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THE LABYRINTH
Considerations on Modern War

On the cover: olive tree on the ruins of Sparta, Greece. (shot by Author. 2010)

Discant viventes
sorte mortuorum[*]

A Klee painting named "Angelus Novus" shows an angel looking as though he is about to move away from something he is fixedly contemplating. His eyes are staring, his mouth is open, his wings are spread. This is how one pictures the angel of history. His face is turned toward the past. Where we perceive a chain of events, he sees one single catastrophe which keeps piling wreckage and hurls it in front of his feet.

The angel would like to stay, awaken the dead, and make whole what has been smashed. But a storm is blowing in from Paradise; it has got caught in his wings with such a violence that the angel can no longer close them. The storm irresistibly propels him into the future to which his back is turned, while the pile of debris before him grows skyward. This storm is what we call progress.[**]

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[*]   [May the living people learn from the fate of the dead]: inscription placed at the entrance of the concentration camp of Mauthausen.

[**] W. Benjamin, *Schriften*, Frankfurt a. M., Suhkamp, 1955.

INTRODUCTION

T his book represents the greatly revised and corrected fusion of two former books written in Italian.[1]

The title is easy to explain: when I am thinking about war, it calls me to mind the last sequences of *The Shining*, a horror film directed by Stanley Kubrick, with the father running after his son through a labyrinth made-up of snow-covered hedges in order to kill him. War is something like that, in other words fathers killing their sons, or better the humanity killing itself within a world which is both real and imaginary that we consider really hard to leave.

As a consequence even this book is a bit labyrinthine: in the essays composing it, topics and situations, notions and explanations will come up again and again. I hope both not to bore and not to make you lose your way.

And now, if I had to outline the guidelines, the main points that will emerge during this treatment, I would outline the following points:

War is a combination of factors, both tangible and intangible, so complex and organized that it will disappear from the human horizon, and perhaps only, in the presence of decisive changes in the nature of death, both in the sense of a marked departure along time span of human beings or in its perception at the level of collective consciousness.

Nuclear weapons are so radically new (a real "ultimatum to the Earth") that it is my belief the prospect of nuclear annihilation has exercised, in the decades since Hiroshima, a sort of pedagogical function over humanity; despite all ideological and technical attempts to resize the historic significance of nuclear weapons's advent, this inhibition can still do a lot to discourage a global war, if properly reinvigorated with theoretical and practical tools.

International law, however, represent the main way forward, given the

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1   Paolo Ceola, *Il Labirinto: Saggi sulla guerra contemporanea*, Napoli, Liguori, 2002 and *Armi e Democrazia: Per una teoria riformista della guerra*, Varallo, Istituto per la storia della Resistenza e della società contemporanea nelle province di Biella e Vercelli "Cino Moscatelli",2006. I wish to thank the publishing houses for the authorization to use again these two books.

current state of humanity evolution, to effectively combat the phenomenon of war.

Politically, democracy must consider the war, in all shapes and conceptions not coded by international law, as a direct and immediate threat to its existence, even in times of peace.

Whatever the model of interpretation of the war (maximally conservative or deeply reformist) it will face a revolution that in the coming years will jump in completely upsetting nature: the progressive and accelerated transfer of warfare from the human element to the robotics, and then to what it might be called post-human; the actors of history will not be the evolutionary heirs of the genus "homo", but new creatures, hybrids born from the union between the organic and the machines. Post-humans, for which combat and death will have new meanings.

I hope that these points will be adequately explained in the essays in this book.

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1 HELL'S FOUNDATIONS[2]

1. 1 ROOTS

Some snapshots about different kind of war during 20st century...

*I*t is the picture of a First World War veteran. It is a black-and-white pic-*
ture and the man, still wearing his uniform, looks in profile. From the big
website called The Great War (Murray 1996) we do not find out anything
about him, neither his name. He is just a glance. Probably because under the
eyes he does not have anything more. A huge black hole has taken over the
space first filled by the nose, jaws, mouth and chin. In all probability a splin-
ter excavated a hole where there is now only a silent scream. The man watch-
es and shouts without being able to say and tell the slaughter filling his eyes.

Let give him back for a moment what he lost and bring him back to his
place, in the trench, with his comrades. And now we shift and raise our
visual, as if we had a camera on a helicopter that is flying higher and higher.
Little by little trenches and communication trenches bring together, they fill
thousands square kilometres of the European territory. At last the western
front appears as a whole: a scar 775 kilometres long, from the North Sea to
Switzerland, that runs along the Old Continent's side; a stinky scar, moist
with rain and blood, full of louses and dead, mouse and wounded. In 1917
German troops were filling a salient – that is to say a territory's wedge –
round Ypres (Flanders), a territory that disturbed the English deployment.
If English eliminated this salient, they would be able to oust German from
Belgium or fill ports like Ostenda and Zeebrugge, the last one being the Bru-
ges's outport in the North Sea. The lumps of soil in these places were already
sodden with the blood which shed in two battles and in Ypres, during the
Second Battle in 1915, German used noxious gas on a large scale.[3] The third
battle of Ypres gets its name from Passchendaele, the location where most

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2 I am stealing the title from a book written by G.Moorhouse, *Hell's Foundations: A So-*
   cial History of the Town of Bury in the Aftermath of the Gallipoli Campaign, London,
   Hodder & Stoughton, 1992.

3 "The most terrible is the slow death of the victims [...] I saw several hundred poor pe-
   ople lying outdoors , in front of a church, so they had all the air possible, *drown* [in ita-
   lics in the text, author's note] slowly with water in the lungs". From the diary of Gene-
   ral Charteris , quoted about an attack with gas, in Gilbert , 1998, p. 184. [Translation by
   author, referring to the page 184 of Italian Edition]

of the operations took place. There are two main reasons why this battle was really terrifying: on the one hand the German defences's strength and the English commanders's stubborn incapacity to understand that the era of chivalry and the assaults of the "indomitable hearts" was over, and, on the other hand, the rain. Usually, in a Flanders' summer, it rains for an average of eight millimetres; that year, in the four days straddling the beginning of the conflicts, it rained for about seventy-six millimetres. That could be a problem for the delicate dewatering system of this area, even in a peacetime.

The preliminary bombardment lasted two weeks. English shot four millions and a half grenades from four thousand guns (one gun every five metres in front). They threw nearly five tons of explosive per linear meter at the cost of one hundred and ten million dollars! The attack began on July 31. At four o' clock pm it started raining. It rained hard for days and the nightmare began. The shaken soil melt completely down, becoming a dirty mud and blood soup. Thousands of men had the choice whether die by enemy bullets or in the quicksands. The battle, like many other in this war, extend over several weeks and had just brief breaks. In the end, for each square kilometre there were something like half million craters created by the explosions and eight thousand people dead or wounded. In three months, Passechendaele provoked 500,000 victims; 300,000 of them were English and 42,000 can not be found any more, sank and suffocated in the mud (Miller, 1997).

It looks like a big black bug. It does not have any rounded line, it only has triangular surfaces soldered together. Built and painted with special and very expensive materials, it only runs at night: its belonging to the darkness is so exclusive that the inner ear of its pilots risks to suffer seriously. During test flights there have been a lot of accidents just because the pilots at a certain point refused to pay attention to the instruments and mistook the sky for the ground. It does not have any bombs or missiles hanging under its wings, so that it is not spectacular to see it flying, it is not fascinating and threatening as other air planes. It is a shadow, a mortal shadow: it carries its war loading inside itself and this is not a huge loading, a few tons of laser guided bombs. But this black shadow, the F117, subdued in a short time one of the most powerful armies in the Middle East, the Iraqi army, in 1991.

The shark is gliding, its figure is shivering in the desert's air…its teeth are painted on a weapon's muzzle, that could decide for an eventual war in Europe between NATO and Warsaw Pact. The A10 is an ugly air plane, specifically designed to destroy tanks, armoured vehicles that transport the infantry and bunkers. Its main weapon is a long, thirty millimetres calibre,

Chapter 1

revolving barrels gun. The frightfulness of this weapon is that it fires off heavy projectiles that are massive covered by depleted uranium, which has a high specific gravity. Just some shots, sometimes just a single one, and a fifty tons tank is destroyed.

This is the most staggering picture of the atomic age: it portrays the needle put up in memory of the first nuclear explosion at all, the Trinity test of July 16, 1945, conducted in Alamogordo (White Sands), New Mexico (it is in Virilio, 1996). The rock is glazed, black, a perfect death's icon. A glance is enough to remind the black needle in 2001: A Space Odyssey, where it was, on the contrary, a life and intelligence donor. Even the waste lands of Hiroshima and Nagasaki can not even communicate such a fainting as the one inspired by this picture.

It could be the icon, the poster of wounded humanity, tortured by war. A Kuwait woman: during the Iraqi invasion, some soldiers tortured her two sons while she was watching the scene.[4] Now, she does not speak anymore, tries to tell what happened by signs, sighs and in monosyllables, but the only thing that is to understand is "Allah…Allah…". Other scenes of this documentary show another mother, younger than the first one, her child in her arms who does not speak anymore, since an Iraqi soldier kept for long his head under a boot.

Does the war with its huge cruelty and proportions shut humanity up? Does it constitute anything too great and terrible for Mankind, even if it is one of his creations? Sad to say, this is just a part of the truth, that turn out to be the truth only if we shift our attention from victims to executioners, who think that war, when not pretty, is helpful, or unavoidable, or interesting or even exciting. The cruel god of war can be invested with different and contrasting feelings, and ate and disgust are just some of those. It is compulsory to be aware of the fact that speak about war correspond to speak about the mankind and his whole, and sometimes desperate, complexity.

First of all, we have to say that the current conception of the war is founded on a misunderstanding. If we can not deny the fact that war is deeply based in the human culture roots, interpreting culture as a complex synergy between psychology and environment, the preconception that war resides in the genetic code of humanity should be clearly and unequivocally abandoned. If "genetic" does mean "automatic", mechanism always ready to

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4 Werner Herzog, *Lektionen in Finsternis*, 1992, Werner Herzog Filmproduktion, München.

kick off, such as hunger and sexual urge, then we have to understand that it does not work in this way.

Actually, it is true that war lies at deep levels, but not so deeply, even if there are people who think that war has genetic origins in order to set their conscience free from aggression or in order to pin its blame on someone else and give a justification for murder. Single person and whole cultures are not violent. Supposing that war had genetic causes means that there should never be a peacetime, because we were always been at war…but it is not so. Supposing that war has genetic origins means that the word "propaganda", with all the things that it implies, does not necessitate to exist. Supposeing that war was of this nature, it should help to reproduce the species (and this is of course a genetic imperative!): but now, how can we explain the possibility of self-destruction? Should we accept the paradoxical idea of a collective suicide gene in the humanity's inheritance?

Man does not slaughter just because it is part of his DNA. But do not flatter ourselves. The war's explications are just a bit closer to the surface, but Cain's darkness are really thicker and deeper. We should not forget that, if it is true that Neolithic gave a strong stimulus to war (with its richness' *surplus* to defend, with the sedentary stabilization of whole groups of people who began to look askance at the horizon, with its hierarchic structure of the society), it is probably also true that the difference between pure acts of individual violence (in self-defence, for a woman, for a prey, for personal hate) and collectivisation, finalization and ritualization of group's violence (i.e. the war) is older.

In all probability what we see in the first scenes of *2001: A Space Odyssey* is what really happened, also in order to the inextricable connection between weapon and tool, brain and hands, thought-imagination and *techné*.

Chapter 1

1. 1. *1* The Group and the Death

The mechanisms concerning formation, strengthening and existence of the human group are absolutely fundamental. Whether it is the horde, the *polis* or the modern sovereign state, the dynamics' essence of the group's identity continues through History and comes to us from the mists of the past. The inexorable effectiveness of this process lies precisely in its simplicity and essentiality. It is a well-oiled trigger ready to shoot with unerring accuracy.

First of all, the group develops in a geographical area. It coagulates around cultural affinities, the convergence of interests, sharing and acceptance of particular mechanisms of power, social and emotional relationships to each other established and accepted. The group's membership rules and forms the identity of the group: this mental image that the group has of itself organizes the individual sensations and rises above them in an independent existence. In this way, the individuals will be themselves both as individuals and as part of a transcendent community. The group identity is, perhaps, the first *totem* of the mental life of man: it comforts, reassures, gives a place in the world and in front of the world, of the Nature and of the others. The identity of the group was therefore conceived as an act of love. The group identity is the cultural/symbolic equivalent, with serious repercussions on the real, of the prenatal and immediate post-natal conditions, which are certainly the first, ever, *imprinting* mechanisms of human beings.

But the community is not an entity without a face. It has a symbolic incarnation, its own **name**, that it is used to identify it. It has also a real incarnation, the **leader**. The role of the leader is of course crucial. The chief could be a single man or a group of men and he represents the community's ideal. Its members transfer on the chief the ideal projection of themselves, their ideal Ego. They love then their leader more than they love themselves, both because he represents the community (which transcends them and survives after their death) and because in his being, they can recognise themselves and find themselves better than how they really are. They deceive themselves, they have to deceive themselves, that the chief loves them in the same way.

Contextual to the formation of group identity is the appearing of the idea of the Other, the one who does not belong to the group. The strength of the mechanisms of solidarity, affinity and cohesion among group members is the presence of those who have not shared its birth and its formation. The emotional treasure of membership is observed by those with the group have nothing to do. They are real people as the other group members, but it does not matter, it does not have any relevance. Ethologists (Eibl-Eibesfeldt,

1983) have coined the term "pseudo-speciation" to explain the apparently paradoxical fact that mankind is the only living species whose members are killing each other continuously and in a striking way. To say the truth, the Other is considered so different that, even if he/she is a human being, he/she is labelled as someone belonging to another biological world and to another cultural universe.

But in fact human beings kill their **fellows**: it should be the affinity, the likeness, that makes people uneasy. At the moment that we perceive the Other as **fellow and at the same time we want to be different** we have to magnify the differences. And the Other, because he "looks like a man", can ruin our "being Men".

So the Other does not share the same mental inheritance (in addition to the material resources) of the members of the group. And here snaps the fundamental switch of the human act, the fear. Fear that the mental construction of the group, even before the mental well-being, could fall apart, destroyed by those who come from outside.

But this "fall apart" has a specific name: death. Fear of death is not just coming from the banal survival instinct, as it happens with animals. Otherwise, war would not exist. Death is thought to be the greatest injustice that humankind does not want e does not have to accept. Fear of death constitute the human being; it is a stimulus so fundamental that it is reasonable to think that the mankind resorts on itself, considering the outbreak of wars, a very complex mental process. The impossibility to stay alive, the progressive affection's desertification, the anxiety for the end of their own human group and of all the other things, create such a violent repulsion that snaps the need to charge someone with the fact that we cannot disembarrass ourselves from the death.

Moreover, we know very well, everyone of us is aware, that mankind has to face two kind of death: the physical one and the spiritual one, so to say the parting from our own identity. Between those two, the first one is paradoxically the least feared one, especially during a war, because the group helps to handle it. Using the words belonging to the great writer Elias Canetti, Nobel prize 1981: "The worst that could happen to men at war – that is, die all together – saves them from an individual death, which is the thing that they dread above all" (Canetti, 1990, p.87).

When the death arrives, it does not find us all alone and we know that afterwards the group will provide (with its reminiscence and the myth, which means by entrusting the public memory with us) to make us live again. It is towards the second death that the mankind is really alone. Losing the per-

Chapter 1

sonal identity, losing the possession of it, makes the mankind just an empty skeleton, a *zombie* lacking in symbols and above all in a future.

The next step is then the **hostility** towards the other, the stranger, the barbarian. **The Other** is, therefore, the **vehicle**, **the death's image**.

Certainly the fear/hostility does not have to result in violence in any case. There are some strong factors, both psychological and social-economic-political, which can inhibit them (there was no History, otherwise); they also make possible the fact that one group's identity does not perceive other identities as destructive but that they could interact in the different ways created by humankind. But there is also another way to do that, of course. If environmental conditions allow it, the hostility is not inhibited but boosted and it begins to feed itself. The Snake's Egg, the evil's son, the War, was born. An endless series of vicious circles originates; the most important is the one that not only says that the group's cohesion is an instrument to carry on a war but also that is the war that strengthen and fortify the group's bonds.

The Other, the Enemy, the one who was already extraneous to the group's identity, becomes the **scapegoat** for the state of things. And we can add more: sometimes the elaboration pushes that on that, under special circumstances and in certain moments, we have to think that we die not because that is what the nature wants, but **because of** the existence of the Enemy. In any case, from this mechanism start a lot of images, symbols and stereotypes that stud our whole cultural history.

To cast on the Enemy our own death's fear help us to rationalize it, we can almost become its friends. And this is the way the death becomes, from an inscrutable and unacceptable destiny, a weapon, the mother of all weapons. We need to control the death, to give it someone other, in order to forget or even to give a sense to our own death, to arrive to win against it. To let other die is an instrument created by the mankind to feel immortal, to feel like God[5]. The other way is to give the life: and so such apparently incompatible stimulus melt in a common sensation of omnipotence that takes away from mankind the fear and let us live out and over our own body, our own material existence and the condition of being isolated.

In short, if the enemy becomes the image, the bringer of death, we can explain why on the one hand violence in war tend to become so extreme, just as Clausewitz said, and on the other hand the reason why many men find so

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5   "War is the art of embellishing death" says a Japanese proverb. (Virilio, 1996). [Translation by the Author]

nice to kill. As claimed by many psychoanalysts (Bonvecchio, 1999) men go to war just to kill the death represented by the enemy, and the delirious cruelty of many acts of war (the naive people call it "inhuman") feeds just the fact that the greater the dehumanization and objectification of the victim the higher the sense of omnipotence of those who kill and much easier to remove the guilt.

1. 1. *2* The Sacralization of War

Under the pressure of the mechanisms mentioned above, the war is ready to be sacralized. The act, or rather the succession of acts of which it is made (i.e. the socialized killing of men) is completely stripped of its immediate significance in the sense that what is really killed is not a mere human body, but a mental image. The physical body of the Enemy is no longer recognized as similar to their own but as a carrier, in fact, of a **meaning** that, as an accretion of all evil, must be eradicated. The vision of the dead enemy gives a sense of omnipotence: you are still alive, you were better than him and better than death, the death that has been redirected toward him. There remains the empty carcass of adversaries: sometimes followed (if the echo of the common destiny of death still has a way to ring); other times (often, in the twentieth century) it is also, because of the physical tabernacle denier of self, the Enemy, subjected to a further compulsive violence, which aims to destroy even the molecules that make it up. From the dragging of the corpse of Hector by Achilles to the crematorium, the Enemy's body has suffered the same fate of his vital essence, in a succession of acts that appear much less respectful even of cannibalism that, in its assimilation of the Enemy as food, has connotations of recognition of its past value.

Even the memory of the Enemy, his passage on Earth can be subjected to violence. Sprinkle salt on the ruins of Carthage, to give just an example, does not have the only meaning of sterilization of any attempt to economic recovery: it is also the oblivion forcibly dropped on what the Enemy may have said, written, done and imagined. Clearing the memory of the Enemy (to give another example, the story of the destruction of living stories of the *desaparecidos* in Argentina) is perhaps the highest note of the collective Ego through war.

The war, therefore, at first as cultural event, is likely to be sacralized. It has to do with the building blocks of collective action: group identity, fear of the Other, the symbiosis with Death. Therefore, it cannot be reduced to a mere mass murder, even if it is a mere mass murder, in the bare meaning of the facts. The event of killing **must** be reworked, reinterpreted, and since it has to do with the dilemma of existence/annihilation, it can be sanctified.

Chapter 1

The discourse of and about war must have, therefore, higher tones, poetic, inspired and dramatic: the sacralization of war is a constant in the cultural history of mankind.

The war also sheds blood, the fluid of life. While on the one hand it takes away the blood of the enemy, getting it out of his body, the blood shed in battle takes on the connotation of purifying liquid to bless the sacrifice of the members of the group. This sanctification is materialized in the war memorial that can be made of stone, trees, or consist of mental images, like the Teutonic mythology *Valhalla*, where all the dead warriors are going to gather troops for its six hundred and forty doors.

Even if it is easy to understand that ancient wars could have been easily sacralized, because they have been fought with technology close to the arm and mind of all men, we also must be convinced that the war of the twentieth century, industrialized, while seemingly inhuman, distant, a *Moloch* of iron and fire, was sacralized. In fact, the *Moloch* is still a god[6]. Faced with a monstrous war machine that crushed them, the men passed through the industrialized war did not have long accepted the condition of microbes dominated by technology. They deified instead what they thought to be alien in order to belong to it, because we cannot deify what is too much like us and because they themselves had created that iron and fire that dominates them. In addition, the sacralization of war, as was manifested by the First World War onwards, also served to quell the guilt for the senseless slaughters of war mass. The sanctification of the war and the cult of the dead (Mosse, 1990) acted as inhibitors of anxiety for the waste of young lives that the world has experienced in a massive scale from 1914 onwards.

A war may well be terrible, apparently totally unrelated to the extent of the human: he will always find a way to re-appropriate, to revise and make sense. Indeed it has been argued (Caillois, 1990) that the more war is terrible, the more it brings into play the destinies of men and nations, and the easier becomes its sacralization because the man bears everything except the anxiety and the fear of be exceeded by his creations. Even the most frightening war can then be appreciated, praised and coveted: the little guys have created the *Moloch*, they **are** the *Moloch* and thus worship him[7].

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6   Actually Moloch, or Molk, is the term used to describe human sacrifice, not the god. But I continue to use this meaning for ease of understanding.

7   Even the most terrible war...Then we may ask whether even the GNW, the Global Nuclear War, the spasmodic megadeath dotted by atomic mushroom clouds and dispenser of radiations for decades could fall in this speech. It is not easy to answer. Apparently

1. 1. *3* **The War and the Pleasure**

This is a central war's imaginative world: the blood bath as the equivalent of childbirth, the regenerative catharsis that clears all the old stuff and, as a new and massive spraying of semen, giving rise to a new world. Sexuality has been let in by the handful of men[8] in the collective violence and has become a common place at the popular level (the soldier as a "real man") and enough to fill entire libraries of studies for and against. To summarize, it can be argued that sexuality, as regards the war, has suffered a double process

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not. First, the GNW truly belongs to the realm of "too much": too devastating, too total in too short a time. In addition, the GNW comes from a world of technique that is much more alien to the people masses than it was that in which the two world wars were fought. The old mental universe of the end of XIX century felt in World War I and was upset, but the war technique was gradually assimilated because not so far from the daily experience of industrial civilisation. World War II found people more culturally and psychologically prepared.

But from then warfare technology has increased its race and the collective spirit has been no longer able to master it. Masses have become conscious of losing mental control of the war, both in the sense of understanding the mechanism regulating the whole universe of weapons, and in the sense of the possibility of influencing political decisions that generate it. The GNW seems too strange in its design, preparation and implementation. It would last less than an hour, it would be a clash of weapons, people do not know anything but they exterminate humanity.

How is it possible to sanctify a war like this? Yet someone has exalted the Bomb, but only as an exorcise, a way to enhance the deterrent effect of peace guardian. Others have tried to pass the nuclear war as a "war as usual", but they have been rare and isolated cases, attributable to political pathology. It lacks, however, the mass sentiment, the turning with benevolent eyes of millions people, that opinion widespread that turn scary collective tragedies in epics. The GNW, for now, is just fear, such as a cancer. But it will be always so? Or, one day, out of boredom or nihilistic despair, the proliferation of mushrooms clouds will find legions of priests ready to hail them?

8   You would want to say by males only: that the male penis is a weapon, both real and symbolic, it should be fairly obvious. Difficult it is unlike so since the dawn of time the penis is the only part of the anatomy that allowed the vast majority of males to stand in a position **to do** (in the sense of actually changing the existing) something: to perpetuate his name, experience the pleasure, punish an enemy through the rape of his wife. In this sense, I believe that the penis has been the tool most used by mankind, most of the hands and certainly most of the brain. But really the violent conception of sexuality is exclusively male? It is my opinion that the female universe, no matter how much the rhetoric of "generator of life" and "certain things women would not ever" we can spread above, is equally permeable to the sacralization of war than the male. If properly cultivated, the dark side of female mentality is just as ready to streamlining operations and reworking of death we are talking about.

Chapter 1

of removal and redirection. On the one hand, the elimination of *eros* (so to say, off with the female element and, in general, sex as a game, imagination, creativity and freedom) and on the other hand the re-investment of libidinal energy in the service of war aims and the State.

It is likely that this has to do with the obsession with purity and with a conception of reality as object of rape. I will try to explain it better.

Regarding the first point, the historical examples of societies in which the fanatical militarism is associated with a severe sexual repression are literally wasted. Even at the level of collective imagination, so that it would be otherwise inexplicable the success of the slogan created in 1968 in objection to this view: "Make love, not war." The obsession of purity is born, for a change, from the fear: fear of contamination by everything (ideas, attitudes, people and entire social groups) which is experienced as alien to the group identity. Sexual repression is used to address mental and emotional energies to the war as a great sterilizer and creator moment in view of a new reality to be created once and for all *ex novo*.

Do not forget also, in this context, the territorial factor. Whether a group of men invade new territory, whether they want to prevent the invasion by another group, it is certainly conceivable that starts a mechanism equalizing the territory to a fertile womb (the "mother country"). It is clear that, as in this womb men want to plant their seed (made of values, work materials, etc.), it must be pure, virginal. So, either it has to be sterilized by the previous occupants, or the invasion of others is experienced as a rape. I believe that the ethnic cleansing sink their roots in this type of conception.

The consideration of reality as object of sexual activity, or even rape, is a much more ancient mechanism than industrial civilization. The death given to the Enemy and sex have this in common, they change the reality, they are both creative acts, remove obstacles, create a new balance. The sexual intercourse was the first experience that has approached the man at the feeling of God: A *fiat lux* that, despite its laughable banality and insignificance in the face of many other creative acts, even of human origin, was settled in the male psyche as something that radically changes the reality. But even the death given in war has the generating power (in the collective mentality) because the Enemy represents anything you want to destroy, the same nothing that lies in a barren womb. This is the way reality, potential or actual container of the Enemy, is, broadly speaking, raped and made subject to modification by a vitalistic act, whose different shapes can be the sexual intercourse or the thrusting of a sword. "Polemos [conflict] is the father of

all things", said Heraclitus[9]. It is a matter of fact that rape in war has little to do with the creative *eros*, that it is essentially an act of domination through physical and mental submission, not an erotic act. This is confirmed once again by the repulsive events that took place during the war in former Yugoslavia. Rape is an act of war, it is a weapon that uses sexual procedures for whom it is not necessary the desire of a woman but the desire to invade-sterilize-fill (Doni, 1993).

War as a sterilizer and fertilizing practice together, therefore, is a firmly fixed nail in the imagination, especially for men: hygiene of the world, the obsession of the desire to cancel a reality that is seen as unacceptable and replace it, with a new creative act, with a new reality similar to them[10].

1.1.*4* The Party and the War. War is a Party

The link between party and war is a fact well established from cultural anthropology. What can be distilled from the mass of studies is that, for example, war and party have in common the fact that they both see to act two coincident delusions of omnipotence, that of the individual and that of the society. Both in party and in war the usual moral, legal, social fees (in short, the mental cages that regularize daily living) vanish, along with inhibitions and more different conventions. In war, for example, operate mechanisms of lack of responsibility of the individual that are very similar to those experienced in a carnival, and we should not be fooled by the fact that the soldier is trapped in a rigid discipline and bureaucratic institution, while individuals participating in a party are in a chaotic situation. In fact, the both status remove from the individual the weight of the opinion on his own acts, at least within certain limits. The exorcism of death, usual in the party, is not in contradiction with its obsessive presence that the individual experiences in war. Indeed, by dealing with it every day, it may cease to fear. The result is the same grimace of death typical of the catharsis of the feast (Caillois,

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9 Of the many existing translations have chosen : Heraclitus, *Dell'origine,* by Angelo Tonelli, Milan, Feltrinelli, 1993. The quote is from page 67 [Translation from the Author]

10 Anyone who wants to measure the gulf of human imbecility should, in fact, to turn his attention to statements that exalt war as a factor in sexual regeneration of society. The best that can be said of most of these contributions is that they are subjects to the psychiatry or psychotherapy. In a general sense, it is worth remembering that the conceptions of sexual war contain at least a decisive contradiction: in war the best males die, then you do not understand in what the war serves to hygiene the world.

Chapter 1

1990). In both cases, the individual and the society experience (especially at the beginning of the events) a deep sense of freedom and omnipotence.

1. 2 THE THEORY OF WAR

From the darkness of the human predisposition to collective violence, which so far we have tried to analyze even if briefly, rises then the willingness to kill not for personal use, but in the name of identity, values, symbols, and, more generally, of an image of the society that has to be achieved. In other words, in the name of a political project.

The inseparability of the link between politics and war is precisely the fact that politics is always relating to a project and that the project too often needs, to be done faster, some violence. Too often, but not necessarily always. I mean, quite simply, that war is a cultural invention, a response to certain needs and that it is possible to imagine a world where politics continues to exist in the absence of war, or at least where the presence of war is very small. War is an instrument of politics and in turn war influences it, but war is not its necessary and inevitable outlet. This statement, which may seem derived from an act of faith, is actually based on the belief that today the two terms appear, for many reasons, in sharp contrast. Politics can be defined in many ways but in essence is how to organize the existing to continue to exist, according to a project. In the essence of contemporary warfare is instead inscribed the self-destruction of mankind. The leap of civilization, which is necessary to overcome this fundamental contradiction, is of course in very far-off times. Today, politics and war are still together, and their relationship is reflected in the international system structure.

The theory of war is also part of the policy making, the **well-pondered** war that - before becoming a technique or an art of combat and thus taking the form of strategic thinking, battle plan and field for the academy manual - is reflection on the origins, essence, forms and perspectives of the conflict between human groups.

In the context of Western thought, Karl von Clausewitz (1780-1831), Prussian general contemporary of Napoleon I, is a crucial time for recovery of theoretical tradition and innovation, especially from the point of view of the clarification and systematization of the elements peculiar to war.

Clausewitz had the fortune to live at the time when war has become modern. Napoleon took the power of the French revolutionary masses and hurled

them against the European armies still bound to the parameters and the dogmas of the eighteenth-century war. The effect, as is known, was in many ways disruptive. The old armies related to loyalty to the sovereign, expression of a patrimonial conception of the State, and that moved on the ground like clockwork mechanisms were outclassed by the force of the number and of the ideas embodied in thousands of citizen-soldiers motivated by the **desire** to fight.

The Napoleonic era has inaugurated the ideological war, new edition in a lay key of religious wars. Clausewitz could also assist to the beginnings (but thanks to his genius he had been able to predict many future developments) of industrialized warfare, where artillery and logistics play a preponderant weight and disrupt the space-time coordinates of the strategy and combat.

Clausewitz distilled the basic elements of war, from grand strategy to tactical battle to the guerrillas, and he obtained the essential grammar of collective armed confrontation. I think that, among all theorists of war of the nineteenth century, he would be the only, if he could live one again, who would not be too surprised by the features of contemporary warfare.

For Clausewitz there are three basic elements of war : rationality, chance and enmity or primordial violence[11].

The term "rationality" signifies, in short, all rational aims, therefore political aims, for which a war is started, conducted and concluded.

The term "chance", in Clausewitz's meaning, is an element that is sufficiently explained by itself: the war, in fact, is the quintessence of the imponderable, is the soil in which the forces that are beyond the human domain have always found their preferred habitat. But it is still very important to say that, in the "chance" category must be enrolled everything about the willingness and the ability of the leader. In short, this component includes everything that is not rational planning before the war, nor the anger towards the enemy (the third element) which is rather explained by the concept of

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11 The work of Clausewitz has presented serious problems of translation and interpretation for both the nature of non complete book and the fact that in the nineteenth century attention to precise terminology and conceptual definition was less obsessive than it is today. The most emblematic case is given by the German term "Politik" which in English has two important translations: "Policy", which could be defined as a course of action or art of government, and "Politics", more general and comprehensive. These ambiguities in terminology, and so conceptual, have made difficult to understand what exactly Clausewitz thought meant. Here "Politik" stands for "Politics".

Chapter 1

"enmity" or "primordial violence" or "violent emotion". This latter concept means that, for Clausewitz, every war begins and grows with the push to become a struggle without any possibility of mediation: we always fight to destroy each other totally. If this does not happen is because politics, in the broadest sense, acts to channel the fight and ends it when it is the time. In short, politics is both the provoker and the moderator of war. It is provoker because men, or better, politically organized groups, are by nature destined to fight; it is moderator because even the bloodiest war is made for political reasons and objectives that, once met, take away the reason to continue the war. In short, only three kinds of forces make up the cocktail of war, and their relationship depends on historical contingencies: rational, not rational and irrational[12].

Clausewitz also identifies the actors having to perform the functions related to these three elements. The tendency to extremes, beyond the fact that it is proper to the war dynamics itself, is embodied in the people and in the enthusiastic support of the idea of fighting an enemy. The political purposes of war and therefore the rational activity behind the development of a coherent strategy, are attributable to the political *élite*. Finally, the case has his actors, as mentioned, both in the never complete adjustment of reality to the war efforts, and in the free will of the leader who can change, in a decisive and surprising result as well, the same war outcomes that seemed so obvious in the beginning.

From all this it is also apparent that a great Clausewitz's insight was the discovery, or rediscovery, of war as a **social** phenomenon of fundamental importance. In this way, he did not only brake with the tradition of the eighteenth century (for which war was considered as a technique or even an art for fine brain completely separated from other human activities), but posed the fundamental problem in which consideration to take collective violence. After Clausewitz, it was no longer possible to consider the war a mere phenomenon of individual or collective pathology, a sort of reserve for the depraved and murderers. He understood and showed that war as a social phenomenon cannot be solely considered in terms of moral condemnation, but as one of the ways in which groups of people communicate with each other and are organized in their internal structure. Just the idea that politics con-

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12 In a rather dismissive way, it could be argued that Clausewitz "absorbs" in his model the equally famous, of Thucydides, for whom war is made of fear, honour and interest. The first two elements could be included in the sphere of irrational, interest in rationality.

trols the war actually implies that between peace and war, there is not that abysmal distance that might seem at first sight: in both conditions, human groups interact with each other and History is born and proceeds from the mutual dialectic between conflict and peace. Last but not the least result of this idea, he gave new dignity to the study of war as an intellectual activity that must take into account not only the technology of weapons and command, but also be aware of social, psychological (individual and mass) and politicians factors of every armed confrontation between collective entities.

Clausewitz devoted particular attention to the trend to the extremes, to the absoluteness which is proper to war. He then challenged the idea that war was or had to be an uncontrollable demon, for three main reasons. First of all, wars do not erupt out of nowhere but are preceded by long periods in which mutual interaction between human groups is structured, changes and evolves in ways that allow, at a certain point, the outbreak of an armed conflict. Second, if war would end in all its absoluteness, the victory of one and the defeat of the other of the contenders should also be absolute. But it is not so. Many times in history, military defeats - also grave - have not led to political elimination and sometimes the winner was even to "lose" the peace. Finally, if wars were really always absolute, there would be neither wars or History anymore, in the sense that every war would lead to a definitive result, and soon the propulsive push of the relations between political entities would be exhausted. In short, the consequence of Clausewitz's thought is that, examining his theory, we must always be conscious of the gap –which was to him quite clear (and here especially, I believe, lies his genius) between theory and real facts. Clausewitz sees war **as if** it were absolute, but he knows very well that no war is all the way true; but he can catch the growth and development of the absoluteness in the real course of the events. In short, Clausewitz can read both the real and the picture of the real, which is for men concrete in the same way.

