



War and Peace: From Uruk to Hiroshima, via Yasnaya Polyana and the Modern World in the Last 200 Years

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Introduction

When I was invited to speak to you about War and Peace, and was asked for a title, I suggested "War and Peace" impulsively, as an instant reflection on the abundance of both in our current times.¹ And, while horrific for those in the war zones; there is a general problem – how destructive war can be today, and then what does 'Peace' mean? The concern of such a specter of actual 'War & War,' led to a series of articles on the theme that I wrote with my co-author, German physician Alexander Krabbe in Berlin. The concern of the specter we speak of is of another global conflagration, and even further, the potential use of nuclear weapons and further breakdown of the biosphere. Such a world war will likely be enough to accelerate the Tipping Points further thereby eliminating more of wild nature and increasing the general breakdown of civilization.

In the spring of 2021, during the height of the pandemic, I embarked on what I expected to be a brief trip to Berlin. Instead, I ended up staying for several months working on research in

¹ This piece is a plenary speech given during the 6th Politics and Culture Conference held last October 11-12, 2024, co-hosted by North Valley College and Mindanao State University – Iligan Institute of Technology (ed.).

psychology and psychiatry exploring the Pandemic and its impact on children's mental health along with learning about the German Energiewende at the hospital with the medical staff and hospital management where I was visiting. Energiewende is the German state program for energy transition over the past 24 years. Alex and I gave a lecture from our findings on children's mental health in the Pandemic that September, online with the American University of Sovereign Nations (AUSN). One afternoon, as we strolled along the Havel River near Spandau, we discussed the troubling global situation. The Pandemic with illness and death, strained and broken supply chains, the epistemic crisis in people's understanding of society, unprecedented economic collapse with an ongoing decade-long stimulus devoid of much real discovery and innovation, and a chaotic stock market, all had created a sense of looming crisis and within a world of nuclear-armed states and climate change. We knew that one or two of such conditions lead to wars, and much more potential with many crises together, as we allowed history to speak to us: voices from William Shirer's *Berlin Diary* and Robert Fisk's *Great War for Civilization*, and other major works. Moreover, the confusions in the 'social mind' or general level of information and education and the media landscape were amplified with social media since around 2010 and made extreme by the Pandemic, as many were illiterate on media, science, and history, and as decades of anti-democratic rhetoric, the crushing of labor in the 1990s, and businessism were taking a toll on society.

Instead of social media, it would be better to look at the platforms as *data production sites* in raw form, rather than to grace the system with the term 'media' as plummeting rates of literacy, education, and health, in the U.S. are troubling. Meanwhile, during the emergence of social media, profits were soaring leaving the Peace Dividend out of sight. Today, the mediasphere has degraded into a dystopia of unsubstantiated, uncorroborated information – virtually useless for information and knowledge as the world's richest people bought a major social media platform to use as a megaphone for their interests in the state-corporate nexus aligned in their direction and with wide promotion of fascist and white supremacist undertones, conspiracy speculation (theory, indulgence in mysteries), and Manifest Destiny. Mass hysteria continues and has been increasing as the elections approach. Within such a public and digital sphere of blatant

authoritarianism, there is at least a small defense of the mainstream media, which is viciously under attack, in that they follow some journalistic integrity, though it is true that much of the media is framed and omitted. For regular citizens, many allowed themselves to be rendered by accepting the first look at data and information on social media as verified truth - 'verified' meaning their own mirror of substantiation of personal bias, hatred, and other frailties molded by those capable of paying for influence the social media platforms and by those who own them, not questioning the fact that for a substantial media, there would have to be a journalistic process such as through local bureaus for verification and corroboration. People have allowed themselves to be rendered open to authoritarianism, which is clearly advancing now. A technological dystopia with extremely concentrated power into a plutocratic techno-utopianism. All utopias are totalitarian.

