Redefining the First World War within the Context of Clausewitz's "Absolute War" Dystopia

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Abstract

In general, the First World War is referred to as a "total war" in the history literature. It is possible to introduce a new analysis to define the Great War via the introduction of Clausewitz's theory of war. It could be argued that the First World War, which can be labeled as a novelty in the history of war, both demolished the set of values of the international system which had evolved before and (re)established the structure of the future system of international relations. In that sense, both the pre and post eras of World War I constitute important fields of research for political scientists. This study aims to analyze the First World War within the context of Clausewitz's dystopia of "absolute war" and attempts to construct a new method with which to understand the structure of the Great War in Clausewitzian terms.

Key Words

The First World War, total war, absolute war, Carl Von Clausewitz, Eric Von Ludendorff.

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Introduction

The armistice signed in November 1918 between Germany and the Entente States marked the end of the fighting, which had been ongoing without pause since August 1914. The finalization of this "Great War," the popular name given to this major conflict, had to be completed rapidly with the signature of a series of peace treaties at the peace conference that had gathered in Paris in 1919. If the Treaty of Lausanne, which the Entente states signed with Turkey, is also taken into consideration, it could be strongly argued that the end of the Great War was actually in 1923 as opposed to the more conventional date of 1918.

Even though it was named the Great War, the reference to the Second World War necessitated a change in the name and the conflict that had been known as the "Great War" was later reclassified as the "First World War". Despite the massive loss of life and limb and the introduction of nuclear weapons by the end of the Second World War, the impact of the preceding conflict, which

had divided the great powers into rival blocs and placed them in a situation of endless struggle, was physically and physiologically even more devastating for humanity. This effect can be evidenced by its unique nature, one which the so called "modern" states had never before witnessed. The level of the devastation can be measured with statistics that would have been nothing less than fictional before 1914. During the course of the Great War, some 65 million people were recruited for the fighting and 8 million people, both military and civilians, died, with more than 25 million people wounded in the course of the fighting.[1] The conflict not only damaged the resources of the participant states but also jeopardized civilian (material and human) resources on the so-called home front. Under pressure of such tension, the integrity and sovereignty of the combatant states were put to the test, one in which neither Russia nor Austro-Hungary managed to survive and see to the end. The Ottoman Empire's days also seemed to be numbered. The European political system was in peril, as the norms and values of the 19th century's European Concert began to be eroded. As the new status quo began to take shape with the peace making process of 1919, the major causes of the Great War seemed to be rooted in these European norms and values.

Despite the massive loss of life and limb and the introduction of nuclear weapons by the end of the Second World War, the impact of the preceding conflict, which had divided the great powers into rival blocs and placed them in a situation of endless struggle, was physically and physiologically even more devastating for humanity.

Before 1914, within the context of the evolution of the European state system, war had been perceived as an instrument of sovereign states. The characterization of this perception was first made by Carl Von Clausewitz's work, *On War*, a reflection and examination of the Napoleonic Wars. However, the negative impact of the Great War on the concept of war, which had previously been defined in Clausewitzian terms and institutionalized in the same manner within the course of the 19th century European system values, initiated a great deal of criticism towards the concept itself. In this sense, the victors labeled their war effort in terms of liberal idealist definitions, such as "the struggle of democracy against tyranny", or even christened their fight in terms of a "Just War". On the other side, the defeated adversaries defined their

struggle in terms of the preservation of their national beings and as self-defense against a forcibly imposed fate. Such attempts to legitimize the catastrophe, in which each state involved needed some kind of explanation and justification of its effort, caused some obscurity regarding not only the phenomenon of the Great War but also on the history of the origins and causes of the conflict. However, with a huge potential for analysis, Clausewitz's theory of war stands ever ready as a tool for examining and evaluating the Great War. This article bases its argument on Clausewitz's dystopic concept of "absolute war", which he used to define the concept of "real war" and analyzes the origins and the causes of the Great War in relation to Clausewitzian dystopia by classifying it (the First World War) as an absolute war.