The success of Clausewitz was at least equal to the disesteem which his work has suffered from. Like all classics, the Prussian theorist has been praised, annotated, misrepresented and ferociously fought ever since his *Vom Kriege* (*On War*), posthumously published in 1853, began to appear on the shelves.

Criticism of Clausewitz's thought were largely focused on these points: 1) whether and to what extent the politics can still subordinate war to itself; 2) whether it is only and always the politics that is behind the origins of wars and finally 3) whether the players who decide the war have changed, making

Chapter 1

obsolete the state-centric view of Clausewitz.

Regarding the first argument, the question arises from a double observation: the increasing role of ideology in wars and an increase of the destructive power of weapons. War would have become so absolutized both in ideal and in technical terms that now it influences and subordinates the politics. Therefore, it would no longer be able to hold rationally the ideological ghost nor to govern the war, not only once that the conflict have begun but even before, given the enormous influence of the contemporary military-industrial complexes. The time of planning and political decision would be therefore crushed and the process of communication between adversaries compromised, since the enemy has become the Enemy, receptacle of each absolute evil, and that, after a conflict fought with modern weapons, there would not be any opponent to start relationships anymore. In short, Clausewitz would have gone down because of the ideologies and the atomic bomb.

I think that this objection is to be traced to the fact that we give the term "politics" used by Clausewitz an interpretation too restrictive. It is true that the constraints in respect of the autonomy of the political process are nowadays heavy and that contemporary History has abundantly shown us to what levels of uncontrolled fanaticism we can get; but we cannot still infer from this that politics has completely lost its autonomy. In fact, just the management of nuclear systems during the Cold War was the high point of the government of politics: there was no nuclear war, deterrence (which is pure political exchange) had the best of the nuclear confrontation because weapons had become too powerful.

The other objection to Clausewitz focuses on the role of culture, anthropologically meant as a set of values and customs of a people, to blow in the war. Clausewitz would have forgotten the fact that many people make wars not because it has been politically decided, but because their vision of the world and their ways of life lead them to this outcome. It is claimed the man is not only a political animal and then the war is also born by calling into the deepest values that have little or nothing to do with a political rational decision.

Basically Clausewitz is accused of being what he was, a man of his times, of a period when Europe was the world and the values of the Enlightenment were still the strongest. It seems to me, however, that if it is right to historically contextualize the Prussian general, we cannot forget that the power of his thought lies in its adaptability and flexibility. Just the recognition of war as a social phenomenon and the importance of psychological factors make the interpretative grid of Clausewitz a tool of analysis which is still valid.

It is true that particular socio-economic conditions (think of the war of the nomadic populations) or bulky cultural heritages (the world of Japanese *shogun*, for example) can make the war something that happens because it must be and not the result of a political decision in the Western way, but everything happens within certain limits: the limits of peripheral or fade away economies, the boundaries of cultures that do not stand up to modernity. And in any case, no nation goes to war without deciding to do so and that decision is always political because it involves the present and the future of that society[13].

The third point concerns the role of the modern State. It is stated, and this is true, that several global centers of power and/or antagonists to sovereign states have multiplied. The big economic *corporations*, nongovernmental organizations, international institutions, terrorist groups and organized crime are all rival counterparts to the traditional predominance of the States. How can work the war's theory of Clausewitz in this context, since it was formulated in the most height of state institution?

But even here, if we would contextualize Clausewitz, we risk misleading him. It is obvious that he had in mind the sovereign State as a center of excellence in policy making, but his analysis does not become invalid just because other political poles have been joined to the State: the core of sovereignty matters.

On the other hand, even organized crime can be said to have its own "politics" once it has become sufficiently powerful and branched geographically. We must always remember that Clausewitz stands fully in the western theo-

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13 When one is looking to challenge the role of Clausewitz in the contemporary world in the light of the criticism above you may run into some contradictions. The most famous exponent of the critical current we are examining is the British historian John Keegan, in his volume (Keegan, 1996) moves the charges Clausewitz mentioned above on the basis of what happened in the former Yugoslavia. Keegan says (p. VII): "The horrors of the war in Yugoslavia, as unthinkable as revolting to death civilized, can not be explained in conventional military terms. The fabric of local hatreds that reveal is comprehensible only to professional anthropologists who study the wars between tribal and marginal" [Translation by Author]. In short, we would have seen in the former Yugoslavia, to the unfolding of a Clausewitzian war, not politically determined and conducted, but the result of yet a seething ethnic hatred without limits and a culture of tribal mold. The fact is, of course, that if there was a war decided in adjudication has been the one that has battered the unfortunate country, where political elites have planned the massacre in the name of well-defined objectives of power, using those elements which Keegan does instead traced as the cause of the war (Rumiz, 1996).

Chapter 1

retical tradition about the war, from Plato on wards, and that his innovative contribution was to shed some light on the phenomenon of war as a social phenomenon, broadly speaking.

1. 3 THE SYSTEM OF STATES AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

The material forms, in which the combination of human groups has taken place, have naturally a long history: it was during the Neolithic period that this story had a decisive acceleration. Agriculture first supported and then supplanted the economy of hunting and gathering as the main source of wealth. This fact gave rise to two fundamental processes for growth and diversification of human groups: the creation of *surplus* of wealth and being rooted in a territory. These two factors altered so customs, mentality and symbolic imagery of men that the Neolithic is considered the true *turning point* in human History.

The accumulation of *surplus* implied the possibility of investing in permanent structures for protection against raids and attacks by neighboring groups, which in turn allowed a more extensive use of cultivation in areas which were protected by defensive structures. This reinforced the dual mindset of us-versus-them and led to the need for a labor division far more detailed and structured than previous eras. Therefore, warrior classes were born, and their basic mentality had already formed thanks to hunting (habit of giving and receiving the death, cover, fraud, risk assessment, etc.).

The always more pronounced shift from nomadism to the settlement had intuitive and enormous impacts on the evolution of civilization, as well as to create a secular clash between armies that raided and armies that wanted to defend themselves against those raids.

In short, during the Neolithic period started a series of actions and feedback that let the group identity be formed not only on symbolic basis but also, highly and one another, on material needs. In a broad sense the war model was culturally formed, and since then it has established itself in the lives of men with the arrogance that we know: it runs through the history and form it, in a large extent it is the History[14]. Through the forms in which the

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14 According to a book that has done a lot to discuss (Ehrenreich , 1998) the birth, if not the affirmation, of war should be placed much further back, in the Mesolithic and the

political aggregations of men were gradually substantiated, since the time of the *poleis* to the current international system, the war and politics have marched together, marking the stages of the collective tragedy of humanity. As the political authority is strengthened and institutionalized it increasingly appears as the only source of war: it is true that the *leaders* are to decide and often to impose wars to their subordinates (and they, for this reason, vent on the command figure the sins of the suffering endured), but this decision would not be possible without the presuppositions that make men - the great majority of men - beings willing to kill. Some war, in short, may be imposed, but the War is, as phenomenon and cultural invention, the collective heritage of humanity. From the outset onwards, the relationship between politics and war has been characterized by an internal indefeasible dialectics that gave rise to the alternation of war and peace treaties: that is, how human communities relate to each others continuously and essentially in terms of power balances.

If we could see human history as if it was a fast movie, one of the features that would affect us would be the alternation of periods in which human homogeneous aggregations tend to widen and times when they break up, even if they recompose themselves in large systems. From the great empires of antiquity we move to the more peculiar geopolitical structure of the Middle Ages, which then undergoes a major transformation due to the slow but inexorable process of polarization that will give rise to the great absolute monarchies of the modern age.

Of course, the turning point was established by the emergence of the destructive power given by firearms. Artillery destroyed cavalry and the nomadic armies and the forces of all power centers that were not the absolute States, the only ones who could afford large parks of guns.

The States system has its own symbolic date of the final statement in the Peace of Westphalia in 1648. Since then, between continuous processes of aggregation and fragmentation similar to tidal flows, no great empire has managed to establish a lasting hegemony over the world, that, meanwhile, politically speaking, has expanded by involving in the History each corner of the planet.

Neolithic; above all, it would find its foundation in the role of prey lived by humans, against the overwhelming forces of nature, for thousands of years. The war, in short , would be the mechanism by which men are freed , becoming predators, from an existential destiny perceived as unsustainable.

Chapter 1

Such longevity of the sovereign State has come to settle its image of political unity endowed with sovereignty as a prototype and benchmark for all others: even today, everything moves in the political arena in favor or against it, to overcome, integrate or destroy it. Obviously the historical success of the State-form has also led to the development of a rich doctrinaire *corpus* of theories on state sovereignty with adjoining crowded gallery of brilliant minds willing to serve or fight it, from Machiavelli to Hobbes, from Hegel to Marx, from Kant to Lenin.

But what is the war seen from this perspective, i.e. from the perspective of institutional actors, especially states, called to fight it? What are its basic features that integrate psychological-anthropological parameters and the more sharply theoretical ones, that we briefly tried to outline? Beyond the endless formulations historically occurred, we can say that war is, according to this view, a collective, violent, goal-oriented phenomenon whose actors are entities whose purpose is to preserve, protect, enhance or acquire a high degree of decision-making autonomy (i.e. not subjected to other instances if not for self-determination) that is legally sanctioned and recognized by similar players. From the standpoint of its ultimate effects, war can also be defined as the ordering principle of relations among international actors, as it determines role and future expectations.

So it seems fair to say that wars, or most of them, have, originally, a completely rational content. What the victims, the posterity, or more simply the general opinion of common man, looks like a meaningless fight has, on the other hand, most times, clearly defined and understandable origins. Wars have then well identifiable reasons or, in other words, the domain of politics, with its purpose instrumentally defined, is always present at the beginning of a war. It means that the history of wars is the story of a continuing but sensible massacre (which does not mean to call it, for this reason, acceptable) and not, as it may seem, a frenzied bloodshed that would not have any other foundation than a metaphysics and unproven "meanness" of humans.

Of course, the cool rationality of economic and territorial aims changes itself deeply once it comes into contact with the seething universe of collective psychology: it engages a circuit of actions and reactions, in which emotional and rational components feed off each other, so that at the end it is almost always impossible to isolate a single factor as the sole responsible for the outbreak of an armed conflict. This complexity, this "background noise", is already present in the social universe in the strict sense of the word: the ways in which people, the mass, live war and in war are subject to radical trans-

formations. War begins in an atmosphere of collective exaltation abundantly filled with stereotypes and rhetoric capable of reassuring themselves and intimidating the enemy: the group identity finds here its greatest expression. In this sense, a turning point was represented by the French Revolution. Since then, in modern times, the figure of the soldier and citizen are born and come together: the citizen is such because he shoulders arms to defend his conquests; the soldier is no longer a subject, in front of the country he is equal to the rich and the noble. It is then the war of the responsible mass that is born, of the mass which is vehicle and expression of the nation spirit. Since then, of course, plenty of water and much blood have passed under the bridges of History. The democratic principle of armed nations is split: on the one hand, it has survived intact (for example, still intact the Constitution of Italy and other countries), but on the other hand it has been corrupted. Nationalized masses (Mosse, 1982) have been poisoned by the most vulgar patriotism and by the ideological intoxication: the principle of the citizen-soldier has been corrupted so much that in contemporary totalitarianism men and women, no longer citizens but symbiotic beings with the Leader, go to war as they were doped by the power of the group to which they feel they belong.

Chapter 1

2 A SIMPLE MODEL OF EXPLANATION

From the above we can derive that the factors, which are in play when human groups come into collision, are not only numerous but also of different nature, affecting both the material scope, as the resources for and with which we fight, and the immaterial one, that is, for example, the perception that a group has of himself and of other human agglomerations, from the most trivial instances of identity to, as mentioned, its overall political projects.

This clearly shows that the study of war turns out to be all the more difficult the greater the number of factors considered. This fact has led scholars on the one hand to indulge in a sort of hyper-specialization (wars considered almost exclusively from the perspective of the events of war, demographics, energy policies, ideologies, etc.), on the other hand to the almost total waiver to provide keys to the reading and parameters of interpretation that, despite their limitations, could grope to give an overview of the war phenomenon.

And yet the work of Clausewitz taught us that an interpretation model is inevitable and indispensable. This model will be all the more effective if, in its simplicity (which does not mean roughness), it can recognize, identify and change the bearing, structural lines of real events. Clausewitz gives a concise definition of war, but which, if broken down into all its parts, and carefully examined, predisposes in an almost complete way for a correct interpretation of the phenomenon: "An act of force to compel our enemy to do our will." Or, if we want to use a few more words, we could repeat that it is a battle, physical and of wills, between collective entities with some measure of overall sovereignty (i.e., symbolic and/or territorial) in order to enhance the sovereignty, in name of an organization plan of the own future, i.e., in a word, in the name of a politics.

If we follow the definition given by Clausewitz, we see that the very important words are *act*, *enemy* and *compel*: the enemy and the will to destroy him are the result of material interests and symbolic-ideological constructions; at the same time, the act that should make the political will can only be realized in the belligerent acting, synergy between war technology and project for its proper use.

If it is correct, I would propose then to consider war as a "system of systems". Each is inextricably linked with the others but never completely dom-

inates them. Each system is necessary but not sufficient alone to explain the phenomenon of war. Each system contains elements of others, but also has characteristics of specificity. If we want to sum up what so far said, we could say that the systems to be considered are the symbolic- imaginative system, the political system, and the technological system[15].

2. 1 THE SYMBOLIC-IMAGINATIVE SYSTEM

The definition "symbolic-imaginative system" is very imprecise, so that an expert on these subjects would raise many objections to this phrase. In my opinion, it is the mental universe that men, organized as a community, conceive and develop to give an explanation of reality and, simultaneously, modify it in order to imagine to be in a relationship with this reality. Then: values, symbols, myths and rituals, beliefs and ideologies, popular prejudices and complex philosophical systems.

Under the system we are considering, the focal point is given by the definition of the group identity in an environment of hostility. Then, we can ask what were the evolutionary lines as regards the figure of the enemy, a receptacle of all evil and, simultaneously, the giver of meaning to the action of killing. The twentieth century, from this point of view, has introduced some essential news. The industrial revolution and ideologies have acted in a qualitative way as well as in a quantity way. Because of the first one, the entire population is involved in war production and thus becomes a prime target and, from a certain point of view, entirely legitimate. Because of ideologies, especially the most totalitarian ones, people are called to be actor in first person, and without any possibility to evade, of political acting, and then they have to carry the responsibility of the consent given to their charismatic lead-

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15　It should not scandalize the fact that the economy is not considered as a stand-alone system. While the economy completely permeates the community's social life and many wars, including the root causes, have main and stringent economic reasons, it is also true that in any case is the political system, in the broad sense, to be the seat in which economic variables are made and are structured in view of the choice between war and peace. Not only that, not all wars contain the same "percent" of economic reasons. If the conflicts of the Middle East are determined to a very large extent on oil and water, it is difficult to think of a few priority economic reason for the war for the Falklands in 1982 between Argentina and Britain. The reader therefore consider the term "political system" in the broadest sense, to avoid the misperception that I simply want to understand the process of government by elites.

Chapter 2

ers. This process culminated, as it should be known and indisputable, with the Nazism, for whom "born" in a certain way (and not just thinking and acting) was either a fundamental privilege or a crime punishable by death. The many decolonization wars in the second half of the century have exacerbated, if possible, the phenomenon: when the anonymous peasant or the guiltless child may bring a bomb under their clothes, the cancellation of the civilian, as a carrier of specific immunity rights, turns out to be definitively confirmed. In short, the twentieth century, or rather how modernity was interpreted in the twentieth century, has in any case identified in the individual human being a person who interests; in war, racism, totalitarianism, no one is leaved in peace: every human being (even if absorbed in some kind of mass that has to be destroyed) is the subject of hateful zeal.

But it would be a mistake to think that modernity has had a monopoly on extreme cruelty: even before the industrial revolution, massacres, genocide and rapes were common practice. The fate of the besieged of a city or war prisoners was often terrible, definitive. These atrocities, however, were held back by lack of control over nature and poverty of the technical means used to bring death. It took time and effort to destroy a city and kill large numbers of people.

That said, however, the real novelty of the twentieth century lies elsewhere. The first is the bureaucratic-industrial nature taken by extermination. Especially in the Nazi experiment, human beings are in fact treated as waste, as residues that have to be removed and treated as such. The process of killing does not exhaust the slaughter practice, which continues with the elimination of the corpse after having recovered the parts considered to be re-usable and with the cancellation of the historical and personal memory of the victim. Basically, men become like animals in the slaughterhouse, placed in a out-and-out disassembly line. Even a brief visit to places like Dachau and Mauthausen reveals their character of out-and-out death factories, the last link in an organizing chain which aims to identify, collect and transport the victims to places where theywill disappear in the wind. No totalitarianism has equaled the Nazism in this practice, even if that method, that social engineering, that bureaucratization of death which is peculiar to the modern age is always possible to find in Stalin's gulag, in the delirium founded on the extermination of the political rivals in Cambodia during Pol Pot time or in the tragedy of the Latin American *desaparecidos* (just to name a few). The enemy, which often does not know to be the enemy and understand it only when it is too late, is seen as a thing, so as the excrement which has to be

removed in the name of a purity which has to be created *ex novo*.

The other novelty concerning the enemy figure is just as important and introduces an element of contradictoriness, in respect to the scenario just proposed, of epochal nature, in fact, increasing the confusion of the whole picture. The atomic age, or rather the balance of terror, introduces a crucial paradox: given the condition of reciprocity of nuclear extermination (the so-called Mutual Assured Destruction), if you want to survive, you need to ensure the existence of your opponent. The old *mors tua vita mea* becomes *vita tua vita mea*, and vice versa. The enemy becomes a partner, your own reflection. The Evangelical imperative, "love your neighbor" (and you will be safe), is reversed in its exact opposite, "hate your enemy and you will be destroyed," and it works much better than the original. The Bomb, terminal technical point of human conflicts, imposes on everyone all the sterilization of hatred driven to the extreme consequences. After Hiroshima the fear/hate comes back like a *boomerang*, straddling missiles belonging to the opponent armed in a specular way, and must (**must**, on penalty of death) be held in check. The atomic terror has made us brothers, in spite of us: it is not surprising that we try in every way, as we shall see through technology, to go out of this peace *sui generis*.

These are the two poles in which lies the figure of the enemy throughout most of the twentieth century. Nowadays, at the beginning of the third millennium of the Christian era, it has taken a more ghostly appearance. It is not only those who are called terrorists, for obvious reasons, to take on this connotation; even the undifferentiated mass of the poor, of the excluded, of the unfortunate is seen as a kind of prophecy of doom incarnate, although not well identified. The enemy is nowadays therefore the figure of a suspect rather than a certainty. The world of the "others" is perceived not as an institution but as a magma, a quagmire under the feet of "our" world.

So far we have talked about the "dark side" of the "symbolic-imaginative" system. This system, if we want to follow the Freudian categories, could be compared to the unconscious, with his violent impulses or at least difficult to be controlled. But, remaining under this interpretation, the unconscious, as is known, is opposed to the super-ego, inflexible judge, expression of the morality instances. Well, with many forcing and inaccuracies, we could enter the system we are dealing with also what the war, especially in its most uncontrolled form, seeks to oppose, which is to say the international law.

The law has a relationship which is more than ambivalent with war. On the one hand, it must be said, the law seeks to justify war, to provide a legal

Chapter 2

license to kill. This happens in two situations: regulating the combatants' behavior (*ius in bello*) and justifying the causes why war began (*ius ad bellum*). According to these parameters, the ideal war is the war fought with proper methods for correct reasons. The typology of methods and reasons has undergone, over the centuries, different formulations. The law, however, always sets some limits: what comes out is subject to the rigors of the law. Thus was born the other side of the ambivalent relationship we talked about before. The law seeks to justify as well as to prevent "unjust" war or at least to sanction it, raising the condemnation of the actors who have designed and put it into practice, as well as to submit the behavior in war to procedures, restrictions and prohibitions. It is therefore arguable that the more complex, structured and sophisticated the law becomes, the less accepted is the absolutization of war, an absolutization that we want to be within the limits of the exercise of force as a confrontation without limits and taboo.

The twentieth century, from this point of view, has recorded several progesses in comparison with the past. At the end of World War II, two images were embedded in the collective imagination: the trains that stopped at the dead end of the Nazi concentration camp and the mushroom cloud. The significance of these two images was all too clear: humanity was at a crossroads and one of the two roads lead to the annihilation. Therefore, it was born not only a new international institution, the United Nations, but also a surge of legal drafting that led to the establishment of a new series of poles placed to block the excessive power of absolute war. On the one hand, the systematization in the definition of the most terrible crimes communities could stain with; namely, simplifying, crimes against humanity (such as theorized, planned and implemented on a large scale) and war crimes (against civilians and prisoners in the context of the fighting). On the other hand, even an attempt to reaffirm, once and for all, what were, exclusively, the only wars legally "right": the one fought in self-defense (and only for the period in which to the country or countries, under attack does not come assistance from the international community) and the one moved to counter a militarily aggressive politics. Because even this was decided: that the community of states could wage war over who had actually put in jeopardy international peace and security.

2. 2 THE POLITICAL SYSTEM

The political system is the realm of institutions. It is very difficult to define politics and its link with war that is both simple and comprehensive. We could say that politics is the activity that organizes the present and the future of a community because of general and at the same well-defined purposes: this activity gives rise to political forms, which is to say to functional modules which regularize relations between population, territory and instances of power. Politics is inevitable and essential; no society can do without it if it wants to remain a society. Moreover, as already said, it does mean to organize the present to build the future, every society is the bearer of a particular vision of them; vision that will inevitably be uneven (as every organized group has its own identity) from that of other society. There will therefore always be conflict of views between human groups; when such differences and such conflicts go beyond certain limits (and at this stage of human evolution that often happens, though not always) the conflict itself won't result in competitive ways but in clear hostility. War is thus linked to politics, it is one of the forms in which it can express itself. It should be clear that if the conflict between human groups is inevitable (at least until there are more distinct groups), it won't always speak through armed violence. The conditions for which this happens are actually very easy to occur and the triggered mechanisms are hinged very deeply in the collective psychology (as we have repeatedly told); but these conditions are neither eternal nor inevitable, otherwise the history, which is also building and collaboration as well as destruction and hatred, would never have existed.

The salient feature of the political system is that it, through its forms of evolution, gives rise to many types of war; in turn, each particular type of war will interact with the political form that has produced it, and it will strengthen or weaken, depending on the historical contingencies, the performance and survival characteristics. The most striking example of these forms, as it is the one with the longest term in history, is the sovereign state; it has experienced various forms of war that have profoundly changed it. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the Absolute State, substantially property of their sovereign, gave rise to wars of attrition and consolidation, which is to say limited wars fought by regular armies or mercenaries, because they had to keep their wealth and squander them. The same masses of people, excluded from the exercise of power, however, were the real source of state assets and should therefore be preserved and not be exterminated. With the French Revolution this picture profoundly changed. The masses were made to enter

Chapter 2

the political process, willing or not, and the nation had been superimposed to the state: large portions of the population fought, directly or indirectly, for general ideals in exchange for a share of decision-making sovereignty. With that revolution also changed the way to make war: the citizen-soldiers faced the armies of traditional monarchies and defeated them for years, driven by new ideals and by new tactical conceptions. Then there also began the rise of nationalism, which celebrated its greatest glories and its most horrible wickedness in the early twentieth century.

Since the late nineteenth century, sovereign states reached maturity that allowed them to create large formal alliances. During the First World War, coalitions of states, supported by mass armies heavily armed, fought every inch of the way. The Second World War saw the ideologies prevailing on the appearance merely public: Nazism, Bolshevism and liberal capitalism assembled alliances that had many players and fought over world domination. The international scene of the second postwar is very reminiscent the utopia, inverted in sign, of "*1984*" by George Orwell: two empires, expression of irreconcilable ideologies and economies, are contending and dividing up spheres of influence and dominion over the planet. War is shift to the borders of the two empires or in disputed areas, while it never breaks out directly between the two dominant giants, unlike what happened in the relations between the traditional sovereign states. This inhibition of the great conflict is merit of the presence of nuclear weapons. The vast majority of other states loose, in this context, its sovereignty, assuming the role - sometimes awkward, sometimes profitable - of client or vassals states of one or both superpowers. At the same time, armies also profoundly change: the weapons enormous technical complexity and their astronomical costs require the return of professional troops; thus the era of mass conscription, trial and achievement of the democratization of society, begins to end. War still change its nature following the eclipse of traditional form-state, increasing it with a process of feedback. The end of one of the two empires is not for military reasons, but economic, because of the inability to hold the phantasmagoric military spending.

In recent years, the force of economic globalization, namely the internationalization of capital and the division of labor, produces a scenario, constantly repeated by the media, dominated, although with old and new opponents, a kind of unique thought, where the liberal-capitalism, especially in its most predatory form, is the master. In this context, the crisis of sovereign state appears to emerge quite clearly, although many commentators tend to

emphasize the resistance to this trend. Today the international scene is populated by these actors: a superpower, still in full possession of its political and institutional prerogatives of sovereignty; a myriad, literally, of organizations (governmental, nongovernmental, national, international and transnational) that are competing pieces of power and visibility to the mass media; a series of client states of the superpower; some powers *in fieri* (Europe, China, India); another myriad of states which are only nominally state (because they are in reality a conquest belonging to multinationals or residues the old state age) and finally, *in cauda venenum*, criminal organizations that are adding to the economic power real units of authentic sovereignty over vast territories. In this scenario, changing and fragmented, war creeps, adapts itself, streaks, sniffing and poking, looking, it seems, for a new form, as a dress for the new millennium.

2. 3 THE TECHNOLOGICAL SYSTEM

If the "symbolic - emotional" system is the most persistent, the most ancestral and the slowest to evolve (having to do with the psychological and moral sphere of the community) and the political system is placed in the middle, emphasizing their most profound changes at least on scale of several generations, the technological system has undergone - since the first industrial revolution - a tremendous acceleration, even frantic.

Weapons were created by and as tools and for a long period these two functions have not generated any specific forms to differentiate them. But even after the weapon has acquired a distinctive aspect and distinguishable from that of other articles, the technique has remained the only external "environment" where the man drew on the resources to create his world, both in physical than symbolic, constructive and destructive terms. Differences between the various cultures are born in the **thinking about the technique**, which is to say when men have thought of themselves as manufacturers and users of technologies, including arm technologies. The link between technology and war is very close ; in fact, both technology and war have in common the characteristic to change reality in a profound and rapid way. They are situated in the base of the behavior of a being, as the human one, which builds his environment as he evolves. It is possible to write an encyclopedia, listing the technical innovations that have changed, more or less radically, war over the centuries. However, it is perhaps more interesting try to identi-

Chapter 2

fy the fundamental evolutionary lines, the undercurrents that have affected more in the relationship between technology and war.

For example, an important factor in evolution was the distance at which the weapons are effective; the first major evolution leap was represented by the invention of the arch (a very fine instrument indeed). Since then, death in war has increasingly come from a distance. This parameter is of course coupled with the type of energy applied to arms. This latter factor has a twofold aspect: I am not only talking about the distance that the object, which has to kill, can be launched but also of its inherent capacity to cause destruction. It is obvious that firearms, in this sense, have literally changed the world.

Another element of basic impact was, and is, the amount of human intelligence that moves from the soldier to his weapon. For a very long time, all the weapons were "stupid", that is to say, while incorporating intelligence and work of those who had constructed them, they performed in a passive way their task when they were operated. In recent decades, however, both in civil and military area, machines began to have their functional autonomy. Based on human instructions, which are becoming more and more generic and summary, machines have learned to choose between a range of options becoming increasingly large. There is a huge difference between a press of twenty or thirty years ago and a numerical control machine constructed nowadays. In military field, then, the evolution has been frantic. If a German V2 used during the Second World War was launched and it was **hoped** that more or less reached the target, and in any case, who had launched it **could not do anything**, nowadays the operator who launches a new missile **has not to do anything**: it is the weapon that finds the target, identifies it, hunts it down and then hits it, possibly changing route, altitude and speed. This progress has mainly been created by computer science; evolution is so rapid and profound that we cannot speak any more of an integrated man-machine system, in the sense, entirely new and revolutionary, that man and machine together create a kind of new entity born by human intelligence transferred and reworked starting by the machine and by its faculties transferred to mankind.

There is a clear correspondence between military and civilian world; if we say that we now live in the information age, it means that traditional material basis of wealth require, proportionately, less work to be produced than in the past, so that the great part of energy and capital are directed to create, order and transfer that intangible and seemingly aleatory product that is knowledge. The economy is then passed through several stages, from the

one in which the majority of the population had to cultivate the fields, to the one in which the factories were to absorb the greatest amount of economic input. Nowadays it is the so-called tertiary sector, the services sector, to absorb and essentially produce the national income of developed countries. In parallel, military field has seen a similar trend although not as linear and, in its results, quite defined. Simplifying, it can say that, if in past times the most direct consequence of going to war was the destruction of lives and properties, in an amount increasing with the growing in the control of the forces of nature by man, today, at least in the West, is becoming a tendency to inhibit, rather than destroy, the enemy's ability to "operate" as a system capable of producing armed opposition. The paralysis - and then not the destruction - has become the watchword, see for example Gulf wars, the intervention in Bosnia and the intervention against Serbia during the Kosovo crisis.

This evolutionary leap is directly related to its interdependence of modern economies, also with regard to countries that are not avant-garde: lock the computer network of a nation, in other words, costs less (in terms of effort, risk, time and money) than to destroy cities and their inhabitants - and you get the same result, the yield. War is becoming less bloody, at least in the minds of Western strategists, because it has been understood that, in order to achieve the political results that have caused it, it is no longer needed to push hard on violence pedal.

Anyway, it should be remembered that this is not a linear process: it lives together with definitely opposing forces. Apart from the presence of weapons of mass destruction, it is worth noting that if, at least potentially, direct destruction of properties and lives decrease, harmful consequences of war actions of an indirect nature do not diminish, especially the environmental damage consequent on bombings of industrial plants.

In these first two chapters we have attempted to explain the foundations, both tangible and intangible, of the war-labyrinth and to suggest a model – valid or not, it has to be judged by the reader – to interpret and read these foundations.

And now, we can go through

Chapter 2

3 WAR IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

In many facets of contemporary warfare is possible to see the various forms of collective violence in a much larger number than in the past. In it ancestral figures, dating from the origins of mankind, live together along with symbols and stereotypes well projected into the twenty-first century; there the spirit of *samurai* and the cold slaughter of *lager*, death by knife and atom, shot in the neck and starvation used as a weapon live together.

The war of the twentieth century can be considered the culmination of all previous types of war. That does not mean that it is the final stage of war in general. Simply, contemporary war, as well as other expressions of human action, exceeds century-old restrictions, exploits in a new way the potential uses of economy and social universe. The war of ancient and modern era (until the French Revolution) was, in spite of carnage and destruction in large quantities, basically a limited war because the lack of economic and demographic resources shortens its duration and intensity; men were still bounded by seasonal cycles, economy of the land, lack of mobility, etc. The possibilities of war destruction increased together with the increase of available resources to create wealth: first industrial revolution transformed the world into an arsenal and men were able to invest and accumulate for destruction without the above restrictions.

3. 1 SOME QUANTITATIVE FIGURES

The twentieth century has undoubtedly been the most violent in History. This statement must be integrated taking into account that bellicosity and sanguinary of a historical period can be measured in various ways. We can make an assessment in quantitative terms, both in absolute terms (sheer number of victims) and in percentage terms (number of victims in relation to the total population of the countries involved in conflict or to the total world population at that time). We can integrate these parameters by entering them in a time context, taking into consideration the rate of mortality.

We can also make a qualitative assessment: that is to ask us whether and how the way of killing in war has changed, with relative social, psychological and moral implications. In short, we can draw up all kinds of charts and statistics and get conclusions even grossly contradictory. We can try to go in

order and start by the quantitative aspect.

As already said, it can not be stated that in the past massacres which affected a lot out of a population, even worldwide, significantly reduced compared to the actual numbers have lacked. Then the war deads matter more, but it is also true that the techniques of killing were slower and harder, it was necessary to kill people almost one at a time. With the industrial revolution statistical curves begin to peak. For example, one of the bloodiest wars in History was the one called Lopez's war (1864 - 1870) between on the one hand Paraguay and Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay on the other hand: at the end, Paraguay had lost 304,000 of its 525,000 inhabitants and were left alive 29,000 adult males only! (Kohn, 1989). The U.S. lost more lives (620,000 out of a population of thirty-two million) during the civil war than together in the two world wars, Korea and Vietnam. If during the period 1400-1900 A. D. it is estimated (Habiger, 1997) that the world has lost four and a half million people in war, that is about 1.5 percent of total average of the world population, already during the First World War there was almost twice the number deaths (only counting the soldiers) than five hundred years earlier. The Second World War added to the total 55 million deaths, i.e. 2.5 per cent of the world total for the period.

In qualitative terms, things get even more complicated. We have seen that tendency to war arrives from far away, both in historical and psychological terms. It cannot be said, I think, that in the past people used to kill less because they hated less, or in another way. In other words, the difference between pre-industrial and contemporary war is not the quality of hatred poured on the enemy but in the practical possibility to carry it out, to make it concrete and to let it produce some effects. If it is true that ancient times have seen genocide, siege ended with the extermination of the besieged, crops destroyed to the last seedling, it is in contemporary times that these practices are systematized, bureaucratized, are assigned to the management of war system and transferred to the "will" of the machines. And it is especially in these times that the nightmare of the annihilation of the human race can become a reality; a possibility that in the past could only live in utopia and that was nearly completed only once and by a natural force - not a human one, the Black Death pandemic of the fourteenth century.

The ancients, if they wanted to exterminate *in toto*, could do it only limited to small areas. Beside that, they were hampered by technological and environmental reasons. Contemporaries, if they wanted to do so, would not have such restrictions.

Chapter 3

In conclusion, I still believe that when measuring severity and violence of war is right to think in absolute terms and not in percentages. Every man who dies represents an irreparable loss: the uniqueness of his brain is lost, his load of stories and emotions is crushed without remedy. From this standpoint, the twentieth century had no rivals: the two World Wars had been the culmination of slaughters, but also the second post-war period has been terrible, with its more of a hundred wars and at least twenty-three million dead. We should not forget, then, that the twentieth century would have been able to exceed other centuries even in percentage terms, if Hitler had been able to put freely into practice his plans of extermination, or if the big nuclear bang had broken.

3. 2 GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE WAR IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

The least one can say about the twentieth century war in general is that it has been: a) industrial, b) absolute, c) global, d) generating, as in no other era, of binding structuring of the international system. These elements are, of course, inextricably linked, so that it is only for convenience of analysis that they are separated.

a) The industrialization of war means much more than the mere fact that powerful machines are increasingly to be used as weapons: it is the real triumph of technology that impress of itself both time of peace and time of war. Workers are soldiers of production, soldiers are workers of war. There is a continuous cycle of production and killing and armies are modeled according to modern standards of corporate *management*, while companies seem more and more armies.