As in history, the Pandemic's effects were particularly devastating for urban populations and still, today is the case, even with advanced technology, know-how, and wealth there is poor industrial design to deal with biological inevitabilities such as bacteria and viruses entering an 'immune commons' that now is shared by most of the world's population; and then there is waste or pollution produced by urban centers and its effects on humans, species, and the ecological system. Civilizational destruction of nature (encroachment) and then industrial pollution in soils, air, and water, with little restraint and regeneration, creates and complicates matters immensely when it comes to biology. What we can be fairly sure of is that the war on nature will cause more pandemics. These are the ecological and biological realities, let alone the now fantastical, yet necessary, consideration of building cities to be in harmony with nature. For these conditions, we wrote a technical paper in 2021 on the need for new biopolitics. Although Covid-19 was not the deadliest of viruses, medically, however, its public health and social implications were profound, some of which were deadly in themselves, such as the lack of preparation and immediate response in Western countries, and then later general, extreme lockdowns or medical martial law. It is only a matter of time before something more serious comes along, something like MERS, another respiratory virus, that has perhaps a 10 or 12% mortality rate, spreads quickly, and has a longish incubation rate of say a week or more. There are scientists, particularly

virologists, physicians, and public health experts, along with other experts who are constantly watching the conditions. Other experts include an array of people with more general roles such as professional philosophers, legal scholars, sociologists, urban planners, statisticians, and so on, who are involved in dealing with emergent conditions. In the case of a more serious pandemic, while we have the knowledge and expertise in virology and public health, given systemic problems, the medical experts would not be able to deal with such an event.

The point to remember is that the reason we can expect more epidemics and pandemics is that as civilization continues its relentless assault on nature with energy demand, mining, consumption, and 'development' all increasing, the chances of dangerous diseases also increase and not linearly. Lagos, Nigeria, and the Pearl River Delta are already tens upon tens of millions of people and urbanization is increasing where the UN says that upwards of nearly 70% of people will live in cities by 2050. This system is a war against nature. Hence the platitudes and romanticism around war and peace, spectacular and dramatic, no doubt, will inevitably miss the actual war.

In our conversation there along the Havel River in Berlin, Alex and I moved on to discuss the potential for shooting wars and immediacy, with a shared concern about the crumbling systems that are core to civilization and the escalating risk of global conflict. Afterward, I traveled to Phnom Penh for work in economics looking at small to medium enterprise development. A month into my stay at the business college in Cambodia, Alex sent me some research regarding rising tensions along the border between Ukraine and Russia. News, CIA reports, and such. Initially, I had thought that Russia, the US, and Europe would avoid a shooting war in Ukraine and getting entangled in what certainly would be a grinding, ongoing war and nuclear confrontation. However, Alex impressed upon me to look at the information and it became clear that the situation was likely heading towards actual war. Around that time, Newsweek reported on December 9th, that US Republican senator Roger Wicker, a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, had stated that "we don't rule out first-use nuclear action" and "American troops on the ground" while speaking about Russia and Ukraine specifically. Later, when challenged with the comment, he responded that he had not been speaking specifically. Just a month before, on November 8th, 2021, the

U.S. had reactivated the military base at Mainz-Katzel, Germany, the site of the Pershing Missile Headquarters. U.S. Pershing II intermediate-range nuclear weapons were there until when in 1988, following the ratification of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Treaty, the dismantling of its mid-range nuclear weapons and missile launchers began. The command was "discontinued" on September 30th, 1991. About 10 years later, in 2002, President George W. Bush unilaterally abandoned the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty (ABM). Knowing the history, the reactivation of the site of the Pershing Missile Headquarters concerning U.S. hypersonic Dark Eagle missiles looked to be serious as tensions escalated.

Over the decades since 1991, there were a number of actions in the region such as NATO placement of missiles at the airport in Romania and in Poland, and then there was Maiden 2014 in Ukraine as both the US and Russia were involved with the political situation ending in violence and fatalities. It has long been known that NATO projects U.S. power into the continent as NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg discussed on mainstream television with President Trump in his first term of office, where Trump's concern was with Europe paying more for the services. This knowledge and history are reported openly.

News about the deployment of the "Dark Eagle" hypersonic missiles on European soil also came two years after the US administration under President Trump abandoned the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF treaty, 1987-2019). On October 26th, 2018, Russia unsuccessfully called for a vote to get the United Nations General Assembly to consider calling on Washington and Moscow to preserve and strengthen the treaty. All the while the treaty itself is internationally considered as one of the most valuable arms control treaties in history. According to NATO Review, the INF treaty was "a remarkable arms control achievement as it led to the elimination of an entire class of Soviet/Russian and US missile systems."

