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Why Is There Still War on This Planet?



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In recent days, more and more people are concerned about nuclear war and the end of humanity. However, one must question their assumption: Is it really plausible, or when will it start? The news media often portray this catastrophe as occurring very soon. Granted, what if it has already started a long time ago? Just like volcanoes that can erupt in the blink of an eye, but their formation takes sometimes thousands of years for magma to accumulate. Ultimately, this pattern arguably can be understood as a form of *social entropy*—a gradual process of disorder which, unlike physical entropy, is preventable through mutual cooperation.

More than 600 years ago, in *The Muqaddimah*, Ibn Khaldun argued that human social organization is a necessity rather than a choice, referring to Aristotle's quote that "*Man is political by nature.*"

"The power of one individual is not enough for him to obtain the food he needs, and it does not provide him with as much food as he requires to make his living. Even if we assume an absolute minimum of food—that's food enough for one day, let's say even a little wheat could be obtained only after long preparation, such as grinding, kneading, and baking. Each of these operations requires utensils and tools that can be provided only with the help of several crafts, such as the crafts of the blacksmith, the carpenter, and the potter. Even if a man could eat unprepared grain, still a greater number of operations would be necessary to produce the grain: sowing and reaping, and threshing to separate it from the husks of the ear. Each of these operations requires *many tools and many more crafts than those just mentioned. It is beyond the power of a single man to do all that work, or part of it, by himself. Thus, he cannot do without a combination of many powers from among his fellow beings, if he is to obtain food for himself and for them.*"

— Ibn Khaldun, *The Muqaddimah*, Book 1, Chapter 2.

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It can be presumed that human beings entirely depend on cooperation to survive, yet they are also prone to rivalry. One of the key explanations for this contradiction is that once hunter-gatherer bands with dozens of foragers turned into societies of thousands, — then millions, and eventually billions, humans—despite sharing only a 0.1% difference in DNA—divided into “us” and “them.”

Once societies became large, competition for resources increased. The only way to hold the dominance in a valley was to protect, or, when needed, use violence to acquire more resources. But there is a strong motive that lies behind that choice: how to keep a large number of people united who can contribute to society and fight for it when necessary. To better understand this motive, let's analyze similar characteristics of animals living in groups.

For a lion, chasing big prey is hard, while group hunting means more food, and it is the same for other predators. For monkeys and sheep, being in a group means that many eyes can easily spot predators, and most of the time, predators target isolated animals.



In these conditions, people band together under common causes and follow leaders who promise to protect and provide. Leaders, in turn, require loyalty, which often comes through common culture, national identity, or ideology. History has shown how persuasive speeches and propaganda can motivate millions to fight. Manipulative leaders often exploit perceived threats from “the other”, using fear to unite people against a common enemy.



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In simple words, humans possessed something unique that no animal could have: the ability to dream. Yes, that is sharing and thinking about abstract ideas, which caused us to unite. No animal can have an imaginary friend like a child does, nor can it imagine the existence of a distant planet, which is thousands of light-years away from our planet, or dream of flying on Aladdin's carpet.

“L’imagination gouverne le monde.”

— Napoleon Bonaparte

Napoleon was right. Imagination indeed rules the world. It is hard to maintain people in large numbers with the help of biological instincts. That's why our ancestors shared myths, beliefs, and established culture, moral principle and laws. We started trusting and calling each other “us” because of laws, money, religion, nationality, tradition, customs, language, myths and history.



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These inter-subjective concepts created the idea of who we are. Consequently, they took control of our inner drivers such as the need for belonging, safety, status, meaning, and purpose. But if we think objectively, it is too crazy the way we feel the same emotions and joy when our favorite team wins the tournament as when a loved one recovers from illness, even though we haven't bet on it and the outcome has no real consequence for our life. That's because our brains can't distinguish the difference between what is biologically important and what is symbolically important; both events trigger the same neurochemical responses, such as dopamine for reward, serotonin for pride and status, and oxytocin for belonging, while reducing cortisol, the hormone responsible for stress.

“The real problem of humanity is *the following*: We have Paleolithic emotions, medieval institutions, and godlike technology. And it is terrifically dangerous, and it is now approaching a point of crisis overall.”

