OCR – A2 GCE
Historical Themes
1789–1997
F966: Option B

The Changing Nature of Warfare 1792–1945

QUESTION 1

Examiner's Specific Advice

A question that asks 'To what extent' should deal with arguments both for and against the primacy of generalship, to show change and continuity through the period. What are the other factors? Be prepared to consider them fully and decide which elements were most important in the development of warfare. There should be a good range of examples, from as many as possible of the wars within the period. The principal elements should be synthesised across the whole period in a coherent and detailed analysis.

The best answers are likely to present a relevant, structured argument that is consistently analytical and supported by appropriate factual details. Different elements of the topic need to be synthesised to reflect the synoptic nature of the unit. Less effective essays are likely to be more descriptive in style or chronological in organisation, and lack a balanced overview of the period. Although the student may be aware of continuity and change over time, the essay usually contains fewer cross references to developments and there is often a tendency to lose sight of the question set. There may be too narrow a focus on just one or two examples of warfare in the period.

Exemplar Question

1. To what extent was generalship the key element in the development of warfare 1792–1945?

[60 marks]

Click here for a Chronology relating to this topic

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Examiner's Exemplar Plan and Essay 1

Plan

- Introduction
- Generalship and other factors
- Napoleon
- Civil War – Lee and Grant
- Moltke
- First World War
- Second World War (1)

Between 1792 and 1945 generalship was very important, especially with great leaders like Napoleon, but other factors like industry were very important too (2).

In the Revolutionary Wars the whole nature of warfare changed because of the new ideas of the French revolution and the mass armies. By attacking in columns the French put the nation in arms against old-fashioned aristocratic armies and took the ideas of liberty into Europe (3).

It was Napoleon who provided not only bigger armies but also great leadership, so under Napoleon it was generalship that was more important than in the eighteenth century (4). Napoleon used many of the ideas that had been thought of in the previous century, such as the *ordre mixte* and the concentration of forces. He had the idea of the strategic battle, so these ideas brought together for the first time had a major impact on the development of warfare. This can be seen in the battle of Austerlitz and the way he used fast movement in the defeat of the Austrians at Ulm. No one had seen genius like this, so Napoleon's generalship was the major factor, unlike during the revolutionary wars when the size of armies and the morale of the troops were most important (5).

However, as the industrial revolution grew the generals became less important than the weapons. There were many important weapons like the machine gun and heavy artillery and by the time of the mid nineteenth century these were more important than generalship, so that there could be no more generals like Napoleon (6). The US Civil War saw many thousands killed by new weapons and though there were important generals like Lee and Grant, they did not matter so much as the industry.

In the Crimean War there were many casualties from disease and the generals did not understand the need for good equipment and supplies. In the Charge of the Light Brigade men were sent to charge cannons and there were many killed. So poor generals cost lives, but generalship was not the most important factor as it was under Napoleon because of the industrial revolution (7).

(1) The plan indicates a basically chronological approach. What are the other factors?

(2) Though rather short, there is an argument. However, this is a basic opening.

(3) This illustrates a problem of chronological survey – some generalisations about the first war on the list are offered, but no link to the question is made directly. This is likely to restrict the marks in A01b.

(4) Some analysis here (A01b) but the supporting material is rather general.

(5) Some comparison here but it lacks explanation as to why elements like the *Ordre Mixte* showed genius and why Ulm and Austerlitz showed that generalship was the key factor. However, knowledge can be credited (A01a).

(6) There is some attempt to focus here and more of a sense of a developing

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As the century went on, so did the growth in science and technology. Great new factories made huge weapons, submarines and warships. There were timed fuses, magazine rifles and railways. So generals had to know how to use new weapons. Generalship like Napoleon's, which involved looking carefully at the battlefield and deciding when to attack, changed because there were so many more people in the armies (8).