But also the victims were undergoing a standardization process. People have been killed in a continuous cycle in ways that were previously reserved for animals. Everyone can read (Pick, 1994) something about industrial slaughterhouses in the late nineteenth century, such as those in Chicago: you cannot avoid to think about the crazy attacks of the First World War or the extermination camps. Victims of the fields had been dismantled, while cities had been bombed by aiming to the mass of people as a whole to fragment and burn. The First World War imposed a model of industrial war with a purity that is unsurpassed even today, but probably only because after it, the public has got used to that awareness.

In another sense the war has been industrialized: in its artificiality. With an unstoppable crescendo, from the trenches of the Somme to the Gulf Wars (and beyond them) the war has imposed (and has been prepared, planned and "sold") as any other industrial product. Propaganda has become a science, and - said in terms that may seem trivial - millions of people believed in huge tall stories and have killed and died in their name. Apart from the disgusting rhetoric of dictators, even photography rarely showed us real war: on the contrary it shows decorous wounded, Red Cross nurses with their spotless white coat and decorous dead with a rosary in their hands. Not only, in recent decades television has meant that the war became a product to sell - not so different from a bar of soap - dressing up, narcotizing and mystifying reality. An example was the Gulf War in 1991. It has been a war which has been sold us as war seen on television; but in fact we know very little about what really happened. Of the three topical picture of the battle, two - the bomb that hit a bunker at night and the bird soaked in oil - were taken from old archive directories and the third - Baghdad illuminated by the anti-aircraft artilley - went on the screens so many times to appear at the end (or maybe it really was) Disneyland.

b) The absolute nature of contemporary war travels, as well known, on two tracks of the amount of death distributed and the amount of hate spilled into the enemy, or rather on the amount of people identified as enemies to be able to discharge against them an absolute hatred. That is from the sum of the energy that comes from the domination of nature and the one coming from the domain of the minds.

The first point does not need many explanations. Any statistics relating to the wars of previous centuries is simply pulverized and the same trend, as part of the century, has a hyperbolic trend. Just a few years are enough to make ridiculous a bombing that at the time of its occurrence seemed catastrophic. The nuclear weapon has of course assumed the role of watershed: it closes the age of death in installments, the daughter of the chemical explosive, and opens the age of instant mass death, a consequence of nuclear reactions.

In this context it is important to consider the acceleration of the time needed to deliver the massive death. It is not just the few moments necessary for a nuclear explosion to spread out its effects; even the so-called conventional weapons, that is not nuclear, chemical or biological, have become very fast and in a few minutes can turn a huge amount of destruction on the enemy. In addition, their usury rate also accelerated dramatically: nowadays, a few

Chapter 3

weeks of war are enough to empty the arsenals that are too expensive to be refilled. And so, in a short time, destructions - that in the past could be divided into months or years - are accumulated.

The second point leads to several reflections. The deadly *cocktail* obtained mixing universalist ideologies, feasibility of world domination and bureaucratic-industrial systems produces the absolute death, released in serial form, as an assembly line. The figure of the enemy followed the same course of weapons: from the nineteenth century, it has become increasingly flat and stereotyped. Napoleon, as a physical character, has almost been the only one to catalyze the hatred of all Europe that did not look to France with the same animosity (Mosse, 1990). After the Franco-German War of 1870, things began to deteriorate gradually and all moral restraints disappeared. People began to paint an entire community as enemy, using reference codes and languages previously considered immoral and indecent. From the First World War onwards, civilians have been assimilated to the military because they worked for them and because they were struck with the same weapons or with weapons and tactics specifically designed to disrupt the social environment of the country. Since Auschwitz and Hiroshima, the mass of civilians has become a blurred and undifferentiated entity; the opposing army has been considered almost its appendix. This mass, absolutized in the evil, had to be hit with absolute pure weapons, built for big blind and indiscriminate killings.

c) The globalization of war must be understood first of all in a spatial sense. Not only every corner of the planet has been achieved by war, but have also changed its space-time coordinates. War has organized vertically both upward - sky and outer space - and downwards - seabed. The war does not take any more a plan but a sphere, the 180 degrees of the old military field have become 360. And it is not enough: war has gone beyond the realm of five senses in order to occupy the area of what man cannot hear and see. It has become a silent battle between electromagnetic waves. The starting shot is not heard any more and, in a few more years, it will be heard no longer even the shot coming. Of course, these physical changes are also reflected on the mental space of the warrior. The enemy is "elsewhere", at any point in space-time and from there he hits. The war has become visible only in its effects.

The twentieth century was thus the century of global fighting for domination of the world, even when the "world" ended at Europe's borders, as happened during the First World War. Even the wars of decolonization after the

Second World War have immediately become an universal value, although they were geographically circumscribed. Nowadays it is not different, so it can be said that the century just ended has historically reached the stage where geography of war and their symbolic and psychological value coincide and coexist on a scale which is now, and finally global. Next wars, in short, will all be global, even if the apex of fighting were to remain confined in a small area.

d) Considering the arguments discusses above, it can be guessed the last characteristic factor of twentieth-century war. This factor is the fact that war has always been, and still has the prospect of being it even more in the future, a conflict founding a new hierarchical order in the international system. I mean, this century has probably seen the decline of war of balance and of war of attrition, namely that kind of confrontation, which in its final results was restricted to barely modify the international balance - leaving substantially unaltered the nature of the system.

On the contrary, in contemporary times all major wars have profoundly reshaped the world stage, marking the end of European hegemony, the emergence of country-continent (U.S., USSR and China) and triggering a massive process of decolonization. Paradoxically, the only war of attrition, the one that saw the United States against the Soviet Union, during the decades of 50s and 80s, was not fought with shooting guns but with economy and cultural symbols.

Future perspectives do not seem to indicate trend reversals. Whether it is about a battle between giants or a claim of some Third World countries against the rich world, the effects won't almost certainly be just a front or a small arrangement of the international sistem.

3. 3 THE WORLD WARS

The First World War was global not only in spatial or geographical terms; if we consider, with a terminological license, the term "global" also reported to the psychological and social universe of men, that war represented a real mental revolution. Mankind went to war taking on the culture of the nineteenth century and came out with the sad and restless face of the twentieth century. Under the rolling mill of artilleries passed the illusions of many generations and were forged new ones that gave their poisonous fruit a few decades later.

Chapter 3

The August 1914 was time of great illusions and self-deception; very few people had been immune to them. Apart from the dreams of imperialistic dominance enhanced by every peoples with harm to the others and the recurrent illusion of a short war, it is to be emphasized the fact that people went to war convinced to give a mortal blow to the bourgeois and merchant spirit, in the name of chivalry and of the ideal, while just that war - in its total and inner industrial essence – would have been the triumph of bourgeois and mercantile society. Bourgeois ridiculed by interventionists in the name of the principle of blood and country home were in fact the true keepers of the spirit of that war.

For interventionists, war should be the escape from a kind of modernity they rejected, from the imminent production rules and from the increasingly massive bureaucratization of human and social relations. The risk of death was for many - at the beginning of the war - not a frightening prospect but a way to sanctify life through sacrifice; a life that, in peace time, would have been mediocre, like millions of others. Nationalism was the language, the vocabulary in which it was translated an ideal of transcendence, of eternity, opposite to the flatness of a life as workers or clerks suffocated by prissiness and conventions. To resurge as real men and self-fulfilled, it was required to face the highest risk: this was the belief of the 1914's volunteers. War would have denied these romantic inspirations: it soon became clear not only that the lady with the scythe was working at an unsustainable rate, but also that the only entity that took advantage of war - because it was fed by it - was the bureaucratic-industrial machine, therefore bourgeois, which was to be transcended by the sacrifice. Faced with the machines that destroyed men, this "Luddism to the contrary" of states that strengthened burning their younger generations, cynicism, resignation and weariness made soon forget the excitement of the days of August 1914.

But the illusions were not lacking, even among opponents of war. Apart from the historical humiliation of seeing proletarian masses to embrace the unbridled nationalism, a subsequent error of perspective was to consider the mass of frustrated and demoralized soldiers - after years of war - as the bearer of something more and different than frustration and disheartenment. Rebellions expressed in the great mutinies of 1917 and 1918 did not survive at the end of the war, because it had been lost their root cause, namely the forced subjection to the steamroller of industrial war.

A large part of European landscape came to resemble to the Moon: craters, explosion and millions of men who led lives of troglodytes in under-

ground cities. Behind them, an industrial machine produced at full capacity; in front of them a hungry and devouring industrial machine. Between these two *Moloch* entire European generations had been crushed. The race, broken by a bullet, of the protagonist of the film *Gallipoli*[16] can be taken as a symbolic image of those years: Europe played and lost its entry into modernity, its future, in the trenches of the Western Front. Or, we could say that it has not been a race that has been broken, but that it has been a sinking in the quicksand of an inability to escape from the war before it became too big and powerful. Perhaps the first world war has been a point of no return: one in which ethics has definitively lost its battle for the domination of technology.

Only victims and industrial production numbers give us an idea of the frightening acceleration suffered by European community, a real plunge headlong into a maelstrom of horror.

The French had estimated - at the beginning of the war - a requirement of twelve thousand shells a day: they found themselves in the end to produce two hundred thousand of them.

After six weeks from the start of the war the French had already lost one quarter (with one hundred and ten thousand deaths) of the one million and a half million people lined up. At the end of the war four ninths of the French soldiers enlisted in the combat units were killed or wounded.

On the Somme, in the summer of 1916, there was a British offensive. It was preceded by a bombing of a week, during which it has been fired a million and a half hits. The attack began on 1 June: 50 percent of the attackers was wounded and twenty thousand died, that is as many as had died during the war against the Boers.

Of course, the Germans had a similar fate. In October of 1914 they debuted with the *Kindermord* (The massacre of the innocent): in Langemark, by Ypres, thirty-six thousand students of German universities, all volunteers, had been massacred in just three weeks. To the Americans in Vietnam, it took seven years to reach the same number of victims. Throughout the war, Germans lost 13 percent of the workforce, well above the critical threshold of 10 percent.

Let's follow any assault, for example, that of the 36th Ulster Division, 1 July, 1916, on the front of the Somme. With thirty kilograms of equipment on their shoulders, the infantrymen have six minutes to run into no man's

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16 *Gallipoli* by Peter Weir, USA, 1981.

Chapter 3

land in front of the enemy front lines: but the controls are confident that the bombing has destroyed the German lines so that soldiers can start loaded, so that they won't to be immediately dependent from supplies from the rear. The division attacks with seven thousand and three hundred men: two thousand did not return and two thousand seven hundred were injured (Murray, 1996; Iavarone, 1997).

At the end, there were eight million deaths only among soldiers, a figure far higher than the figure that resulted between 1790 and 1914. After the war the population pyramid of the main European countries resulted upset (Silvestri, 1982, vol. II). France had lost (i.e. died) one million seven hundred thousand young men in a population of forty million inhabitants; Italy six hundred thousand on a population of thirty-six million; Great Britain one million out fifty and Germany two million out of a population of seventy million. The grand total of the mobilized in all countries was of sixty-five million men and victims figures are simply breathtaking. 57 percent of them did not pass unharmed the war, was killed, wounded or taken prisoner, for a total of thirty-seven million people (Murray, 1996).

As it is well known, after the war the pandemic Spanish flu, added its cargo of nightmares on the shoulders of a destroyed, hungry and worn world: over twenty million dead, ten of them in Europe only.

The First World War has at least one point of contact with the nuclear deterrent strategy. The maximum power, at that moment as nowadays, led to a stalemate, so the trenches are comparable to the forest of today's missiles. Or rather, the war of 1914 caused an even greater paradox of terror balance. In the latter one, in fact, the power has never been delivered but only threatened; on the contrary, in the past it was precisely the release of accumulated violence to cause the stagnation of the front. The reason is also the combination of the advent of three elements (machine gun, barbed wire entanglement and rapid-firing artillery netting from long distance) that, synergistically, undermined the basis of the supremacy of the infantry whom officer staffs were still bound. Practically, most powerful weapons supplied to the armies created more problems than the ones they solved: they bogged down the war and hindered that victory they had to propitiate.

The defense, not a chosen defense but a passively accepted defense, then dominated the scenarios of that war and the attrition took over from the decisive assault. Nevertheless, it was not a completely static war. But the movement, the dynamism, especially triumphed in the rear (with the spectacular transfers of thousands of troops by rail) to stop on the front lines formerly

dominated by attrition, the impact of hosts, much more similar to geological masses in friction rather than to animals or waves of raging knights. This situation created frustration in the staffs that stubbornly tried to remedy the situation with the same tools that had caused it. They then arrived to endless aborted attacks because the same ground had been so well "prepared" by the hallucinatory artillery bombardments that seemed to be impassable to the same attackers.

Towards the end of the war it seemed clear to some what would be the way to overcome the stalemate imposed by certain types of weapons: the possible solution was to use other weapons, weapons that from the sky or from the ground would permit to grind, destroy and embank barbed wire entanglement, machine guns and cannons; planes and tanks, indeed, would make war much more dynamic.

Essentially, First World War was the last ancient war, if we look at its fundamental horizontality (because of the low weight of the newborn aviation) and the first modern war, as materials conflict. It is a perfect halfway point conducted by mankind towards war or rather, conducted by war against human masses.

The figure of the undifferentiated soldier, of the number - soldier prevailed over the scene of the first conflict, but without dominating it entirely.

"What else is humanity, if not a moraine under the weight of a monstrous glacier? This ice slowly slips into the valley and nothing seems able to lighten its weight. When it finally melts, when the pressure on the moraine is terminated, there just remains a vast and desolate expanse of rock- and they don't know anything about the glacier. This is what this war is. The ones who compare it to an old campaign in which the will of the opponents faced each other openly go wrong: in this war both opponents are lying on the ground and only the war has its own will".[17]

"Here it has been demonstrated that man can be reinforced more than we could suppose. He grows with his own tools - and his powers of resistance increase exponentially in this context. It also becomes more difficult to approach him; it requires a kind of preparation that borders on magic. We can say that in this arena, where national mass armies and gigantic concentrations of artillery block the front, begins to take shape a second and higher form of warfare: the war of twenty men who – all alone among the dozens

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17 Rudolf Binding, *A Fatalist at War*, Boston, 1929, p. 61; in Leed, 1985, p. 49. [Translation by Author]

Chapter 3

of thousands -have been changed by the gravitational pull of earth and fire, are still able to breach in the elementary and, in an even deeper meaning, decisive stratum in which it's possible to have a look in the enemy's eyes."[18]

These two quotations, chosen among thousands of potential quotations in the vast literature of and about the First World War, are quite significant because they illustrate the two fundamental human types produced by the laboratory of that conflict. In the words of the German writer Rudolf Binding we can read the resigned fatalism of an humanity crushed by its own progress that, in the form of war, has turned against it. These are words that lead to despair and pity and, apparently, deny any way to finish the war, which is now treated as an uncontrollable natural force. I used the word "apparently", because perhaps it is exactly in the *pietas*, in a mutual recognition of being men and no longer enemies that we can find a glimmer of light at the end of the dark tunnel of cold, impersonal and serialized death – the one distributed by machine war.

From an intellectual point of view, the words belonging to Ernst Jünger, the German longevous writer-soldier-entomologist who died in 1998, are much more challenging. He is placed opposite to the human trajectory of Binding. From the cold and controlled rhetoric of Jünger (much more dangerous than the ridiculous nonsense of other writer-soldiers, first of all the Italian D'Annunzio) emerges, in fact, a new kind of militarism. In fact, First World War could establish at first sight its end: the dominance of machines, of fire walls hurled against masses of people cramped underground could mean the futility of any attempt of leadership, courage and connected rhetoric. Instead, of course, it did not go that way. Just the immobility imposed on large numbers of fighters allowed somebody to carve out some spaces for activities that today we would call of "command". If we raise then our eyes to the sky, the emergence of a type of fighting outside the rules it is even more striking: the pilots of the new-born air force were the errant knights, the lone and bright heroes, very different from the greyness of the masses of men in the trenches. Jünger's words then tell us that militarism is the son of mobility in battle but also that it is a mere illusion, that the rhetoric provides for make mere attractive and marketable to the simple souls, an attempt to identify and ultimately to love something - war- which is infinitely greater and may otherwise crush us: only the identification with it make us to safe-

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18 Ernst Jünger, *Werke*, vol. I, p. 352. Stuttgart, 1960-1965; in Leed, 1985, p. 197. [Translation by Author]

guard our integrity.

The militarism of Jünger and of those who imitated him is illusory because it exchanges a part for the whole. On the one hand, the part is that much of individual initiative that is always, or at least almost always, possible to have in any situation, even the most alienated and alienating. On the other hand, the whole is the fundamental fact that is that modern war, including the First World War as the first example, is a war of mass and against that same mass. Any conception of "bold", "lone wolf" or "knight of darkness" (and misusing rhetoric getting even more increasingly) is at the same time possible and practical to mass-character of war, and also essentially irrelevant and useless for the management of war and its final outcome. In short: Jünger and the endless array of people like him, can afford to act like an aristocrat because the industrial war may make such human anomalies that do not affect much on its real essence. The borrowed supermanliness belonging to Jünger is evident from his first words. To claim, as assumed, that men can "grow with their instruments" would frankly sound ridiculous - if it were not tragic - in the light of the subsequent evolution of the instruments of war.[19] Of course, Jünger was not the last militarist: as an illusion, militarism will always find reasons for its self-sustaining. What here does matter is to point out the two paths out of the standardized war proposed by the two authors, trajectories which will meet again, also expressed in completed political ideologies made in the next post-war period.

The First World War was the party and, in the meantime, the funeral of many illusions. The illusion of nationalism, of survival of the chivalric war, of war as initiation (what for an initiation, all in all!: it is not that clever an initiation rite that kills the initiates), that of war as a celebration of youth. It exacerbated tensions rather than vent them and, concerning young people, the "feast" was made to them: Oedipus speaking, young people went to the front to destroy the fathers' society and instead they destroyed the children.

But of course, illusions are used to combat fear; in its name and against it man, above all, acts. Consequently, even the immediate post-war period saw the flowering of many illusions; or, in other words, the post-war period was characterized by colossal collective removal processes of sense of anguish

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19 One must remember, however, that the evolution of his thinking led Jünger to be one of the most profound and lucid thinkers of the twentieth century, with huge awareness in approaching the tragedies of our time. See just as an example, one of his last books: *Der Friede* (Jünger, 1993).

Chapter 3

and guilt for the oceans of blood spilled and of collective re-appropriation of a 'positive' idea of war. A humanity that turned its back on any type of collective expiation cheat again with itself raising monuments to the fallen and starting again to manufacture weapons. There were not only psychological reasons, of course, at the base of the fast forgetting of horrors of war: it is well known, just to remind international aspects, that the very conditions of peace laid the foundations of the next conflict. But it is symptomatic of the low evolution level of humanity (low if compared with the technological level of destruction capacity, of course) that, through the cult of fallen and of the Unknown Soldier (Mosse, 1990), it was to carry a colossal operation of cosmetics of collective psychology: from the unbearableness of the anxiety they passed to its denial and from the denial of indiscriminate horror to its mere celebration and finally to the assignment of meaning to those deaths that, having been millions, had rejected the very possibility that there might be sense. Mourning was then first justified and later enhanced to remove the guilt and to keep intact the ideal of Nation that would otherwise have been destroyed by the price that had prevailed in the victims. Humanity, in short, metabolized the terrible massacre, covered it by rhetoric, and then made it acceptable and repeatable.

From the denial of mass death, or rather by the lack of a more ethical response, it developed, together with religion of fallen, a sort of indifference to the intrinsic value of human life. This should not seem paradoxical, since it can be explained by the consideration that while the dead were idealized as custodians of the ideal national, the living suffered from a devaluation, which was the result of the amount of ferocity expressed in war. This indifference led in individual and mass supermanliness: it feeds itself by the pride of being alive, having passed the ordeal of the trenches, in short, to have won the supreme challenge of war. The brutality that invaded as a toxin every relational aspect of civil society in the post-war period, and that was one of the roots of the Second World War's slaughter, was born just short of the failure process in terms of ethical tragedies they lived.

The second act of the Thirty Years' War of the twentieth century was at the same time another war and the same war, resumed after a pause of a few years. The same war not only in the sense that the Treaty of Versailles set the stage for the next confrontation, but also because the international actors involved were mostly the same. It was another war both because the ideological reasons assumed an universal and dominant value, such to set up a final clash between two conceptions of human beings and politics, and

because the horror swept from the edges to the most intimate folds of society and in the minds, taking on new forms without abandoning the traditional ones. It was the triumph of industrial war, the "heavy" war of machinery and steel, but put together the foundations of the "light" war, the one of the calculations, of management, of electronics and of intellectuality pushed to the maximum level. It was the war of daily horror, of dripping water, bestowed in a bureaucratic way and pervasive for years and, at the same time, of horror concentrated and released in few moments of destructive delirium with effects that had been noticeable beyond the end of hostilities. Of course, by a geographical point of view, it was the first truly global war and that is why its effects, more than seventy years after its end, are still present and inescapable. It was, above all, the war that destroyed the myth of war as it was formed by the French Revolution onwards. After 1945, in fact, to the Western world, or if you prefer to the white world, war came to be that calamity that even the Enlightenment philosophers of the eighteenth century had deprecated: not a way to resolve disputes, not a category similar to the policy , not a training ground for would-be heroes, but a nightmare to be avoided at all costs. Only in the colonized world which aspired to rid the war will remain an inevitable or desirable option to solve problems quickly.

From whatever angle you look at it, the death caused by the Second World War has systematic characters, planning and indiscriminateness. In that war finally disappeared, perhaps forever, the distinction between military and civilian as a priori targets and not only as potential and probable victims of war. It has also been performed the complete three-dimensionality of war with a particular emphasis on the vertical dimension; of the domain of air assumed that prevalence which would no longer lost.

The least that can be said of the reasons why the Axis powers, especially Germany, lost the war, is that the task was beyond their strength. First of all, there was an underestimation of the extent of the reactions to the universalism of fascism, reactions that were equally global and all-inclusive. Nazi-Fascism disarmed its opponents: to fight or perish or, at best, become slaves. This conception - it is written in every manual of strategy - favors defense because it gives good, even excellent, reasons to fight and to dramatically increase ones strength. That fact became particularly evident with the attack on Russia: the Nazi-Fascists were drunk from their ideological arrogance, and, fortunately, neglected the morale of the Soviet fighter.

As for the production of civilian goods, in 1939 Germany held 14 percent of world production - as well as Britain; the U.S. used to produce 42 percent

Chapter 3

of goods worldwide. These figures made the pompous people of right propaganda say that the United States were a corrupt, decadent, pornographic (and so on) democracy. In 1939 Americans had, excluding the Navy, armed forces in ridiculous levels both in quantitative and qualitative but in 1944 they produced 40 percent of all weapons worldwide and 60 percent of all munitions used by the Allies. They put also in the field a total of fifteen million men (Romero, 1996). Do you want any examples in detail? Three hundred and forty six old tanks in 1940, eighteen thousand in 1944, two thousand and one hundred broken-down planes in 1940, having been ninety-six thousand (!) in 1944.

The most debated point regarding Allied strategy has always been the choice to impose to the Axis countries unconditional surrender. I do not claim to settle the issue. I just want to explain briefly the terms of the dilemma. It is true that the demand for unconditional surrender led Germany and Japanese to resist fiercely, even -in the Japanese case- beyond the limits of the ridiculous if considered some of the individual members stories of the Japanese army. It is also true that, if considered afterwards, this choice favored Stalin's plans, as he could then advance into Europe, probably beyond his expectations.

But it is also compulsory to say that Allies wanted to put an end to German militarism once and for all, should it have or not the little Austrian corporal's mustache. It is also true that Hitler did not offer alternatives: his conception of politics, life, social and international relations was likely to be turning in his grave two thousand years of Western civilization. Moreover, the process of political suicide of Europe was now evident; the bite was too tempting for the emerging American power trying to be the only leading Power of the world and that, if it really had to be in conflict with someone, preferred having something to do with something totally unrelated like Soviet communism, the more easily identifiable as the enemy and distinguishable. And I did not mention the fact that an unconditional surrender imposed to the Germans and Soviets to fight each other. Two conquests with a less waste of energy.

Still concerning the Allies, another strategic-tactical choice that has to be examined is the preference for the material aspect of the war. Such an attitude is composed of two factors. The first is to give priority to the fire power and the machines at the expense of human being. This is due both to the already cited obsession to avoid excessive loss of life during the first conflict and to the confidence, of a cultural nature, in the goodness of technology as a

factor that could decide the fate of the battle (this particular attitude belongs to Americans). The second factor is the large-scale application of modern management methods. The effectiveness of industrial management to the war effort led to a consideration of the war similar to civilian production efficiency: efficiency, attention to cost/benefit, integration between intellectual, economic, political and military dimension, in order to "produce" the victory.

It could be filled a particular Guinness Book of Records regarding material, civil and military destructions during the Second World War. Primates that would be nowadays overcome, but which are still significant. The concept that the destruction of a house or an airplane (resulting in death or survival of men) had become a concept related to the statistics turned to be predominant, although not new in the war history. However, for the first time it could be calculated in advance the average lifespan of an aircraft or any other war means. This is to confirm that, once secured the obvious desire to win, the trump card was the greatest human and industrial potential - related and synergistically linked one another. In particular, the Axis countries were economically in a bad position. They only were more powerful militarily, particularly in tactical doctrines – anyway, only in the beginning. So it can be stated that the Second World War could not have another ending; it has been one of those conflicts in which the clausewitzian components regarding case and will remain restricted - in their possibilities of expression - to tactical dimension, individual operational theaters and single battles. The length of the war might have certainly been different, as well as its final budget in terms of losses. But the outcome could not be different. Perhaps just one "if" could have a decisive effect of tipping: the one concerning the obtaining of atomic bomb by Nazis. Probably this would have led to a situation closer to the final stalemate than to the victory of one of the two fronts. But nothing definitive could be said about it, apart from the fact that, observing the complexity and enormity of the American "Manhattan Project", doubts might be raised on the ability of the Germans, not just to get the Bomb from a scientific point of view, but on their ability to manage it, produce it, and organize an attack against the Allies. Moreover, the atomic bomb would have caused - as I suppose - immediate and preventive nuclear attacks by the Allies.

Second World War saw the gap of the process that, during First World War, saw death producers (military) suffer from the brunt of the losses. Gap in the sense that: *a)* civilians victims were in greater numbers than soldiers victims and *b)* most terrible weapons or most bloody tactics of use of force (including the extermination in the fields) were directed against civilians and

Chapter 3

not against soldiers. So far is true that Second World War was in percentage terms less bloody for military personnel (considered then the correction factors of war duration, people involved, etc..) than First World War. This tendency was strengthened after 1945 and until today, when mass destruction is addressed as a priority to the defenseless civilian population.[20] The fire wall that during the first conflict was poured on the soldiers of the other party, took on new shapes and directions in the Second World War and spread on other objectives that the trenches.

The image of the "field", the large or very large area and - at the same time - severely limited, which is defined, almost clipped out of the Earth's surface and, virtually, on the memory of the world and of the civilization. The "field" where Death could unfold throughout its greatest power. This image, this concept become predominant. It was the death camp. But the "field" was also the *area bombing zone*, the three-mile radius circle within which the technique of the terror bombing unleashed its apocalypse of fire: a huge inverted funnel through which the explosive power concentrated in space and time went down to spread then on the small but vital area for the survival of target cities. The extermination camp swelled the time of the killing so as to create, so to say, a new type of time, a new History that was installed in place of the old one. Military technology instead began that process of concentration of energy in space/time which reached its climax at Hiroshima. In any case the result was the opening of new and multiple black holes in the collective consciousness and in History: black holes that swallow, I think forever, the illusions of men to set themselves easily and quickly free from their own dark side. Second World War was in fact a terrible war, in which the night raged and the sun, on the 6th and 9th of August 1945, rose twice.

We could define the Nazi extermination[21] as the murder, programmed and

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20 Remember that even the conventional war that is fought not with nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, it is more bloody for civilians than for the military. This fact has several contributing factors: the increased protection of most of the military personnel, its smaller size in terms of quantity and on the contrary the increased vulnerability of the civil society, for the infinite articulations of its socio-economic structures, leaving the survival of the people at the mercy of wires very easy to cut. However, a source cited above (Aspetti, 1999) informs us that the civilian victims were, on average, 50 percent of the total up to the fifties, 63 percent in the sixties to switch to 74 percent of the total during conflicts occurred during the eighties.

21 I use that word because it is more correct than "genocide" that, to stay etymology, is facing a particular population and "holocaust" that is self-imposed personal or collective sacrifice. In this sense it is not accurate to speak of Holocaust (or Holocaust) about the

planned, of a large number of human beings, to a varying pace and always pretty fast rhythm, that had to serve to a *latu sensu* political purpose that must be reached quickly enough. It is important to consider that it has this double and contemporary significance: it acts both on a personal basis, as each victim is as if received on himself the death from the entire organization, and obviously at a collective level.

It would be useless and even disrespectful groped to add something to what is often beautifully said, written and filmed on the Nazi extermination. The aim is just to emphasize its incredible effectiveness. By applying the industrial - almost Taylorist - method in practice, no more to the assembly of the goods but at the dismantling of human beings, Nazis opened an easily practicable road: the extreme serialism and parcelling out of the distribution of death. The reduction of victims' bodies, and parts of bodies, as mere commodities is of course a direct consequence of considering the victims as a commodity even when they were alive, some rubbish which is to be eliminated. In fact, the problem of waste disposal is not anything new: Nazis set out the problem of the elimination of Jews and other subjects in exactly the same way. The fields were more than factories of death. They were immense landfills. The extermination is then a weapon, which is particularly effective because, before being a practice, it is a mental attitude. Transposing the industrial criteria not only the production of weapons or the delivery of fire, but directly, without intermediaries, to humans, it has reached the highest levels of dehumanized effectiveness.

It is useful making two further considerations. Even the Bomb is not so effective at an exterminating, pantoclastic level, if not assuming its total usage. But even in this way, it is possible to assume the existence of isolated groups of survivors, Neo-Neanderthalian, driven back to civilization, but alive, and perhaps able to start over once again. Potentially, however, the extermination can eliminate all human beings, not just strangers/enemies to the group that started it, but also belonging to the group itself. What I mean is that the weapon of mass destruction is definitive only if used in mass. Otherwise, just as a weapon/tool, it does not reach the heights of accuracy and definitiveness of extermination that is already, at the time when it is conceived as a project, a final weapon. The other consideration concerns

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fate of the Jews, but of their extermination, as well as all other peoples, classes and categories of people who were crushed by the Nazi madness and not only Nazi.

Chapter 3

the organizational side of extermination. It is still industrial even if used in rural field (such as the massacres perpetrated by the Khmer Rouge of Pol Pot in unfortunate Cambodia) because here "industrial" does not mean mechanized, but in the sense of planning, fragmented and bureaucratized. The shot of mace to the head, on every single head, launched by the henchmen of Pol Pot is quite similar to the calculations of what would serve *CyclonB* per capita in the Nazi's "showers". But, of course, if extermination acts in a technically advanced field (as in the case of Nazis) it is also involved the multiplying effectiveness of technique. It is clear to understand that a delivery of gas "works" much more then many distributions of beatings and blows to the head.

The big air raids were huge jabs to the enemy body, bring by concentrating as much as possible the force - first chemistry, then atomic - and then releasing it within the limits of a military operation. There is not the intent to underestimate the scale of tragedies like the apocalypse of fire in Hamburg, Dresden, Tokyo, not to mention Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Pages of clear infamy: reading their chronicles no one, unless morally completely alienated people, could avoid to raise some form of prayer, even to a God who does not exist.

But still it has to be dismissed, even with a sense of discomfort, the equalization of these actions to extermination camps. There is a difference, which is subtle, but existent and decisive. Massive bombings were a mean to defeat the enemy; extermination camps were the mean, and at the same time the essence of a concept where the enemy does not even exist anymore because his place was taken over by the Alien Thing to eliminate - the rejection, the non-human. Allies acted in military terms, even if very tragical, against a real enemy in a war formally and bilaterally declared; as far as they had to deal with the German anti-aircraft artillery. Nazis (and their imitators) operated according to an almost metaphysics logic against a defenseless enemy that they identified as such because of the mere fact of his existence in a war only by them undertaken. Bombings were, perhaps in a distorted manner, strictly functional to the logic of war; it cannot be said the same about Nazi extermination.

The allied bombing campaign against the Axis countries marked the achievement of the quality summit of the vertical organization of war. Since then, quantity of explosives launchable in a time unit and systems for target identification changed. But since then the death - both in war and through weapons - would always and basically come from sky. Rockets and the atom

would have coagulated within a few meters of metal a death that at that time came from thousands of military aircrafts arranged in a long river of steel and from explosive and incendiary bombs.

That of aerial bombing was a true epopee. Along thousands of miles of routes, formations of hundreds and hundreds of heavy bombers, day and night, they faced the onslaught of fighter planes – thrown at the same way into an hopeless undertaking: to stop a recurring invasion that reduced to ashes German and Japanese cities. The skies of Germany saw fierce battles, trails of tracers and explosions. The most macabre was certainly the continuing rain of debris, blood and human pieces falling to the ground - a prelude to the rain of bombs.

Americans bombed during the day, English at night. Americans rely on two tools and tactics of fighting to strike with precision enemy targets. The two instruments were well armed and well armored aircraft and the accuracy viewfinder Norden that promised wonders; the tactic was to send the planes, without fighters' protection, in multi-level formations (virtual "boxes" on the sides of which were bombers) in order to oppose in every direction the wall of on board machine-gun fire against German fighters. As it is well known, it has been a disaster. Many American planes have been destroyed like medieval knights mowed down by the blows of light infantry. The losses often, too often, arrived at five, seven, ten per cent. Even further more. The *B 17 Flying Fortress* and *B 24 Liberators* were stuck for hours - on outward and return- in epic and exhausting duels. Even German fighter pilots dropped like flies. Remembers one of them: "Every time I close the canopy before taking off, I feel that I am closing the lid of my coffin."[22]

As long as they could not have fighter escort with sufficient autonomy to accompany them for the whole trip and fight too, bombers of the Eighth American Air Force faced a trial that has understandably remained in the war memory of the United States.

The British were rather more realistic in adapting to the imperfections of technology. Since accuracy pointing was impossible or better subject to too many variables, they chose the middle way: to hit with precision but on an area sufficiently large and limited to ensure success. And then they chose the night, safer for them, more terrifying for civilians on the ground and more difficult for German fighters. And finally they opted to hit cities, making the pair with the interests of those who had bombed the first their island. It was

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22 Heinz Knoke, in Crowder, 1992.

Chapter 3

precisely the British to get the most spectacular results, as they had adopted the right tactics: the *area bombing*.

British bombed spectacularly. *Pathfinders* aircraft squadrons, usually *Mosquitos*, preceded the bulk of the force, consisting of hundreds of bombers; once identified the aiming point on the ground, they "marked" it – using bombs and flares lighting yellow, red or green. Germans, with resigned humor, called "Christmas trees" waterfalls of flares descending over their heads. The bombers then, tightening up their ranks, unloaded their bombs within a circle of three miles from the lights: one or two thousand tons of high explosives, phosphorus, thermite - magnesium and incendiary fragmentation bombs in a quarter of an hour or half hour, in an area of few square kilometers. Cities, if the raid was a success, were dead shot because they found themselves with a swelling of deaths and total ruins, something far less tolerable than damages and casualties diluted in a larger space.