— Edward O. Wilson

Edward says, human beings might perceive abstract struggles as having catastrophic significance. Thus, the crisis of humanity is not technological, but psychological. To get the point, it is enough to look at the conflicts that occurred after World War II.

USSR (before collapse)
Anti-Soviet partisan wars in Baltics (1944–1956)
Hungarian Revolution (1956)
Prague Spring / Czechoslovakia invasion (1968)
Soviet–Afghan War (1979–1989)

After 1991

Russia
First Chechen War (1994–1996)
Second Chechen War (1999–2009)
Insurgency in North Caucasus (2009–2017)
War with Georgia (2008)
War in Ukraine (2014– , full invasion 2022–)

Ukraine
Crimea annexation conflict (2014)
War in Donbas (2014–2022)
Full-scale invasion (2022–)

Georgia
South Ossetia War (1991–1992)
Abkhazia War (1992–1993)
Russo-Georgian War (2008)

Armenia – Azerbaijan
First Nagorno-Karabakh War (1988–1994)
Border clashes (1994–2020)
Second Nagorno-Karabakh War (2020)
Post-2020 clashes (2021–2023)

Moldova
Transnistria War (1992)

Tajikistan
Tajik Civil War (1992–1997)

Kyrgyzstan
Osh ethnic violence (1990)
Osh clashes (2010)

Kazakhstan
Zhanaozen unrest (2011)
January unrest (2022)

Baltics
Post-WWII anti-Soviet resistance (Forest Brothers)

EUROPE

Greek Civil War (1946–1949)
Cyprus conflict (1963–1974)
Turkish invasion of Cyprus (1974)
The Troubles – Northern Ireland (1968–1998)
Yugoslav Wars: Slovenia (1991), Croatia (1991–1995), Bosnia (1992–1995), Kosovo (1998–1999), North Macedonia insurgency (2001)

MIDDLE EAST

Arab–Israeli War (1948)
Suez Crisis (1956)
Six-Day War (1967)
War of Attrition (1967–1970)
Yom Kippur War (1973)
Lebanese Civil War (1975–1990)
Israeli invasion of Lebanon (1982)
Iran–Iraq War (1980–1988)
Gulf War (1990–1991)
Iraq War (2003–2011)
Iraqi insurgency / ISIS war (2011–2017)
Syrian Civil War (2011–)
Yemeni Civil War (2014–)
Israel–Hezbollah wars
Israel–Gaza wars (multiple)
Saudi–Houthi conflict
Kurdish–Turkish conflict (1984–)

ASIA

Chinese Civil War (1945–1949)
Korean War (1950–1953)
Taiwan Strait Crises (1954–55, 1958)
First Indochina War (1946–1954)
Vietnam War (1955–1975)
Cambodian wars (1967–1998)
Laotian Civil War (1959–1975)
Indo-Pakistani Wars (1947, 1965, 1971, 1999)
Bangladesh Liberation War (1971)
Afghan wars: Soviet war, Civil wars, US–Taliban war
Sri Lankan Civil War (1983–2009)
Myanmar civil wars (1948–)
Nepal Maoist War (1996–2006)
Thai insurgency (2004–)
Philippine insurgencies (1946–)
Indonesia–East Timor (1975–1999)
Sino-Indian War (1962)
Sino-Vietnamese War (1979)
Japan Red Army conflict
Naxalite insurgency (India)

AFRICA

Algerian War
Mau Mau Uprising
Angolan War of Independence
Mozambican War of Independence
Rhodesian Bush War
Nigerian Civil War
Congo Wars (1st & 2nd)
Ethiopian Civil War
Eritrean War of Independence
Eritrea–Ethiopia War
Somali Civil War
Sudan Civil Wars
South Sudan Civil War
Darfur War
Libyan Civil Wars
Mali War
Central African Republic wars
Boko Haram insurgency
Mozambique insurgency (ISIS-linked)
Western Sahara conflict

AMERICAS

Cuban Revolution
Bay of Pigs
Colombian conflict
Guatemalan Civil War
Salvadoran Civil War
Nicaraguan Contra War
Peru Shining Path war
Chilean unrest (1970s)
Mexican Drug War

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