The generals in the First World War did not learn the lessons of the other wars like the Civil War because they just ordered frontal attacks, which caused millions of casualties. They did not understand that the trenches could not be taken just by frontal attack or that new weapons like machine guns would be so powerful. They could not use cavalry because of the mud and they did not learn lessons, like Haig when he attacked the same way at Passhendale [sic] as he had at the Somme, causing millions of deaths. So by 1914–18 the generals were not the main reason for the development of war, as their ideas did not change. Instead it was the new weapons and the new tactics like trenches that changed war (9).

In 1914 Moltke began his Schlieffen Plan, which was like Napoleon's big plans, but this failed because he had not expected the Russians to move as quickly as they did. His generalship was at fault and he depended too much on plans. After this trench warfare developed which the generals did not really understand and spent years trying to end. New weapons were important, like the tank, which was used in 1916 (10). However, generals did not really see how to use this. If the generals like Haig had used it properly then those generals would have had a big impact on the development of war. However, they did not and the war was dominated by weapons like gas and the battlefield development like trenches (11).

The Second World War saw a massive change in the scale of warfare and much more use of technology. It was faster moving and there was not much trench warfare. Brilliant generalship was shown by the Germans in the Blitzkrieg campaigns and in another area where speed was important, Rommel won great victories by rapid attacks. However, as the war went on the skill of individual generals seemed to matter less than the use of overwhelming numbers, such as in Russia or airpower and equipment such as D Day. In that way it was not unlike the First World War, but the role of generalship changed even more (12) as Eisenhower was more of an organiser than a strategist. Things like the A bomb were more important than individual generals.

Generals were important – especially Napoleon and men like Lee and Grant, who became symbols for their armies (13). They made mistakes and these were very important. However,

argument. There is some synthesis (A01b).

(7) The section on the Crimea isn't very strong, but there is an attempt to relate it to the question. Limited detail (A01a).

(8) A valid point, but not very well developed. Some synthesis (A01b).

(9) A good point but the section on the war is rather general. Students would not be penalised for the incorrect spelling of Passchendaele but it is worth taking time to learn the proper names of battles in the period.

(10) Planning is weak here as the student goes back to the start of the war and offers a brief outline of major events. Credit for reference to a specific plan and the battle for A01a).

(11) Remembering the question, the student seeks to make a point. However, more development would help here.

(12) This has an

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it was mainly the weapons that were important in the development of warfare after the industrial revolution. Generals had an important part to play, as soldiers need leadership. Napoleon's presence on the battlefield was worth 40,000 men and Lee kept up the morale of the Confederacy, but there was less need for this sort of generalship as the big weapons dominated. (14)

interesting comparative point which isn't developed and the answer continues to be sequential.

Examiner's Assessment

The answer has clearly made an attempt to synthesise some elements of the theme and is aware of both continuity and change during the period in question. There is an appropriate argument but the supporting material is less strong. The approach is mostly analytical but there are some weaker paragraphs in which generalised description dominates the question and there is some lack of effective illustration. The structure of the essay is sound, although it does not cover the wars of the mid-century well. Its unevenness puts the answer into Level III for A01b and it has been awarded 27 marks. The actual knowledge is stronger in places – there are some references to battles (Austerlitz, D Day, Passchendaele and elements such as Blitzkrieg and the Schlieffen Plan) but these are more developed in the later period – there is some reference to correct terminology (Blitzkrieg). This is accurate and relevant evidence with little actual inaccuracy and the writing is generally clear, so a Level II mark of 15 is justified (AO1b).

(13) Frustrating – if this could be developed it would open up an interesting line of investigation.

(14) The conclusion, as so often is the case, is the best part here and an argument is attempted.

Examiner's Exemplar Plan and Essay 2

Plan

- Elements of generalship– tactics and strategy; relationship with troops; use of technology
- Other factors: industry, communications, army size
- Change and continuity. Compare Nap/WW2 – overall change (15)

(15) The plan deals with themes rather than chronology. It looks at both start and end of period.

As new technology and communications changed in this period, the role of generalship developed. The battlefield control exerted by Napoleon gave way to much larger planning by the Second World War. However, despite all the changes, the major influence on the development of warfare remained leadership (16).

(16) An economical and direct opening, which identifies some of the themes and offers a clear line of argument.