British had realized the weakness of American tactics and, paradoxically, it has been because of day successes of Germans against Americans that German cities have been condemned of the devastating incursions of the British *Bomber Command*. This has been another paradox of the war to cost dear to Germans: about six hundred thousand deaths and nine hundred thousand injuries and, what is worse, 40 percent of deaths caused by only 1 percent of dropped bombs. This apparently strange fact has an explanation, the firestorms, especially on Hamburg (fifty thousand dead in one night of 27th to 28th July 1943) and Dresden.[23] To begin the phenomenon was, in all cases, the absence of wind and the abnormally low rate of humidity. The fires joined together and became a huge stake. The air warmed and rose, and fell in its place a new cold air from the periphery which heated in turn to give way to another air. And so on, up to twenty three hundred miles per hour winds and temperatures of thousands of degrees. What remained of many people was only a repulsive and dark pool of sewage or a pile of ashes: many died in the underground shelters, first literally asphyxiated and then cooked by the huge hood heat above them. The apocalypse was repeated several times in Japan, where cities, with many homes where made up of paper as a building material, burned even better than German ones. So was the devas-

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[23] There is perhaps no more debated than military statistics on the exact number of casualties in Dresden from 13 to 14 February 1945. The figures "dance" from less than 50,000 to more than 130,000. The reason is that the city was crowded with refugees, many of whom not counted or recorded.

tating effect of those raids that even the two atomics produced less damages and casualties. Had it not been for the shortest time and together infinitely longer (radiation) that it was necessary to kill, the two atomic bombs would not have stolen the sad supremacy in Dresden, Hamburg and Tokyo.

Sure, the 6th and 9th August 1945 the world experienced a turning point, indeed **the** turning point. The most terrible of this debut was that it upset the tempo of human suffering. People in Japan, as well as in Europe, had become accustomed to a particular history of bombing. The wait ("will they come… or will they not ... "), the sound of the alarm, the running to the shelter, the waiting once again ("will it strike here, won't it ... ") with closed eyes and mind busy to feel whistles, bursts, tears and prayers. Then the attack ended and, the one who escaped it, could groped to pick up the threads of their own humanity: to bury their dead, to look after the wounded, to save their own things, maybe go back to work. Until the next incursion. A life of fear but that, despite jumping through the dark of the terror, could remain within the limits if not living at least of a recognizability as human experience, because the passage of time remained the same, there was a before and a after. To the ones who survived, the attack could become a memory and speech, in short, could be metabolized.

Atomic bombs took off time of suffering to the human beings, they turned it like a glove. At the beginning, it has been eliminated the "before": the atomic flash erased instantly the two cities almost definitive. The few survivors could not find anything of what they were used to have: just an empty space and a deafening and devastated silence. Not a corner to refuge, not the house of a friend where to go. City had disappeared as well as their human content, together with memory and history. Survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki found themselves to limbo, a veritable both physical and mental black hole. Then there was the "after": the fact that people continued to die well beyond the time of the explosions, well beyond the end of the war, had catastrophic consequences on the mental health of survivors and instilled a new kind of terror in the collective consciousness of humanity. It is as if the bomb had told the men: **my** war never ends, even if you dig a big number of cemeteries and monuments, even if you will keep on praying and even if years will pass, you will find it in the deformation of your children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

The fact that there was neither a before nor a after, that memory could not process what had happened, that time had stopped; this was the most shocking news. The deaths continued to return from the cradle of monster chil-

Chapter 3

dren, only children of the Bomb, no longer of the will of man or of Nature.

The adoption of the terror bombing strategy has sparked controversies that are still topical nearly seventy years since the war ended. The disagreement focuses in particular on the following points: whether the bombing, conventional and nuclear, have been effective - militarily speaking, and if they were morally justifiable. It is practically impossible to account for all positions regarding these issues. They were written thousands of books, and each generation of historians or the opening of new archives reignite controversy. Quite arbitrarily, I will try to give some reference point, insisting that an eventual interested reader may find material to read for years (Bonacina, 1975; D'Orsi, 1995, Friedrich, 2004; Hallgarten, 1972; Keegan, 1989; Pianciola, 1995; Second, 1995; Silvestri, 1982; Urbina, 1995; Walzer, 1990).

Meanwhile there is to say that what posterity attribute only to the will of men often depends substantially, on the moment in which things happen, even by force of circumstances and previous events. The decision to focus on the big four-engine bombers and adopt the strategy of air supremacy made the moves well before Second World War (Paret, 1992). It has its foundations in three equally important factors.

The first factor was the confidence in the technology and in the proven synergy between industry, military hierarchies and academia. The second factor was the memory of the land bloodshed of First World War, and in this sense, air power promised to save the enemies lives by hitting the only industrial and logistics potential in a sort of technologically advanced and more humane war (Crowder , 1992). We will keep on finding this idea even nowadays. Then, a geopolitical factor: practice of air power was born in Anglo-Saxon countries, island countries more likely to focus on the marine and aviation rather than ground forces, in order to ward off the enemy and hit him in his house. It is well known that Germans did not follow Anglo-Americans in this area, thus beginning, even before the first shot was fired, to laid the foundations of their defeat.

And then, regarding the atomic bomb, it is well known that the "Manhattan Project" was born in part from fear that Germans would do the same, partly because of an autonomous decision of the political-military establishment both of the United States and of Britain. Still today, the size of that project is impressive. One hundred and fifty thousand people of which one thousand were scientists worked there; its final cost was two billion dollars of these period (!), which is to say twenty billion dollars in 1996 (U.S. Nuclear Weapons Cost Study Project, 1997). On this point, perhaps more than any

other, is measured the over-ambitiousness of Nazis to dominate the world. No way for Germany to set up a "circus" of that size. In fact, Germany spent in its nuclear project the 0.50 per cent of what spent the U.S.A.

However, since 1943 the Allied air power began to be able to bring more devastating blows to the Axis countries. Was it a militarily correct choice? Critics argue that, beyond the civilian casualties needlessly sacrificed, the conventional bombing of Germany had no big effects neither on the population's mood nor on the industrial production. In support of their argument, there are of course many statistics that, quite truthfully, certify that German production only increased up to the sudden collapse of the last months of the war. The question naturally and immediately becomes of an ethical nature as well, because if the bombings were militarily unnecessary and ineffective (and not so much in the absolute sense due to the efforts made to implement them), the more outrageously high shows the human budget to be, almost a million deaths among civilians and pilots of the two parties, only in Europe. Moral condemnation becomes even clearer when considering the mode of the bombing, previously described.

The number of supporters of strategic bombing is also numerous and equipped with equally valid arguments. Meanwhile, it is not demonstrable that the bombings were militarily ineffective. Germany has also produced a great deal under the bombs, but how much more would they have produced in their absence? Germans had to face the bomber stream by building a huge organization in terms of personnel and equipment that could be used more profitably on the front lines of battle or even in the extermination system.

The decision to bomb the cities was in part forced by the technological level of that period, that simply prevented the precision bombing against the only industrial and military targets: Americans tried to do that but largely failed. It should be recalled that the air strategy was one of the few cards, if not the only one, in the hands of allies to counter the sensational German victories in Europe: how else could they counter the German geographical domain?

Concerning the effects of the raids, their supporters had good game when they tried to remind that the most devastating, the *Feuersturm* - the firestorms - were not foreseeable at the beginning. And if they were consciously needed, it was noted with sad cynicism but not without some reason, it was because "make Germany more like Hamburg" (i.e. repeat the massacre of the Hanseatic city in another five or six occasions) would most likely defeat Nazism even sooner and shortened the war by a year or two, with perhaps a

Chapter 3

final number of less victims, stopping the completion of the Holocaust and preventing to Stalin to advance so much in Europe.[24]

On one only occasion, that is the tragedy of Dresden, the agreement is a bit more general: it was a shameful act, in large part a war crime, tried to sow terror among the population and, even worse, to intimidate the Soviets (Dresden is the gateway to the East European, and in February 1945 had been lapped by the Red Army) with a spectacular show of strength of Allied air power. Critics add, for good measure, even the apocalyptic bombing of Tokyo on 9th – 10th March 1945, with strokes of *napalm* bombs that also caused over one hundred thousand victims, to strengthen their moral condemnation.

As is easily imaginable, controversies about the two nuclear strikes have been even more virulent. Official justifications of the bombings are well known: thousands of lives of American soldiers who would have been lost during the invasion of mainland Japan, were spared, for the same reason, thousands of Japanese have been able to age in the postwar period; not necessarily invade Japan or economic strangulation would have been more humane than inflict two nuclear stabbings; Japanese leaders would not have believed a nuclear demonstration organized ad hoc to convince them to give up and maybe they would stretch, they were imbued with a mystical warrior, more reasons to resist; and if it is true (and it is true) that the war is a battle of wills, the two atomics strikes were the most effective means to crush the Japanese will to continue fighting. Finally the subject more cynical and more consistent with the national interest: they had the Bomb, it had cost a heap of money, it might use as well to defeat the old enemy and send a notice to the new one (the Soviets), just to understand who has the leadership.

Criticism of these arguments are intuitive and can be summarized in the indemonstrability of the topics mentioned above. In fact, they say, has not attempted any alternative way to end the war. The last argument then was considered particularly serious: instead of grasping the opportunity for a nuclear moratorium, the U.S. has in fact started the nuclear arms race. Especially the second bombing, of Nagasaki that is considered a real crime: mil-

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24 This reasoning, as I said, appears even disturbing in his pity and once again demonstrates the paradoxical nature of strategy and war in general. Given some historical conditions and technology, kicking down on the pedal of a certain type of violence is functional to the elimination of other modes of death ...

itarily unnecessary, politically cynical and morally unacceptable.[25] Nagasaki as Dresden, sacrificial victims of the incipient Cold War.

The controversy is on conventional than on atomic bombing began during the course of events and are reflected in behaviors that denote remarkable guilty consciences. For example, the British Bomber Command did not receive the Medal of the Campaign, as the other specialties of the British armed forces (Bonacina, 1975). The performance against German cities reduced to smoldering and empty skeletons and Dresden in particular, which together lost a great human and artistic heritage, led to this unnecessary rudeness towards truly heroic men who had been facing for years the weight of night raids and which, after all, the peoples of Europe had a nice piece of their newfound freedom.

It was clear to everyone as aviation came from the war as the supreme weapon: since then, air power was considered the trump card to win wars, from Korea to Vietnam to Operation *Desert Storm* and Kosovo and beyond. After a few years after the war, the atomic terror will delete all other memories, but the proven ability to annihilate a city in one night, making tens of thousands of deaths, i.e., in other words, the opportunity to concentrate in a few hours suffering that was diluted before in weeks, months or years had grave consequences on both the military doctrines and the imaginary of people. The fear now was from sky, silent, fast and seemingly unstoppable: the missiles then quickly replaced the roaring bombers as postmen of death. The British were the first people to experience it. Before the V1 and then, vastly more terrifying because they do not intercepted, the V2, had given no end of nightmares. The air terror of Second World War replaced that of gas during the First World War: despite their differences, they said to the people war technology became more and more overhead, less and less human scale, increasingly in the hands of technicians.

The Second World War was a spectacular one, unlike the First World War that had little charm from this point of view, for the good reason that the most striking weapons (tanks, planes) were not yet in service in numbers and types to arouse emotions and imagination. But during the Second World War the war mass aesthetic myth is stated and, simultaneously, the epic story of so many special forces that in '14-'18 war did not exist except in a limited way. So while it is difficult to be fascinated by a gasping *Sopwit Camel*

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25 The poor citizens of Nagasaki were the most desperate demonstration of the truth that end as second is a double tragedy.

Chapter 3

built in wood and canvas (however celebrated as the Snoopy's plane), a very different value have the *Spitfire* and the *Focke Wulf*, the *Stukas* and the B17 *Flying Fortress*. The same applies to land-based weapons: a cannon that shoots is boring, do you want to compare it with a *Tiger* maintank? The same with the troops: the masses of gray infantry fired at the barbed wire (perilous at an accelerated rate, typical of films from the First World War) only arouse pity while marines and paratroopers touch many other strings. To say it is all the fault of Hollywood wants to miss the target, the exchange effect for the cause, although certainly repeat hundreds of times in practice that is always the same war films just changing the faces and backgrounds, has increased the phenomenon.

To add to the spectacular event was the fact that the Second World War was represented, and therefore viewed, in terms far more realistic than the First one. Not only because the means of representation, photography, film, journalism, writing, language, had developed a more complex language and aesthetics, but also because the War was experienced directly by many more people. The First World War saw the dichotomy between the front and not: the men on the front lines saw the war, mostly civilians at home they suffered indirect effects. The Great War was a war hidden: hidden propaganda compared to civilians and, ultimately, also concealed the soldiers in the trenches. The soldier-type of the Western Front saw before him a few square meters of stinking mud of his trench; when he looked up, a few hundred yards of no man's land, and then the sky. The soldier in Second World War was much more mobile: often transferred, he saw and used the most diverse war machines. Thus, while the Great War was suffered by many and only imagined by the others, the Second World War was seen and endured by all. It was revealed, in short. Which meant that it could grow on a common basis of real memories, an aesthetic, a style linked to the slide and show of many different machines and many men in uniform.

We will see later how it is amended, to this day, the '"aesthetics of war". Meanwhile, we should be aware of what has been said before, not even too shocked, worth going into some disappointment. The point is, I believe, that weapons are exciting. And beyond a certain limit, the fascination reaches levels of mass, so the small group of monomaniacal lovers of models, uniforms and other militaria, become precisely a wide audience ready to pay a ticket to go see an air show or a movie where it tells how the Marines captured Iwo Jima. But why the weapons are fascinating? Or rather, why

only certain types of weapons and men, namely those that make conventional war? No one is fascinated by the Bomb itself (unless something goes wrong in his brain), while many are from B52 that carries or missile on top of which is placed. I believe that the answer lies in the fact that the complex conventional weapon (tank, plane, aircraft carriers, just to name a few) encloses a powerful potential and promises related to the eternal magic of "doing" (even destroy it is a "do") things that banal and daily objects are not able to perform. Even a stone is a weapon, but to split a skull is prosaic; pilot, or see someone pilot, an F16 is much more exciting. The machine/weapon is a concentrate of building-for-the-destruction; it combines in itself, in a few cubic meters of gleaming metal lines often very graceful, one of the fundamental forces of man, the very essence of power: create (an object and own's spirit) to impose will to other men and to the world. All sophisticated mechanical means are fascinating because man knows that give him power, but the weapons are beyond because confer the power/omnipotence of God and, what is more, destroying the existing, give him a chance to start over head of the game.

With the suicide of Hitler and the Japanese surrender in Tokyo Bay ended the worst war in history. The world is finally united by the main feeling of human soul: fear. Whether it is the nuclear mushroom or a track which stops in front of the crematoria, the men know that there are places, symbols and tools that make the whole of them finally a big family.

3. 4 THE POST-WAR OF THE BOMB

The "Atomic Situation" is a state of passivity, very similar to that experienced in the trenches of the First World War. Only en the victims were soldiers and the fire really it came from enemy artillery; now are the civilians living under the hood of waiting and the nuclear fire only appears as an *imago mortis*, only on the occasion of the nuclear tests in the atmosphere that mark the lives of men. But the example is so terrible that many, despite assurances of their governments, suffering from shell shock virtual.

The realization that the war is and will definitely be a machine war penetrates at the level of collective consciousness. The romantic and spiritualist conception of the conflict, so in war, what counts is only the *animus pugnandi* is definitively buried. It had been the backbone of European militarism and had connoted, drawing from distant roots, the military adventures by the

Chapter 3

European Franco-Prussian war until Hitler. But now the modern technique triumphed, both in war and in peace: men take note that the numbers, statistics, management and logistics win wars much more than "the proud chests launched with contempt of danger against the enemy"[26].

For some this defeat is unacceptable: the far right will continue to hatch a conception of war where losing with honor is better than winning and especially where the old polemic against materialism will be continually recycled in key geopolitical, considering what won World War as the deployment of the number against that of the "few but good". A historical mystification and an intellectual masturbation, good only not to take note of the new course of history. The spiritualistic conception of the war transmigrates where the shadow of the Bomb and large military organizations can not get: in the theaters of war periphery, where guerrilla and counterinsurgency fight in wars, precisely because limited and peripherals, can afford the luxury of the ipervalue human factor. The Bomb and the guerrilla in its various incarnations (the Algerian *fellah*, the partisan *Vietcong*, etc.) thus become two sides of the war after the war. But the figure-parasite, like ivy attached to a large tree, is the human one. In fact, little by little, the romantic aura of the partisan (and the opposite, much more disturbing and fanatical, the counter insurgency warrior) will fade, to assimilate and blend into the gray of the confused contemporary world where it is impossible to define fascinating any war.

At sociological and professional level, the military job moves away definitively by the conditions of civil society. Just when the interpenetration between industry, politics and the military began to be devastating,[27] the military profession takes on characteristics such as to exclude, for the very distant future, the involvement of broad masses of the people, as soldiers in the war, and as citizens in control the military. The masses is intended only the role of taxpayers before and victims then. The esotericism of the military

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26 I imitate here any step of militaristic rhetoric in any language: it is so predictable that, almost certainly, unknowingly quote, *verbatim*, a source actually existed .

27 Among the most cited phrases of war are those of President Eisenhower, just before being replaced by John Kennedy, he said, about the growth of military power within the American democracy: "In the councils of government, we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex. The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists and will persist." (in Galbraith, 1969, p. 47). The success of these sentences is because that have been said by a conservative President and former military and their prophetic content.

profession (characterized by an exasperated technicality) is accompanied by major restructuring of the conceptions of war, caused by the knowledge that the battle, the focal point of the human experience and moment in the military history of all time, is now not only mail overshadowed by the long and exhausting struggle between imperial systems but is also completely depersonalized (both in terms of direction and management) in the double sense that the increasing lethality of weapons[28] takes away space to the human element and that killing the enemy equals more and more to kill.

Whatever the final judgment on it, of cursing, of supine acceptance or even exaltation, it is difficult to identify a rational view of the atomic weapon. It might have been too much to expect the opposite, given the absolute novelty introduced from military atom. We hardly mark the scope of the epochal rupture introduced by way of waging war that not only for the first time and **really** introduces the certainty of self destruction but also deals, throu its effects, with all chronological dimensions. In fact the Bomb kills the past (for its destruction of the artistic and cultural heritage), the present and the future (for the radioactive threat on the unborn and on the genetic code of living). All immersed in a space-time singularity entirely new: the ultimate destruction in the shortest time ever experienced and conceivable (a flash, literally) but then expands, potentially for thousands of years that plutonium needs to decay and become inert.[29]

Thus, the bomb becomes a real social disease and as such is now recognized now denied. There are people who are neurotic owing it; others, to escape the anguish of impotence and take relief from an adoring approach to the new god, eventually identify with. The war represents itself in the brains of millions of people in every moment of their days and become much more than a natural disaster, although, for awfulness, vastness and unstoppable looks like a divine punishment or the impact of a meteorite. It, as bursts at the behest or human error, has a presence/absence of a different type than the earthquake or flooding. You could say that it is looming as a fault that is known to have committed or who you know that you will commit: a fault at

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28 During the Second World War it took a thousand one-ton bombs to destroy a target contained in a square of 600 x 1,000 meters. In 1970, it was enough 176 one-ton bombs. During the Gulf War it took just two laser-guided bombs, launched in a single mission (Singer, 1996).

29 The 239 isotope of plutonium has a radioactive half-life of 24,100 years.

Chapter 3

the same time metaphysics (for its absoluteness) and entirely contingent (for the banality of the event that could unleash).

The "brinkmanship policy" (term used to illustrate the mechanism of deterrence at the level of relations between the superpowers) becomes extendable to daily mental situation of every man. His political passions, his religious beliefs, his either-or ideological, that before they could detonate their aggression (almost) freely, as many now become boomerangs mental. The men continue to harbor prejudices and hatred toward their fellow but the Bomb, constantly and surreptitiously like a giant super -Ego, reminds them that this could be horribly murdered and without appeal . It is the *memento mori* of humanity.

The trouble is that, at the same time, peace can not buy a more immediate and substantial value. Indeed, the idea of peace - that, to look at things with simple soul (or simplistic) would have to rush to fill the void of what-it-is-possible vacated by the war assuming the role of cannibalism on a planetary scale and that (peace, I mean) would have to offer an immediate and concrete hope to the masses of frightened men - falls into the realm of Utopia inconsistent. Apart from noisy minorities (which , truth be told, over the years will grow considerably), a mass level peace becomes a kind of nostalgia. It's the Bomb, the Monster, to ensure peace instead: a contract infernal, a bill planetary chronologically indeterminate, which people are subjected to.

3. 5 SYSTEM OF WAR

With the stabilization of the American and Soviet nuclear arsenals beyond the threshold of reciprocity and overkill limit (i.e. redundancy, of which more later), the process of absolutization of the war reaches its fulfillment. War becomes at the end "system", in many meanings all converging into a single outcome. That is, it becomes total because it is given, for the first time, the dream/nightmare of the real possibility of the complete destruction of the enemy and, at the same time, it becomes totalizing because, ceasing to be an event traumatically outside of the condition of peace, pervades, as preparation material and psychological, the society as a whole. War becomes short Institution and assume those hybrid and bureaucratized connotations typical of our age. The combination of military interests, industrial and academic, the aforementioned Military-Industrial Complex, it becomes more than just a lobby but a fundamental structure of modern societies. Scientific

research is heavily conditioned by military interests: entire technological revolutions, such as personal computers or the Internet, are born in the military and then transmigrate into civil society, maintaining between the two poles is a continuous osmosis.

In addition to institutionalize, war takes a fundamentally deterrent nature. Most of the efforts and investments, more and more colossal, are designed to prevent it from bursting. The war dose and regulates itself; it becomes a *pharmacon* (a good poison), a kind of homeopathy. The similarities with the war of 18th century are becoming more evident. It is no longera traumatic rupture of the existing, but the regulatory mechanism and leverage domain. On closer inspection, it is a new kind of militarism that does not fill the squares of people praising the struggle but that informs of itself much more effectively and pervasively every aspect of life both of States and of the masses.

For the first time in history, the preparation of the event-war is no longer, in fact, simple preparation and harbinger of the conflict, but **it is** war. The huge sums spent on nuclear weapons and for the enormous conventional apparatus, the conditioning of scientific research and industrial production, processing a huge rant media of culture, symbols, advertising, myths, and, last but not least, the continuing ideological shoot are the real weapons of a fictional war in which the superpowers clash. It is as if the real violence, inscribed in the arms of megadeath, changed sign, establishing a competition and not a bloody fight, but, just like in a real war, could change the situation of power between the duelists. The USSR nipped out from this comparison.

Unable to sustain the pace of military investment without affecting the quality life levels, already incomparable to those of the West; tied to archaic systems of domination in its sphere of influence; and, above all, totally unable to cope with the flood in Western terms of symbols related to the collective (as they are earned jeans and Coca Cola in military terms?), the USSR lost the "Third World War". The effects of this defeat are, in terms of political-territorial, the same as if he had fought a real war: the USSR lost its empire and much of his international stature and bearing the ideology of his power ends in dustbin of history.

Today, during the historical process that most likely will put a strain on the system of war that we have described, because of getting worse of too many problems left unsolved, the system is almost impossible to understand in its entirety. It encompasses geographically and politically the entire planet. We are living a historic moment of pause, stasis waiting for new traumatic

Chapter 3

ruptures, the outcome of which will be defined by the characteristics and choices of today. Today, really, everything holds together and everything has importance: technological innovation as yet another famine in a distant country, the relations between the currencies as the commercial competition, the emergence of recycled ideological currents (like the neo-Nazism) as the world-wide integration of information flow. Today more than ever, peace and war are traveling together, they are the two faces of Janus. Pending that one may turn against each other, which under the pressure of emergencies incompatible with this system, they turn away and become again two poles, two areas distinguishable for choice and quality.

Everything can be said of contemporary war except that it is not spectacular. The attack helicopters in *Apocalypse Now*, with the background of Wagner, is the symbol, the icon of this sparkling display of strength, agility, grace and its smooth power of modern weapons. Indeed I think we can speak of a double spectacle: its own, intrinsic to arms (so totally foreign to the narrowness of men and at the same time so gentle in their hands), and the other induced and enhanced by their attendance through the civilization of the image, its this second half of the twentieth century. Today the production of images of weapons (both in terms of fiction that iconographic production of real subjects) is so wide as to equal, I think, the other icon of the century, the pornographic.

Of course the most interesting side of the modern warfare spectacle is to be found in the use of the television. The war on TV has had its heyday during the Vietnam War: a public opinion trained to see hundreds of war movies has digested a "real" war that came into the house through the news. The fact that then, taught by the political consequences of this overdose of images, the powers that be have concocted an effective censorship on successive wars (the war for the Falkland Islands on, it is not seen practically nothing of what was happening on the front lines) it did not affect either the habit of the public images of war nor their liking. The fact is that the war on television is pure event and sterilized rhetoric.

It is pure event in the sense that the viewer is led to focus precisely on the mere occurrence of what weapons do. Backstory, motivations, reactions and their opponent everything is flattened and summarized in the few seconds of the movie and then disappears, in favor of the most striking performance of the weapon.

It is a form of rhetoric because the pain of war does not exist on television except as pietism interested in increasing the ratings. Otherwise what is be-

ing done to see is precisely the mere display technology in rhetorical form as the only factor.

The civilization of the image is not confined to television, even now this medium is being replaced by the personal computer. The second war video games and the Internet is more than ever a war of symbols. The fact that behind the iconic symbol that acts, fights or is destroyed on the screen there are people and things tend to be completely removed. As mentioned, the visual alienation replaces the traditional alienation from ideological rhetoric. The enemy is so because this is drawn from the pixels. The fear that the maximum abstraction and impersonality is accompanied by the highest moral indifference is well founded. Today it "kills" (even without quotation marks) by clicking in front of a screen. One wonders if the mouse generation will suffer the same disillusionment that suffered the generation of boys in 1914 that went to the front with a head full of images of a war that no longer existed. They were ignorant of the military technology and its effects; the generation of the computer ignores what's behind the game of war, which is still blood, sweat and tears. Visual technology and mask disguises the permanence of the reality of war.

This re-creation of the war is all the more false as the commercial techniques of simulation or representation become sophisticated, because they isolate certain aspects of the universe of war, chiefly the performance of weapons or tecno-Warrior, to the detriment of all other. It is quite obvious that, in this sense, the media war representation is part full of kitsch. This degeneration of taste springs from the contradiction that you try to tell what actually can not be narrated; contemporary warfare, especially in its effects, goes far beyond the possibilities of the story, as a means of understanding and awareness. It is unspeakable, there are no words to master the scenarios of modern war fought thoroughly. From this contradiction arises kitsch modern war, heir of one born in the late nineteenth century and that has affected the taste of the public until the advent of the atomic age.

Film, television and computer are in charge so make a palatable indigestible reality, treating it like any other industrial product. In addition to the privilege of some factors over others, the language of the media war representation is characterized to the trivialization and to euphemism. The attack becomes "preventive defense", the genocide "reclamation of an area", the repression is re-named "normalization", an indiscriminate aerial bombardment simply a "raid". The speech on the war has always been a kind of

Chapter 3

Orwellian newspeak, with many similarities to that of totalitarian regimes. Today the language of images places side by side and exceeds that of words. If today there is only what goes on television, it is no coincidence that it is the latter, or similar techniques, to dominate both in the cockpits of military aircraft in the salons of taxpayers. The pilot sees symbols to be destroyed, the spectator witnesses, without the possibility of being an accomplice (and conversely to react, if he has the moral sense) the execution of a public enemy of the whole reified, represented by a dot disappears. Assuming of course that in the salons war really arrivals, albeit in the form of video games and that will be able to differentiate from the last film released.

I think it can legitimately be argued that in the twentieth century, the operational dimension of the strategy has covered the following fundamental stages:

Spiritual-militarized, from the First World War to the successes of the German army in the War;

Logistics, by the United States, in the second half of Secont World War;

Founded on **ideological and social mobilization** during the wars of decolonization;

And finally, **technological**, from the end of the Vietnam War to the present day, passing by the Gulf Wars.

That is, in other words, the backbone of the organization and conduct of the military has been gradually hinged on factors such as the desire, the management, the ideological force and finally technology. Of course this path, in addition to not being at all linear and free of commissions, essentially concerns and for much of the Western way of waging war. It remains to be seen whether the current primacy given to technology will eventually surpass all others and will become the heritage of all the armies in the world. It is a complex issue because, for example, the use of technology is also a direct effect of the Western obsession to avoid casualties among their soldiers. Other armies, not to mention the paramilitary groups of non-state, are not traditionally so conditioned in this way. However, today the technological model is the winning one. It remains to be seen whether in the future a so well organized war machine is effective against guerrilla or terrorist groups.

3. 6 CONCLUSIONS

Already with a look similar to bird, the war of the twentieth century clearly reveals its labyrinthine character, full of paradoxes and contradictions. The character most macroscopic and at the same time most significant of an apparent lack of exit routes, is the permanence and even aggravation, compared to past epochs, the synergy between the liberation of human strength (atavistic impulses, old fears, repressions and projections psychological impressive) and the terrible force expressed by technology. The war continues to be comparable to the situation in which a machine in full and continuous acceleration along a descent, led by a man more and more furious.[30] Yet the contradiction is there, clear and strong as a brick wall (the wall of the labyrinth?). Today the war expresses a destructive potential that is self-castrating. The potential of destruction are so widespread, technically reliable in so many different instruments that, paradoxically, must be almost more faith in thinking that the man can not change course than the reverse. I mean, continue to believe the war a destiny, and not a problem, assumes such a lack of confidence in the possibility of redemption of men is perhaps more sensible, rational and intelligent think that humanity can, in some way, and maybe after going through very painful evidence, escape the fate of extinction that appears so clearly inscribed in reality. So clearly it inscribed as to appear even cloying and banal, and therefore, perhaps, intellectual expression of old age, a kind of deception whose blatant evidence can not easily be identified and overcome.

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30 Someone said that essentially "man is a terrified terrorist".

Chapter 3

4 WHAT THE BOMB CAN TEACH

4. 1 THE REALITY OF THE BOMB:[31] THE OVERKILL

I n not strictly technical terms, the *overkill* is the multiplier of the entire humanity destruction. In the arsenals enough bombs exist to destroy humanity many times.

Observing the overkill has the same effect of being at the foot of a too high mountain. You feel overwhelmed and annihilated. If we took a hundred thousand of Second World War bombers (and with what results ...) and we filled them with bombs to make it impossible for them to take off, we would reach the explosive amount of a single hydrogen average power bomb.[32]

It would take a fraction of the nuclear potential, just two hundred megatons, to kill 37 percent of the American or Russian population. From 1945 to 1996 it was built about one hundred and thirty thousand nuclear warheads (Cotta-Ramusino, 1996) for a total of about twenty-five - thirty thousand megatons, i.e. twenty - thirty billion tons of TNT, or, if you like the statistics such as Guinness Book of Records, one million-six-hundred thousands bombs like that dropped over Hiroshima, while the entire explosive power used in all the wars during history, from the Neolithic to Nagasaki, amounted to only ten megatons. The growth of nuclear warheads seems a metastasis: nine in 1946 they amounted, for example, to sixty thousand thirty years later. And if you like to talk in terms of hard cash, we will say only, using data from a prestigious American Institute (US Nuclear Weapons Cost Study Project, 1997) that the whole nuclear "circus", from the beginning of the

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31 As in the previous essay, "Bomb" means, in brief, the complex of nuclear weapons as well as the entire industrial-scientific-political-military infrastructure who chairs with their use. The term is intentionally generic and I intend to use it only in a metaphorical sense and evocative.

32 The power of fission (A) or fusion (H) nuclear weapon is measured in kilotons (kt), where one Kt corresponds to a thousand tons of TNT and in megatons (Mt or Mgt), where one megaton worth a million tons of TNT. Consider that you are speaking only of the mechanical power of the explosion: it must be added, peculiar of nuclear, radiation and high temperatures. So much explosive power is explained by the fact that a single gram of uranium produces an amount of energy equal to 22.5 million times that produced by a gram of TNT.

Manhattan Project in 1940 to 1995, costs the tune of three-thousand-nine hundred billion dollars to the US alone (1995 dollar value).

Since 1985 there has been a certain quantitative reduction in the number of nuclear warheads, which will be discussed later, but in any case the mountain of *overkill* is there, motionless and triumphant in his desperate and obsessive power.

The nuclear scrap rests, even today, on three legs. The warheads, placed on missiles, can be launched from submerged submarines, from underground armoured silos or strategic bombers, via direct drop or, in this case, through missiles.[33] The anti-nuclear movement has identified in this tripartite division, called "triad" or "trimurti", one reason for the frantic warheads multiplication.

Naturally, however, the strongest reason of missiles and bombs' proliferation lied on the nature of the political struggle between the two blocs. United States and the Soviet Union, East and West, confronted in a scientific and ideological epochal duel. This conflict was the main fuel of *overkill*. The multiplication of the weapons brought, of course, to that of the targets. Even considering that important objectives could be worth more bombs, the escalation is impressive. The number of Soviet targets for US missiles went from 2,600 in 1960 to 25,000 in 1974 to 40,000 in 1983. As it said at that time, even the two adversaries chicken coops were under fire. The main technical reason for this furious and frankly grotesque increase in the number of targets lay on the advent of so-called MIRV, that is missiles, launched from any platform, which could bring more than one nuclear warhead, up to ten or fifteen warheads, aiming different targets.[34]

The "mirvization" missile was accompanied by a deep evolution of the nuclear deterrence doctrine, which will be discussed later. For now it suffices to say that until the early seventies there were enough bombs and missiles to hit only the cities of the opponent. Then the "mirvization" allowed to also aim to military, industrial and logistics targets.[35] But it has to be careful, hitting "only" the cities means already the essential: not later than 1964, it

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33 The missiles are called SLBM, ICBM and SLBM

34 In the jargon of the nuclear extermination, it is called the "bus" the terminal part of the missile containing the warheads. During the re-entry into the atmosphere, the "bus" releases one by one the various warheads, along with fake bombs and other electronic devices (called "baits") to fool enemy radars.

35 The first strategy is called *Countervalue*; the second *Counterforce*.

Chapter 4

was reached the level of unacceptable destruction, that is 20 to 25 percent of victims among the population and 50 percent of industrial capacity the two superpowers.

It might be interesting to note that the public realized that the arms race had reached a new stage, and this happened very often, only after many years from the time when the political and military elites had decided to increase their arsenals. For example, the interest in a mobile ICBM, that is not destined to be stuck forever in a well armoured silo, dates from the late fifties. The start of the practical realization of the idea (the MX missile in its original version and then modified) can be placed at the beginning of the seventies.