Clausewitz's Dystopia: Absolute War

Arguably, the first academic text on the concept of war was written by Carl Von Clausewitz. In his famous book *On War,* Clausewitz made a revolutionary distinction between war and warfare.[2] He referred to "warfare" as an act of violence, in which one side tries to impose its will on the other. His delineation of warfare as an act of violence implies that the definition of war should be different and more inclusive than that of warfare, which is merely the act of violence. In that sense, Clausewitz describes "war" as merely a continuation of politics by other means. The logic of the definition posits war as an instrument for states as continue their relations by means of warfare. War is thus an act of politics and a form of communication that includes an element of conflict; a struggle, as it were, of persuasion. Under such conditions, war is politics combined with the means of force, a collection of practices reinforced by strategy and tactics to reach defined goals and objectives.

Clausewitz argues that if war were merely an act of violence to impose one's will on another, such an action would have been a radicalization of a mutual struggle in which neither side would hesitate to go to extremes in order to defeat the other and thus ensure its own survival. He labels this extreme situation as "absolute war", in which war represents not a means but becomes an end for the belligerents.[3] As Raymond Aron points out, absolute war is an abstraction of the phenomena of war and has no resemblance with earthbound and historical facts; it represents a purely ideal state, and due to its negative nature it should be referred to as a dystopia.[4] It is interesting that though Clausewitz uses the term "absolute war" in many places of *On War*, he never explains or defines

the term directly in his text. The cause of Clausewitz's approach is perhaps his intention to use the term absolute war to determine the materialization of the circumstances of real war by questioning and negating the dystopia of absolute war, which seems to be the reason behind Clausewitz's negligence in producing a description of absolute war; even though the dystopia accompanies his efforts on analyzing the real war.

In Clausewitz's own words:

> "As the most extensive use of physical force by no means excludes the co-operation of intelligence, he who uses this force ruthlessly, shrinking from no amount of bloodshed, must gain an advantage, if his adversary does not do the same. Thereby he forces his adversary's hand and thus each pushes the other to extremities to which the only limitation is the strength of resistance on the other side."[5]

Influenced by the idealization and equipped with nationalist assumptions, Ludendorff's definition of total war led to a totalitarian rhetoric.

In Clausewitz's philosophy of absolute war in the book *On War*, a war which is severed from historical and public influences and whose destructive character can only be defined at a theoretical level, cannot belong to the living world. In other words, real war is evidently different from absolute war.

Despite increasing density in his quest to explain war by moving from pure theory to actuality, Clausewitz takes the reader to his explanation of what constitutes war in the real world. First, he examines the state of absolute war by examining it as a solitary condition immune to preceding events; he supposes that real wars do not break out suddenly and without any cause, as was supposed in the case of absolute war. Following his emphasis, he presents a second enquiry, which is clearly related to the first one. He supposes that the sudden break out of absolute war is related to a sudden decision or to simultaneous decisions of war, whereas in the case of real war such decisions go through a rather lengthier process. Finally, and related to the above statements, Clausewitz questions the non-existence of political aims and goals in the process of decision making in the case of real war. His final verdict (or his aim) is striking but meaningful. In regard to real war's uncertain outcomes, he writes: "Thus the political object as the original motive of the war will be the Standard alike for the aim to be attained by the military action and for the efforts required for this purpose."[6]

As can be understood, Clausewitz argues that real war is a political action. In his words: "war is a serious mean for

serious ends", and not simply a political act but "a continuation of politics by other means".[7]

The term "real war" is a notion denoted by Clausewitz via his examination of historical wars,[8] whereas the dystopia of "absolute war" is a theoretical projection in which war exceeds politics. Despite his faint attempts to impart relevance to the Napoleonic wars, he does not seek any examples to substantiate his dystopia.[9]

Raymond Aron calls attention to the delicate relationship between real war and absolute war in the passage below:

> "The subordination of war to policy as a means to an end, implicit in Clausewitz's formula, establishes and justifies the distinction of absolute war and real wars. Escalation is the more to be feared, and real wars risk coming closer to absolute war, the more violence escapes the control of the chief of state. Policy seems to vanish when it takes the destruction of the enemy army as its single goal. Even in this case, war assumes a form that results from political intentions."[10]

Here one may once again ask: could it be that war, which is a political instrument, may change as a phenomenon in the minds of its users? Or to reform the question in Clausewitzian terms: could there be a situation in which in a war which seems to be a perfect real war in its political sense, a state of absolute war, replaces the state of real war in the course and execution of the process?