In terms of tactics and strategy, generalship was the key element of development (17). The French revolutionary wars had led to important changes in the size of armies (the levée en masse) and the ideological commitment of those forces. There had also been important changes in tactics like the use of the mass column, so effective at the Wattignies in 1793.

(17) The argument is taken up and the first theme of the plan is examined.

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However, these changes alone did not bring about the huge development in warfare in the early nineteenth century. It was Napoleon's genius in bringing these elements together and using them that really developed warfare. Though he offered little that was new, it was his ability to use ideas that changed warfare. For example, his rapid movement from Boulogne to Ulm in 1805, his division of his forces into independent corps and his brilliant envelopment of Mack made movement a major feature of warfare and his influence can be seen in the rapid deployment of Prussian forces in 1866, which led to quick victory against the Austrians; the rapid march to the sea by Sherman in 1864; the huge plans of Schlieffen and the later Blitzkrieg of the Second World War. The use of tanks by the end of the period and the much greater opportunities to use air power made the control and planning of tactics, strategy and the deployment of weapons vital and enhanced the role of individual leadership (18).

(18) There is a sense of overview here and the exemplification is quite detailed. In no sense is there a telling of the story, but knowledge is deployed.

Again Napoleon's concept of the strategic battle, in which advance, engagement and pursuit were integrated, saw a decisive movement against the more limited campaigns of the eighteenth century and towards the total warfare of the twentieth. The large armies, for example, the 600,000 men he led into Russia, also increased the scale of warfare, anticipating the million-strong forces involved in the Schlieffen Plan of 1914. Also his allying military power to the whole resources of the nation anticipated the total war of the twentieth century. The Second World War needed the mobilisation of resources on an unprecedented scale and commanders had to be able to control resources.

Having set the example of the importance of the commander in strategy and tactics, Napoleon gave great opportunities and responsibilities to those who came after (19). Grant and Lee in the US Civil War became important personifications of their causes; Lee relied on brilliant tactics to overcome numerical and economic weakness; Lee used naval power in his command of the Mississippi and was forced to develop new tactics of striking at the South's economic heartlands in his march to the sea. Both had great limitations, but their personalities, like that of Napoleon, summed up their eras. The confidence inspired by Moltke was highly important in carrying through the campaigns of 1866 and 1870–71, especially when victory came at a much higher price against France. Guderian's concept of Blitzkrieg is derived from Napoleonic principles of rapid movement to disorientate enemies. The large scale organisation of D Day by Eisenhower and his team was an extension of the planning skills of Moltke, Schlieffen and Berthier.

(19) Many candidates are tempted to dwell on Napoleon, but here the student is aware of the need for a synoptic approach and the writing is analytical. A01b elements are strongly shown here and there is a good use of accurate and relevant examples (A01a).

Haig and the generals had to develop strategies to meet changes. Schlieffen and the younger Moltke had to meet the challenge of mass armies and communications. The Second

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World War generals had to be able to use mass weapons – for example at the huge tank battles of Kursk and Kharkov in 1943 and in the D Day invasions. The Schlieffen Plan determined the whole development of the First World War with its huge Napoleonic-style manoeuvres. Haig's massive attacks and his subsequent ability to develop his tactics to use new artillery tactics such as the timed creeping artillery barrage, the mass use of coordinated tank and air attacks in 1918 and his enormous personal reputation which kept British forces going, show his immense personal impact on war. Indeed, the personal role of leadership remained a key feature. Napoleon's presence on the battlefield was said to have been worth 40,000 men; Wellington's reputation with his troops was a major element in encouraging them to withstand the harrowing experience of Waterloo. Robert's reinstallation of confidence after Black Week in the Boer War and the stoicism of Haig were of huge importance. Montgomery and Patton realised the importance of personal charisma in the Second World War. Rommel's reputation was a major factor in inspiring victory in North Africa. Where personal leadership qualities were lacking, as in Gamelin in France in 1940 or among the Italian generals in 1940 in North Africa.
Thus even with new circumstances, the personal element of leadership remained important (20).