This observation is linked to a very important aspect of the arms race: its ideology, particularly with regard to downright lies of which the public has been a victim. An ideology is a system of ideas and values not entirely fraudulent: it contains elements which, if not exactly truth, can be considered at least partially rational arguments. As for the accumulation of nuclear weapons, and in American context, we can cite, as rational elements, the fact that for the United States the numerical equality of nuclear weapons could not be considered sufficient given the Soviet conventional superiority. In addition, and this applies to both sides, increasing the number of weapons also implied their diversification; which, if you expect to fight a war, is an elementary measure of prudence. Having few and similar weapons exposes, in fact, to easy countermeasures by the enemy.

But these aspects of the "philosophy" of the arms race are totally outnumbered by the authentic nonsense peddled to the public to retrospectively justify economic and strategic choices taken months or years before. It was real ideological fetishes and slogans that were disguised with technical arguments and supported by avalanches of papers signed by brilliant intellectuals, and were made to gobble inhabitants of the two super-powers. It would be hard to say how many times the American taxpayer has heard from worried thinkers that "the US has lagged behind the Russians." Dozens of times, at least, since the launch of Sputnik.

We talked before about watchwords. One of the most famous was the "window of vulnerability" of land-based missiles (ICBMs). It was this: when also the USSR was endowed with multiple warhead missiles, a frenzied campaign in the media began with the aim to convince American public that the missiles placed in silos were in danger of being destroyed on the ground, before starting, by a massive attack led only by a fraction of Soviet missiles. This would have allowed the Soviets to destroy a part of one of

the components of the American retaliatory capability using only a fraction of their warheads and, in addiction, to threat with their remaining forces the American cities to avoid the American retaliation. So the Soviets, with little expense, should have won the war. I will not describe the technical and strategic ruminations that filled American newspapers and television in the late seventies. The poor US citizens were convinced that they practically lost their shirt in front of the nuclear Cossack rider. Americans should spend more money on new bombers and *Mx* missile which could have been launched from a mobile platform, and consequently it would have been a much more difficult target for enemy warheads. I will not bore you by telling the whole controversy: suffice to say that the Americans were asked to decide on the data provided by the Pentagon itself, coincidentally the largest recipient of their decisions and that the assumptions of the military was nothing but a short fable.

In fact, assuming the possibility of a massive Russian attack against the American ICBMs bases meant to imagine the launch of at least one thousand missiles and three thousand warheads. Given the long-term cumulative effects of the Bomb, such an attack would entail between twelve and twenty-seven million American deaths. What they wanted to pass off as a shot "To blow away the gun to the sheriff" was in fact the beginning of a real nuclear war. This took back the whole matter, with its alleged and shocking news, in the customary setting of nuclear war. In short, much ado about nothing (Victims, 1988). The "window of vulnerability of US ICBMs" went to keep company with the other tales peddled in previous years, such as the never existed "bombers gap" (from the years '53 to '57), and the "missiles gap" (from the years' 57 to '61), even that it never existed.

The arms race is not the real war, as it is not the Cold War. We must then shake, over the stick of arms, also the carrot of peace. In addition, and this is especially true for the US, you can not give the impression of spending money in one direction, that is of arms: it is necessary that the Department of Defence gives the impression of a rational management of their resources. But beyond those that may seem, and perhaps are, partisan and unprovable statements, remains the fact that neither the SALT (Strategic Armaments Limitation Talks) or the START (Strategic Armaments Reduction Talks)[36] have

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36 "Limitation" and "Reduction" are not synonymous. The first term is intended, essentially, the non-implementation of certain weapons programs; "Reduction", instead, a real cut in existing arsenals.

Chapter 4

achieved the only result that humanity would really appreciate: to get rid of the nuclear threat. In fact today, after more than fifty years of negotiating history, the arsenals are still quite capable of destroying the world several times. Nuclear arsenal were limited and reduced, of course, but especially in the way they were rationalized. Through negotiations, trumpeted as great strides toward peace, the old weapons, or those that did not ensure attractive prospects in military and scientific terms, have been eliminated and those remaining are efficient, safe and promising spectacular developments.

It is possible to assert that on the one hand the negotiations have been the way to eliminate inefficiencies and on the other hand they have represented a kind of ideological fraud. In fact, the stated purpose of the negotiations was to achieve mutual, balanced and controlled disarmament, but on the contrary: a) during the negotiations it was more important to eliminate deficits rather than surpluses of weapons; b) the superpowers have never really pursued equality but superiority; c) there has never been a third actor, a referee who impose decisions or simply controlled the implementation of the decisions taken; d) the negotiation process has not really affected the substance of the military-industrial and bureaucratic complexes power (Galtung, 1986).[37]

The overkill was here presented in an extreme synthesis, in its numerical (number of warheads and missiles, amount of explosive), structural (the nuclear triad, targets) and dynamics (the arms race) components, today it has characters of excessiveness taken since the early sixties: a mega-death concentrated in a technical-organizational dimension that people are used to take away from their everyday thoughts. In the collective subconscious other apocalyptic modes have taken its place: global pollution, endemic famine,

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37 Undoubtedly it is possible to give an interpretation of the negotiations completely different and more lenient than the one proposed in the text. It being understood that the arms control has served to eliminate the deadwood arsenals, it is entirely legitimate to argue that through negotiations the dialogue between the superpowers remained open and that the elimination of certain types of weapons has contributed to loosen certain tensions and therefore has increased the level of mutual security. In addition, it is also possible to affirm that the negotiations have never set a goal (which, moreover, could not reach) to eliminate the real causes of a possible nuclear war. All this is true and it would certainly be naive and misleading to blame the negotiating process have not done what they had not been started for. That said, however, some essential points remain to look critically at the results of SALT and START. In particular, the ideological use, in order to consent propaganda, negotiations and the character of "internal lubricant" of the negotiations for arms race, which in fact continued, and continues, substantially unimpeded but rationalized from the negotiation process.

large migratory movements. Methods of extermination completely different from nuclear global conflagration, that is pervasive, and it daily operates being able to gradually wear down, survivability and sealing of the social environment, like drops that dig the stone. The overkill is the distant outline of an iceberg drifting on the route of humanity; rather concerned to note the overcrowding of the ship or the poor state of food on board, men now dedicate to it distracted glances.

If nuclear weapons are the "what" of atomic age, deterrence is the "how-and-why" it occurs. Deterrence and overkill are not automatically, as we will see, inherent in the existence of nuclear weapons. But in fact from the outbreak of the first Soviet bomb, the atomic age has walked on these two legs. It presented like the god Janus this double face.

4. 2 THE REALITY OF THE BOMB: THE NUCLEAR DETERRENCE

The fact that I am writing (and you are hopefully reading) means that nuclear deterrence, or dissuasion, worked[38]. All weapons, even the cruder one, incorporate an intimidating strength and yet all the weapons were eventually used. History is a sequence of failed deterrences. We must therefore ask, among the many questions of the nuclear age, why nuclear weapons have never been used, except the final events of the Second World War.

To enter into the kingdom of MAD[39] (Mutual Assured Destruction) you should arm yourself with a paradoxical logic and understand that the uncertainty and ambiguity of the terms and things, which they are underlying, is the water in which the fish of nuclear peace swims. The paradoxical logic, as it has been pointed out by various authors (Bonanate 1971, Luttwack 1989), pervades the entire strategy, and not only the nuclear one. In the strategy, as well as in the war itself, not everything that according to the meaning

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38 The meaning of the two terms is not precisely the same, especially in English, but here, for brevity and convenience, we consider them synonymous.

39 MAD is the central acronym of the nuclear age in which all traces back. We will see that, despite the changes to nuclear weapons and their operational strategies, the balance concept expressed by MAD remains central. Incidentally, it is very well known the intrinsic meaning of the English word "mad". Pacifism more vulgarizer wanted to emphasize, with intent liquidators of the whole matter, in emphatic mode this coincidence, demonstrating good dose of guilty superficiality in dealing with the problem that instead is rather intellectually sophisticated.

Chapter 4

of every day "normal" is logical and rational works. For example, you can lose a war despite winning all the battles, or looking at the level of minute confrontation, a wide, straight road towards the target is less preferable than a long and tortuous path. The main reason for this paradoxical logic, which has heavy philosophical and ethical implications, seems to lie in the fact that the opposition at every move of a player is very strong and that the stakes are, ultimately, the survival of the players. This characteristic leads to literally overturn all the implications of each type of action and reaction. Consequently, the strategy, with all that is connected to it, is a real world apart from everyday life or at least from all that is not military.

In the nuclear field then, this paradoxical value, this characteristic that things are not what they appear has resulted in a virtually absolute form. The fact at the basis of this is that nuclear deterrence is based on a real, and not just perceived as real, capacity of mega-distruction. It was said earlier that all weapons have in them a capacity of intimidating but this capacity, sooner or later, either fails (in the sense that the enemy decides to ignore it) or is ignored by those wielding the weapon (in the sense that they believed that it is time to move from threats to action). Sooner or later the bluff of all weapons have been called. The reason for this is that before the nuclear age no weapon has ever been perceived as definitive, absolute and exterminating at the highest level. This idea could be a product of propaganda and even of the self-believing of many fighters, but the doubt that weapon was not the WEAPON has been always present. Moreover, even in the toughest fights, the bloodiest wars, the collective subconscious of the fighters knew that someone would be left to handle the following peace or, at least, would remain the contour of the struggle, the environment of things (Nature, monuments, culture) that participate in the life of men. This series of awareness made it possible to believe in both victory and defeat of the opponent, and to separate the belligerent rhetoric ("we will kill you to the last man") and the subsequent reality of the facts, in which the consequences of the war were mitigated, in the great majority of cases, by the complexity and potential of the occurred peace. Just to stay anchored to the paradox, we could say that wars were made possible by their not ever being truly absolute, if not in the rhetoric with which they were celebrated.

In front of the nuclear weapons, the men are faced with a series of innovations. The amount of destruction of these weapons is immeasurably greater than any other weapon; the time required for the nuclear destruction, indeed, is immensely less, which makes it difficult for any society to hold the nuclear

strike. Finally, the nuclear weapons effects are dilated in space and have the skill to project into the future, striking generations to come with an already written death sentence. In other kinds of war effects on subsequent generations were, and are, indirect and less violent. In the wars of the past sons of dead men and women were not born and for the early days after the end of hostilities children were suffering the most backward life conditions. But the bomb recorded a brand focused on the genetic heritage of the survivors, the future of the new peace is a future burdened by the same death that affected the war. Atomic death never ends, it does not end with the peace treaties. Faced with these changes and soon made acquainted (after the launch of Sputnik) that the combination of bomb/missile was working and mutual from east to west and vice versa, men began to live with the nuclear terror. Deterrence has become real and effective; who would wanted to hit, was sure to be in turn destroyed. Along this single-track train the arms race has started running and deterrence became operational starting to rattle off its many paradoxes.

It is impossible to indicate which of the nuclear age paradoxes is more fundamental or significant than others, nor we can say that they fall into distinct categories: basically the entire atomic situation is a unique paradox. To begin with, it must be said that the impossibility to conduct a nuclear war, apparently so obvious given the annihilating power of weapons and the certainty of the reciprocity of the exchange, can not be actually stated clearly either in theory or in practice. There would be not deterrence, in fact, if there were the doubt on the use of nuclear weapons: neither the opponent nor its public opinion and that of the allies should be left to be lulled into the illusion that the use of nuclear power is in any case impossible. This is the reason, or better one of the reasons, for which the language, with which the army and politicians are discussing on nuclear weapons, is only slightly different from the one used to talk about the non-nuclear weapons. From "Tragic but Distinguishable Postwar States" Herman Kahn[40] to "limited nuclear war" etc., nuclear vocabulary ranked alongside the more obvious terms such as "Apocalypse", "Destruction", "Armageddon", also terms from pre-nuclear age. This made, and makes, furious the prim pacifism that gives responsibility to the militarism of the political and military elites. There is no doubt that militarism exists even among the managers of nuclear power (we will return later on this topic). But it is certain that this language implies a reality

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40　Herman Kahn, *Thinking About the Unthinkable*, 1ª ed., New York, Horizon Press, 1962.

Chapter 4

that must be ambiguous in order to make results, the results of deterrence.

But it was not only a matter of words ... The nuclear war produces political and moral effects without even occur. Indeed, its being consists precisely in not being. It is like our individual death that as an event belongs to the future, but as a thought event is already in our present. The atomic war is a virtual war in the purest sense of the word, is a re-creation of reality not as representation, as it happens in video games, but as foreshadowing. It has imposed the presence - absence as a crucial figure of reality. In this sense deterrence is the thought of nuclear war, its icon, the imago mortis acting in place of the real war.

Another interesting paradox arises directly from what has been called "the shot of the sheriff." This phrase indicates reprisals carried out by the country that has already suffered the devastating attack, nevertheless it was able to launch its nuclear weapons in response. In the pre-nuclear age, retaliation followed an attack or a threat of attack and the country that performed it could suffer a counter-retaliation. In the nuclear age, the country implementing the retaliation has already been destroyed, or rather the condition because it implements the retaliation is precisely the previous destruction. The future is symbolically or virtually anticipated and becomes present: before you destroy me, then I destroy you.

The nuclear weapon poses each of the contenders at the other mercy and only the defeat is clear and unambiguous. The roles that opponents could play as strikers are purely virtual (used only by assumption, one might say) because the destruction of every players is the only certain outcome. Marking a huge difference with all other types of war, the Bomb denied the chance to earn anything from the sufferings inflicted on the enemy and at the same time gives the "losers", or rather the dead, the opportunity to kill again through retaliation.

In the context of nuclear power it is also interesting the fate of sovereignty. Before Hiroshima, or rather before reaching the stage of reciprocity in the nuclear exchange, in the event of war State sovereignty meant essentially to have tools to prevent an attack or invasion. With the Bomb, the sovereignty of the State "A" means the possibility of preventing the State "B" to hinder retaliation of the already destroyed "A". The atomic situation, in short, does not allow eliminating the fear, even thought the opponents arm themself; the only allowed choice is to try to experience their own fear to the opponent.

In summary, it is an amazing game of mirrors that to which we see if we

look with bright eyes the atomic situation. Each actor is hostage of the other; each actor is basically forced to save the other assuring the possibility of implementing the retaliation. In short, each country must protect its own population through deterrence, but it only works when the population itself remains in a state of vulnerability ... And then, each actor is unable to be too weak (which would invite the contender to attack) or too strong (which would invite, again, to the attack, this time for damage limitation). The lack of defence against nuclear weapons is, in fact, the greatest and only possible defence since the mutual vulnerability arises stability and therefore survival. We will see later how this paradox has shocked not only the peace movement, but the same political and military forced to live it minute by minute, year after year. Hence the attempts to break the pattern of the game, to give back to nuclear fight some signs of resemblance to the one played, the dawn of time, with traditional weapons, when attack, defence, weaknesses and strengths were less ambiguous and ghostly meanings.

Let us now examine the concrete factors that a nuclear deterrent must have to be defined as such. This will eventually understand how the deterrent effect of nuclear weapons is not only in their awfulness, but also in the fact that they are not the monopoly of a single actor. In order to produce peace based on fear to the maximum degree, the nuclear exchange must be at least between two players and each of them must be put in a position to destroy and be destroyed. Overkill (at least equal to 1, i.e. to an unacceptable destruction) and reciprocity are therefore crucial.

For this purpose, the first essential characteristic is the visibility of the available retaliation means. The opponent must be able to know that we have missiles and bombs and that they will be used in the most effective way. Otherwise, it might be tempted to attack both because it is convinced to be the stronger or because it has fear to be too weakened. When it comes to nuclear terror, it should be clear, then, that we talk about a clear, declared and made explicit terror. It is not the fear of the single terrorist that is revealed only when he hits. The nuclear terror only works (perhaps unique among all the terrors) when it is clear to everyone (first of all to their opponents) of such content and outcomes it is entailed.

There will may be not dissuasion then if there is not the possibility of early warning. Each actor in the nuclear confrontation must be able to know if there is an ongoing attack against him or not. Otherwise, we are again: the uncertainty about being or not attacked inevitably leads to the certainty of it. Who could support such uncertainty? The stab in the back is an option

Chapter 4

outside of the nuclear deterrence logic. It is a circumstance, among others, which represents a decisive break with the whole previous military history.

A direct consequence of the existence of the two just mentioned factors is the need to preserve the contenders' means of surveillance and early warning. The up-to-date chains of radar and satellites are, or rather must be a kind of untouchable sanctuary if you want to keep the deterrence in operation. These means are the tools that ensure countries with the nuclear retaliation power the half hour (it is the time that intercontinental missiles take to reach the polar opposite of their starting point) that represents the difference between perishing alone or together. There has never been a more crucial half-hour in the mankind history: a half-hour where the chance to have a future is concentrated.

Another key point concerning the credibility of being part of the game is the nuclear invulnerability of the retaliation means. All components that are used to carry bombs on the targets and the bombs themselves must be left in a position to accomplish their task if the balance has to remain. This represents a new break with the past and a new paradox: otherwise, the mutual blackmail lose reciprocity and who is at a disadvantage, or believed to be, could attack in desperation. A portion of this security is inherent in varying degrees to the very nature of the launching pads of the bombs. In this sense, nuclear submarines, thanks to their total invulnerability, are the true keepers of the essence of atomic situation.

The launch sites are only the starting point of the atomic ride. Midway between them and the bombs themselves, there are missiles, which are heirs of the German *V2* rockets and bad brothers of "good" one that led the man to the moon. They must enjoy invulnerability too in order that balance and deterrence could work. The missile has this feature since its inception: the *V2* terrorized English population who was accustomed, like the populations of other bombed countries, to know thanks to the sirens of the air strikes and to carve out spaces of life and consciousness during the raids. The death brought by the missile is silent, sudden: it does not allow prayers, memories and escapes. Currently the missile is the preferred carrier of nuclear weapons.

The deterrence's penultimate constituent element is the response adequacy, namely the necessity of maintaining a proper balance of power between the nuclear opponents. If you enter the tunnel of military nuclear a question will become crucial: how much destruction is unbearable for the opponent, that is how strongly retaliation warrants an attack? For two small countries,

chronically disputing in any corner of the world, a bomb for each one may be sufficient. Instead, we have seen how the superpowers have built redundant arsenals, even baroque, as someone said. [41] In any case, in terms of destruction of things and people the measure is given by the acceptability of the price that the country "B" is willing to pay and that the country "A" is willing to pay to "B", and vice versa. Equilibrium is the point of contact between the two curves.

The last factor is missing: the relevance of the stakes. What can justify the end of humanity by nuclear power? How many tons of books have been written to argue on this point ... This question is of course outrageous, the most outrageous and obscene of all, the pacifists have answered to this question from the start sculpting with golden letters a "NOTHING" without appeal. But if the answer to the question is "nothing", if the stakes of the bomb does not exist (or rather, must not exist), the entire castle born from theoretical atomic situation will collapse. Nuclear arsenal and strategy are unnecessary or rather immoral, completely immoral. The pacifist anathema covered the entire construction of the balance of terror and has attacked every single component starting from this initial statement of position: because nothing is worth more than the survival of the human species, the Bomb is entirely wrong and has to be deleted *ab origine*.

The impression, or doubt, however, is that the question is to be misplaced. The question is not if something is worth the destruction of humanity, but if something is worth the threat of destruction. To this thin thread of semantic difference and factual hangs the whole atomic situation, including its acceptability. Mankind has always followed the real fact to the threat of that fact: the atomic bet is based on the no automatism of such succession.

We should realize that there is an atomic virtual comparison (which we are living) and a real one (nuclear holocaust). The stakes of the atomic virtual confrontation existed, exist and will exist until the Bomb will be with men: they fall, after all, in the field of politics of the atomic age, and they take the characters and content that the policy assigns gradually to them. But the most immediate aim is the very **survival** at stake. Since the weapons exist and can not be "un-invent" it must use them to make sure you can exist and not be erased. So, nuclear weapons are both the disease and its cure.

But beyond that, once it walks from the safety of the destruction to the threat of destruction, there are many values that can be worth the risk. The

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41 Mary Kaldor, *The Baroque Arsenal*, New York, Hill and Wang, 1981.

Chapter 4

definition of those values is up to Politics, i.e. to the more general and profound sphere of organized communities' life. So it can threaten the annihilation of mankind to ensure the protection of fundamental rights of freedom, to preserve own cultural identity, to be world leader, etc.

Deterrence requires that men are always conscious about the subversive quality of the Bomb, that it is the last resort of the war. The nightmare of "horizontal" nuclear proliferation (i.e. the one consisting in the increase of countries possessing nuclear weapons and spreading to every corner of the world of warheads and fissile material) is not only quantitative. As long as it is only a college professor in search of fame to argue that the Bomb is "only a weapon a little 'more powerful than the other," the damage is limited. The nightmare is that the proliferation leads to the trivialization of the possession of nuclear weapons; hence the need that exists in the collective well-rooted belief that the importance of the stakes and possession of Bomb constitute an inseparable link. It is just such a link that allows you to use politically deterrence, that is to say, through it, the survival of core values. From the point of view of the defeat of communism, for example, it is not a coincidence that historically deterrence won on the one hand the actual nuclear war and on the other hand the unilateral disarmament of the West.

If these are the constituent factors of deterrence, I will now examine how they are modified over the years.

4. 3 THE IDEOLOGY OF THE BOMB

It would perhaps be better to speak of ideologies or different interpretations of the balance of terror. In fact, MAD theory has been read and interpreted in many ways; as the years go by, it appeared to many members of the political-military establishment more and more than a conceptual cage from which try to get out. Which it may even seem grotesque given that it is, however, a kind of balance, even if a terroristic one. The fact is that the going forth of the MAD were propitiated by technological innovations: on this basis, from the inside of the establishment several assumptions were aired that, attacking one or more constitutive aspects of the balance of terror, tended to review and reform the MAD. I think it is useful to albeit very briefly trace the way of strategic theories since the postwar to place more clearly the modifications undergone by the theory of Mutual Assured Destruction.

Roughly speaking, until the late fifties the task of carrying bombs to tar-

gets is entrusted to the big strategic bombers. For the US it is a time of supremacy in air power. Only the large cities are under threat, lacking the technical possibilities to attack well-protected military targets. Political and ideological elements of great tension flanked those factors which induced themselves a state of great nuclear stability. It is the worst period of the Cold War and the Bomb is, so to speak, misrepresented: it becomes an instrument of political pressure and strategic value and official premises gives to it a role that it can not support.

On the American side, the main strategic theory is called Massive Retaliation that speculates an US nuclear response in the event of a Soviet not nuclear attack in Europe or elsewhere. The lack of credibility of this theory appeared quite evident from the beginning: the bomb was still a tool too disproportionate (it was fashionable, among many others, the joke: "a cannon to shoot down a gnat") to respond to challenges that needed a no nuclear and more limited and flexible response.

The next period, from the late fifties to early sixties, is very important. The intercontinental missiles assume the lead role as carriers of nuclear weapons. The two opponents, although not at the same time, acquire the ability to strike enemy cities without the possibility of being thwarted. It is the period of maximum vulnerability of the two contenders to nuclear weapons, that is of the utmost strategic stability, even in a time of tumultuous succession of technological innovations. The poor missile precision requires striking only very broad objectives, as a consequence major cities are still the main targets. Nuclear strategy is essentially *countervalue* and if it is true that, in the event of war, it is the most desperate strategy and it is without the possibility of return, it will be also evident that, for the same reason, this strategy maintains the balance that advances hand in hand with terror.

The following years, until the late seventies, there were a number of technological leaps that had serious repercussions on the MAD theory gradually becoming a shorter and shorter blanket. In the field of launch platforms, nuclear submarines finally surge to the rank of key weapons while the long range bombers experienced a certain period of stagnation, even if they increased their potential for penetration into enemy territory. But it is in the field of missiles and warheads that the most significant changes occur. The missiles were becoming more precise[42] and they were quickly modified to carry up to ten or fifteen warheads on several different targets. Even the

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42 Less than a hundred meters error after a flight of thousands and thousands of kilometres!

Chapter 4

atomic bombs change: the increased precision of the vectors allows decreasing the explosive power that often drops below the megaton; bombs are also diversified, and bombs were invented for certain specific targets. The latter one at last multiply (there are enough warheads) and the precision of the missile allows inserting in the lists also small military installations.

The reason of the MAD instability is directly linked to these technological leaps. Accuracy and the increase of the warheads are becoming, for the first time, the whole "system-Bomb" no longer voted exclusively to the retaliation-defense but also to attack. It becomes possible that one of the two contenders decides to attack first in an attempt to annihilate the means of retaliation of the other before they are used. Then this possibility could lead to turn the other contender to anticipate the attack to avoid being nuclear-disarmed.

In short, the system is destabilized, it passes from the **established and accepted vulnerability of both** to that of only one, the most hesitant or burdened by moral scruples. In "nuclear literature" many take MAD for dead. But it resists, although precariously. Indeed, a key technical factor remains. In their practice invulnerability nuclear submarines remain immune to first aggressive strike and therefore can in any case implement the retaliation. In addition, it is also clear that the increased technical possibility of a nuclear exchange is not necessarily more likely or more political will in its favour.

However, the debate gradually cooled to the extent that it is evident that attack assumptions do not imply that their realization is realistic. It is the concept of "limited nuclear war" to be logically flawed. Indeed, attacker, albeit in a limited way, has no guarantee that the other responds in the same way and then you can say goodbye to governable and especially winnable war. In fact the attacked, even assuming that it wants to respond to a limited extent (for example with a single missile), will still have to make matters worse to punish the aggressor and to discourage him from trying again. Right from the second shot, then, the limited war goes to hell and the spectre of global nuclear war reappears. Even the launch of a single missile (on the Kremlin or the White House) would be a terrible shock, full in horror, panic and material destruction. No country could consider a single shot of this kind as a limited offensive, so the answer really could unlikely be graduated coldly.

In short, the various theories of nuclear war feasibility show their limits both for their poor technical plausibility and because they have excessively the risk that due to his fear the opponent, placed in front of so hostile intentions and capabilities, decides to attack perhaps at the first serious alarm as

result of a computer error. It seems clear that the most unstable condition of the atomic balance is just the one in which every part is induced to believe it can achieve victory by attacking the first.

4.4 THE BALANCE OF TERROR AS SYSTEM OF WORLD POWER

It is perhaps interesting to ask what the Bomb has added to the international order such as that resulting from the Second World War. Even in the absence of nuclear weapons the international system designed in Yalta would have seen the rise of two major powers with the related loss of leadership of former predominant nations (Germany, France and Great Britain) and the position of chronic subordination of the poor countries.

From the late fifties onwards some factors of the American rearmament policy can be read independently of the military presence of the atom: in particular the aspiration to assert supremacy on allies and the need to source raw materials at low cost. The same economic logic of the internal American rearmament, which drew new life from the need to expand nuclear arsenals, would have marched at a good pace in their absence. Military expenditure is a good deal because it does not compete with those in the civil, stimulate technological innovation and above all is repeatable, suffering much less than the phenomena related to overproduction and lack of demand. Military industries can always count on the presence of their biggest client, the state. As for the USSR, on the contrary, it can be argued that the nuclear competition has even damaged the stability and longevity of its dominion over the countries of Eastern Europe, diverting resources and helping to wear out its economy in the long time.

If it is likely, however, that the international system would be structured in the same way even in the absence of nuclear weapons, it will be not said that it would have enjoyed the same stability and length. Without the restraint of the competition between the superpowers to the nuclear level, very likely the same competition would soon explode in a repetition of the Second World War: a conventional fight between East and West for the dominance in Europe. Instead, the existence of the bomb reorganized and structured every characteristics of the international system in a totally new and unique structure. The bomb has become the constitutive factor of the system, or rather a kind of internal regulator, a kind of thermostat in a feedback mechanism. Tensions have been deleted in the traditional and obvious points (the

Chapter 4

direct and armed struggle between superpowers) and have been discharged elsewhere in the system and by other means (the ideological and economic competition and the peripheral theatres).

I think it is legitimate to argue that, in fact, the superpowers political and military elites have understood from the beginning that the total nuclear confrontation there would never have been. They were well adapted to (and took simultaneously advantage of the) atomic situation in order to stabilize their condominium of power over the world. In this sense, the continual atomic alarm of peace movements can also be seen as a significant error of historical perspective, because it warned about a danger that the upper echelons already considered *a priori* as not achievable [43].

In a sense, nuclear deterrence was a referee, a "third" actor certainly not absent (in the terminology of Norberto Bobbio [44]) but in mind. This arbitration of the supreme weapon did not convince the men to love each other but prevented, in fact, a general conflagration. This consideration will lead us to conclude the chapter with a reflection, which may seem almost blasphemous, on the positive aspects of deterrence.

4. 5 BROKEN BALANCE OF TERROR

All changes in the structure of the Bomb-System that we talked about so far are of rough nature. But, since the early 80s, a process has begun and it has profoundly changed the traditional appearance of the nuclear "circus" (i.e. warhead + vector) inherited from the end of the Second World War and has propelled it well into the twenty-first century. It was characterized by the

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43 From this point of view, it is quite obvious that there are two types of *overkill*: one is physical, precisely indicating how many times you can destroy humanity; the other is political, indicating the threshold of tolerability of a nuclear attack by a government or a State, beyond which there is a total shambles. This limit is infinitely more restricted: it is no exaggeration to think that a single nuclear explosion could send home, or shoot, the entire leadership of a country; and that few explosions lead to collapse any human society.

44 The image of the "Third", understood as referee/actor between the two contenders was illustrated with his usual clarity, by the famous scholar (Bobbio, 1989). Bobbio speaks of "Third absent" to indicate the inaction, in the political world, of a supranational authority, legalized and efficient, able to force sovereign states to conduct more peaceful and united policies.

following factors: **a) Militarization of outer space b) End of radar visibility of vectors c) Dual capacity vectors d) Versatility of the warheads) Vulnerability of the complex missile + bomb owing new types of conventional weapons f) Horizontal nuclear proliferation**

a) The militarization of outer space

Between March and April 1983, the then President Reagan launched the project of SDI, i.e. *Space Defense Initiative*, or, as they said all at once, the real "Star Wars" and not the one made in Hollywood. "[…] I call upon the scientific community in our country, those who gave us nuclear weapons, to turn their great talents now to the cause of mankind and world peace, to give us the means of rendering these nuclear weapons impotent and obsolete. [...]"[45].

The idea of the president was very simple and apparently appealing: in order to stop the threat of nuclear destruction, it was necessary to build in space a defensive umbrella capable of hitting enemy missiles when they just left their bases to launch; all the missiles, bombers and nuclear weapons will be made as the useless junk in one stroke. You remember how several controversies were arisen in a few days. Thousands of articles, hundreds of books were written; a lot of animations on television around the world went on air, where you could see nuclear missiles hit by infallible laser beams fired from large satellites in orbit: a real hangover of chatter and images. The controversies were related both to the technical feasibility of the project and its cost, that was really terrible[46].

After several years of hype the SDI ended up in drawers and outs of the collective memory. Yet another error, of course, because this "Manhattan Project"[47] in space format is far from dead.

The basic idea of the SDI was to hit and destroy enemy missiles almost immediately after their launch, rather than at the end of the re-entry stage like the old conception of ABM. In practice, once reconnaissance satellites had detected the missiles' departure, a kind of layered defence had to take

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45 Ronald Reagan: Speech of 23 March 1983. Cit. Ferrari [et al], 1986, p. 30.

46 So much so that first the Soviets and then the peace movement translated acidly the acronym SDI with *Save Defense Industry*

47 Recall that the Manhattan Project was the colossal process of synergies between scientific, industrial production and military-political power that allowed the United States to get there first military application of the discoveries on atomic fission.

Chapter 4

place. First, the missiles should be targeted before their ascent phase and then at the height of their orbital parable. The next step would be the destruction of the *bus*, that is, the ends of the rockets that enclose the warheads. The subsequent decimation would be borne by the warheads released by *bus* along with a variety of baits that are false nuclear warheads or other devices which, accompanying to the earth's surface the real bombs, have the task to confuse and overpower opposing defences. Just this tactic makes the SDI, at this stage, particularly delicate. Real warheads must be distinguished from false ones. The last defence layer is built on weapons no longer in orbit but in atmospheric flight, or land-based. Interceptor missiles and powerful laser would attempt to destroy the last enemy bombs. Maximum time for the entire operation was about half an hour, during which at least a thousand rockets and seven-eight thousand warheads should had to be destroyed in case of general attack.

SDI supporters argued in the following ways their assertion that SDI would benefit from the cause of peace: a) in general and towards the future, the space defence missile was the first step towards the final sunset of nuclear weapons carried on target from long distances; in short, with the SDI the end of the atomic age began; b) it was not at all necessary that the SDI worked at 100%; it was enough that it worked just enough to make expensive, complicated and botched an enemy attack, that is, the important requisite was to deter the enemy from attacking, as usual; c) the SDI was important because it compelled USSR to a dramatic alternative: either to embark on a new and extremely costly arms race or to accept negotiations for substantial limitations of nuclear weapons; d) the SDI wanted to convince the opponent to not even launch the first missiles, that is, SDI intended to deter not only a general and massive attack but also a limited one aimed to achieve important political goals; e) towards the American nuclear arsenal, the SDI can be resolved in a further form of protection: it would discourage the race to new offensive weapons and ultimately strengthen the balance of terror.

But supporters of SDI insisted mainly on its emotional side: enough with the Bomb, let's make it a metal scrap with a fine laser beam. The MAD theory was branded as immoral (does it presuppose the total destruction of humanity and future generations, or not?), unstable (for each new offensive weapon the whole defence system must readjust so that it will not collapse) and, finally, it assumes that the attack sooner or later will take place; and if it never came, the price to pay would be the maintenance of an eternal (but for how long?) arms race. So the acronym MAP (Mutual Assured Protection)

replaced the MAD. The term "mutual" was contextual to a proliferation of space weapons. If everyone had been equipped with weapons in orbit, nuclear weapons would have ended up in the toilet bowl and humanity would finally pull the toilet over the atomic age. Saying that these arguments were attacked is an understatement. Let's examine for a moment the most important criticisms, then I attempt a final assessment.

Most common feeling criticism to SDI consisted in finding that just like the old ABM missiles, the whole system of space defence represented a shield behind which the enemy could assume (perhaps rightly) the preparation of a pre-emptive strike and offensive. It was possible to presume that the Soviets would have feared that the Americans attacked in security to destroy their retaliation rockets. Incidentally, this possibility would have nullified one of the pillars of dissuasion, i.e. the invulnerability of the means. In order to reply to the mentioned above point b), opponents of the SDI asserted it was true that it was not necessary that it worked 100 percent. But if the American militarists had probably accepted a reduced by half or a third party Soviet retaliatory in order to defeat the deadly enemy forever, what the population would have said since it would have counted "only" ten or twenty million Americans dead? Forcing the USSR to the negotiations (c) was a cheap and dangerous hypothesis: which negotiation could be set on so unequal bases, or how was it possible to claim that in a situation of such weakness the USSR would bend without doing anything? The criticism to the other points (d, e) were resolved in finding that, in fact, the SDI represented the most expensive and dangerous way to get the same strategic stability that already existed and that could be consolidated with other arms control treaties. The new arms race of SDI was in fact an unnecessary, dangerous and expensive because it was possible to negotiate what might be right away and with greater chance of success.

Many criticisms focused on the technical impossibility to realize the space shield. Critics pointed out so many defects and errors in the project to make it worthless. These flaws could even be an allure to try the same attack, to call Americans' bluff because they could be mainly defeated by their botched sideshow technology.