In fact it is not only Germany being accused but the extreme nationalist, historical and operant approaches of German philosophy that are seen as culpable.

Colin Gray argues that the Clausewitzian theory of war may be applied to any period of time.[11] In Gray's sense, and in the logic given in the previous paragraphs in which each question relates itself to the former, it is possible to introduce a hypothesis that may be put forward as follows:

> "Within the context of its outbreak and its practice, the First World War became an absolute war. The instinct of destroying the opponent caused the disappearance of the vague political aims and goals and with the allocation of all existing resources, each side sank into a fight in which violence became the only end within itself. With the loss of diplomacy, the belligerents were polarized and their political activities gave way to pure violence. Such conditions transformed a struggle which should have been a real war to a state of absolute war dystopia. Under these conditions, the First World War is an absolute war."[12]

Ludendorff and Total War

Eric Von Ludendorff, who had shared the position of Chief of the German High Command with Paul Von Hindenburg from August 1916 to the end of the First World War, labeled

the First World War as "total war".[13] For Ludendorff, the First World War was a conflict whose roots could be traced back to the Napoleonic Wars but its first appearance could be seen in the Franco-Prussian War of 1871, in which the belligerents amassed all their ideological and physical energies and resources to serve an environment in which the military characteristic of the conflict superseded the political one. Ludendorff's effort was to purify Germany from Clause 231 (also referred to as the Guilt Clause) of the Versailles Treaty, which placed the entirety of guilt for starting the First World War on Germany, by proposing that Germany fought a defensive war from 1914 to 1918 for her survival, which was threatened. Ludendorff argued that total war is a state of war that emerges when a nation's being is in danger and when a nation under such circumstances is intent on destroying the threat. Ludendorff argues that wars in which no such threat appears are to be called limited wars. In this manner, total war is a just and merited struggle for survival, whereas limited wars are low and vicious activities which are born of greed.[14]

Influenced by the idealization and equipped with nationalist assumptions, Ludendorff's definition of total war led to a totalitarian rhetoric. As total war is a struggle for the survival of an entity (known as the nation), the elements that form the nation should mobilize their physical and spiritual resources to sustain the fight. Under such extra ordinary circumstances, the distinction between civilian and military becomes nonexistent, as all the people of the nation are supposed to demonstrate their will for the survival of the whole, and thus each person becomes a warrior. In such times, the need for civil authority diminishes and the need to lead such a society of warriors gives rise to a military authority. In the case of Ludendorff's total war, the authority of the military elite should surpass the authority of the civilian elite to supervise and oversee the struggle for survival, and the resources of the nation in their entirety should be administrated to fulfill the needs of the military. In Ludendorff's view, the scope of this struggle for survival would not only include the main threat, which is defined as the external enemy, but would also include internal enemies who do not contribute enough to the cause.[15]

As Ludendorff's attributions shift the definition of the concept of the total war to extremes, there is a need to leave his views behind, but it should also be remembered that the First World War is also classified as a total war within the international historical literature and that Clausewitz's notion of absolute war is nonexistent. The motive behind such a delineation is that Germany is

accused of being responsible for the beginning of the Great War. In fact it is not only Germany being accused but the extreme nationalist, historical and operant approaches of German philosophy that are seen as culpable. Therefore under such circumstances, Ludendorff's definition paves the way for a counter-definition, which was to later be explicated by the other side that fought the Great War.

> Though absolute war is an isolated act which appears suddenly, in the case of real war, the conflict is the sum of certain origins and causes, which are apparently persistent in regards to historical context and the preceding historical era.