It was November 2021, when we began drafting our first essay addressing these growing pressures and sent it to the Korea Times, which was interested and then did not respond quickly enough taking weeks of back and forth to decide. Thinking the situation is going into escalation, the article was picked up by the Korea IT Times and published in Seoul in December 2021. On December 13th, 2021,

Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov of the Russian Federation stated that Russia may be "forced to act if the West declined to join it in a moratorium on intermediate-range nuclear forces (INF)" and that this may lead to the deployment of its own intermediate-range nuclear missiles in Europe in response to the United States' nuclear weapons deployment plans. Around the same time in December, the Prime Minister of Norway remarked in a speech, "There is likely going to be a war for Christmas." Within two months, Europe and Russia found themselves at war once more, this time with Russia invading Ukraine with reference and pretext to historical invasions of Russia by Europe.

Ancient Eurasia

In all this modern conflict, it must be noted that Ukraine has a long record concerning human organization going back at least to the first humans in the bioregion and Kiev forming between 25,000-15,000 B.C. At 7,000-6,000 years ago, the nested village model of the Trypillia Chalcolithic megasites of the North Pontic forest-steppe had been created such as at Nebelivka and VeselyKut. Rich in land, chernozems, or some of the richest soil in Europe, with forests and other resources, we can only imagine the abundance. Artistic endeavors from early humans indicate an intellectual life, as do the larger structures at these megasites apparently used for meeting places and depository systems of specific kinds of houses in a far more egalitarian system than what we know today. What we would call agroforestry and bioregion today; the North Pontic forest-steppe has been known for millennia to be a place of natural wealth.

The Russian state formed far later in 882 AD. In a recent interview, Russian President Vladimir Putin argued similarly on chronology, but for the Russian state and its sovereignty or territorial dominance, thereby making a modernist argument within a Russian traditionalist perspective on sovereignty: we conquered it; it's ours. Aside from such history, there is other history – the legitimate concerns of the Russian people who have endured centuries of attack, death, and destruction at the hands of Europeans as modernity came about. Ukraine is the usual invasion route and coveted land base of European powers – rich soils, biodiversity, timber, slaves, and mines. A leaked discussion among German military officers regarding support for Ukraine has only heightened tensions, evoking memories of Nazi

Germany's march across Ukraine into the core of Russia; actions today are rightly perceived as provocations. In another case, the "guns" and thunder of the kettle drums in Tchaikovsky's 1812 Overture is the orchestral epic of the successful Russian defense against France. The Germans did the same under the control of Nazism which wanted living space or "lebensraum," which required the reduction of the region from tens of millions of people down by perhaps 50% of the original so that German "stock" could resettle there. This plan was one of the grandest acts of the planned aggression in history known as settler-state colonialism, matching that of the steppes of the 'successful' American model across the breadbasket of Turtle Island on which the Nazi leadership developed their own plans. George Friedrich Hegel, the Prussian philosopher, in his *Philosophy of History* wrote that native American culture such as in Mexico and the Western United States of today, "must expire as soon as Spirit approached it [civilization]" and George Washington said that his policy was for the US to spread out as a nascent empire into the hemisphere with its characteristic extermination and scorched earth policies. The model is not new. What is new is the rapid destruction of nature with the expansion of industrialism, urbanization, and warfare with greater destructive power and dexterity in engineering and technology directed towards destruction at each point in history and too little space for political de-escalation in the event of fatal military misunderstandings or false computer alerts. The Russians are well aware of the history of Eurasia and the current security situation, though the West seems largely oblivious while we live in a time that sees nuclear-armed states in near direct confrontation. This is the path towards thermonuclear war. Such an escalation could come about with a series of miscalculations and misinterpretations of real and imagined threat when under the extreme pressures of conventional, industrial-scale war; war with the added insanity of maneuvering around a number of nuclear power plants. During the last century, there were a number of near misses of thermonuclear war, detoured by luck and human intervention within minutes, in a long string of 'lesser' failures. NATO's Able Archer in 1983 is an example that nearly provoked thermonuclear war. This highly precarious world has been with us for nearly 80 years, and we think the current situation is the greatest existential threat in history, beyond the Cuban Missile Crisis and Able Archer among other close calls.