(20) A bit diffuse here, perhaps, but the argument is being pursued and illustrated by examples taken from across the period. This shows synopsis and synthesis (A01b). Precise (A01a).

However, the impact of changes in industry and communications transformed elements of warfare. The industrial revolution gave rise to weapons of a destructive capacity unknown in the days of Napoleon. The railways allowed troop movements on a new scale and the rise in population gave rise to huge conscripted forces. It can be argued that technology made traditional generalship redundant (21). No amount of tactical skill could end trench warfare from 1914 to 1918; the Prussian needle gun and the breech-loading rifles made frontal assaults costly and ineffective in the mid century. It could be argued that the steel breech-loading Krupps artillery ensured Prussian victory in 1871. The Minie rifle was crucial at the scattered encounters at Inkerman in the Crimean War. With armies in the hundreds of thousands, the personal knowledge of individual soldiers, which so endeared Napoleon's men to him, was clearly impossible. The Schlieffen Plan seemed, like the Prussian campaign of 1866, to be a matter of railways and timetables (22).

(21) This sets up a counter-argument, that other elements were more important. Analysis and judgement (A01b).

(22) The use and range of examples to support the view are particularly good in this paragraph.

Yet this view is not really sustainable. Every general has had to master technological changes and the quality of generalship is reflected in how well traditional leadership skills are linked to adapting to circumstances (23). For all his brilliance, Lee did not come to terms with the increasing power of the defence with the development of more rapid and accurate rifle fire, as the devastation of Picket's charge at Gettysburg shows. For all the casualties of his later campaigns, Grant

(23) This is good – the counter-argument is being discussed and the main theme of the answer is being followed through (strong A01b). The range of examples is very strong and indicates a good

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grasped the importance of economic warfare by attacking the Southern heartlands. Generals did adapt to new conditions even in 1914–18, as Brusilov's more flexible tactics in 1916 and the storm troop attacks of Ludendorff in Operation Michael show.

mark for A01a.

Haig learned how to deploy tanks, reserves and airpower, and the allies learned to coordinate their command when Foch was appointed *generalissimo* in late 1917 For all the technical superiority of the US over Japan, inspiring leadership could inflict delays and damage at Iwo Jima in 1945. Bad leadership decisions meant that superiority of supplies and equipment counted for little at Arnhem. Japan had less equipment and fewer men but still conquered Malaya and Singapore in 1941 (24).

(24) Again there is a range of illustrative material.

Thus, while generalship certainly changed from the age of Napoleon to that of the Second World War, there were many elements of continuity and in warfare personal decisions and qualities continued to be a key factor (25).

(25) The conclusion, though brief, follows logically on from the argument and the plan.

Examiner's Assessment

This essay ranges widely and synoptically in a focused manner. It stays firmly in the 'generals' camp but recognises and evaluates the counter-argument. There is evidence of analysis and synthesis. The argument is well structured, relevant and analytical. Sometimes the examples become a bit 'breathless' and allusive, but there is a sense that the knowledge base is solid. The essay gains 40 marks – the top of Level I (A01b).
There is a wide range of accurate and relevant knowledge and sound use of terminology, and the answer is clearly structured, so a Level I mark of 20 can be justified for A01a.
The overall total mark is 60 (Grade A).

Click here for a Mark Scheme that accompanies the exemplar answer provided above

Click here for further sample Questions to test your skills

[Mark Scheme]

Examiners use Mark Schemes to determine how best to categorise a candidate's essay and to ensure that the performances of thousands of candidates are marked to a high degree of accuracy and consistency. Few essays fall neatly into the mark levels indicated below: some essays only cover part of the period; others give a good

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overview but provide few supporting details. As a result, examiners seek to find the 'best fit' when applying the scheme. Each essay has a final mark based on two Assessment Objectives (AO1a and AO1b) worth 20 + 40 = 60 marks. As the standard of the two essays lies between Level I and Level IV, only the descriptors and marks for these levels have been tabulated below.