Referring to the topic of H.G. Wells' book, *The War That Will End War,*[16] which posited the idea that world peace may only be achieved through the defeat of German militarism by force, the phrase "the war to end all wars" was often used by the British Prime Minister David Lloyd George.[17] However, it should be noted that this phrase was usually attributed to the President of the United States, Woodrow Wilson. Wilson nominated the Great War as a fight by democracies against tyrannies in order to make the world a safer place. If the fight was won, the world was to be a better place, in which problems would not be solved by wars but via democratic institutions that would make dialogue and negotiation possible. In order to erect the reign of good, evil had to be beaten by force and violence, and under such conditions, the war which was being fought was the most important struggle in history. Clearly originating in one of Christianity's most important apostles, St Augustine, and his concept of the "just war", the phrase "the war to end all wars" was a definition that countered the concept of total war.[18]

Even though it should be accepted that total war and the war to end all wars are contradictory definitions presented by the belligerents of the Great War, it should also be noted that these concepts fall short of explaining the hypothesis put forward in the previous pages. At this point, the need for the Clausewitzian dystopia arises. However, there is still a further need to follow Clausewitz's line of thinking and follow his lead over his enquiries.

A Clausewitzian Analysis over the Characteristics of the First World War

Clausewitz defines his concept of absolute war over a state of conflict in which the use of violence becomes

the sole purpose. Upon this point, Clausewitz sets up his famous trinity. The first practice of his trinity is the use of force to impose one's will on the other. However, this action is said to trigger a counter action of a similar character from the other side. This reciprocal action necessitates a second practice aimed at disarming the opponent to break his will and thus fulfill the first practice, which in turn again forces reciprocal action from the other side, necessitating a third practice. This third action necessitates the allocation of all possible resources in one's arsenal in order to manage the first two practices. This final practice would also be countered by the opponent. Within such a context of theoretical triple reciprocal actions, war – logically - would go to extremes and would not end until one side is utterly destroyed. Though in Clausewitzian terms, the concept of real war is indeed based on the reciprocal trinity, because of the relationship between war and politics, real war is usually resistant to such extremes. Thus the starting point for the test of the hypothesis of this study appears. Within the context of these reciprocal practices, was the First World War limited by the resistance of politics as in case of real war, or was it carried to the extremes of the dystopia of absolute war?

If Clausewitz's path is followed, a second argument arises. Though absolute war is an isolated act which appears suddenly, in the case of real war, the conflict is the sum of certain origins and causes, which are apparently persistent in regards to historical context and the preceding historical era. Was the beginning of the First World War related to the origins and the causes of the period before 1914 or did the war begin unexpectedly and "independent" of time?

The final argument should be based on Clausewitz's descriptions of his opposing concepts of real and absolute war.

A third argument based on Clausewitz's trinity should be added to Clausewitz's definition of absolute war as an uncontrolled and sudden conflict that is disrupted by a single decision or multiple simultaneous decisions. However, in the case of real war, there is a period of tension and escalation. Did the First World War start at the end of such an escalation, or was it the outcome of the sum of careless decisions (or a series of simultaneous careless decisions)?

Clausewitz points out that in absolute war the political issues and goals are not determinative of the logic of the decisions for war; this, however, is not the case for real war.

Naturally the fourth argument emerges from this statement. In the case of the beginning of the First World War, did the decision-makers in the belligerent states evaluate the existing political environment truly, and how correct were their assumptions regarding the existing situation, which led their countries to war?

The final argument should be based on Clausewitz's descriptions of his opposing concepts of real and absolute war. If the First World War is assumed to be a real war, was it a continuation of politics by other means? Did the states fight for realistic political goals defined by clear war aims on which their strategy would be based? Was the door for diplomacy and negotiation open? Or did the First World War become a simple act of "diplomatic" violence bent on destroying the opponent?

With the allocation of all existing resources, each side sank into a fight in which violence became the only end within itself.

The analysis of Clausewitz's dystopia of absolute war paves the way for a hypothetical framework that can be used to determine the characteristics of the First World War. The hypothesis that was put forward before should therefore be renewed here:

Within the context of its outbreak and its practice, the First World War became an absolute war. The instinct of destroying the opponent caused the disappearance of vague political aims and goals, and with the allocation of all existing resources, each side sank into a fight in which violence became the only end within itself. With the loss of diplomacy the belligerents were polarized and their mutual political activities gave way to pure violence. Such conditions transformed the struggle, which should have been a real war, to a state of dystopian absolute war. Under these conditions, the First World War is an absolute war. [19]

In order to test the hypothesis, a series of arguments are raised by following the construction of Clausewitz's analysis of the concept of absolute war. It is necessary to repeat these arguments once again but in a sequence differing to that offered in Clausewitz's logic:

- In case of the beginning of the First World War, did the decision makers of the belligerent states evaluate the existing political environment truly and how correct were their assumptions regarding the existing situation, assumptions that led their countries to war?
- Was the beginning of the First World War related to the origins and the causes of the period before 1914 or did the war suddenly begin

in and of a time in which it was unexpected?