Moreover, countermeasures that the Soviets could take were so many and effective as to nullify the entire system.

But the most serious criticism do not focused on the technical side, because it could basically say that what is not feasible today it can be tomorrow. In addition to the previously mentioned risk of an offensive sense of SDI by

Chapter 4

other states, criticism of SDI pointed out that the idea of SDI was born old because it wanted to oppose to an already mature nuclear technology not to a future and predictable one. Then, it was pointed out the "space" hypocrisy of Reagan who in order to start what was in fact a new arms race speculated on the desire for peace and on the will to abolish nuclear weapons, instrumentally endorsing pacifist topics against the nuclear weapons' immorality. In summary, the SDI, even if it was so technically up to date, was branded as a crude doctrine because it disregarded Soviet reasons, it could not be solely interpreted as defensive (actually it was the contrary) and it put too much confidence in the goodness of military technology.

One can legitimately argue that SDI has represented the tip of the iceberg, a symptom of a process of technological evolution that will result soon in new weapons and strategies. With the launch of the SDI the US administration wanted to give the latest acceleration in the economic competition with the Soviet Union. The latter was defeated thanks not to military but economic war: the arms race has panned the USSR. And the SDI was an important piece in this framework, as well as it represented a major shot in the arm for the US defence industry.

b) The end of the visibility

The attacked has to know that it is in a position of being attacked in order to respond to. If the target State had ignored when and where it will be attacked with nuclear weapons, it would be in the hysterical dilemma of either doing nothing (and thus risking being caught off guard) or preventively attacking the enemy before disaster happens. The result in any case is the total destruction. Removing the visibility to nuclear carriers, with the connected inability to enjoy the option of pre-alarm, is like turning off the light in a room where a duel is going to be played: the contender who can see in the dark has already won before firing.

Well, stealth technology is permeating the entire universe of large weapon systems. It is primarily based on two methods: giving weapons a particular form in order to deflect radar waves and building them with materials very different from the traditional one, no more metal alloys (except in small part) but polimerics, ceramics, special resins, compounds of graphite. The result is that the stealth weapon system dramatically reduces the blip on the enemies' radar screens. This technology, in which the US is the absolute leader worldwide, is now mostly applied to aircraft, fighter jets for particular uses and strategic bombers. It is the result of decades of studies and trials, and

was one of the best kept secrets in history. The B2 bomber was born as a project in 1979 under President Carter and was officially introduced in 1988. The fighter F117 was created in 1977 and gave incredible evidence during the Gulf War in 1991, when during the first day destroyed 40% of the major Iraqi objectives. The B2 radar track is a hundred times less than that of its predecessor, the famous B52, and half of that of a small plane! The B2 can carry several nuclear weapons directly to the target without the enemy, unless very, very lucky, catching it. With such a weapon, you can dismiss early warning and thus deterrence.

So the weapons tend to become invisible. How much is paradoxical and shocking this technological revolution? In the nuclear philosophy, it is the complete reversal of the logic of deterrence. In its classic framework, weapons **had to be visible**: everyone, opponents and allies, had to be well aware of their presence and power. This was the logic that hold together the retaliation credibility: the State A knew how much its nuclear contender B was powerful and then A was forced not to attack, but at the same time A was also reassured because A knew to know and so everyone drew the same reasons of terror from mutual knowledge and awareness of the power so widely performed. The fear could thus be shared, but also the safety of not being attacked. Now, with the technology of invisibility, fear becomes back to only one actor, the one who does not possess it.

But also in a more general sense invisibility is a revolution. Weapons, every weapons and since forever, were eventually shown, flaunted and thrown at the enemy as an image and symbol of strength. If anything the warriors were to hide: guerrilla fighters, partisans hid themselves in the eyes of the enemy until the time of the action. Now the expensive and refined weapons behave like guerrillas; they hide behind vacuum fluorescent screens. It almost seems that guerrilla warfare has taught conventional war, hyper-technologized war of sovereign states its mode of existence and manifestation.

The stealth weapon is an absolute weapon, absolutely different from that of the atomic bomb. The absoluteness of the latter consists precisely in its pure presence or in the show of its destructive power. The absoluteness of the stealth weapon has to do not with its ultimate effects (which are also visible and destructive), but with the manner of its being there and not being there at the same time. In the long term the enemy could end up not even knowing whether the weapon really exists and in what quantities and with what strategies to use. It is a phantasm absoluteness, a near-death from the realm of shadows.

Chapter 4

The near-death of atomic bomb is quite different: you can imagine the effects of a nuclear attack, you can calculate and study before they happen. This process went as far as to the point that the never really happened nuclear terror became a concrete image penetrated into the collective unconscious of humanity. The prospect of death through invisible weapon is beyond the imagination of human beings, evades their natural or mechanical eyes and the warrior deprived of sight is always a non-warrior.

As one might guess, stealth technology gave a very serious blow to the deterrence. Where before there was visibility of weapons and possibilities of reaction to a spectacular attack, loud from the first hundredths of a second, there is now the prospect of black and silent shadows that glide over the countryside and cities in order to strike without warning and with absolute precision.

c) The "dual capacity" and the end of the adequacy of the response

"Dual capacity" means that a carrier, missile or bomber that is, may have on board conventional explosive or nuclear weapons and that, above all, the opponent is not able to understand what type of explosive charge is bearing down on him. Bombers and cruise approach to inflict precision shots: will normal or annihilating mushrooms nuclear explosions be? Again the orthodox picture, if not reassuring, of the deterrence goes to hell. In the classic model, no one would have launched expensive intercontinental missiles to deliver to the enemy a bit of TNT; because missiles and strategic bombers were born, you might say, just to bring the Bomb to the target. Historically and technologically the combination carriers/nuclear weapons was indissoluble. In the orthodox model of deterrence everybody would understand what nature would be the attack on the basis of the means used.

But faced with the "dual capacity" such confidence falters and eventually disappears. The uncertainty of the attack is reflected on the uncertainty of the response. If in classical deterrence uncertainty lay in the "if" and "when" there would be an attack, in the age of invisible weapons and dual capacity it widens to the "how" (the "why" here does not apply). This trivial dislocation of adverbs has huge implications, as we see. In its uncertainty (will they attack? If we attack them, will they respond?) classical deterrence had a stability that resided in the clarity of the code used: **recognizable weapons in their essential features and clear strategies**. The mode of manifestation of the code were provided and set in a mutual and equal message. But now the uncertainty is dramatically reflected on all other questions, forcing reformulating them again.

d) The new terror: Versatility of the warheads

From the above, it will perhaps be clear that the increasing specialization and differentiation of weapons is at the base of the deterioration process of deterrence. In the pair "balance of terror", the more the terror is macroscopic, widespread, unconditional (if we want to, crude and brutal), the more the balance is strengthened because it increases for everyone the degree of shared danger. It is the talk about code clarity that we did just now. Instead, introducing sophisticated weapons, new operational possibilities, etc. gives impetus to an erosion process that reduces the component of the "balance" without actually diminishing the terror. Indeed, decreasing the balance increases the terror. This is particularly true when to undergo such a process the last link in the chain is, that is, the nuclear warheads themselves.

We have already mentioned the fact that when during the seventies priorities of targets were reformulated moving from a strategy against the cities to a counter military installations (which was allowed by the increase of warheads and by increased precision of missiles) deterrent stability underwent a serious blow. This is of course because a strategy that gives priority to the military targets is not a strategy based on the second shot of retaliation (it would not make sense to hit a missile base from which missiles have already left), but it is a strategy of the first shot, far more menacing because it is preventive and not punitive.

This process deteriorates even more as a result of diversification and specialization of the warheads. Alongside the bombs destined to merely exterminator function on a large scale, it has grown a generation of ordnance that, although "little" powerful in terms of pure explosive force, are capable of solving particular tasks. So we have warheads that can penetrate very deep into the ground before exploding in order to destroy bunkers; or can cause massive electromagnetic effects to jam the enemy equipment, exploding in the atmosphere, etc.

The destabilizing effects of all these devices is evident, they make possible, familiar and appealing an idea which should be postulated as taboo, i.e. the practical and effective use of nuclear weapons. Being simultaneously atomic weapons but not weapons of mass destruction (even if only in theory) can facilitate their use, can take away the horror of atomic apocalyptic connotations in favour of an account of a horror that you may also face and overcome but to win a war[48].

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48 This is the kind of weapon that Israel could use to annihilate the Iranian nuclear pro-

Chapter 4

e) Vulnerability of the complex missile-bomb owing to new types of conventional weapons

omeone wants to launch a missile with a nuclear warhead? An antimissile missile based on the ground may be ready to the task or, an even more drastic solution, a space platform that shoots a laser beam, or even a plane (or a submarine) that launches a stealth hypersonic cruise (from 6 to 8,000 kilometres per hour) ... *et voilà*! The nuclear missile is destroyed with simple conventional explosives. If you do not even want victims, warheads can be used, instead of detonating chemical explosive, to produce an EMP effect, i.e. an electromagnetic effect (also a by-product of nuclear explosions) that wreaks havoc with all the electronic circuits of the weapon that one want to destroy; or directed energy weapons that use microwave as high energy.

As you can imagine, these scenarios are derived directly from the SD, which we discussed earlier. High technology conventional weapons are used to destroy, or at least inhibit, the weapons of mass destruction by using an amount of infinitely smaller energy.

Well, in classical nuclear deterrence (between few international players pointing missiles at each other against the cities and who enjoy early warning, invulnerability of their means, etc.) the exchange of message is an adamant clarity; remember: "If you destroy me, I will destroy you" and vice versa. Out of this situation, all is complicated in a damn way. We have already seen it throughout this essay. Things do not get better if one of the actors decide to use conventional weapons to deter nuclear attacks and for many good reasons that we will try to briefly summarize. Technically speaking: a) nuclear warheads (and those chemical and biological) should be kept out of the reach of conventional weapons, and therefore hidden, miniaturized, brought to destination in a suitcase; anything in order to avoid detection; b) also carriers would suffer the same fate: if the missiles parabolic trajectory can be hit, then you might as well steal or buy some smuggled *cruise*, or even worse, to launch missiles at the first hint of interception.

But the biggest troubles are political: who might agree to be disarmed in its prestigious nuclear component from someone who is not likely even on the same level, since he has departed from the field of weapons of mass destruction? How could you justify a nuclear punishment? It will end up

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gram. Low explosive power, precision and prudent management in the media could be "digest" the world public the fact, in itself shocking, that would be the third military use of nuclear material in history.

automatically in the dock of history: to add insult to injury... And then, who can afford a revolution of this magnitude? The bomb can now be built by many, it is a weapon of democratic acquisition as well as for its effects. Who could keep up such a system of space stations, missiles and smart bombs, microwave guns, etc.? The usual happy few, those that already, at the time, held nuclear monopoly...

It is true that it can be argued that: a) In short, it is still **progress** if conventional weapons supplant those of mass destruction; b) it could trigger a virtuous circle for which everyone, in the end, should be encouraged to invest in the new super weapons..

No one can know whether the spectacular progress in driving bullets of chemical energy, or even in the exit from military chemistry (a cycle that began with the invention of firearms) will actually change the face of war. What is certain is that in the next ten, twenty years you will live in a period of transition, such as fraught with unknowns and dangers[49].

f) Nuclear proliferation

The same successful attempt, *temporibus illis*, by the USSR to break the American atomic monopoly can be considered the first act of nuclear proliferation. Since then, on the one hand many countries have pursued the goal of obtaining nuclear weapons and, on the other, the few states that already had them tried to prevent the enlargement of the nuclear club using policies also very ambiguous and contradictory.

The chorus of concerns about nuclear proliferation is quite extensive and uniform. There are also the dissonant voices (Gambino, 1986). In summary, they are summed up in the position of those who believe that the spread of nuclear weapons could lead to substantial benefits, due to the destructive nature of these weapons. Again, the reasons are obvious. Assuming a situation of two countries engaged in an irreducible conflict, the "optimistic" of proliferation believe that, if both of them had had the bomb, this strategic situation would automatically resemble on a smaller scale the East-West conflict. Then the Bomb would ultimately inhibit the conflict, block it, hold responsible elites also making them conscious and aware of the complex issues related to membership of an international system. In short, nuclear fear would make adult, if not wise, all the international actors watering down the

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49 I will try to deepen this topic in the next essay.

Chapter 4

thrusts of the most tumultuous political fanaticism. With the atomic Bomb in every corner of the world all the states would become more careful about how they move on the international stage: it is what is called "sobering effect", caused by the nuclear weapons...

It is evident that those considerations in their turn, though not trivially attributes to a kind of nuclear militarism on a global scale, are subject to heavy criticism. First, the balance of terror has worked, so far, precisely because the possibility of its collapse was terrifying. Everyone stopped at the prospect of a global destruction because: a) the nuclear fear covered the entire planet, not just the two countries directly affected and then all States were interested in that deterrence could be effective; b) fear was an image of a political confrontation that had the face both of the conflict and of collaboration, or complicity, with the aim to domain the world through division; c) it was the final link in a complex of military confrontations and frictions ranging from contacts between ground troops to targeting the enemy with missiles, through the endless channels of diplomacy: everything was part of a general deterrent framework. This complexity misses in a scenario between two small countries: consequently the danger posed by the possession of nuclear weapons by small and quarrelsome states intensifies.

To these topics may be added others that originate by external causes to the atomic situation or non-recurring in the future. For example several factors reminded everyone that we lived under the nuclear terror: the memory of the horrors of the two world wars that is slowly fading away; the homogeneity of the opposing blocs during the confrontation East - West, in the sense that in those years there was not the feeling, so widespread today, of a war of everyone against everyone, but a greater rigidity and "discipline" in the confrontation between political blocs and conceptions of life prevailed; the series of nuclear tests that for many years they rang the bell for the inhabitants of the countries involved in the atomic virtual duel; and finally a steady stream of media, articles, films, books. Do all these factors still act today? Can they really act to every people and political elites of the planet? Will be understood by all the news that the bomb has brought in the way of doing politics, in view of the enemy and so on? Is the idea of surrendering to the retaliation, of being insecure to ensure mutual survival really a concept that everyone is able to accept?

Also, it is possible that the militarism originating, for example, from religious fanaticism considers the Bomb in a different way than the theory and

practice of politics in the Western version, which in the end even the former Soviet Union shared the origins and assumptions. To this topic the "non-opponents" of proliferation can argue that, independently from religious or other kinds of fanaticism, atomic death remains a bad fish to fry and that, beyond the rhetoric, even the most fanatical leaders would think a hundred times before pressing certain buttons. It is not hard to dispute this statement, wondering if all of this has nothing to do with the concept of death and afterlife of certain peoples, philosophies and religions. Or question of million dollars, wondering what one would have done if Hitler had had the bomb... and then what some of alleged or anticipated contemporary followers would have done. In short, a great controversy ... It is very likely that nuclear proliferation continues and unfortunately only time will tell which of the two views about it will have the comfort of confirmation from History[50].

4. 6 CONCLUSIONS: TERROR WITHOUT BALANCE?

As I hope you may have guessed from the above, the common character to all the described technical innovations is to complicate the traditional code of deterrence. The nuclear "hit-and-response", i.e. the key generator of balance and stall, is attacked in its "response" component. In view of stealth carriers or with "dual capacity", in view of or selective bombs that can be hidden in a backpack, in view of an attack from space, the nightmare of being a victim of a devastating first strike that leaves no chance to answer abandons the territories of a very complicated technical action and therefore difficult to imagine (which was the classic hypothesis of a massive missile attack) to become an option easily implemented, perhaps by desperate people. In the scale of deterrence the pan of balance becomes more and more light while that of terror increasingly heavy.

In the classic atomic situation ("If you attack me, I will destroy you") the **declared will and technical assets were consistent with each other: the means were such that no other strategy was possible**. Today (and as you recall this situation dates from the late seventies) assets can be used according to an opposed and irreconcilable logic. In addition, there is no assurance that having first shot weapons is, in the end, an invincible temptation to change also declared strategy to a more aggressive goal. In fact, historically speaking, did not men always said that they got better weapons to defend

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50 We will return on this topic, too.

Chapter 4

themselves, and only defend themselves, better? The classic atomic situation was one of the few moments in which this statement (normally a mere rhetorical device and a lure for fools) had the essential characteristics of truth. A stalemate imposed by the mutual vulnerability. **The real deterrence does not hold neither on declared will nor on rhetorical devices, but on concrete data which can be received by all the actors of the international system.** The new weapons introduce elements that unhinge the old code of deterrence and therefore represent a serious danger.

4.7 THE POSITIVE ASPECTS OF NUCLEAR DETERRENCE OR WHAT THE BOMB CAN TEACH

It is good to say that the mere possession of atomic weapons does not create the deterrent effects, but it is the quality and quantity sharing of the Bomb system that creates balance, although of terror. In order to not be considered simply a weapon more powerful than the other, the atomic weapon must be able to mirror other nuclear weapons and so the states that possess them must do.

That said, I can say that the ultimate weapon has completely revealed the true language of war, which is death. It is true that, according to the classic definition of Clausewitz, war is simply politics by other means and that the war is subordinate to it. But according to the Prussian theorist there is an element of absoluteness and debauchery in the war that politics (once it has achieved its objectives) try to moderate. The Bomb can be interpreted as a concrete expression of unbridled war. Deterrence, this self-castration and inhibition of total war, is the extreme limit that history, or the chance, have placed to the showing of absolute horror.

After all, the Bomb placed the equation: hate equal suicide. As if nuclear war is a civil war *par excellence*, the apotheosis of fratricide. Just like the soldiers of opposing sides during the First World War found themselves sometimes to fraternize in the name of the escape from the reducing to slavery caused by war, so atomic age men are forced to recognize, to mirror each other in order to survive under sword of Damocles of thousands of fireballs.

- The point is so important that it must be repeated with other words. In fact, you may deter someone only in two ways: either by threatening an unbearable punishment (deterrence by punishment) or physically preventing him from implementing its resolutions (deterrence by denial). The proper and particular situation of the nuclear age

is deterring through intolerable punishment, which is the stronger mode, because:

- The threat of punishment, or rather its forerunner, is paradoxically more terrifying than a concrete act of retribution that, in practice, can not succeed one hundred percent;

- Who dissuades can keep waiting, brandishing the threat of intolerable punishment, and must only maintain the credibility of his threat; thus, he takes a defensive position and according to Clausewitz, the defence is stronger than attack;

- Who is dissuaded, in turn, is in no way challenged or tempted by revenge/punishment, as it is the case with deterrence by denial, that is, indeed, a challenge and therefore it could cause the sufferer to the temptation to try. Deterring by denial obliges who dissuades to act and the act involves the risk of failure. Deter by punishment instead simply obliges to be credible, no obligation to act. The rest is the fear that in the first case can not be a sufficient brake, while in the second it can unfold in full. With the punishment one forces the other to not want, with the denial to not use power: but not everyone accepts that; and it is easier assimilating a not-will than a not-possibility, especially when the opponent is in the same, mirror conditions.

The bomb is the most serious and experienced threat of humanity extinction. There have been other, especially the great pandemics of antiquity and the fourteen century. But it is the first that men can inflict each other. This certainly is its danger but also, probably, its pedagogical function. Look at the bottom of the bomb, looking at its face, can help men to maintain the absoluteness of the war between the tight reins of politics. This speech may seem, and perhaps it is, too optimistic in the face of phenomena related to nuclear proliferation and to the atomic Bomb desire of many emerging countries. However, it is undeniable that, if the path to nuclear weapons continued to be travelled, the search for **reciprocity of threat** (with all the features that we mentioned before: visibility of weapons, "sanctuarization" of early warning assets, etc.) would be the only still point to cling, before trying a way of nuclear disarmament that meets every States.

In short, if it is really the mankind fate riding for a long time the nuclear tiger, it will be vital that the atomic situation is stabilized as much as possible, giving priority, in all its aspects (from the characteristics of the weapons to the operational theories), to the patterns that make the nuclear threat a "common heritage" of humanity[51].

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51 In addition to measures cited in the text, there are many others, enough to fill a "dream book", to stabilize the atomic situation. These include: 1) To bring back to one, and only one, nuclear warhead atop ground-launched and submarines missiles; 2) To point nuclear weapons solely against the cities, and not against military targets: in short return to

5 THE FUTURE WAR:
from postmodern to post-human

Things are in the saddle
and ride Mankind
(Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Ode to
William H. Channing")

5. 1 THE TECHNIQUE

We are facing a revolution of enormous scope. The growing autonomy of the machines and their integration with the biological element, opens scenarios that, at the end of the twenty-first century and in the absence of natural catastrophes, will lead us to recognize the advent of a new humanity, a new stage of evolution. "GRIN" is an acronym that is a convenience feature to view the whole of the change: Genetics, Robotics, Computer Science, Nanotechnology. In their mingling the various fields already represent the spearhead of the new evolutionary race. This change will affect all areas of society, including of course the military one.

War machine is not simply war made with the machines, as it has happened throughout the twentieth century. It means that the mechanization of the war launched by the developed world has triggered a process that most likely will end with the war made exclusively by machines, including robots-soldiers instead of flesh and blood, and vice versa (but not that much) human bodies of soldiers biomechanically transformed into robots, or better cyborgs.

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retaliatory second strike; 3) To always place human crews on board long-range strategic bombers; 4) To allow, in case of serious international crisis, United Nations observers to be stationed in the nuclear launch sites; 5) To avoid using technologies missile (ABM) to counter the trajectory of carriers with bombs; 6) To leave the outer space only to satellite for observation and alarm; 7) To cut ruthlessly quantities of warheads: the *overkill* factor should not exceed one, that there should be no more heads as needed to kill humanity only once; 8) To extend nuclear protection to those nations that, left to themselves, they could be tempted to manufacture, or use if already possess, nuclear weapons (thinking of a NATO guarantee to Israel, for example ...).

It is also clear that when we talk about war machines one should not only think about weapons that shoot. Since the Second World War in this category all the means used for the different tasks of logistics and, above all, the means for calculating must be included. Precisely in this field, progress has been incredible, more than in any other field. To give just one example, the ENIAC, one of the first computers used after the Second World War, was thirty meters long, three meters high and one meter deep; already in 1977 a twenty times more powerful processor costed ten thousand times less and needed of a memory contained in a silicon chip of three square centimetres (De Landa, 1996). You can imagine how that chip is now considered... So let us look to the future, speaking before the weapons as objects and then the forms of war. It is good to warn that there will be repetitions, a passing and coming back to concepts already set out (still hoping not to bore the reader too): this depends on the intrinsic complexity and complementarity of the factors at play.

5. 1. *1* The Shapes of Arms

The transfer of intelligence from the man to the machine is a process in constant acceleration and expansion. If this is a process that dates from a long time, in the coming years the real revolution will be drawn up by physical combination between the two parties: thanks to bioengineering, the soldiers will be robot and robot will be human. The scope of these innovations is hardly imaginable. Summarizing, the fields in which the military technique will not end to surprise the uninitiated are the satellites, computer networks, robotics, artificial intelligence, biotechnology and the already mentioned, last but not least, nanotechnology. Computer networks are, as it is known, already strongly developed and while we are waiting for computers capable of "selfgeneration" and with "almost human" intelligence, we are now on the threshold of total integration of battlefield, so every human or mechanical element will be connected.

Robotics and nanotechnology are areas in which prospects are most striking. In a few years land and sea unmanned vehicles have passed from the stage of reconnaissance platforms for the real fight, obviously gaining a greater functional autonomy. Tanks, for their part, are learning to defend themselves, without the intervention of their crew and due no longer to the thickness of their armour, but shooting around mini rockets to shoot down missiles that could perforate and destroy it. This could lead to the final decline of today pachyderms of sixty, seventy tons tanks. Obviously, all devic-

Chapter 5

es are miniaturizing and in a not too distant future we will see flying swarms of mini air planes, submarines sail a few meters in length, and so on.

Stealthiness is another characteristic of future weapons: whatever the technology sector that one want to consider (design, paint, noise, emitted heat) the trend is for a drastic, really drastic reduction in visibility of whatever considered radiation. At the end of this process there are the nanotechnology: engines visible only under a microscope, equipments of each type no larger than a fingernail and able to carry out works today unthinkable.

It is pointless to dwell in this "Barnum" of technological marvels. What is important is to try to grasp the basic trends: integration between man and machine, increasingly extensive range of weapons, flexibility of use, also including, in this sense, the weapons of mass destruction.

5.1.2 Effects on the Battlefield

The process of time contraction to take political and military decisions, both in strategic and tactical level, continues its unstoppable run. Especially in the tactical field, the battlefields are now marked by a dynamism unthinkable in the past. Machines, ideas and information must move at an increasing speed, in four dimensions, to hit and to avoid being hit. In a sense, modern armies are proposing the characteristics of nomadic societies armies: today here, tomorrow many kilometres distant places, able to disperse and focus quickly. Of course there is a fundamental difference that consists in the enormous firepower available to most of today soldiers.

As it was pointed out in a brilliant essay (De Landa, 1996), the armies' evolution from the eighteenth century to the present day is particularly interesting. Until the late eighteenth century, the armies were similar in the field or in the strategic theories; they were mechanisms that must operate on the basis of standardized, almost ritualistic procedures. Clocks that worked at low intensity of consumed and produced energy, formed by "automata-men" that moved and fought slowly and in a mental and physical space like a chessboard.

After the coming of masses in history and the industrial revolution, armies profoundly change their nature. Not more clocks, they become engines that were pushed to the maximum in all their manifestations. Large energy consumers, they produced it too in destructive form. The mental space in which the war is being prepared, analysed and fought, is torn, expands beyond; chessboard, which caged space-time in rigid coordinates, was replaced by a

movement that brought to mind a wild ride downhill.

Today the view of physical and mental environment is changed again. Army, as mentioned, is being nomad. It is still a great consumer of resources of all kinds, it does not indiscriminately squander them but, in the way of a laser beam, it focuses and shoots them on the research of the final blow. Mental space becomes a network that overlaps the physical environment in which the means and the men are called to operate and need to be able and know how to move in all directions, with no defined fronts and throughout the electromagnetic radiation, coincident or less with the possibilities of the human senses. The three stages of warfare (clock, engine, network) are the same to those that could be found in the industrial production for civilian use.

Contemporary warfare is therefore undergoing a revolutionary process of change, or as it is repeated *ad nauseam*, a Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA). This revolution has a name: Information Warfare (IW). It is good to understand in the right away that the "war of information" is not the old propaganda war. Here "information" does not mean the news, **but any finding suitable to operate the political-military machine**. Then the IW wants to optimize the flow of knowledge of their own army and block and destroy that of the enemy. This under the quite obvious assumption that modern military organizations operate according to information of all kinds and travelling in all directions.

The IW is thus war to and by computers, but also by and against weapons with high technological content and within the whole immaterial universe surrounding military operations: radio waves, radar, lasers and so forth.

IW has emerged at all levels. It is worth repeating that it has both offensive and defensive capabilities, and it is based on: weapons, and their delivery assets, with great precision in hitting the targets, highly advanced systems of control-communication-computers and intelligence (known as C4I), electronic warfare and virtual reality simulations of all levels of war, from grand strategy to small tactical episode (Kipp, 1995). The whole with the intent not as much to destroy massively the army or the country of the enemy, but rather to prevent the enemy from functioning and, in a defensive sense, to acquire greater autonomy for own army and political leadership[52] in term of

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52 The Gulf War has marked the chronological beginning of this process. To illustrate the effectiveness and lethality of modern weapons, suffice is to say that 2.5 percent of the total US Air Force, made up of forty-F117 Nighthawk (fighter jets to stealth technology) with only 2 percent of the total number of sorties carried out Iraq, hit the 40 percent

Chapter 5

space and time.

In short, the mechanization/"technologization" of war has resulted in a process whereby it has increasingly become as a legal execution, like in the death row: short and infallible. All military actions are draped with an integrated computer network whose flows are not unidirectional (from command centres to the soldiers), but are travelling in all directions just as happens on Internet. Every single soldier can send messages or receive them in respect of the information complex above and around him. The electronic cocoon is therefore a sphere, or a network, and includes large satellites in high orbit as well as the cellular phone of the individual tank crewman.

Therefore, the basic features of the IW are: **confidence in the technology** and the **declared intention of winning and save human lives**. Let's look a bit more closely at these two points.

Trust in technology is a traditional aspect of the Western military thinking. The tendency to trust in the use of the most effective means and of the organization instead of warrior ethics or ideological mobilization has marked the confrontation between the West and the rest of the world and between the same Western countries for centuries. The historic achievement, even through difficult trials and stinging defeats, seems to agree with this trend. Traditionally, better equipped and organized armies won wars and not the warlike enthusiasm. Even because, while the warrior morale (perhaps after a first defeat) can fairly quickly be resurrected, it is not as much about an industrial apparatus and adequate logistic. The miserable end of fascist warmongering was the latest example of a confrontation that, if it is certainly not over, for the moment turns in favour of matter over spirit. Before the present time, the highest point of the faith in technology has had in the period of affirmation of air power as a key to win wars. In particular, during the Second World War, with the policy of strategic bombing carried out by the Americans, with his research of surgical and decisive blows against the German industry base, which we previously mentioned. We know that this strategy largely failed, but the Americans did not grasp fully the lesson so much that

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target of prime importance with a share of first shots to score 80 per cent and without a single loss. At three and two minutes of the night of 17 January 1991, that is, one hundred and twenty seconds after the start of operations, Iraq was practically blind and deaf, having been stripped of its most important communication centres (Patton, 1993). Considering also the terrestrial weapons, the PGM (Precision Guided Munitions) of all kinds, which constituted only 10 percent of projectiles fired or launched, got 90 percent of the targets.

they repeated the mistake of relying too heavily on their technological power in Vietnam. The promise of technology is a hardly circumvented siren; so today the IW promises victories with low human cost: the debate whether it is yet another illusion is still open and will be the events to say the final word.

The other point is the pursuit of victory without having to pay an excessive toll in terms of human lives, even regarding the enemy. Even in economic terms, the Information Warfare promises to be cheaper than the traditional way of fighting, if for no other reason because it is supposed that short strokes produces less destruction than prolonged and indiscriminate bombings.

The need to save their soldiers has become a categorical imperative for Western armies, due to both the demographic collapse and the high cost of a well-trained soldier. The second part of the argument is less intuitive: the desire to avoid casualties among the enemy is not due to philanthropy, but, as mentioned, to the fear of devastating reprisals and, very importantly, to look for as large as possible political consensus in world opinion. Here the second concepts above mentioned, "protection of the masses", connects. The mass that must be protected is the population of the countries involved in the conflict, those people are not to be subjected to devastating reprisals otherwise the purposes for which the war was undertaken will be thwarted. In short, it is better to hit a power plant and stop a city, rather than razing entire neighbourhoods, because you never know what might happen later.

The possible weakness of the argument is that no one really knows how an opponent will react facing the military-political defeat, albeit achieved with a smart military strategy. It is true, however, that a retaliation with terrorist methods would put the loser on trial in the light of the judgement of posterity, but in the meantime the bloody omelette would be made.

The debate about IW, as perhaps you can guess, recalls some concepts traditionally associated with other military contexts. Its modes of use resemble terrorism but they are also tactics elements of guerrilla warfare: silence, invisibility, accuracy and speed. It would seem then that the Western way of warfare is trying to leave loud and bloody methods of mass conflict to set off on the ways, permitted by the technology, once adopted by those who relied on human qualities such as camouflage, cunning and intelligence. The Western war would then become "light", airy, multi-faceted and flexible. If this attempt is bound to be successful it is now impossible to say. Among the ideas recovered from tradition there is, for example, the thinking of Sun Tzu,

Chapter 5

the Chinese theorist of the fifth century BC who is famous for its insistence on the pursuit of victory achieved without a fight, at the lowest cost and in the shortest time possible (Sun Tzu, 1988). The Mongolian armies warfare during the thirteenth century is also rediscovered: they defeated enemies, while constantly outnumbered them by implementing an efficient and fast, in that time, system of information circulation. Compared to their enemies, Mongols knew better and in advance where and when to move, stand and fight.

But what Mongols entrusted with the number and speed of their couriers on horseback, now rests on a number of means hardly classifiable, because much of the information is classified, i.e. Top Secret. An impressive panoply in order to "deny, distort, destroy or disable enemy communications and its ability to identify targets"[53].

Returning to the concerns raised by such a drastic choice in favour of the technology, it should be said that it is not only the enemy reaction, maybe "irrationally" disproportionate, that may jam the mechanism of computerized war. As it is repeatedly noted in the literature (Riper, 1997; Dunlap, 1999), it is the very essence of war in the clausewitzian way which can go all belly up. For example, policy options can be favoured by IW but they can also influence it, block it or frustrate it. Then there is the huge problem related to chance or friction: the fact that during a war nothing works as it should do for reasons that can be endless. The malfunction does not end with itself, but in turn it could create chain reaction of side effects. There is also another important objection. Illusion of winning the war by striking from distance can be very dangerous both because the enemy can simply not accept being defeated by those who pay little of their blood having the luxury of not exposing himself to an excessive risk, and because the real and traditional victory consists of physically occupying the real space, and then the mental, of the enemy and of paying alleged prices.

IW fans argue that the clausewitzian categories, particularly the moral aspect of the war and the chance, have gradually lost importance thanks to the continuous growth of the technological and management factor of the war. When the war "physicality", the hardware we would say today, ended near the physical body of soldiers because they were materially wielding weapons and when the information that circulated depended on their intellectual

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53 Morris, 1995, p. 6.

ability, the imponderable elements linked with the imperfect nature of human beings assumed a greater significance. But today, and even more in the future, technology will change the very environment of the war, its breeding ground and the air it breathes. The own machines decide at higher and higher levels; machines identify and strike; machines exceed the limitations of Nature; machines learn to fight. Therefore, according to this view, the realm of morality and the unpredictable tends to decrease.

War technology raises numerous issues relating to: **firepower**, **chances of survival of the soldier**, **role of the fighter**, **figure of the enemy**.

The trend regarding the **firepower** is given by the decrease of the dispersion and waste of the blows delivered against the opponent. While the nuclear explosion is by nature always effective because of its power (it would only be ineffective in the case of a total output of route of the carrier), the conventional explosives have traditionally been used in a superabundance respect to the quantity and quality of the aims. Instead, from some years now the conventional power has undergone a process of concentration/miniaturization: bullets have become expensive and precise, so precise to approach the realization of the ballistics dream: one shot-one kill. Nuclear and conventional weapons are differentiating then only to the extent of the area affected, while the effectiveness (the so-called probability-killing) is becoming the same. It can be argued that is over the age of wastefulness (millions of fired bullets, millions of tons of dropped bombs) and it began the era of thrift. But this does not mean that the conventional fire has decreased. The power is still besides precision: the synergy of the two factors is deadly. For example, the successor to the B52, the B1B, can drop eighty-four bombs of two hundred twenty-seven kilograms each on a single target. Even hiding underground has become more difficult: the now commonly in use penetrating laser-guided bombs are five meters long, weighing over two tons and are capable of making a hole in thirty meters of pressed terrain (Barbati, 1996).