	AO1a Mark Scheme for Levels I, II, III and IV
Assessment Objectives	Recall, select and use historical knowledge appropriately, and communicate knowledge and understanding clearly and effectively
Level IA **18–20 marks**	Uses a wide range of accurate, detailed and relevant evidence. Accurate and confident use of appropriate historical terminology. Answer is clearly structured and coherent; communicates accurately and legibly.
Level IB **16–17 marks**	Uses accurate, detailed and relevant evidence. Accurate use of a range of appropriate historical terminology. Answer is clearly structured and mostly coherent; writes accurately and legibly.
Level II **14–15 marks**	Uses mostly accurate, detailed and relevant evidence, which demonstrates a competent command of the topic. Generally accurate use of historical terminology. Answer is structured and mostly coherent; writing is legible and communication is generally clear.
Level III **12–13 marks**	Uses accurate and relevant evidence, which demonstrates some command of the topic but there may be some inaccuracy. Answer includes relevant historical terminology but this may not be extensive or always accurately used. Most of the answer is organised and structured; the answer is mostly legible and clearly communicated.
Level IV **10–11 marks**	There is deployment of relevant knowledge but level/accuracy of detail will vary; there may be some evidence that is tangential or irrelevant. Some unclear and/or under-developed and/or disorganised sections; mostly satisfactory level of communication.

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	AO1b Mark Scheme for Levels I, II, III and IV
Assessment Objectives	Demonstrate an understanding of the past through explanation and analysis, arriving at substantiated judgements of key concepts and of the relationships between key features of the period studied
Level IA **36–40 marks**	Excellent understanding of key concepts relevant to the question set. Excellent synthesis and synoptic assessment of the whole period. Answer is consistently analytical with developed and substantiated explanations, some of which may be unexpected.
Level IB **32–35 marks**	Clear and accurate understanding of most key concepts relevant to analysis and to the question set. Clear understanding of the significance of issues and synthesis of the whole period. Answer is mostly consistently and relevantly analytical with mostly developed and substantiated explanations.
Level II **28–31 marks**	Mostly clear and accurate understanding of many key concepts relevant to analysis and to the topic. Clear understanding of the significance of most relevant issues in their historical context. Much of the answer is relevantly analytical and substantiated with detailed evidence but there may be some uneven judgements.
Level III **24–27 marks**	Sound understanding of key concepts relevant to analysis and mostly focused on the question set. Answers may be a mixture of analysis and explanation but also simple description of relevant material and narrative of relevant events OR answers may provide more consistent analysis but the quality will be uneven and its support often general or thin. There may only be a limited synthesis of the whole period.
Level IV **20–23 marks**	Understanding of key concepts relevant to analysis and the topic is variable but in general is satisfactory. Answers may be largely descriptive/narratives of events and links between this and analytical comments will typically be weak or unexplained OR answers will mix passages of descriptive material with occasional explained analysis. Limited synoptic judgements of part of the period.

Further sample questions

1. How important were technological developments to the changing nature of warfare 1792–1945?

2. How far was the nature of warfare affected by changes in transport and communications in this period?

3. To what extent were coalitions important in determining the outcomes of wars between 1793 and 1945?

4. Discuss the view that changes in military organisation determined how wars were fought between 1793 and 1945.

5. 'Public opinion was a major influence on the changing nature of warfare between 1792 and 1945.' Discuss this view.

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6. How important was the quality of troops to military victory between 1792 and 1945?

7. Assess the view that the wars of the mid-nineteenth century were the major turning point in the development of land warfare in the period 1792–1945.