- Did the First World War start at the end of such an escalation or was it the outcome of a careless decision or the sum of a series of simultaneous careless decisions?
- Within the context of reciprocal practices, was the First World War delimited by the resistance of politics, as in case of real war, or was it carried to the extremes of dystopian absolute war?
- Did the states fight for realistic political goals defined by clear war aims on which their strategy would be based? Was the door for diplomacy and negotiation kept open? Or did the First World War simply become the banality of acts of diplomacy and violence that were intent on utterly destroying the opponent?

Despite the fact that a new historical approach needs to be presented here to analyze the arguments above, it would be necessary to keep in mind that the data to be put forward may only lead to initial fragments of the main analysis. The need for a further and deeper historical approach would strengthen the outcome of these arguments and therefore would go further in testing the hypothesis.[20]

Considering the first argument, it may be stated that in the case of the declarations of war in the summer of 1914, the polarized motivation of the decision makers of the belligerent states analyzed the political situation in a manner that led towards conflict rather than cooperation, even though the instruments that could have sustained peace were in place.

The outbreak of war in the summer of 1914 is a mystery that is still being examined, with a satisfactory answer or explanation yet to be found. In this article, no claim to finding a solution to the riddle is posited, but it does assume that an environment of low tension (relative to the previous years) existed between the great powers of Europe in 1914. Such an assumption seems to stand in contrast to the general assumption that there had been an escalation of ongoing crises since 1905 between the European powers and that this escalation eventually led to an all-out European war.

Looking at the European system, it is possible to observe that the major crises that had dominated the years before 1914 had indeed brought tension to the system. However, by 1912, all major tensions were in a state of cooling after tensions between the great powers peaked in 1912 with the Agadir Crises, in which England and Germany came near to military conflict. After this shock, both powers

endeavoured to exercise greater caution in order to preserve the peace, although it should be said there was little cooperation between the two. Both powers pursued a rather cautious and responsible path of diplomacy during the Balkan conflicts of 1912 and 1913 in a way to decrease tension amongst the great powers. However, this cooling of tension, the image of the "enemy" that had been constituted by the crises between 1905 and 1912 was ever-present and constituted a major obstacle to cooperation between the European powers. In the case of diplomacy and war, the Sarajevo assassination crisis was not a major issue that would start a European war, as there was always room for diplomacy and the major European powers indeed were cautious to preserve the peace and the status quo between themselves during the previous conflict in the Balkans. But it should be noted that the war prompted a sudden chain reaction, with one European power after another declaring war. No search for mediation was made in the month after the assassination in Sarajevo until the break out of war. After Sarajevo a chance for diplomatic reconciliation existed, but because of the evaluations of the existing political environment, none of the European decision-makers opted for a peaceful resolution.

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The second argument takes the first to another structural level and introduces the misjudging and misevaluation of the then current environment. As we have seen in previous sections of this article, the situation in 1914 was not the escalation of previous years but rather, initially, a sort of *détente*. But it should be noted that almost all the great powers in Europe somehow envisaged a war earlier than 1914. This understanding can be traced back to the existing war plans of the great powers, which were drawn up before 1914. These war plans usually formed the definition of security for each power and were usually in conflict with one another. However it should also be noted that almost all of them were made in the context of a hypothetical-cum-imagined war, falling far short of reality, and the plans never accorded with the existing political situations. Regardless of the "fictional" nature of the plans, nearly all of them aimed at "striking first" at an opponent, thus creating a state and a sense of vulnerability in which a political crisis that should have been solved with the extreme care and vigilance of diplomacy was instead

understood as an opportunity and an imperative to strike first. It should also be remembered that the alliances between the continental powers also encouraged such perceptions. Under such circumstances, it could be argued that what was actually a regional and minor crisis in 1914 appeared to the decision-makers of almost all the major powers as an opportunity to strike first.