This process involves a series of consequences, one of which is the growth of the intrinsic value of the weapons, in terms of money and labour incorporated in them. The weapons have also declined in numbers and are not easily and quickly replaceable. So the contemporary war between armies armed to the maximum level allowed by the technology increasingly resembles a boxing match between heavyweight (which does not last long, exhausts opponents and can be decided by a single shot) or, better yet, to a duel of chivalry times where the concentration of resources decided the whole campaign.

Another consequence of technological progress is the imposed dispersion

Chapter 5

of military forces on the ground in order to reduce vulnerability. In the early nineteenth century, a division, about fifteen thousand men, occupied an area of five square kilometres. Today, the same division must disperse in a square which side is at least forty square kilometres. In the twenty-first century it is expected that, in order to avoid enemy fire, a division will occupy a square of at least one hundred square kilometres (Reto, 1996). Therefore, in the past the fighting bitterness was in direct proportion to the proximity of the contenders: since the invention of firearms, the distance has increasingly grown and today one can strike anyone at any point firing by anywhere. The proximity as a factor favouring the killing remained the unlucky prerogative of civilians: in Rwanda eight hundred thousand people were killed with machetes. A thing like that can no longer happen to any modern soldier, unless he is taken prisoner.

The above implies among other things that the modern conventional war, being limited in time, should go straight to the point. "Hitting early and hard", this is the categorical imperative of modern western armies. This does not mean that the war should also be limited in scope, and in its political-military objective, which represent the reasons of the war. Rather, the intended purpose can no longer be entrusted to the wear and tear of the enemy because these aims are pursued through other instruments such as economic embargoes and diplomatic isolation. The purpose congeals, is concentrated in a few decisive shots one want to give to the opponent, without losing intensity and reach. A similar situation, if one of the two armies is considerably weaker in terms of technology and has not the Nature as an ally, favours what in the past was obtained after years of gruelling fights: the outright massacre. The example of the Gulf War is worth noting because in that case the proportion of losses apparently was one hundred and twenty of Western troops against a hundred thousand Iraqis, nearly one to a thousand[54].

In this context, the **soldier chances of survival** (second point) are largely decreased. Today, every single fighter is a very worthwhile target both because he/she is contained in a valuable weapon (tank, ship or air plane), and he/she includes value inasmuch he/she is a product of a long training and the terminal of information coming from a satellite or from other sensors. It is no longer the mass of enemy soldiers to be targeted (with massive and

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54 Cfr. Masini S., 1995; Lefkir-Laffitte, 1995; London, 1993. In fact no one is sure of the Iraqi casualties figures; but the proportion compared to losses of Westerners seems generally accepted.

indiscriminate fire) but in fact every single soldier as a specialist. Hence, it can be assumed that the danger of death, and its psychological tension for the modern soldier have increased. The increased level of technology has, for example, reduced the importance of the natural factors for the protection of soldiers; today, the night does not protect as it was before, as well as bad weather or holing up in a trench; these types of protection, a kind of natural uterus, have not lost all their importance but they are increasingly replaced by the active protection, electronic womb where modern soldiers are immersed. The fact is, however, that the active electronic protection (masking radar, countermeasures, etc.) are psychologically less effective protections than, thanks to atavistic mechanisms, it is clinging to the land or take advantage of fog or darkness. Therefore, it can be argued that modern soldiers feel more "naked" facing the risk of being hit than a private of the two world wars. It is true that the war professional now costs much more than in the past and therefore tends to be saved, but only (though it is still a lot) in the sense that the concept of the soldiers as "cannon fodder" has waned (this role is now reserved to civilians).

Third issue to be addressed: the **own role of the fighter** has also changed in many ways. Meanwhile, the gap between military and civilians, which was already heavily present in the last century, has increased. As mentioned, while the soldiers, which are few and expensive, tend to be capitalized and spared, civilians could have to face not only the megadeath of weapons of mass destruction but also they, as the Yugoslav conflict has demonstrated, are the subject of trade, through the death, to acquire political advantage. The indiscriminate sniping is a means of political pressure, as well as ethnic rape is a new weapon to test with fieldwork.

In addition, the soldiers' loneliness within their peer group has accentuated. If the provided scenarios came true, the early twenty-first century soldier would be an individual wrapped in an electronic cocoon, his helmet would give him, night and day and in any weather, the situation in front of him, in the form of virtualised representation. Each infantryman will be as the today pilot, who "sees" the kilometres away target in digital form, directs fire simply by moving his eyes and launches weapons that find themselves the target. The soldier of the near future will be informed by satellite at all times about his position, a small camera will show the essence of the landscape in front of him and the sensors will find for him the enemy, by detecting body heat or the emission of breath and the smell of perspiration.

It is likely that the heightened "technologization" undermines team spirit

(so important in war for survival, especially the psychological one) because each soldier will have too much to do to receive, interpret and send electronic messages. In this sense, perhaps, the loneliness of the infantryman huddled in the muddy trenches of the First World War will come back and it will resurface in an electronic way. At that time a wall of fire and noise railed against the little, stunned and terrified man; on the contrary today and in the near future, perhaps the soldier warn not even the hiss of a small and invisible projectile and the soundtrack of his death will be only his pant that stops.

It is questionable whether there is the robotic soldier at the end of this process. The issue is very complex because it is not easy to define the term robotics or understand the consequences of this trend, should it actually becoming true. The today concept of robotics has been significantly modified compared to the past. During history many times soldiers fought in conditions of high stereotyping of their behaviours, that is, they were accustomed to obeying, just like robots, highly simplified and standardized orders and procedures: the only requested service was an iron discipline in deployment and under fire. The two most obvious examples that come immediately to mind are the seventeen century soldiers and the First World War infantrymen. In both cases the whole army with its subdivisions, from the front down to the company, was considered a machine, a gear that had to function without jamming: to achieve that goal the minute pieces of the machine, i.e. individual soldiers, could not and had not to think. Their training was simple and it was necessary to repeat it with the utmost speed and efficiency. The soldiers were all interchangeable; it not needed to act autonomously, indeed it was considered harmful. The analogy with the workers of the first industrial revolution, as we know, is much more than a mere similarity.

Today, at least basically, in the western armies, the soldier is a professional (also conscripts in this sense) not only able to use complex machines, but also called to make decisions in changing situations. The variety of tasks and risks that he must face prevents the modern soldier from seeking refuge in standardized behaviour. Yet the man in question is subject to constraints and tensions that do not really make him a free warrior and a knight of adventure. Today soldier has two enemies which push him to became a robot. One is the incessant pressure both of his own technology, which he has to govern, his own, and of enemy technology, which he has to cope with. In a much more stressed way than during the wars of the first half of the twentieth century, the soldier feels the weight of contemporary technology, he depends on machines, especially by their decisions and not only, as in the past, by their

good or bad work.

The other enemy is his role of manager and regulator of death in two cases: the megadeath and "shot" death. The soldiers who run the equipment of massive destruction (nuclear weapons and their means of delivery, specialists of chemical and biological weapons) are called to prepare and to manage the unenforceable, are the priests of a religion that you have not to practice for the good reason that it is not a religion of salvation. The fact that in this lies the trick to get out psychologically, i.e. the reassuring idea that it manages the threat of an act and not the act itself, does not change the fact that, functionally, you are in a situation of maximum alienation. *Mutatis mutandis*, of course, an executioner remains so even if the execution is continuously postponed.

Managers of "shot" death are those for which the death of the enemy no longer exists, it has been reduced to a dot on the radar screen that disappears, to the noise of breaking a hull submarine heard through headphones or to a flash in the distant night. Today the enemy is seen not in the face, but only through symbols with which it is represented, this leads to indifference, to the far more ease of killing than the compulsion to do so under the pounding orders and iron discipline. I think it is hard to deny this assumption. The contemporary "robotization" of soldier then, or at least its risk-fulfillment, depends much more on the technology than, as in the past, on the training and/or ideological environment in which soldier is operating.

With the war of machines the **figure of the enemy** experiences many interesting developments. The process of his total dehumanization tends to be completed: in particular it is not only for the above mentioned reduction of the enemy's body as a symbol, an icon whose disappearance from the screen indicates that the machines were hit and destroyed that he loses his humanity. It is also through the simulation in training, with sophisticated programs of virtual reality, that the enemy loses his human characteristics. The simulation, whose popular version tracks in video games for home computers, is massively used today. Staff officers, infantrymen, air planes and helicopters pilots, and so forth, are trained fighting entire wars and supporting clashes at the tactical level in simulated environments, in colours and in three dimensions. The psychological consequences of this process are neither be underestimated nor easily predictable because we need to identify the effect of the information revolution on imaginative processes of men.

Chapter 5

Indeed, there is reason to fear that today soldier, the digital soldier, **sees** the enemy only when he places himself completely at his mercy. This could create serious problems for the need to protect those who can not defend themselves. So, the soldier is preparing and training on a simulated reality and he fights the same way.

In conclusion, it is difficult to understand the differences between virtual simulation and the traditional ideological propaganda. Today simulation tends to dehumanize the enemy through the **eyes** of those who experienced watching a video. In the past, the **word** removed the humanity from the enemy. The latter was forced into a category that had the words to define; today it is a set of points that are moving according to a program. From which of the two alienating processes it is easier to get out in order to recover the human reality of others, to kick the ghost who has created, is difficult to say. Even because it is not yet at all clear which modifications to the manner of human intelligence expression will lead to the transition from a writing-culture to a picture-culture.

5.1.3 Digression: The DEWs (Directed Energy Weapons)

The DEWs do not shoot objects physically separated as bullets, but electromagnetic energy, light (laser), radio or microwave. These weapons, at the time of this writing, are located near the end of the testing phase and the beginning of full operativeness. It is reasonable to assume that by the end of the second decade of the twenty-first century they might crowd the battlefields. For more than one reason DEWs mark a clear break with weapons propelled by mechanical/chemical energy. First of all, they hit the target at the speed of light, or next to it; their fire capacity is also limited only by the ability to provide them with energy, which is a great advantage compared to expensive and cumbersome reserves bullets. A "hit" of these weapons has also a significantly lower unit cost.

Currently, and in the foreseeable future, the DEWs appear as weapons, as they say, "to the point", that is, suitable weapons to hit precisely the enemy machines (missiles, planes, bullets, etc.) in an area of a few centimetres square, making them melt, explode or shorting their circuits. They can then be included, so far, between the destructive but not lethal weapons, at least not directly. Nothing prevents, however, to think that in a near future lasers and microwave may also be used to saturate an area or kill many people.

It is impossible, at present, to determine the scope of the innovation intro-

duced by DEWs, except, perhaps, for one thing: they will increase flexibility and firepower of the army which own them and conversely they will force chemical energy carriers to become increasingly stealth, fast and small to avoid detection. Probably, the most famous victims of the DEWs will be big intercontinental ballistic missiles, key vehicles of strategic nuclear weapons. The end of the missile as well as we know it, or at least those using a stratospheric trajectory, would be a large change in the landscape of war. Of course, it is unthinkable that this is enough even for declaring the decline of nuclear weapons. Other types of carriers, less susceptible to the threat of laser weapons *et similia* will be used.

It is therefore almost certain that DEWs will change the landscape of the battlefield, but whether, and how the emergence of these weapons might look like the change caused by the introduction, centuries ago, of firearms can only stay unresolved. The evolutionary leap from weapons using muscular energy to those in which the bullet is fired from a burning chemical fire has undoubtedly changed the world and how to make war, it does not change the most profound essence of the latter, however. The only real innovation that changed (or created *ex novo*) a new policy and a new kind of war was atomic energy. But nuclear war is a war *sui generis*, for reasons known and repeated a thousand of times. On the contrary, it can be argued, with good chance of not being contradicted by the fact, that DEWs will change the face of battle but not the fundamental nature of the phenomenon of war. This one is especially related to the "who" and "why", but not to the same extent to the "how" a war is conducted. From this point of view, DEWs at least so far do not seem to have a so revolutionary connotation.

5. 2 FORMS OF WAR

If an interpretation model (of which we have tried to give an example in the second essay) is needed in order to think and to understand the war, it is more complicated if we try to address the problem of predicting the characteristics of future conflicts. The war, any war, spread out its effects in history and they need time to be analysed. Even the most traumatic war (for instance the first use of nuclear weapons), as it may already have appeared an epochal watershed to contemporaries, sediments material and symbolic effects in such an amount that they can be understood only much later. Therefore, we will try to identify some parameters of conflicts evolution in order to try to

Chapter 5

outline, with a good degree of approximation, the identikit of the future war, keeping in mind that the forms of war depend on technological, political and cultural life of humanity. This is even more true today when the world, in its components of power centres and technological knowledge, seems to "liquefy": new lumps of sovereignty arise and knowledge spreads, is pulverized and permeates all existing.

5. 2. *1* Symmetry / Asymmetry

A first important parameter concerns the symmetrical or asymmetrical nature of future conflicts. You can define symmetrical a war fought between subjects substantially homogeneous, both in technical and political terms; not on equal terms of course, but similar. The two world wars were symmetrical, as the war for the Falklands and the Iran / Iraq. The maximum symmetry occurred during the nuclear "balance of terror" between the US and USSR, a situation could be referred as a mirror: each of the two opponents could mirror the other at any level, from political rank to the possibility of inflicting the same amount of damage. When you get to this level, the symmetrical war inhibits itself and comparison shifts on a non-military framework or in geographically peripheral theatres; these two effects are in fact occurred during the years of the so-called Cold War. The asymmetric war, instead, represents a deep inconsistency between the fighting actors, even in the warfare, the ultimate goals of the struggle and in the political structure. A characteristic type of asymmetric warfare is the classical guerrilla.

One must be careful to not confuse the pair symmetry/asymmetry with that bloody/not bloody: symmetrical wars, as it has been said, were bloodiest. Rather, one might say that, while not all symmetrical wars are bloody (classic examples are many of the eighteenth century conflicts), the asymmetric wars are much more easily bloody. This is because in asymmetric conflicts the many differences between contenders affect the mutual perception; the enemy, therefore, tends to become more easily a demonic figure, totally inhuman.

It is said that the political form of the contenders affects the symmetry of the conflict: historically speaking, asymmetric war is often presented as a clash between a classic sovereign state and an underground movement of struggle, with a degree of sovereignty completely dependent on the contingent of guerrilla operations. In short, the gap between the sovereignty of the actors is a constant of asymmetrical warfare; this explains why terrorism

must be considered a kind of the guerrillas: the terrorist attack aims precisely to discredit and diminish the ability of the attacked to impose its will on the land and the people.

The asymmetry is, therefore, a product of a disordered world, a world where it lacks a political and strategic scheme that constraints or at least conditions all the players. The asymmetric warfare is therefore the first reasonable certainty as regards the future war, since, as it has been said, after the end of the USSR there is little uniformity in the world in the levels of sovereignty. In fact, the September 11, 2001 attack was a typical act of asymmetric warfare: apart from that the surprise is a constant, but not exclusive, feature, of any terrorist act, we saw the means of the enemy used against him, people used as hostages and then simultaneously as weapons and as targets[55].

It should be borne in mind that not all acts of terrorism belong to the type of asymmetric warfare (can also be made as part of a symmetrical conflict), nor that asymmetric warfare is identified *tout court* with terrorism. But certainly the two categories have large areas of overlap. The problem lies in disparities between the actors: the choice of asymmetric conflict, and terrorist options in particular, serves to fill the gap of power and visibility that a part in conflict suffers towards the other.

The different nature of actors means that each of them is weak where the other is strong and vice versa, and that their political ends diverge up to the limit of the incompatibility. Given this, it often tends to ascribe to one of the contenders characteristics incompatible with the asymmetric war itself; the myth of David and Goliath so returns, where the latter is usually the more structured, stronger in the traditional sense, more sure of his impunity actor. It would like it is disadvantaged in asymmetric warfare. In fact, it should always consider that the war is a long process and only at the end, and not even always, it reveals who the real winner is[56].

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55 From what has been said in the last sentence you might understand how much difference there is between the nuclear terror and the current one caused by asymmetric warfare. The atomic situation has unified the world even giving it a normative background (*mors tua mors mea*); asymmetric terror disintegrates the world and tends to deep it into chaos; both product of destructive technology, the nuclear is founded on reciprocity and not do; but the other clearly oriented to action at all costs.

56 As for the initial phase of the confrontation between the US and Islamic fundamentalism, for example, if it is true that America has suffered a serious injury in terms of loss of lives and property, it is also true that what looked like a solid regime, a true defence of religious obscurantism, melted like snow in the sun in a short time due to the American

We must, therefore, be prudent speaking about asymmetric warfare to attribute a priority advantages or weaknesses to either party. This is not to deny that the attack of September 11, 2001, for instance, has been imaginative, indeed it was quite ingenious, but the only real advantage of the terrorist lies in surprise and when you can enjoy this privilege, imagination, whether or not much, stands out clearly. In fact, asymmetric warfare (i.e. we repeat the conflict between actors deeply dissimilar) causes problems for everyone and gives to everybody possibilities and potentiality. What is important is to understand that this will be one of the most prevalent forms of future warfare.

5. 2. *2* Multiform

Because the link between technology and war is absolutely symbiotic it can be expected that the future wars will be fought with a very wide range of objects, processes and systems not originally intended for military use; or rather, the pervasiveness of the techniques will dramatically multiply the possibility of causing damage in non-traditional way. The classic example is a massive attack using computer viruses; but we can also think of a giant financial speculation, or an invasion of enemy country market with massive amounts of drugs or a caused plant disease. A little paradoxically, it is a return to the origins of the human adventure, when the same stone could be used to build a wall or to break a skull. During the following centuries, instead, weapons had mainly their specificity and recognizability; unorthodox means to fight did not lack and were used, but certainly the war had, so to

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reaction. About the American intervention, there is another myth to dispel: the exclusive domain of technology in Western military thinking. In reality, things are not so simple. It is true that the US (and here we could say the '"West") count very much on technology; but that, beyond the characteristics of Western culture which has always been very attentive to their material efficiency, is the result of normal historical wisdom. Given a little common political, strategic and tactical sense of decision makers, wars have always been won by those who had the best weapons. "Best", for a small percentage, means more suited to the circumstances of war, but basically it means, much more simply, the most modern and powerful. That said, it seems, however, that the US entrusted exclusively to the more expensive gadgets to make their war in Afghanistan. Those who thought that the Americans would have flooded the country of smart bombs, that would have been wasted since there is nothing to hit, were proven wrong; it has relied, to defeat the Taliban (at least initially), to a mixture of political, diplomatic and military; the latter then inspired by the use of elite troops and the other to a technique of bombing more related to the Second World War than to the twenty-first century. The B52 have indeed literally terrified the Taliban troops, whose concentrations were cut to pieces.

speak, a form well-structured and predictable.

This situation will have serious repercussions on the fear of war at the collective level. The conflict will cease to be a clean break compared to the daily life, and it will become, through the use of these "weapons" that are not weapons, a subtle note of constant concern. Here, too, it seems to apply the model of guerrilla: during a conflict like that any defined border between war and no war, between the enemy and civilian, between words of peace and hate speech disappears; the opposing sides disappear and the front is everywhere. This is quite different from the total mobilization experienced during the two world wars, if only because then it was all too clear that it was a war, and then they tried to preserve their everyday life as far as possible. Today, and even more in the future, it is the everyday to be threatening, because what has changed is just the weapon concept. The West had a taste of this collective feeling after the attacks in New York and Washington: it is impossible to watch a civilian air plane with the same eyes as before, the same applies to the skyscrapers and sharpeners; if a letter has dust stain, it does not fall to the ground but could contain anthrax, if my computer has a virus, it could mean that all computers in the world are under attack...

Therefore, we have a prevalence of asymmetric conflicts, that is in the broad sense a direct result of the disparities of international actors. This kind of conflicts are also conducted with systems that do not take into account traditional borders between war and no war. As a consequence, the war of the future will be under the sign of ambiguity and confusion. The remaining characters are simply confirming this hypothesis.

5. 2. 3 Humanitarian War

The term "humanitarian war" is certainly the most equivocal one of the confused contemporary lexicon; it is very simplistic to regard it only as far as its enhancers and detractors believe it: that is, for the former the new clean way of conducting moral crusades and, for the latter, yet another hypocritical mask for crusades outright. In fact the meanings of the term are two and well distinct. The first concerns the reasons why a war can be waged: those reasons must be traced to attempt to resolve a situation in which massive violations of human rights occur, or may occur. The overthrow of an exterminating regime through the use of arms is a humanitarian war. According to this meaning, it is not at all certain that the intervention does not lead to extensive bloodshed. For example, if we had considered the war against Na-

Chapter 5

zi Germany exclusively on the side of the victims of the death camps, we would have considered the Second World War as the bloodiest of humanitarian wars in history, but by no means we would have considered it an unnecessary war or wrong. Here we have to do with the *ad bellum* reasons, the more they are valid, the greater is the ferocity of the regime that we want to fight. It is however evident that, at the same time, the concept of humanitarian war brings with it serious risks of excesses, such as to nullify any good reason. Staying in our example, we may ask the uncomfortable question whether the extermination of Jews would justify the literally total destruction of Germany and of all its inhabitants.

This brings us to the second meaning of the term, i.e. the reasons *in bello*, that is, methods of use of military force that make it a humanitarian war. At the present time, this is the sense that, at least in the West, enjoys greater fortune, namely where a conflict fought with precision weapons in order to significantly reduce the direct damage both human and material.

In this sense, it is the product of technological progress. To be more specific, it is the product of technological progress and the great massacres of soldiers during the First World War. At that time, the idea that the establishing weapon of air power could quickly lead to victory through the destruction of the nerve centres placed in enemy territory arose. Throughout the Second World War and until the end of the seventies, we can say that the technology tried in vain to meet the expectations of a "precise and clean war"; instead, the air power caused great massacres. Things began to change when electronics entered by force in construction of technology systems for search, detection and destruction of targets, accompanied by a continuous and irreversible trend of shrinking, with a simultaneous increase of the spectacular performance of all components. Almost without realizing it, the war of precision from utopia and slogan became a real possibility. The turning point came with the Gulf War of 1991. Despite precision weapons were only a fraction of the employed arsenal, they were crucial to beat the Iraqi army. The trend was reinforced with the war against Serbia in 1999; thousands of shots brought the Balkan country to its knee, consequently it had to surrender to a human cost ridiculously low, given the scale of the involved stakes and the amount of resources used by NATO. This finding is not affected by the fact that public opinion, misled by the sensationalism of the media (interested only in very few shooting errors), by ignorance about the progress of weapons and by more or less pacifist ideology, simply refused to acknowledge that military technology was changed and in turn had deeply modified

in an extended way several other factors at stake[57].

The consideration that a war could be won by destroying no longer an enemy state and pouring rivers of blood, but by paralysing its ability to function as a complex system, is opening up new prospects that in the future will continue to consolidate. The main point that will be necessary to resolve is whether the humanitarianism of the hi-tech war remains a purely technical factor or directly affect the spirit of the policy that will arise from future wars.

Let's examine the first case. If the political and military power were to settle the technological performance as a factor in its own right, it would paradoxically be further dehumanizing effects of a type of war, precisely that conducts with precision weapons, which potentially would have sorting other effects. Believing that it is always possible to conduct a surgical war without paying duty of casualties among its ranks, could facilitate the use of the armed option and increase a dangerous sense of omnipotence. Moreover, from the point of view of the consideration, by the power, of public opinion and of its demands regarding the conflict can result in the marked indifference and underestimation: people, voters and their institutional representatives, would ultimately be considered a silent chorus of incompetent. So it would accelerate the process of alienation of people from war, taking on new forms, and its understanding that began with the atomic age when the immense power of the Bomb unfolded on the head of the world as a new, enigmatic and terrible god. That was the point where the parable of the participation of the masses in the war, which began with the French Revolution and culminated in the victory over fascism, reversed its course.

According to the second option, we need to reaffirm, once again, the novelty represented by precision weapons in the conduct of war. They are the perfect counterpart of weapons of mass destruction, nuclear, chemical and biological. Those forced to consider the enemy as an undifferentiated whole to destroy, these allow you to isolate and strike the nerve centres of the opponent, seeking paralysis and destruction. That means that this military tech-

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57 During the war in Kosovo in 1999 a textbook case, which perfectly illustrates the misperceptions caused by an overly ideological view of reality, has happened. The United States was much criticized and accused of arrogance and even cowardice, because they bombed five thousand meters from the Serb positions in Kosovo and in Serbia itself, with very few aims errors: well, that height was precisely the height required by precision bombs in order to operate, that is, to have the time and space required to self-correct its trajectory. It occurred so that a technique more innovative than the indiscriminate bombing of the past was misunderstood to the point of overturning completely the meaning.

Chapter 5

nology is itself not very adaptable to a policy of extermination at the service of undifferentiated hatred. That represents a huge potential for change compared to a century-long tradition of evolution of weapons, which was increasingly characterized by broadly and indiscriminately greater destructiveness[58]. If the war became humanitarian (to keep using that term for convenience) it would service a humanitarian policy, or rather a policy which will consider the war as a truly and only last resort. Therefore, the bottom line of utmost importance of ethics and politics, is that it will take a **definite act of the will**, **a real project in short**, **to take advantage of an innovative technology military precision**[59]. We must therefore ask who will take charge of this way of thinking and make war and why, that is what will be its *ius ad bellum* and *ius in bello*.

It would seem that there is already an actor with the right requirements: the international community. In order to restore peace and security international law allows the use of military force and by strictly functional, that is not indiscriminately punitive and violent, means the restoration of the violated right. Hence, the potential use of precision weapons arises here. In fact, in the present state of affairs the United Nations are unable for lack of structures and tools to wage war on their own and are forced to delegate to other international actors the conduct of war with the well-known and experienced defects of political subordination and moral ambiguity. But if the technology were to allow it, and it surely did, it would not be inconceivable to think of a type of war proper and exclusive of the United Nations, a war substantially different for its selectivity and non exterminating from that practised

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58 To give just one example: it has come to the paradox to remove from precision bombs the explosive load, replacing it with cement, in order to hit a single house by means of pure laws of mechanics. But this is a striking example; it is much more important that the aerial "stupid" bombs, that is, to fall unguided, are suffering, large-scale transformation into "smart" bombs: they are encased within a structure that has a built-in GPS satellite receiver. Thus, it reduced drastically the targeting mistakes, the satellite provides where the bomb hit while still in flight.

59 It is all too obvious that with all that we are saying we are not going to pass the idea that precision weapons do not make innocent victims; the error is inevitable and whenever a bombing occurs, a country is torn in its production structure, social and cultural development and this produces victims, especially among the most vulnerable civilians. It means rather that the use of precision weapons has decreased the impact of war on the population compared to the recent past. But it has simultaneously increased the sensitivity of public opinion as regards to the use of armed force and the wrong belief has earned that for this reason all the most sophisticated weapons are broadly most destructive.

by other international actors. This view is reinforced by the fact, as we shall see shortly, that in the future numerous incidents of massive violations of basic human rights in various parts of the world are expected. If you want to avoid the twin dangers of doing nothing, letting the genocide be fulfilled, or, in turn, of doing too much by implementing a war of extermination, it will be vital to maintain the humanitarian war both mutually interacting characteristics, one of moral nature (the obligation to act), the other permitted by precision technology (defeat of the violator through paralysis and not the total destruction).

5. 2. *4* Anti-human War

The exterminating war of the XXI century will be the direct heir of the great twentieth-century mass killings. They were the consequence of the totalitarian ideologies, in most cases in synergistic action with the bureaucratization and the mass technology. In the future, in the context of contemporary globalization and fragmentation of much of the world's territory and especially the run-up to last direct source of natural resources, population, in turn subject to growth completely unbearable, will be considered: 1) pure and simple impediment to delete in order to make possible the economic exploitation of a territory; 2) object of indiscriminate terror to cause escape or permit the control; 3) weapon, as obstacle for the international community, in order to gain political visibility or management, in gangster sense, the humanitarian aid. In contrast, the last mentioned point can not exclude that a practice to hide mass murder to avoid excessive media attention or intervention of some power could spread. The record has already offered many examples of wars hid away from the international public opinion, especially in the African continent. It is not impossible that, for this purpose, preference is given to strategies of indirect or unconventional attack, such as famine or epidemic diseases caused on purpose.

In any case, what makes it almost inevitable the recurrence of episodes of mass slaughter is the pure and simple contradiction between decreasing resources and growth of population, in both cases to not bearable levels. It does not seem, however, that about this fact public opinion feel like taking excessive consciousness: all the circulating slogans aim to identify a single cause (the excessive concentration of wealth at the expense of excessive births or vice versa), in order also to be able to better dispute with the opposite view's supporters, but they never address a more rational understanding of entanglement of problems at hand. It is strong in short the feeling that,

faced with the inevitable if not the most likely fact, it will especially prepare the discharging consciousness, giving the political and moral responsibility of what will happen to someone else.

It should not be forgotten that the anti-human war, however, may also have another origin. Weapons of mass destruction are in every sense pose apart from the Rwandan *machete*, under the light of the scope of using technology incorporated in them. At the moment weapons of mass destruction are still considered a last resort, the dead end of the war and in the event of their use they represent the failure of their *raison d'être*: frightening the enemy in order to not be used. But of course, many things are changing even some concern them. A trend is trying to make its way for years: their miniaturization, combined with the limitation of their destructive effects, increases the temptation to consider them usable in confined theatres of war or on unique occasions. Small atom bombs, mini chemical fillers, focused use of bacteria and viruses are means to overcome the taboo of mass destruction and to leverage the disruptive effect of shortcut to victory, that these weapons have over the use of armies, fleets and air forces. Above all, they are useful in order to present the world with a *fait accompli* before the media apparatus could trigger, perhaps in spite of itself, a reaction in public opinion. If these speculations seem a bit 'paranoid, then one has to ask himself why nuclear bunker buster weapons, able to drill dozens of meters of reinforced concrete and steel before exploding are in progress.

We must also remember the discussion about the space as military frontier of the future. Attempts to circumvent the various treaties that would limit its use by warlords are already well underway. Missile defence and attack, also on ground targets point, are the main options. So we will see, a little 'paradoxically, the "flattening" of the traditional war (one made of soldiers, planes and ships), although up to date, among a very high level, above the troposphere, and the lowest level, that of the *machete*.

5. 2. 5 Non Human War: I. Sci-fi War between Machines

Does the possibility exist that at least in the West the machines replace completely men at the time to fight their wars? Will we have soldier-robot instead of robot soldiers? Meanwhile, one has to understand that these questions imply a premise: machines that cease to execute orders, take the initiative and have forms of autonomy are today still distant, but not so much. Today, for example, a last generation missile, so-called "fire and forget", able to look for the target, find, chase changing direction several times and

hit it, is not a robot, even if it begins to approach it a lot, just because the decision to launch is up to humans. Advances in this field have been crazy, to say at least, and they continue to accelerate. In fact, a positive answer can be given to the previous questions. The disquiet that generates this new horizon of war is therefore more than justified, and not so much with regard to firing weapons but to those which may decide that others, which they controlled, have to fire. I think of course the big computers that approach the fateful threshold of artificial intelligence.

How will then the war be if the robot does it? Will it be easier to break out, or not? Will it be conducted in a more "human" way? Will the machines recognize some kind of limit? And what will the relationship be between politics and entirely robotic war? It is impossible, at present, say something definitive about an accelerated process, which is ongoing, migration of intelligence from man to machine. We can try in a complete impressionistic way to "shoot intellectual flashes" in the direction of the future[60].

A preliminary and quite challenging question is whether people really want to leave the machines to exclusively make war, as this would prevent them from playing with their own death. **We have seen that the fear of death is one of the basic motivation of war: to win it by imposing death to others, to survive the enemy to feel immortal, to bless with their own or others blood the aggressive constraint of the group, all this constitutes a fundamental aspect of why men love to make war and in a sense they feel the need. But what will this social processing of death become if they are robots to fight? How can you load of patriotic or ideological emotions golems of silicon and plastic? It is hard to think of war as something radically detached from human experience, from the consideration of the relationship between dead and alive within a group, from the rich symbolic capacity of humans.**

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60 For example, the issue of war crimes committed by robots is particularly complex and subject to conflicting interpretations. It is true that a robot does not suffer from combat stress, is not subject to those emotions which lead to too easily press the trigger, to rape, etc.; but it is also true that operators who drive them, remote control them, are also stressed and it is easier to hide a crime that took place thousands of kilometres away. In a case of truly autonomous robot, who will be held responsible for their acts, perhaps made as a result of a malfunction? The programmers of their software or who else? The whole question resembles unfortunately a bit too much that of responsibility during the Holocaust, the bureaucratic and fragmented process so pronounced: who closed the doors of the ovens was responsible, and how much? And the conductors of death train?

Chapter 5

Perhaps the alternative between non-use of the robot and the total dependence on them will, for this and other reasons, the delegation to the machines warriors of just really dirty works. When for particular political or geographical reasons it will concern more to exterminate rather than to make a war as social happenings, then the robot will have within certain limits, free hand. Perhaps robots will be in the future what in the past were the colonial troops or mercenaries, people not presentable in public and whose hands, like those of Lady Macbeth, can not be clean by any water. Robots will probably also assigned missions with no return, "suicide" operations, provided that the obtained results justify the cost of the machines. In all probability, a war fought by the warriors of silicon will be between undercover and ghostly. We have already spoken about undercover feature; the war will be ghostly because stealth technology will be liberally used on the robot, which will be facilitated by the fact that means do not need to contain a backlog human being. It will be a war in which computers will fight each other with blows of computer viruses and who will prevail will launch its not human troops that, through virtual stored or contingent representations, will hopefully fight other troops like them.

One last note concerns the appearance of robot soldiers. Influenced by science fiction, we tend to think of them like humans. But it is much more likely to continue the current trend, according to which the robotic arms are substantially similar to those carried by humans but somewhat smaller. About size, one has not to miss the fact that, in a not too distant future, robotic arms may appear **very** small. The precision engineering is making strides and it is not impossible that in a few years you can see toddle mini tanks more like insects, and the same size or slightly more. Or air planes of some tens of centimetres length. Giving intelligence to micro-machines war is easy, just a chip; providing them with enough explosives to take disproportionate damage is also very simple. The difficulties are currently concentrated in the supply of energy for long periods and distances. But they will come, they will...

Another point about the mechanized war of the twenty-first century, not so far from science fiction, is offered by simulation techniques. We have already said that today the simulative techniques are heavily affecting the instructional processes of the military universe. At strategic processing level however, the current state of the art is that supercomputers available to the US government are able to perform one thousand billions operations per second, making nine thousand processors work in parallel. In the very near

future it is expected to reach one million billions operations per second and more. This means that any war will be previously simulated at increasing levels of sophistication. This raises huge issues regarding the strategic theory, decision making at both political and military level, the psychology of fighting, etc. The topic is vast and subject to more refined developments in technology, so we will just briefly mention a few. From the point of view of strategic theory, the simulation leads an attack on all the imponderables factors linked to the war. It is not a joke that we try to predict, simulating it in the laboratory, the unpredictable. This could lead to a profound change of the war, that would be deprived of one of its basic features since the dawn of time. You could get to the theoretical futility of any actually fought war and instead to ritual battles based simulations, similar to the conflicts that occur in many animal species. The winner would be the one that better simulates, that shows that he considered better than the opponent all the parameters of the battle, even the most uncertain.