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Chronology: Key Events in *The Changing Nature of Warfare 1792–1945*

1792:	Revolutionary Wars begin (1).
1796:	Napoleon appointed commander of the army in Italy.
1797:	Peace of Campo Formio.
1800:	Battle of Marengo.
1805:	War of Third Coalition. Ulm. Austerlitz (2).
1806:	Jena and Auerstadt**.**
1807:	Friedland. War ends.
1807:	Percussion lock (3).
1808:	Pensinsular War.
1809:	Wagram.
1812:	Russian campaign.
1813:	Battle of Leipzig.
1814:	Napoleon abdicates.
1815:	Hundred Days; Waterloo.
1841:	Bolt action breech-loading rifle (needle gun).
1847:	Conical bullet in hollow-based cartridge.
1848:	Use of railways to transport troops.
1854–56:	Crimean War. British troops issued with Minie rifle.
1857:	Breech-loading artillery.
1859:	War of Italian Unification. Magenta. Solferino.
1861–65:	US Civil War.
1862:	Land mine.
1864:	War between Austria, Prussia and Denmark.
1866:	Austro–Prussian War, Sadowa.
1870–71:	Franco–Prussian War.
1874:	Barbed wire.
1878:	Russo–Turkish War.
1882:	Armour plate.
1884:	Smokeless powder. Machine gun (Maxim gun 600 rounds per minute) (4).
1890:	Lyddite high explosive.
1897:	Schneider rapid firing artillery (25 shells per minute).
1899:	Boer War.
1902:	TNT.
1903:	Armour-piercing bullet.
1904:	Russo–Japanese War; indirect artillery fire (artillery fire on unseen targets).
1907:	Track-based motorised vehicle.
1912:	Balkan Wars.
1914:	Outbreak of First World War; Schlieffen Plan put into operation (5).
1916:	Battle of the Somme (6); first use of tanks.
1917:	Battle of Passchendaele.
1918:	Kaiser's battle.
1918:	Allied offensives using coordinated air/tank/infantry attacks (7).
1931:	Japanese army invades Manchuria.

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1937:	Beginning of Japanese war against China.
1939:	The war between Britain, France and Germany over the revision of the Treaty of Versailles begins. Poland conquered by Germany.
1940:	Norway campaign; German campaigns in France and the Low Countries. France surrenders; Britain evacuates her army from Dunkirk (8); war in North Africa begins; British victories over Italy.
1941:	German campaigns in Balkans; German invasion of Russia (9); Japanese assaults on European and US colonies in Far East; USA enters war.
1942:	Major turning points in Russia (Stalingrad), the Pacific (Guadalcanal) and North Africa (El Alamein)
1943:	Allies invade Italy. Mussolini falls. Heavy resistance by German forces. Massive battles in Russia – Kursk, Orel, Kharkov. US advances in Pacific.
1944:	US naval supremacy in Pacific. Burma campaign. Continued heavy fighting in Italy. D Day invasion by Allies followed by Normandy campaign. Russia advances in the East.
1945:	Arnhem campaign. Allied invasion of Germany (10). Russian invasion of Germany and battle for Berlin. Heavy fighting on Iwo Jima and Okinawa. Germany surrenders. Japan surrenders after use of two atomic bombs by USA.

(1) Often taken as the baseline for change after 1792. Initially there was little difference between the Revolutionary armies and their opponents and early victories such as Valmy had little military as opposed to political significance. But the mass charge in columns (Wattignies, 1793) and the organisation of the armies by Carnot, including the famous mass conscription – in fact a one-off, not a sustained system – together with the politicising of warfare by the political representatives attached to the armies, seem significant in retrospect.

(2) Napoleon's generalship in this war is the basis of the legend and subsequent idealised writing such as that of Jomini and Clausewitz. His Italian victories were remarkable, but the battle of Marengo showed flaws. Austerlitz in December 1805 has been seen as his most perfect victory. However, much depended on splits and incompetence on the other side. Wagram is less studied and less obviously brilliant. Borodino (1812) and Waterloo (1815) were more in the nature of brutal and uninspired frontal assaults.

(3) There was little significant development of military technology in the Napoleonic Wars and the development of the percussion cap, which was the first major breakthrough in the development of the modern rifle, was not undertaken until after the wars. Rapid firing breech-loading guns with rifled barrels did much to transform warfare. The lesson seemed to be that the defence would have the primacy, as at Gettysburg. However, the rapid victories in the European Wars of Unification gave that the lie. Much was claimed for the Prussian needle gun in 1866 and the Prussian Krupps artillery in 1870–71, but of equal and perhaps greater significance was error by the Austrians and French respectively, and the skill of Moltke in using communications.

