or irregular troops, that is, it looks at how actors employ their warring capacities against each other through troops' character. Regular troops are combat soldiers who are trained and equipped using conventional battle standards, whereas irregular troops are groups of combatants that embrace a fighting style that does not fit into conventional military doctrine, displaying guerrilla or terror acts to subdue their adversaries. The methods used in warfare is conceptualized to be either symmetric warfare, that is taking place between armed groups possessing similar weapons systems and doctrinal styles, asymmetric conflicts where a huge discrepancy exists between warring sides in terms of military potency which prompts the weaker party to adopt actions pertaining to guerrilla warfare, terror bombings, hit and run tactics, or ambushes, or hybrid clashes where a mixture of symmetric and asymmetric warfare is used.

Lastly, the paper conceptualizes the magnitude of war under three categories which are its range of impact, that is, the war's scope; its duration, meaning, its lengthiness in temporal scale; as well as its intensity, meaning its degree on causing military casualties. These parameters can be local or regional in scope, short or long in duration, and may have caused low, medium, high, or massive casualties. The war being local indicates that it takes place in a single country in a confined manner, that is, if there is no spillover or direct outside intervention by regional powers. The conflict being regional displays that its

impact radius spreads to the region affecting other countries as well. Temporality is operationalized to be short if it is less than 3 years, medium if it is between 4 and 9 years, and long if it is longer than 10 years. The degree of casualties is operationalized to be low if the number of dead, wounded, captured, missing to be less than 3000, medium to be if it is between 3000 and 10,000, high to be if it is between 10,000 and 50,000, and massive if it exceeds 50,000.

Findings

The data analysis indicates that, within the constructed framework, and within the geographical scope elaborated in the paper that spans from Morocco to Iran, there existed or already exists 41 Middle Eastern armed conflicts in the years between 1945 and 2015. Among these conflicts it was observed that 25 of the wars have occurred during the Cold War (1945-1991), while 16 of them has occurred or already ongoing in the post-Cold War era (1991-onwards).

When the actors or participants of the wars were analyzed so to observe any change between the periods of the Cold War and post-Cold War, it was revealed that during the period of 1945-1991, there existed 11 inter-state wars compared to 2 inter-state wars of the post-Cold War period; whereas, during the Cold War, it was observed that there occurred 14 intrastate conflicts in the Cold War compared to 14 within the post-Cold War period. This indicates that although there exists a temporal imbalance in correspondence of the number of wars during these two periods (46 years compared to 25) there has, as the New Wars Theorists has stipulated, an observable significant diminishment in the number of inter-state wars. When the intrastate wars are compared, it is revealed that the New Wars hypotheses of wars occurring within states seems to be in a trend of ascension, as it is revealed that 56% of the conflicts in Cold War period were civil conflicts, whereas this percentage increases to 87,5 in the post- Cold War period, despite a mere 25-year timespan.

When the goals or purpose of wars within these two periods were scrutinized through the data table, it was observed that all of the armed conflicts had political means, that is 25 out of 25 wars of the Cold War and 16 out of 16 wars of the post-Cold War period witnessed political goals of the actors. This indicates that contrary to the New Wars hypotheses which stipulates that these clashes are wars of identity or ethnicity, high politics is observed to be still the main reason. The paper attempted to detail out the purpose of war as much as possible, and hence, it was revealed that even though all of the wars in these

time frames were political, they differed over what other reason followed political aspirations. Concerning this, it was observed that wars which had ideological backgrounds that accompanied wars of political nature was 66% (16 out of 25), displaying that Cold War issues such as leftist vs. right wing, revolutionary vs. conservative, or pro-US vs. pro-Soviet did seem to have a greater impact on the character of wars. Whereas, regarding the conflicts of the post-Cold War it was observed that only 50% of the wars accompanied political reasons were still ideological, indicating that wars having ideological backgrounds still constitutes an important segment in the post-Cold War conflicts, thereby challenging the New Wars hypothesis. Additionally, it is observed that while there existed wars in the Cold War that had economic purposes accompanied by political aspirations, 20% of the wars (5 out of 25), the research displays that in the post-Cold War conflicts only one presented a case where there was a conflict that had an economic background aside from political reasons. Another conclusion asserted from the data was that wars that occurred in the post-Cold War era did actually have a territorial motive, since 37,5% of them had territorial aspirations compared to 32% of the conflicts of the Cold War, an interesting finding displaying that control of territory still constitutes an important element in the new wars.

When the patterns of conflict and methods of war were analyzed, it was also possible to reach interesting findings. Firstly, it was revealed that among the 25 conflicts in the Cold War Era, 4% of them were symmetric conflicts, that is, occurring between materially balanced parties employing conventional warfare, whereas it was observed that 40% of them were asymmetric conflicts, in which guerilla warfare, bombings, terror actions were evident, and that 20% were hybrid in nature. Still, it is noted that 25% of armed conflicts of the post-Cold War were wars that included both fighting styles which revealed that there were wars that included both guerilla warfare style clashes and conventional fighting; an interesting remark which was missed by the New Wars Theorists. When the fighting troops were examined in the Cold War, it was observed that contrary to the large number of symmetric conflicts, the degree of the usage of hybrid troops, that is, both regular and irregular troops actively fighting in these conflicts were high 40% when compared to regular vs. regular troops fighting (20%), regular vs. irregular troop confrontation (28%), and irregular vs. irregular troop combat (12%). This remark is also interesting since it signifies that the blurring of or the combined usage of regular and irregular troops in modern wars had already begun in the Cold War era, and hence it can be argued that it was not a unique feature in the new