The third argument should be considered in such a context. It should also be noted that the thesis which relates the escalation of the naval race between England and Germany to the eventual outbreak of war, is not as strong as first imagined. The mutual perception of hostility amongst opponents/rivals and the ensuing reasoning behind the alliances and coalitions that are formed under the influence of these perceptions do not generate enough motive to opt for war. However, in the case of European politics after 1815, war had always been an option for the state as long as the skirmish was restricted. In such a sense, the escalation that started after the Bosnian Crises of 1908 may well have led to a localized war. Indeed, what transpired in the summer of 1914 represented a localized crisis between Austro-Hungary and Serbia. However, it should also be noted that the motives that emerge from such local crisis are not enough to define the motives of England, France or even Germany, none of which were directly involved in Balkan issues. It is possible to claim that the outbreak of war was instantaneous. What should have been a crisis or even a local war between Austro-Hungary and Serbia became an all-out conflict and it is interesting to note why none of the major powers looked for any other non-military options. Such rash and short-sighted urgency in decision-making should be considered as reasons behind the sudden outbreak of war.

The mutual perception of hostility amongst opponents/rivals and the ensuing reasoning behind the alliances and coalitions that are formed under the influence of these perceptions do not generate enough motive to opt for war.

It should be noted that the greatest loss of life occurred in the last six months of 1914 and during the first eight months of 1918. The total loss of life exceeded 8 million during the course of the fighting. During the last major conflict to have taken place on European soil, the Franco-Prussian War of 1871, the number of casualties had barely exceeded 300,000. In comparison of numbers alone, it is thus possible to argue that the Great War was a conflict of extremes. However, it should also be noted that,

given the war and mobilization plans of the belligerents in 1914, both the political and military decision-makers should have had some notion as to the immensity of the respective war machines that were about to be set in motion. The major belligerent armies that were mobilized in the summer of 1914 alone constituted over 6.5 million soldiers, numbers that had never before been seen on European battlefields. By clinging on to a will to win the war by military action and by putting more military means forward to serve the war machine, it is possible to say that neither the civilian nor the military decision-makers had any inclination or intention to limit the war. As a rejoinder to the fourth argument, and as the arguments build up, the Great War seems to be a clear representation of Clausewitz's dystopia.

After 1815, the European powers were successful in building an infrastructure of peace vis-à-vis the European Concert; all the instruments that the Europeans possessed, including diplomacy, congresses and notions of neutrality, served peace.

The last argument may be discussed within the context of the European political system in the 19th century. During the course of the century, peace between the great powers of Europe was based on a security system that operated with the formation of congresses that oversaw conflicts involving more than two states. As such, the operation of such a system limited the choices for and of war; the states applied military measures that can be seen as a continuation of diplomacy by other means. In such a Clausewitzian manner, it is possible to say that war was an instrument of states that they used responsibly and within controlled limits. However, as industrialization and improvements in military technologies generated new and destructive capacities for armies, the security definitions used by the military elites were modified in light of these new capabilities, which in turn led to new and ever more flamboyant war plans, all of which made an all-out European war, for the first time, increasingly possible.

Conclusion

After 1815, the European powers were successful in building an infrastructure of peace vis-à-vis the European Concert; all the instruments that the Europeans possessed, including diplomacy, congresses and notions of neutrality, served peace. However, by 1914, an infrastructure

of war had been created and the same instruments were now being used to serve war. In this sense, the Great War represents a superstructure that is the opposite of the European Concert in terms of international politics. Within such a context, the First World War has the capacity to fulfill the terms of Clausewitz's dystopia. Even from its outbreak in the summer of 1914, the Great War had vague political ends, which in time were totally eroded and became a phenomenon that drained the energies of the belligerents. As the instruments of diplomacy between the belligerents collapsed totally, there was only one way to communicate: through violence. Under circumstances in which violence is the only method of communication, war becomes an end in itself as the instruments of peace disappear. It was only in 1917 that the European states managed to finally accept the grim truth that no common ground that could bring peace through negotiation existed between the belligerents. Though it had appeared as a powerful instrument of foreign policy in the previous decades, diplomacy had lost its ability to resolve conflicts, and the European states opted instead for war.