(4) There is a catalogue of rapid and significant technological change from the 1880s. The battlefield was transformed. High explosive, machine guns and smokeless powder made the bright uniforms and open-ground charges impossible.

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All the signs were there for military observers that new weapons would make older-style warfare impossible. However, theorists drew odd conclusions – that because of the lethal developments, only sheer morale and courage would hold sway. The French particularly developed the theory of attack at all costs, despite seeing its consequences, for example, at Mukden in 1905. Huge emphasis was placed on the nation in arms and the devotion of the masses to the cause. Armies swelled even though logical reflection might suggest that massive targets – of poorly trained amateur soldiers – were being created for new destructive weapons.

(5) The Schlieffen Plan was a highly significant development, which brought together many of the 'threads' of military experience since 1792. First the massive numbers involved reflected the growth of the nation in arms. Then there was the lingering hope for the Napoleonic coup on a massive scale – a huge swing round Paris while lighter forces held the lumbering Russians at bay. All depended on exact logistics, only possible because of railways, a highly developed general staff and links between the state and the military. It was war as science and probably doomed to fail, as the human element kicked in. Tiredness, unexpected resistance, poor decision-making and a failure to foresee either rapid Russian advance or British participation meant failure, but the plan determined the future course of the war.

(6) Were the generals of 1914–18 unimaginative 'butchers and bunglers', sending their working-class armies to certain death in a fog of ignorance? Or were the technological developments and the sheer size of armies bound to result in huge casualties? The Somme is the focus for a massive debate. The losses of the first day must be set against the developments in tactics and methods of the battle. Some German sources saw the final defeat of Germany as originating from the losses of the Somme; other critics see only an unimaginative and pointless protracted battle of attrition.

(7) School texts give much less prominence to the campaigns in the summer and autumn of 1918 than to the bloodbaths of 1915–17. Yet John Terraine (*Haig, the Educated Soldier*) sees these more sophisticated and successful campaigns as Haig's claim to military greatness. Denis Winter (*Haig's Command*) sees a weakened German army as the key and Haig's campaigns as riven with incompetence and high casualties.

(8) The initial German victories are sometimes attributed to Blitzkrieg. This lightning war consisted of the use of bombing to terrorize the enemy and disrupt communications. This was followed by rapid advance by armoured vehicles which struck at key strategic points and continued rapidly, without waiting for infantry support, in order to disorientate the enemy and prevent any sense of a fixed front. Well trained self-sufficient units pushed forward, not the mass armies of much of the First World War. Air support was coordinated. The danger was that rapid movement would open up the opportunity for flank attacks, but neither French nor Polish forces were able to organize such attacks, so in a sense the tactics were only workable if enemies were weak. The attack on Poland was a classic pincer movement and again would have been more difficult if Polish forces had not been so dispersed and had been willing to give territory to use better defence lines. Had not the British thrust forward into Belgium and opened up a gap between themselves and the French, which allowed themselves to be cut off by an attack on the hinge between the allied armies, and had they moved to counter attack the German flank, then the German strategy might not have succeeded.

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(9) The war in Russia is the most costly and brutal example of twentieth century warfare. The Russian forces had been weakened by a purge of officers in the 1930s and by poor planning. Initial advances in 'Operation Barbarossa' were considerable and millions of prisoners were taken. However, the poor performance of Russia against Finland in the Winter war 1939–40 and Hitler's racial theories blinded him to the dangers of long lines of communication and the problems of fighting in the Russian winter. If he had looked at the much more successful campaign Russia fought against Japan in Mongolia in 1939 and the Napoleonic campaigns, he might have reconsidered. The delaying of the advance by the German campaign in Greece proved to be crucial. The German advance had stalled by the end of 1941 as a result of Russian counter attacks and the Russian winter. It was difficult to make use of key German advantages – air power, organization of forces into self-sufficient units, superior training and weaponry when the weather was so bad. When the campaign degenerated into siege warfare, the Russians had the advantage of interior lines of communication and they offered determined resistance regardless of casualties. They were also only fighting on one front. German air power failed in the crucial battle for Stalingrad and the Germans allowed themselves to be encircled because of Hitler's insistence on not giving ground.