wars, which is a point that challenges the New Wars standpoint. When the armed conflicts of the post-Cold War are examined, it was possible to observe that there was indeed a change, as asymmetric conflicts had increased, composing of 75% of the total number of armed clashes, whereas, as the New Wars Theorists has stipulated, symmetrical regular vs regular conflicts were low with 12,5% among the total, and only 12,5% of the wars of the post 1991 period had witnessed both asymmetric and symmetric conflicts (hybrid), a low number compared to 40% of the wars of the Cold War. This indicates that the New Wars Theorists has actually captured the changing pattern of war, and that armed conflicts of the Middle East do seem to follow a trend of asymmetric conflict. When the fighting troops were examined in the post-Cold War period there seems to be a change as well, as among the 16 of the armed clashes 12 of them were between regular and irregular troops indicating that the majority of the wars were taking place within states, with state troops representing regulars and insurgents employing irregular troops. Another changing pattern which was in line with the New War hypotheses was that fighting between regular and regular troops were decreasing, that is, wars between states are truly in a state of decline in the Middle East, representing only 2 out of 16.

Lastly, when the variation in the magnitude of war is examined, it was observed that the locality - regionality ratio of wars were nearly even (13 compared to 12) in the Cold War period, that is, the wars of the Cold War had been both regional spillovers and locally confined clashes. Nevertheless, it was possible to observe a locality pattern in the wars of the post-Cold War, as %81,2 of the clashes taken place were within states. This indicates that the New Wars hypotheses had captured the change in the scope of wars and their range of impact accurately. If the duration is examined however, it was possible to observe mixed results, that is, while the conflicts of the Cold War were mainly short in duration, 16 armed conflicts out of 25, the wars of the post-Cold War period in the Middle East seems to have a balanced temporal domain, since 7 out of 16 were long and 7 out of 16 were short conflicts, thereby indicating that the Cold War conflicts tend to be short wars while there is also indeed a lengthening trend in the post-Cold War clashes, as the New Wars hypotheses has envisioned. Finally, when the intensity category is observed based on casualty conditions, it was revealed that low-casualty wars are diminishing and armed conflicts are becoming more intense, as there were nine low-casualty coded wars in the Cold War whereas there is only four in the post-Cold War years. The data revealed that the number of medium-casualty conflicts are also

increasing. Still, the numbers further showed that mass-casualty wars have diminished since a decline from 8 high-casualty wars to 5 was observed.

Main Remarks & Conclusion

This paper provided research to test the New Wars Theory's assumptions against the cases of the Middle East, a regional domain that was neglected by the application of this theoretical framework, and displayed an observation on whether the armed conflicts of the Middle East has witnessed a fundamental transformation in character within the post-Cold War period. After reviewing the four major literary works on the concept of New Wars within the scholarship, it reached the conclusion that while the first two conceptualizations of novelty in wars provided interesting remarks, their reliance on single type of variables and limited scope has rendered them to produce problematic, fragile, or debatable argumentations, thus hindering their use in application to the Middle East. The second two however, that is, the works of Kaldor and Holsti, were assessed to provide a better and more compete methodological framework that enabled their incorporation into a hypotheses testing-case study approach embraced in the herein paper. Accordingly, similar to the framework of the latter studies, this paper, with particular assessment given to the status of the actors, the patterns of prosecution in wars, the purpose of wars, and the magnitude as main parameters, examined the degree of change in the Middle East armed conflicts. By introducing a data table-based statistical construction, the study compared the types of wars of the Cold War with the ones of the post-1991 period. The results reached by the paper were mixed. It was revealed that under some parameters the wars of the Middle East have indeed underwent change, while under in others, there was not an observed transformation.

As the findings implied, it was observed that concerning the actors involved in the new wars of the Middle East, there seems to be a diminishment in the number of interstate wars and an increase in the degree of intrastate wars, which are findings that are in line with the stipulations of the New Wars Theory, thereby indicating that when compared to the type of wars and the actors taking in place in the Cold War, it was possible to measure a change in the nature of the post-Cold War Middle Eastern conflicts.

Secondly, it was observed that ideology seems still to have a large impact on the reason of wars, in which political purposes also constitute an important cause. The presence of ideology as a significant element in the purpose of wars

indicate that such a trend did not change in the post-Cold War period as it was also the case in the Cold War era. Though, concerning economic purposes, the paper found out that there was a change, since, fighting parties did not possess an explicit economic reason for the wars of the post-1991 period while they were explicit in the Cold War period. It was also revealed that territory is still a significant driver for wars in the post-Cold War Middle East, displaying that this pattern has not changed as the world entered a new international systemic order.

Thirdly, when the patterns of prosecution of wars were elaborated, it was observed that similar to the predictions of the New Wars Theorists, asymmetric conflicts did indeed increase during this period, in which, %80 of the wars were asymmetric in essence, while only one conflict was symmetric. This displays a change in the nature of the wars in the post-Cold War, as even though asymmetric conflicts still took place in the Cold War, there were also a large number of symmetric ones.

Lastly, concerning the magnitude of wars, the results obtained were mixed. The paper displayed that while the duration of the conflicts did seem to increase in the post-1991 period, when compared to the previous era, its spatiality has also witnessed an alteration, where, the conflicts of the Cold War did seem to have a large regional impact, though the armed clashes of the post-Cold War were mainly local in its scope. The last finding, the wars' intensity based on casualty rates, displayed that both low-casualty and high-casualty armed conflicts are decreasing while medium-casualty wars are increasing.

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