Modernity, the 19th century, and the beginning of modernity with WWI

Just over a century before World War I, the French Revolution sparked hope, and democratic movements, and war, only to be overshadowed by the state form of social contracts that followed, leading to the Napoleonic Wars. This tumultuous period inspired Leo Tolstoy's masterpiece, *War and Peace*, which serves not only as a narrative but as a profound philosophical dialogue questioning civilization's propensity for violence and destruction—a dialogue that despite our 'better angels' and technical advancements, remains relevant today. When considering the Donbas area, Tula and Yasnaya Polyana, Tolstoy's 'literary stronghold' are just north of the current war where the north forest meets the steppe. The stronghold has now fallen.

The escalation of industrial warfare in Eurasia specifically, marked by increasingly advanced engineering and technology aimed at destruction and thermonuclear annihilation, has historically been accompanied by hypocrisy and self-deception. Truth is the first casualty, they say. "Apologists call it general 'progress' and 'necessary,' in a rhetoric of civilization, while others revel in hatred and mass slaughter" that god or gods have literally directed them to do. This absolute recklessness persists today in real conflicts, as sanity calls for a neutral zone, such as the Austrian or Swiss models. In our case, we suggest the generally accepted Minsk II along with a *responsive biorealism* based on the scientific explanations of today and with a durable bioregional fund for the land in Eastern Ukraine as an ecological innovation on the Norwegian sovereign wealth fund.

The Minsk II agreement aimed to establish a neutral zone in Eastern Ukraine with UN peacekeeping forces, a concept deeply rooted in international diplomatic history to create interactions spheres of relative peace. We think when pragmatism aligns with morality and survival, it is time for effective resolutions. In February 2023, China proposed a 12-point plan to end the conflict, echoing the UN's stance that nuclear war cannot be fought or won, a warning directly addressed to the US, Europe, and Russia. This stance is that of nuclear physicists and should be heeded. Also, the Chinese and international call for the protection of nuclear power plants amid war is a critical reminder of the dangers we face, or at least, those in the

northern hemisphere of Earth who should be concerned. Over the past few years in Ukraine, battles have raged near the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant, the largest in Eastern Europe, while another nuclear facility near Dimona in Israel adds to the precariousness; and there is a third in Russia as Ukraine has the ability to strike inside Russia. In fact, the Zaporizhzhia plant is right in the center of the war, thereby increasing the probability of a catastrophe. It can be remembered that not too far north is Chernobyl. What would be the response if one of the nuclear power plants is demolished in war? This alarming scenario was never meant to occur; experts warned against war near such facilities. The history of nuclear catastrophes, such as Fukushima, Chernobyl, and then the extreme threat with Able Archer 1983, underscore the potential for catastrophic consequences. Nuclear power will always be in the shadow of Fukushima; Japan was horrific; let us not make it a far greater hemispheric tragedy at Zaporizhzhia. Recent incidents, including a drone mishap over this power plant, serve as reminders of the volatility in the region. The global community, grappling with the trauma of nuclear disasters like Fukushima and Chernobyl, is witnessing a normalization of insanity. If these crises spiral out of control, the blame may become irrelevant—virtue and being ‘right’, would be fleeting for a mere few seconds, or a little longer for the unfortunate who survive.

A little over a century ago, we were told that war would never be necessary, but we just have to have ‘this war’. Devastation followed as WWI expanded. The cover of military historian John Keegan’s famous *The First World War* is a scene of coldness, murder...ecocide. The sky is winter white. Soldiers are there walking in line in mud. The trees no longer have tops; not a single one. It is a haunting photo. This was a time when we did not have air forces, bombs, and cruise missiles. The trees were decapitated, and millions of people and uncountable animals were killed with what we could call ‘small’ arms. The excerpt from the book says that WWI was the war to end all wars and was considered to be the real beginning of modernity, bringing together all of the strands going back to the 17th Century up into the 20th. It was a war of “unprecedented ferocity...unleashing...mechanized warfare and mass death,” of imperialism, of civilization, “shattering the faith in rationalism and liberalism that had prevailed...since the Enlightenment.” Aside from neo-imperialism, World Wars in the 20th century brought the

desolation of modernism into the world we inhabit after that century of industrial-scale war, the destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in the nuclear holocaust, and wide production of nuclear armaments, militarism, and a grotesque war of civilization on nature now termed “the trajectory of the Anthropocene.” I call it Megapolitron or the vast acceleration of urbanization (polis, city, how the human interacts with the built system); civilization (ideology and process) as a specific kind of culture or human ecology.