(10) The D Day invasion stands as a testament to sheer planning and organisation. The Allies depended for success in the war on amphibious operations against both Germany and Japan. Previous campaigns had showed these as difficult and likely to fail (Gallipoli). Hitler dared not attempt to invade England. However, the allies had been successful in Sicily and Italy (to a degree – attempt to land at Anzio in 1944 was not a great success). Britain became a huge armed camp as thousands of American troops arrived; the modern industrial capacity of Britain and the USA was focused on producing war materials including innovations such as pre-assembled harbours and an oil pipeline. It has been argued that the invasion was wrongly delayed, giving the Germans a chance to develop their Atlantic Wall in 1943. Stalin was particularly critical and some modern historians have agreed. Whatever the truth, D Day's success depended on organisation and resources. Eisenhower and his team were more like managing directors than Napoleonic commanders. In the end, bitter hand-to-hand combat secured the beaches, especially at Omaha where the USA took heavy casualties. Deception had helped convince Hitler that Normandy would not be the main focus; but D Day was only the start. The Normandy campaign and the subsequent invasion of Germany saw heavy infantry fighting in difficult conditions. Casualty rates were higher than those of the First World War, but the campaign was shorter and was not characterised by trench warfare. German tanks were better and caused heavy losses. An attempt to restrict losses was made in 1945 by dropping airborne troops at Arnhem to take the bridge and allow a flanking movement. Much less well planned, this operation relied on a single narrow road linking the advance troops to the main body of attackers. It fell foul of the unexpected presence of a German panzer division in the area. It demonstrated that by this stage the war was not going to be won by brilliant strokes but by dogged deployment of superior resources against a weakened but still dangerous enemy.

Teaching Activities

1. Divide the class into pairs, with each taking a turning point in the history of warfare from this list:

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- The levée en masse, 1793
- The War of the Third Coalition
- The development of the rifle in the mid nineteenth century
- Smokeless powder and steel barreled artillery
- The use of railways in the mid nineteenth century
- The development of the tank
- Blitzkrieg in the Second World War

Students make an argument for the most significant turning point and offer arguments against the other turning points. They discuss which arguments were most persuasive.

2. Students make as many comparisons and contrasts between the campaigns of 1914–18 and those of 1792–1815. They make a list of possible explanations for change and arrange them in order of importance.

3. Students make graphs of the importance of key elements from the period 1792–1945. Was generalship equally important through the period? Was organisation of armies equally important through the period? Were coalitions equally important? If there are different patterns, they try to explain the difference.

4. Hold a balloon debate between Napoleon, Moltke, Lee, Grant, Haig, Montgomery and Zhukov. Establish clear criteria for quality of argument, support from knowledge and presentation.

Resources

P. Browning, *The Changing Nature of Land Warfare 1792–1945* (Cambridge University Press, 2002)
D. Chandler, *The Art of Warfare on Land* (Penguin, 2000)
N. Fergusson, *The War of the World* (Allen Lane, 2006)
R. Holmes (ed.), *The Oxford Companion to Military History* (Oxford University Press, 2001)
M. Howard, *War in European History* (Oxford University Press, 1976)
G. Parker (ed.), *The Cambridge Illustrated History of Warfare* (Cambridge University Press, 2000)
A. Roberts, *The Storm of War (*Allen Lane, 2009*)*
D. Winter, *Haig's Command* (Penguin, 1999)

Weblinks

http://encyclopaedia.thefreedictionary.com/military
www.newarkirregulars.org.uk/links/mhresearch.html
www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/ and follow the links to the First World War
http://sunsite.utk.edu/civil-war/warweb
www.gettysburg.com
www.worldwar1.com
http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/worldwars/wwone/
www.bbc.co.uk/history/**worldwar**s/wwtwo/

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