It is important to point out that during the Great War, much more was missing than international diplomacy. It should also be noted that in order to make peace, the European states needed Woodrow Wilson's 14 points and this clearly shows that the instruments of international politics that the European political system had created in its previous incarnations had become ineffective over the course of the First World War. As a Clausewitzian dystopia emerged during the Great War, the instruments of politics gave way to instruments of violence.

With regard to the arguments and ideas presented in this article, it is possible to construct a Clausewitzian definition of the Great War. However, this definition would clearly be different from his description of a real war. Instead, the definition would be closer to his philosophical understanding of the theory of war, in which he points to the dystopia of absolute war. On the other hand, given the circumstances outlined above, it could be argued that such a new definition forged from Clausewitzian theory may be more objective and academic and may also be freer from the ideological approaches on which Ludendorff's or Wilson's definitions are clearly based. All in all, it is important to point out that, despite its age, Clausewitz's *On War* still maintains a certain utility in terms of examining issues of war and security.

Endnotes

1 Burak Gülboy, *Mutlak Savaş-Birinci Dünya Savaşı'nın Kökenleri Üzerine Clausewitzyen bir Çözümleme*, İstanbul, Uluslararası İlişkiler Kütüphanesi, 2014, p. 297.

2 Colin Gray, *Strategy and History: Essays on Theory and Practice*, New York, Routledge, 2006, p.185.

3 Raymond Aron, indicates that the factor that affects the radicalization of war is the *dialectics of contest*, meaning two sides compete for a single goal by using force against force. Raymond Aron, *Peace and War - A Theory of International Relations*, London, Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1962, p. 21.

4 Ibid., p. 21-22; also see: Ali Karaosmanoğlu, "21. Yüzyılda Savaşı Tartışmak: Clausewitz Yeniden", *Uluslararası İlişkiler Dergisi*, Vol. 8, No. 29 (Spring 2011), pp. 5-25.

5 Carl Von Clausewitz, *On War*, translated by O. J. Matthijs Jolles, New York, the Modern Library, 1943, p. 4.

6 Ibid., p. 9.

7 Ibid., pp. 15-16. For such an approach, Clausewitz was criticized for affirming war. For such arguments see Andreas Herberg-Rothe, *Clausewitz's Puzzle the Political Theory of War*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2007, pp. 70-71.

8 Aron, *Peace and War*, p. 23.

9 For Clausewitz other writings see: Clausewitz, *Historical and Political Writings*, in Peter Paret ve Daniel Moran (eds.), New Jersey, Princeton University, 1992.

10 Aron, *Peace and War*, p. 23.

11 Gray, *War, Peace and International Relations*, New York, Routledge, 2007, p. 1.

12 This hypothesis is widely discussed in the author's previously published work, see Gülboy, *Mutlak Savaş, Birinci Dünya Savaşı'nın Kökenleri Üzerine Clausewitzyen bir Deneme*.

13 Eric Ludendorff, *Der Totale Krieg*, Münih, Ludendorffs Verlag, 1935.

14 Eric Von Ludendorff, "Apostle of the Total War", *The Living Age*, March 1940, pp. 22-25.

15 Ibid., Under such an understanding, the term total war has a tendency to become utopic. For this argument see Talbot Imlay, "Total War", *The Journal of Strategic Studies,* Vol. 30, No. 3 (June 2007), pp. 547-570.

16 Herbert G. Wells, *The War That Will End War*, London, Frank and Cecil Palmer Red Lion Court E.C., 1914.

17 For David Lloyd George War time speeches see David Lloyd George, *The Great Crusade*, New York, George H. Doran Company, 1918.

18 For St Augustine's concept of "Just War", see Henry Paolucci, *The Political Writings of St. Augustine*, 3. ed, Chicago, Gateway Edition, 1967, pp. 162-183; also for an approach from International Relations, see: Haldun Yalçınkaya, *Savaş Uluslararası İlişkilerde Güç Kullanımı*, Ankara, İmge Kitabevi, 2007, pp. 63-83.

19 See endnote 12.

20 For such an approach also see Hew Strachan, "Clausewitz and the First World War", *The Journal of Military History*, Vol. 75, No. 2 (April 2011), pp. 367-391.