World War II and the immediate bombings of Indigenous land in the US for testing, then the Ebola Gay’s *mission* to Hiroshima proved belief in ending the war at the beginning of the century to be a near complete farce and much of war today with religious undertones sometimes explicit right up to George W, Bush claiming on a number of occasions that god called him to invade Iraq. There are flags, weapons, and holy books. Furthermore, as I said we face a war that few wish to acknowledge: an ongoing war against nature—what we see at Uruk in the Epic of Gilgamesh in cutting the cedar forests to Ox Mountain in Mencius’ protest to Francis Bacon’s “Imperium of Man” and then from the payload of the Enola Gay over Hiroshima or ‘Little Boy,’ or timber baron Harry Merlo’s destroy the forest to infinity, to any number of geographical locations today such as the lithium triangle in South America to the shiny electric vehicles of the self-indulgent on Main Street to the space dreams of billionaires and Wall Street, leaving most to die in squalor on the Dirt Roads of the world and the killing fields of the global economy – a vast casino for extraction.

The Story Continues

There is more to the story as Native American scholar Dee Brown noted, “History has a way of intruding on the present,” reminding us that historical events cannot be reduced to mere past occurrences, no matter how much some may wish to select specific moments that suit their narratives. Today, since WWII, a vast acceleration has occurred. Earth scientist Will Steffen called this event the *Great Acceleration or trajectory towards an Anthropocene* with human catastrophic influence over the geophysical system, and ecophilosopher Derrick Jensen calls it all as ‘human supremacism’...there is an ideology, culture, and physical process

going on. As an aside: the geologists have to give the final ‘say’ on the geological ages or –cenes, and it takes a while. The term ‘Anthropocene’ is *a trajectory towards*, not an actual confirmed geological era. And, as I said before, aside from the necessary precision of natural science, the enormous acceleration of civilization-urbanization can be called generally as a Megapolitron.

In our essays on Eurasia and war, Alex’s and my primary concern is the survival of human beings and countless species in Eurasia and anywhere war spreads. We are deeply concerned about young people as the war advances as they are the ones sent to face death; and these days in a war machine favoring, not regular people and human needs, but investor and corporate interests in minerals and other resources. This fact is said openly by leaders. The tragic loss of lives in Ukraine will open the way for investors and mining companies to exploit the land, while for others, locally, there are old wounds and hatreds that people want to avenge and settle through war. We have no issue with people defending themselves as a matter of security and survival and basic dignity in living, nor do we take issue with complaints about historic wrongs done and the need for recognition and reconciliation. Our intellectual concern is that the distressing, ominous realities of the full picture rarely penetrate mainstream discourse, except among a few realists like political philosopher John Mearsheimer, whose insights often contrast with the moralistic fervor espoused in various public forums in the West. Such moral and religious fervor clearly wants to get us into thermonuclear war, whereas I said, only a few seconds will be enjoyed as being right, morally; before oblivion. Alex and I think this morality to be insanity masked in romance, a collective psychosis as its moralistic and militaristic rhetoric spreads.

Moreover, let us consider whether should Ukraine remarkably “win” and force Russian withdrawal or collapse, the aftermath would create a dangerous power vacuum, exacerbating risks associated with Russia’s nuclear arsenal, far more dangerous than that of South Africa when it had a change of regime. Another scenario put forth today, as an addition, thinking back decades, is the notion that retaining nuclear weapons could have spared Ukraine from its current plight. These are pure stupidity; dangerous oversimplification, disregarding the potential for catastrophic consequences of that time. Anyone can see that catastrophe has to be evaluated from many perspectives and

figure out how to move forward with decent survival being core to considerations.

Escalating tensions, including NATO's involvement, have only fueled an atmosphere of moral posturing that ignores the complex realities. Overall, we suspect there is something deeper as this cycle of escalation is reminiscent of historical patterns where idealism also serves as a cover for cowardice as the true costs of inaction become increasingly evident as many in rich countries smirk at the activism of Occupy, Black Lives Matter, and against the pipelines being built across Indigenous land, and completely ignore activists being beaten, sometimes killed, thrown in jail, and tortured in the U.S. In the Global South, U.S. and paramilitary policy is far worse towards those exercising freedom of expression as action. Without large-scale mass movements, WWIII, which we think has already begun, will escalate and as those from the Indigenous Model have observed, the regular person in rich society will become the new Indian.

Unfortunately, the momentum toward escalating conflict has overshadowed more rational voices advocating for de-escalation and perhaps workable, survivable, and dignified co-existence. The media narratives often present the conflict in binary terms, fragmented facts, and lack of historical context, reminiscent of past propaganda efforts aimed at justifying military action. Today, the 'reach' of digital media amplifies these oversimplified narratives, creating a fantasy that overshadows the complexity of reality and critical thinking rendering people as willing subjects for authoritarianism. While open reasoning and sensibility should counteract this toxic media landscape, the current cultural discourse often gets derailed by less relevant issues and various degrees of mass hysteria as many indulge in mystery and conspiracy, some of which are then amplified by bots from nefarious actors. Artificial intelligence will make the problem infinitely worse.

As geopolitical tensions rise, it is imperative that we critically examine the implications of military actions, especially given the high stakes surrounding nuclear capabilities. The situation in Ukraine, marked already by territorial losses, calls for urgent action from citizens as NATO contemplates troop deployments. The same goes for the Middle East as U.S. involvement increases and with U.S. troops on the way there as well.

As Keegan illustrates, the trajectory of conflicts can shift dramatically within a short timeframe, highlighting the existential

threats posed by ongoing militarization and war. Total war spending and preparation is now at an all-time high of a few trillion USD/yr, while the operating budget for the UN is around \$5 bn and the security budget is about \$7bn. The priorities are clear, and we ought to admit that the system did not work. Re-evaluation and new strategizing are necessary. We ought to be alarmed when both the UN and China emphasize the unwinnable scenario of nuclear war. The U.S. military and economic system holding the world together also know this almost certain fact from hypothetical-deduction about what could happen.

As Ukraine loses ground and most likely will lose the eastern land base, the time for a citizen-led response is overdue. And, for the regular soldier today and our concern for them, Keegan's reflections on the anonymity of soldiers in industrial-scale war remind us of the human cost often overlooked in the glorification of military conflict.

While it is challenging to discern the realities and actual facts of war, we must strive for clarity and action. On the initial reality of data, don't accept it immediately until there is corroboration; then seek wider understanding with others from different parts of society and different countries. Then organize to form the protests that can virtuously escalate into movements such as those that created the Wilderness Act and nuclear disarmament in the 20th century. As substantial resources pour into supporting Ukraine, we must confront the possibility that the current trajectory will lead to further escalation, and we must question when a movement against this impending world war will arise.

Offensive Realism moving to Responsive Biorealism

To deal with the immediate shooting war and shifting geopolitical tectonics, it is necessary to get the militaries to stop the hostilities and for negotiations to resume to create a neutral zone. It might be that the Russians would go for this based on their central argument for security for which they threaten the use of nuclear weapons, updating their nuclear stance recently. They will continue to do so as the situation goes to the extreme.

With a neutral zone, effective de-escalation can move into place, and then overall in the world, arms control through mutually binding treaties has been an effective option in the past and today gives

promise to significantly shift this ratio of military spending into benefit. Such 'benefit', we suggest might include sufficiently financing a project on Responsive Biorealism for the conservation of the common geophysical and ecological environment in Eurasia, where such a system could then be discussed with other areas of the world such as the Amazon and the border of the United States and Mexico. I am thinking of a substantial development such as a bioregional innovation on the Norwegian Sovereignty Fund, that would provide for stringent regulations on any use of resources in the bioregion and more importantly, enact something akin to the Wilderness Act as widely as possible so as to protect wild nature. A success in Eurasia might then be a model to enact in the United States starting with the border and then the central steppes where the pipelines are being built.

In a time when the basic conditions for life on Earth are under real threat, perhaps even extinction, from consumption-based "infinite" growth war economics of generalized civilization an author, any author, even famous ones that have millions of readers, writing about war today, might feel helpless when faced with such a system as if "What's the use?" A feeling of sadness is certainly a reasonable expression of human exasperation. So, why write anything? The best answer we have is – for the sake of sanity.²

² Text has been edited for readability and with some added description based on Layne Hartsell's and Alexander Krabbe's magazine articles.