It is not said of course that the theoretical futility of war turns into real impossibility. It must consider the psychology of the combatants of the two parties and their decision. So advanced simulative techniques, i.e. to know in advance how it will end, could inhibit but also favour, for reaction, acts geared to military adventurism and could instead enhance or depress the decision-making skills and creative political leadership. Therefore, the image of senior staff officers and political leaders anxious for an electronic Sibyl spitting its judgements on the convenience or not to undertake a conflict and, if begun, its developments including the final outcome, is an image which most likely will become a reality sooner than you think, but that does not tell us how this technological change will be experienced by men. Super refined simulation, perhaps by machines with artificial intelligence that could decide in a completely opposite manner than the wishes of their programmers, could be the tombstone on the war, but it is said that men bow down to the *golem* they created; a *golem* not more devoted to destruction, but a machine that proved, better than a Gandhi, the futility and failure of any war effort. A point to bear in mind is that the degree of subordination of the simulation for the start and conduct of wars depends on the technological level of it. Namely, for many years the simulation will serve to do better wars; only when the machines will also simulate what men can not imagine then maybe you will come to the stage where it is mentioned: the new electronic Cassandras reveal to the people what they do not want to know in advance. We can only hope that supercomputers are more listened than Cassandra of literature.

Chapter 5

5. 2. 6 Non Human War: II. Cyborg-soldiers

An exoskeleton, composed of plastics and special resins, protects him like a second battle-dress, saving him from the blows of a smaller size and exalting some muscle function and giving particular agility and strength; inserted in his body, a control unit is ready to administer of urgency medication in case to be injured; next to it an artificial heart is ready in case that organic should, for some reason, stop; It takes psychotropic substances that allow him to watch and fight for thirty or forty-eight hours straight; in deposits of a medical centre near there are biomechanical legs and arms, obtained by cultivation by his genetic heritage, to restore it in a short time what it might lose in battle; a series of subcutaneous chips enhance its potential sensory and put him in uninterrupted communication with the rest of his army; It says, around dorms and canteens, that the next generation of soldiers will have an almost unlimited possibility of cloning and regeneration, including that of his own brain ...

The cyborg soldier, the post-human soldier, is the other side of the coin of the machines humanization. So there is a double flow of change: from the organic body of the soldier to the machine, which may eventually be able to do without the human; and from the machine towards the organic, which eventually will be no longer human but post-human. This will represent a revolution compared to which even the rise of chemicals explosive and firearms will pale until it disappears; also because the advent of the post-human affect not only the military, but involve the whole of society, completely changing the parameters of evolution of the species "homo". It will be a leap comparable to the transition from ape to '"homo habilis".

It would therefore be quite unrealistic examining this stage of change, this revolution, under the presumption of being even minimally exhaustive. Even because we lack an essential fact: even if we could foreshadow war as might be imagined and fought by post-human soldiers, how could we imagine the inputs that will send us war machines that are smart enough to replace ourselves? What will they "think", about the war? If we imagine mixed, robots and cyborgs, armed forces with intelligent computers near or inside the corridors of power, what will the Clausewitzian "triad" become? How can the "reason" that governs the decision to start a war and then to end it image? And the trend to absolute? And the case, since the friction of war will completely vanish in a machine world, which form will it take, if it takes some?

5. 3 CONCLUSIONS

Assuming that we have made a correct analysis, the future war, before the advent of post-humanity, will substantially have characteristics of asymmetry and "multiformity"; It will also be primarily fought by machines and the targets will be other machines or human beings totally defenceless. We could try at this point to outline the effects on the systems we have mentioned.

We have already referred to the persistence of the symbolic-imaginative system. Unfortunately it can not be said that the collective ethic has made decisive steps towards the peaceful resolution of disputes, despite huge progress has been made. In times of crisis, the majority of world public opinion still reacts according to the classical schemes: exaltation of their group, collective identity strengthen uncritically, dehumanization of the stranger. The fact is that perhaps a great historic opportunity was lost when the balance of terror was at its peak and the Bomb forced, risking the death, to watch the enemy and, in fact, just to see our own mirror image. The danger is passed, or so it is believed, the main lesson of the atomic age (the gap between technology and collective ethics is expanding too) has been removed.

This finding helps us understand how the influence of a system over others is subject to delay, and stickiness friction. Despite the technology sector is the fastest-evolving, not all the "leap" in technology have the same impact on other aspects of the war. It should be in fact that there are other contributing factors, that in short it has been occurring a synergy between technological change and others of different nature: then ensure that the change becomes noticeable, and the colour change in the war-chameleon becomes immediately obvious.

This is the reason that makes the political system particularly sensitive to changes in technology in the field of war: the pillar which, for centuries, holds the lintel of the international environment, the sovereign state, is in a deep crisis of mutation, because of the processes of globalization, both in economy and in many other factors. It will therefore be on international actors and their mutual relations that more tensions will discharge and again you will see that each type of war fit a particular political system and vice versa.

We could attribute to the war different characteristics depending on the actors called to fight it. If the war of terrorists is definitely asymmetric and mul-

Chapter 5

tifaceted, that of the dominant superpower (dominant until when, however, is not known) will be just as globalized in a spatial sense, without limits of time and tending to maintain hegemony over the planet (Zolo, 2004). Planet presents situations that do not lend themselves to limited scenarios with only two actors, the "small" terrorist force against the giant capitalist. East Asia, for example, offers a panorama of States not at all in crisis of sovereignty, actually so tumultuous emerging; old historical grudges, hoarding of scarce resources and growing populations could trigger disastrous conflicts. It is not so difficult to share the pessimism of some authors (Heisbourg, 1999), who read a historical parallel in the future of Asia with Europe 1914. The globalistic model in this way is fragmented and open several possibilities depending on whether the dominant power able to impose its hegemony, or that otherwise occur rebirth of heated nationalism; or again, that the already wealthy or emerging countries combine against the world of the poor or to prevail a re-ideologization of world politics, even in terms of a clash between the great religions (Tuccari, in D'Orsi (ed), 2003).

Far from attending to the crisis of the war, then we will see the wars of the crisis, more changeable and more anchored in the real socio-economic problems, rather than the result of ideological visions for the domain or, conversely, to the subversion of the world. The terrorist, the technological soldier, the mercenary soldier and the criminal, the nationalist soldier will act with the most diverse weapons, have varied attitudes against the civilian population and their purposes and their motives will be postmodern or secured to forms of past centuries.

Surely in the next years political democracy will be seriously threatened by the evolution of the war. Western countries already see shrink their spaces of freedom and opposition to the government in power, so it becomes increasingly difficult to criticize the current wars. On the other hand, the almost complete abolition of military service, if it resulted in numerous benefits, however, has completed the break of the armed forces from civil society: the soldiers die, but, being relatively few volunteers, the mourning is not socialized but only endured by the families. The decision to go to war or to get out of it becomes just a matter to attend to those in power, which has a free hand to organize consensus, using sophisticated propaganda methods made available to the media and increasingly in the hands of great powers economic. Even international democracy lives bad times: the United Nations needs urgent reforms and international law is increasingly rejected.

In this context, it is vital that democracies reformulate their theories of state, international relations and the war itself, the dual purpose of preserving themselves and give more opportunities for peace and freedom in the world.

Chapter 5

6 DEMOCRACY AND THE WAR

Generaliter bellum iniustum est
et damnatum[61]
(Enrico da Susa, ?1200-1271)

The illusions about the possibility that after the Soviet empire fall the international system would have been unipolar were notoriously short. This possibility could become a reality only after a real war, where the US came out incontrovertibly as winners. In fact, what is happening is a phenomenon of great complexity. If we could compare the war to a violent and cathartic disease from which you come out healed or dead, the current evolution of the global political scene could be defined as a rather slow, progressive and severe intoxication. The today world seems to conform to the theoretical model of an unstable and unbalanced framework: because the distribution of power, the possibility of local - but able to destabilize the entire system- conflicts, and the possibility of unprecedented alliances and coalitions are daily increasing.

Huge processes and changes are taking place under our feet. The anxiety that spreads among men is easily assimilated to nervousness of the animals before a big earthquake.

First of all, population growth. It is appropriate to reflect on the fact that, if humanity has grown from 1,000 to 1950 AD (950 years) of two thousand million people, from 1950 to 2000 (50 years), the increase was about four million. This is a frightening acceleration that brings to mind the similarity with a kind of colossal overdose on a planetary scale. This phenomenon (and it is profoundly wrong, as certain political parties do, to favour one of the two aspects -population growth and wealth gap- at the expense of the other) is coupled with the widening of the gap between rich and poor. After adding to the Third World countries that painstakingly trying to emerge from under-development of the Fourth World of chronic deprived men, perhaps it will be necessary to assume the existence of a Fifth World consisting of those who definitely and unquestionably are intended, as of now, to perish, even if to-

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61 [In general, the war is unjust and bloody]

morrow morning you impose a global revolution in the socio-economic relations in all their advantage.

But it would be useless to continue listing a catalogue of the world's ills. Suffice it to say that when, on the night between 14 and 15 April 1912, the side of the Titanic went to break up an iceberg, very few of his contemporaries could imagine that the tragedy would become one of the icons, more emotionally intense symbols of a century that would have denied the easy illusions on progress of humanity. In contrast, only few indifferent and superficial people did not understand the infamous Sept. 11, 2001 and that the destruction of the Twin Towers and the walls of the Pentagon was the first "sign", the first branding on the history of the barely started century; we all had become aware of attending a historic event, a condensed history that congeals quickly before our eyes.

Against this background, and from a military standpoint, what are the enemies of democracy[62] in the foreseeable future? The answer to this question will highlight the features of the way of conceiving and making war that, broadly understood, democratic systems must adopt if they are to survive the challenges of the twenty-first century.

6. 1 THE DICTATORSHIP

The first enemy are dictatorships, both in the traditional form of countries that often, if not inevitably, resort to war to export their problems or to confirm their sense of omnipotence, and in the mass killing form within their borders to settle scores with opponents or groups that they consider opponents. History has shown that these features have not always proceeded together, but in the contemporary age no dictatorship has avoided doing the one thing or the other, declaring war on other countries or heavily repressing internally. That the latter option represents a threat to democracy may well be less intuitive than the other case, i.e. a quite clear aggression outward. However, there are very strong political and moral reasons to consider a threat for the outside world a country that severely repress his citizens.

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62   We could lose our way trying to give a comprehensive definition of "democracy": let's just understand it as the political system in which the fundamental rights of the individual and the community, understood in its various forms, as defined by the main documents produced by the legal tradition, are protected and defended by the written law and by an independent judiciary, political power and free press.

Chapter 6

First of all, a democracy can not remain indifferent in the face of serious violations of human rights without losing much of its collective ethics, of its own public morality. The same is true for the international arena: tolerating that ferocious dictatorships are part of can only retract the level of progress of humanity as a whole.

Even putting aside the ethics, it can not deny that a repressive regime, as turned in on itself, may constitute a danger to others: it will seek alliances, will be eager to impose its political ideas to others, will naturally be induced to harbour fantasies of persecution. This is especially true because in politics perceptions count as much as the actual reality: no one is able to ensure himself that a dictatorship at the present not aggressive will not become more aggressive in the future. These reasons dictate that you cannot hidden completely behind the respect of national sovereignty leaving a free hand to dictatorships, on the grounds that such respect is a cornerstone of international law. After all, it is about not letting fall the spirit that animated the European resistance during the Second World War. It is true that then the fascists invaded materially countries which then developed the liberation movements, and this is an important difference; but it is also true that the essence of anti-fascism inheritance, that is, the knowledge that is just and sacred fight for their freedom and that of others (it is an indivisible right), can not be let fall too easily.

Obligation and political convenience, therefore, impose upon democracies not to have, in respect of modern dictatorships, a submissive and lax type of attitudes. That said, the range of alternative choices in practice is, as we shall see, very broad: to sacrifice the peace for freedom and vice versa is an exercise for the mentally lazy or disingenuous people.

6. 2 THE TERRORISM

Global terrorism has been elevated to the status of public number one enemy. As we shall see later, in studying concrete problems related to the most recent wars, the "war on terrorism" has replaced the "communist threat" as label and comprehensive justification within the mechanisms of propaganda at work not only in the West in order to justify any type of military and/or repressive action. This is not to say that terrorism is a threat to democracy and should not be fought, but it is necessary, indeed essential, to clarify some basic issues of the utmost importance.

First of all, at the international level there is not a comprehensive, accepted by all and legal definition of the phenomenon. Certain types of acts have been called "terrorist" (Colombo, 2006), but the insurmountable difficulty is that if the terrorist act for some falls back *tout court* into the crime case, for others is part of a legitimate and heroic struggle for the claim of any kind of ideal. In fact, if, roughly speaking, all or most agree in defining terrorist an act that kills, injures or deprives of fundamental freedoms those who, because they are helpless, can not defend or protect themselves in any way, the agreement shall cease at this point because the political context in which the act is carried out is, in fact, differently interpreted and contextualized. That is why the Nazis called "bandits" who throughout Europe called themselves "partisans"; that is why the resistant Algerian could put, in all good conscience, a bomb in the bar frequented by the French in Algiers and for this, just as calm, be tortured by French paratroopers; and so on, gleaning at will in history ... All this has nothing to do with moral judgement, but with the legal definition of the phenomenon.

Secondly, terrorism is a method of fight, it is not the purpose for which a war is fought. Consequently, terrorism is always at the service of a precise political project. So using the phare "war on terror" is misleading: you have to fight the purposes to be achieved through terrorist acts. Also, very importantly, all wars are mixed with terror, precisely because the enemy, by the mere fact that we want to kill him, must be terrified. It is therefore a serious mistake to consider only terrorist who puts a bomb in a bar and not those who bomb a village from the sky. This remains true even if historically it has occurred many times that terrorism should be understood within the asymmetric methods of combat and it was the choice of the one who did not have the traditional means by which wars are being waged: artillery, planes and ships. For this reason terrorism has always been part of the expertise of behavioural guerrillas every time and in every country, mostly the wars of decolonization in Asia. More precisely, we might argue that terrorism is the only choice of the weaker fighting the stronger, while it is an optional choice (depending on level of technology, variety of weapons that you possess and the operational choices) the opposite scenario. This last statement has to be corrected but not frustrate according to the latest historical events that everyone knows. The globalized terrorist does not fight the enemy in their own home (actually even not in a "home-state"), but he is forced to bring terror to the enemy country: this choice is always complicated and expensive. We could say that the choice of method of terrorism does not depend exclusively

Chapter 6

on the poverty of those who practice it, but it is always related to its extraordinary effectiveness, at least in the short term.

This leads us to another point of fundamental importance. Militarily, terrorism is virtually unbeatable: the possibilities offered by technology are so much numerous, and modern industrial societies are so much fragile that terrorist always has on his side the decisive advantage of surprise. This leads him to cultivate a peculiar sense of omnipotence. Combined with this, there are other interesting points to consider: being the protagonist of an asymmetrical conflict, the terrorist knows that his acts will have enormous media coverage and is aware that his political ends are totally irreconcilable with those of his opponent. The act of killing innocent people peculiarly (although he does not consider them as such), or rather people not able to defend themselves in any way, puts him then in a special relationship with death. He is truly an omnipotent person, the little god can decide the fate of many people. If then the act provides for the death of whom does it, this dynamic is enormously strengthened. In this sense, the terrorist is the fulfilment of the warrior in the traditional conception of the term, one who is in favor of death to himself and others. We should not think that this is only a conception of Eastern thought, although *kamikaze* is the word used to indicate the suicide bomber. Even the Western tradition has considered war as "fair", and the death given and received in combat as beautiful and virtuous. This line of thought, also in theoretical elaboration[63], has entered into crisis with the first large massacres of the First World War and then, in a much more decisive, with the advent of the atomic age. It is therefore quite wrong to consider suicide bombing as a cowardly, immoral or delusional way to make war.

The terrible effectiveness of the terrorist method is evident. As the masters of the oriental martial arts know, the effects of violence are multiplied when the potential strength of the opponent is turned against him. Technological civilization uses machines that are also explosive devices ready to explode and is based on structures that are extremely easy to dislocate and paralyse. From the operational point of view, terrorism is therefore an high profitability investment.

The operational concreteness of terrorism is combined with the content of his mostly mythical political project. Mythical does not mean unrealistic;

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63 In the Clausewitzian trinity, the component of the absolute trend of the war was read by many authors in this way.

instead it means revolutionary, based on the rush to achieve results, on the fascination of the masses and on the design of bringing together past, present and future of a society in a framework of all encompassing values and symbols. All this results in a short circuit of the politics, in a sudden acceleration, in the search for the essential that in one fell swoop can get rid of shades, of ambiguity, of compromises and social-contract theory. As the ideal content of the purpose is conceivable at the highest level in a certain historical situation (the "revolution of the oppressed", the ''implementation of the kingdom of God", the" Thousand Year Reich"), the means, such as they might be, are automatically entitled. The fear of terrorism is therefore by definition limitless because it is matching utopia and reality. Consequently, it is in no way justifiable[64].

If terrorism is almost unbeatable on the field, it follows that the war, at least the traditional one, is irrelevant for the purposes of his defeat. In fact, an asymmetric war should be fought in the same way, avoiding falling into his traps. The terrorist wants to be fought militarily, precisely because in this way he has few rivals. An essentially political strategy could defeat terrorism, because its purposes are usually rather utopian and long-term, which allows a wide choice to those who want to oppose. In short, the strength of the terrorist (create a lot of damage) is also its weakness, because beyond this he has very few cards to play. This circumstance appeared very clearly during the wars of decolonization: if the Viet Cong or Algerians insurgents had simply put bombs, they could not achieve their goals, instead they required a continuous political work to win the hearts and minds of the population.

But back to the main point. Beyond that, democracy or not, we must defend against terrorism (not only with a purely military strategy), the real threats posed by this method of fighting have to do mainly with the repercussions within the open societies. Terrorism creates repression, fuelled by the sense of insecurity that pervades the public; consequently power finds in

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64 In the specific case, this involves some interesting questions. For example, about the September 11 "the Americans were asking for" leads to ethical and political reasoning rather slippery: where in fact the limit of atonement for the people responsible for three-quarters of the starve 'humanity? Because the few thousands of victims in the Twin Towers and the Pentagon should be considered sufficient? If had the terrorists caused a nuclear explosion in New York that would have avenged the poor of the Earth? It is quite obvious that blaming the victim does not involve only the justification of terrorism as an end, but also as a method; the result is the elimination of the policy as a place of planning and mediation.

Chapter 6

terrorism a powerful ally: the rooms of dissent shrink, those who object becomes suspect, because "objectively" stands alongside the worst enemy. On second thought, it is almost paradoxical that the greater effects of a tactic of a so "internationalist" war as terrorism-antiterrorism are domestic schemes. Yet, the mechanism is triggered a thousand times in history, always with the same effectiveness as based on the fear that, as a social detonator, not missed a beat. The reason that democracies must confront and defeat terrorism is therefore the need to remain true to themselves.

The new terrorism is not embodied in a defined political-territorial structure, but it is a direct expression of the contemporary crisis of the state sovereign. As always in history, the biggest upsets happen when multiple sins find simultaneously out; in the current crisis, alongside the aforementioned evanescence of traditional political structures, we see the internal struggle between at least two souls of capitalism, the most predatory and the most careful to preserve the environment and some redistribution of wealth; to this must be added what seems like the last, and therefore desperate attempt by certain instances of traditional ideological and religious opposition to modernity.

6. 3 THE CRISIS OF INTERNATIONAL LAW

A further threat to the survival of the democratic system is that its international component, today embodied in institutions like the United Nations, is likely to wither and die. After the Second World War, the double challenges brought by aggressive imperialism of the right wing totalitarian regimes and the advent of the atomic age led to the creation of a legal and institutional system with the aim to implement peace and security on world scale.

The essential point of the matter is that this system of world governance spotted in the war of aggression, carried by a sovereign states against other sovereign states, the primary cause of the greatest dangers that could threaten humanity. In this sense, we can talk about anti-fascist character of the United Nations at the time of their creation. The subsequent evolution of the institution and its legal substrate have substantially not changed the fundamental fact: the states are the main actors of the international community, to them is granted full and equal dignity[65]; the preservation of their autonomy

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65 Even if the special regime enjoyed by the permanent members of the Security Council

and sovereignty takes precedence over the character of their governments and regimes. The logical consequence of this assumption is, as we have seen, the inadmissibility of the war, except for the armed defence of a state in the event of aggression (but the attacked country can not defend himself as it will) and opposition, even by force, to a country that poses a threat to the peace and security. In both cases, therefore, the international community has to take charge of the problem of the violation of international coexistence.

It is worth quoting in full those parts of the Charter of the United Nations in which these principles are explained; The first paragraph of Article 1 thus states:

"The Purposes of the United Nations are: 1. To mantain international peace and security, and to that end: to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace, and for the suppression of acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace, and to bring about by peaceful means, and in conformity with the principles of justice and international law, adjustment or settlement of international disputes or situations which might lead to a breach of the peace".

Very important it is the Article 2, in its paragraphs 1:

"The Organization is based on the principle of the sovereign equality of all its Members"

and 4:

"All Members shall refran in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political indipendence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations".

It is clear, in this article the prohibition of war: the exceptions are provided for by Articles 42:

"Should the Security Council consider that measures provided for in Article 41 - speaking of peaceful measures against a state that threatens the peace or international security - would be inadeguate or have proved to be inadeguate, it may take such action by air, sea, or land forces as may be necessary to maintain or restore international peace and security. Such action may include demonstrations,blockade, and other operations by air, sea, or

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attenuates, in part, this principle.

Chapter 6

land forces of Members of the United Nations" and 51, that gives the opportunity of self defense, with basic precautions:

"Nothing in the present Charter shall impair the inherent right of individual or collective self-defence if an armed attack occurs against a Member of the United Nations, until the Security Council has taken measures necessary to maintain international peace and security. Measures taken by Members in the exercise of this right of self-defence shall be immediately reported to the Security Council and shall not in any way affect the authority and responsability of the Security Council under the present Charter to take at any time such action as it deems necessary in order to maintain or restore international peace and security".

So this is an imperfect but democratic paradigm: it is democratic because it identifies the subjects, the states, and puts them on an equal level; it is imperfect because the identified subjects do not exhaust the complexity and variety of political action. This imperfection, in the present time, is getting more and more serious and urgent, for the simple reason that it is in crisis the subject itself, the sovereign state[66]. Or rather, it has entered into crisis the idea that it is still the state's monopoly of politics; as already mentioned, other actors, over or under states, are imposing themselves on the world stage in fierce competition with the traditional protagonists. When one or more super-states, or a fraction of a population against other ethnic groups, or one of the many strands of organized crime or even a multinational with its private army may wage war, political democracy threatens to quit the hinges both within countries, both, which here especially interested in, in the international scene. The reform of the international law and institutions is a necessary step for the defence of democracy, it is no longer enough that sovereign states cede some of their sovereignty in exchange for security and peace: this mechanism can become a mere shadow, an alibi while other instances exceed, override and nullify the state structure of the international system.

The lack of legal mechanism is always the same, today as in the past: the lack of a true force able to punish violations; in fact, threatening a war to stop a war is not as contradictory (the story bears contradictions) as ineffective,

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66 To tell the truth, already at the time of their creation, the United Nations appeared to contain this contradiction: it is true that the right totalitarianism attacked other countries, but you can not ignore the fact that they did so in the name of ideologies that aimed to hit or enhance more ethnicities and ideologies than national borders; they were geopolitical imperialism, but, if I may say so, "mental". So much so that the first enemies were identified by Nazism within Germany.

or worse, unrealistic. What is missing, in short, is a continuous and timely presence of a military international structure that witnesses the authority and the cogency of the law.

6. 4 THE WAR

The last enemy that is in front of the democracy in the field of war, and also the more subtle, is the war itself. It is not just a matter of destruction, terror and lies that tear societies and to the law of the strongest and lucky. Unfortunately, the issue is much more complicated, because democracies, like all political regimes, can not escape the fact that the war is their dark side, the other face of Janus, the monster in the cellar with which they must always deal. Not only because, very simply, one can always be attacked by someone who is not democratic and is not intended as such, but because, as one want to re-establish the political sense in peace, we must never forget that the war has extensive roots, deep and diversified and that cut is working for many generations. The question therefore arises, first of all, what are the factors that, in democratic countries, can and will, for the foreseeable future, emphasize or counteract a drift warmongering.

The suppression of the conscription in many Western countries, as well as being motivated by economic reasons of no little significance, resulted undoubtedly in many good features. Surely, however, at least a couple of negative consequences are immediately detectable. The first is that, beyond differences between countries, the gap between civil society and the military class tends to increase, with all the drawbacks that this may lead to a democracy. The second is more serious and it has to do with the perception by the society of the coming and then the occurrence of a war. The Vietnamese lesson was well understood by politicians: the other side of the coin of a tragedy involving millions of young Americans was that it was easier to initiate and extend the opposition to the war. Today, only volunteers (and their families) are fighting, it is much more difficult that the protest should organize itself and take root, and at the same time the meshes of democratic control are widening over the decision-making process leading to war[67]. Return to con-

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67 The phenomenon would worsen even more if it were to strengthen the existing tendency to resort to private militias (contractors); they represent the evolution of the old mercenary, both in quantity and quality, since they are at the service not only of businesses but also of states, in semi-clandestine form and certainly not subject to control of legality

scription for more democracy inside and outside the barracks would be absurd: it is therefore necessary to explore new ways for the military caste does not create problems in democratic processes inside and outside the borders.

The perception that the public opinion has about the war, that is made entirely virtual and unlikely by the degeneration of the worldwide media system, constitutes a threat that can not be underestimated. From this point of view *Vietnam docuit*, too: the old war propaganda became a sophisticated media management process, after which the public simply does not know what is happening, but instead saw hours of spectacular images, however, indistinguishable from the movies or from video games. The effect on the voting citizen, especially the young generations, can be considered without exaggeration devastating.

Even spending on the maintenance of military equipment must be considered a problem, not so much in itself but for the fact that the so-called military-industrial complex has been firmly established as the most powerful lobby, practically everywhere. No democracy can no longer think of attacking directly this block of interest to try to diminish the power; the objective can be achieved gradually and indirectly, as a side effect of actions to other issues and problems.

The growing robotisation of weapons is not a normal part of the relationship between war and democracy; it is in synergy with the end of the conscription to increase the process of alienation whose outcome could be the total enslavement of men in the mere role of victims of war. During the twentieth century there have been two times when this process (started, one could argue, with the invention of firearms) has accelerated, or rather was particularly evident. The first time was on the Western Front during the First World War, in which millions of "human ants" remained for years at the mercy of the military industrial power above them as the classic Leviathan. The second time coincided with the stabilization of the balance of nuclear terror, when the atomic situation completely expropriated men of their freedom to fight to the end, but at the same time introduced, in the history, a factor which was impossible to abandon, precisely nuclear weapons. Today, however, the phenomenon is being aggravated because the whole military "system" (weapons, training methods, operational doctrines, strategies and the role of the human element) is undergoing full spectacular acceleration of cutting-edge technologies, which we have already mentioned. The

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and legitimacy.

trend of the citizen-soldier, soldier as a citizen and citizen because he was able to take up a weapon, is definitely running out; in its place the technical and robotic volunteer assisted and soon outclassed by weapons that will decide for him.

All of these aspects mean that today, when one plans a conflict, decision making is conducted away from the demands coming from public opinion. In this regard the example of some European governments, who decided to queue up the Mesopotamian adventure of the US, despite the strong opposition of most of their populations, is significant. With this I do not intend to distribute right or wrong reasons (at least, not on the basis of this fact); I just want to point out that, at the beginning of the third millennium in the West a fracture, a distance between the corridors of power and public squares about such key issues is experienced, and this should give pause bitterly about the state of contemporary democracy.

The central point of the whole question of the direct relationship between war and democracy, however, is essentially of cultural nature. The political system, in the meaning we gave in the first part of the book, should go first and foremost to govern the technology of war, knowing that it can be so destructive to the maximum degree (not only in component weapons of mass destruction, but also unwise use of precision weapons, given the complexity and fragility of the ecological/human), but is also flexible enough to be at the service of very different political choices. The technological road travelled so far is not a necessary way and in his predestined future outcomes. The extreme precariousness of the world-system imposes then that we become free of too many myths related to the war and that the words of the war return to their true meaning. If we use the term "weapons of mass destruction", it must mean this and nothing else. The days of the romance of war, the idea that death is embellished by the war are gone: this is the real lesson that comes from endless places where lie the dead of war[68]. On the other hand, it is not even the time of naive pacifism, what is content with pleading mor-

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68 The geography of pain due to war is, in Europe, so thick to be filled, if desired, months and months of travel and pilgrimages. From Kefalonia to Dachau, from Omaha Beach to the Somme or Verdun, the pilgrim is exposed not only to the obvious demand to not forget, so that everything that has happened will not happen again, but also the need to rise to the realization that every violent death, all this and all future deleted prevented from each victim, has special reasons, which supplement the common destiny: it therefore requires an ethical position, accompanied by a clear and rational political and intellectual maturity.

Chapter 6

al or instrumental disguised political accusations of high ideals; after thousands of books written about the war and after endless reruns of the history, it should be clear by now that men fight for interest and pleasure, and that the path to a stable and lasting peace is still very long. Above all, the suffering of so many humans forces us to remember that peace and freedom are values that can not be sacrificed to one another, or risk losing value and essence of democracy.

Having said all this in other words, we need a radical rethinking of the reasons why one wag wars and of the methods used to combat them. If there can be no just wars[69], all the effort to rethink the war should be directed to reformulate its partial justification, knowing that they will always be questionable and that their acceptability will live continuous moral dilemmas.

If, therefore, the enemies that contemporary democracy is military facing are dictatorships, terrorism, failure and inadequacy of law and international institutions and the war itself, the path that we must follow to ensure the survival and development of democracy is really tight and bumpy. Even more if we compare, in theory, the neo-conservative ideology, of US origin but then spread throughout the West, and a compendium of anti-conservative or liberal theory that, although never fully defined, is emerged from the theoretical formulations and progressive politicians in recent decades.

6. 5 THE SIMPLE WORLD OF NEOCONS

It is important to understand the fundamentals of neo-conservative ideology [70] (or *neocon*), because it is the western right wing policy response to the challenges of the post-modernity, or if we want to talk in terms a little less abused, to the challenges of a world that is accelerating wildly in all its basic parameters, from demography to science, from economy to ecology, from

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69 The issue is constantly being proposed in the form of commonly propaganda, yet historical experience should by now have shown that it is totally unfounded. Apart from the fact that each of the contenders will declare just his own war (and thus, in fact, there can never be an unjust war), it is never stated what criteria, religious or ethical, it should be, or if is talking about right reasons and / or right methods. A war considered just in terms of ethical, moral or religious (that is, according to a vision entirely one-sided) can be completely illegitimate from the point of view of the law.

70 In its official formulation, is the so-called Bush Doctrine, enunciated June 1, 2002 at the Military Academy at West Point and inserted in the document "National Security Strategy of the United States of America" of 17 September 2002.

politics to war[71].

Assuming that the American system gradually beat all its competitors, because it is intrinsically better in any considered point of view, the neocons judge the world an inherently dangerous place, full of actors, states and organizations, whose only aim is to counter the hegemony of the only power, through the use of more destructive technologies, that is the only card left to them. In this context, military force is the one that counts, also because the competitors are able to understand only the language of force. These considerations show a number of corollaries, all equally important: 1) international laws and institutions are at best useless, at worst the "legal face" of the opposition to the US, as they are rich ties to each and other undemocratic countries; 2) facing a superpower the anti-democratic States (the famous "rogue states") and terrorist organizations must elevate to the highest degree the level of confrontation; as a result, the US has a duty not only to hit "soon and hard ", but to do it proactively before it happens a new September 11 or that a state acquires weapons of mass destruction; these preventive wars, being self-defensive, are inherently right; 3) the successful model to follow is that of Israel: the Middle East is "a small world", in which Israel finds itself surrounded by countries that have always wanted to destroy it and that it could consistently win thanks to pre-emptive strikes; 4) reducing the undemocratic regimes we get the double result of removing water to terrorist fish and to extend the boundaries of democratic and capitalist world, a world where, by definition, can not break out wars, as it is historically proven that democracies do not fight each other.

As you will realize from this brief summary, the neoconservative ideology, as well as being perfectly functional to domain the globalized capitalism in its most pirate version, it is quite capable of giving an answer and a solution to at least three of the problems of contemporary democracy: how to deal with international law, with dictatorships, and how to defeat terrorism; finally, the war is not considered as a problem, but part of the solution for the other three problems. From all this the extreme dangerousness of neocons ideology follows, as the need for all the reformers to oppose an ideology equally structured and capable of providing, for the same problems, as effective answers from the operational point of view.

It should, however, be made other considerations. We are in the presence

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71　The fact that, at the time of writing, there is another president in the White House does
　　not mean, I believe, that the *neocon* ideology has not still a long life ahead.

<div align="right">Chapter 6</div>

of an aggressive ideology, certainly aimed to change the world order. This means that, at least for the moment, the classic conservative ideology, based on maintaining the *status quo*, the balance of power, in short, on putting out international fires rather than setting them, is in a moment of eclipse, it is unknown how long. This fact is explained by the end of the division of power between the superpowers, a situation that is replaced by American hegemony and the concomitant crisis of many sovereign states that are not able to sustain the pace of globalization. This is the reason why the concept of just war is back in vogue: when states were fully sovereign this idea was weakened, because each state could claim the rightness of their own behaviour and act accordingly, so that it flowed from the forms of international law; collapsing all those conditions, the right of the strongest is back.

1): "In Italian public opinion and in the wake of events in Iraq it is quickly spreading, the belief that the only war with the truly democratic credentials, the only "just" war is one that has the consent of the United Nations. If they agree the war is 'lawful'; otherwise not. So Italy is required to stay away. The recent 'manifesto' of foreign policy drawn up by Romano Prodi, and published by *Corriere della Sera* days ago, seems to adhere to flesh out this new rule (presented as such). Rule that in all likelihood is going to win support beyond the center-left, threatening to become as a bastion of political correctness, and therefore a formidable constraint on the political level. *But if this happened, the main consequence would be that Italy would be stripped of the right to independently decide about what has always been the highest political decision that a country can take, that is, the decision of war and peace, which also expresses the maximum of national sovereignty.* Such decision would virtually refer instead, at least in part, to a political 'other' that would become a kind of real shared secret co-actor both of the right to decide and, in some way, even of our own sovereignty. A result that is made even more serious by the fact that, as you know, the UN Charter does not seem to realize at all the 'level playing field' to which our Constitution is literally depended in any way binding renunciation of sovereignty by Italy internationally. *For example, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations China has the power to decide at the UN whether a war is just or not, so deciding for Italy. But it is not possible the contrary, since China is always able to cancel at any time with his veto any decision, taken with the help of Italy, about the legal soundness of a war, that is unwelcome by China.* […] *The idea of the priority attributed to the UN decisions on peace*

and war relies implicitly on the assumption that the UN represents an place of superior moral quality, custodian somehow of the right and wrong, and then custodian of the criterion of legality and illegality. But this is completely false. The truth is that when one say UN it is concretely said a meeting the majority of which emanates from governments which are far from our democratic criteria, governments far or even openly hostile to the principles of constitutionalism and human rights. Paradoxically, none of those who in Italy call repeatedly UN law (i.e. its majority) to assume the role of supreme judge of international ethics, would accept, even for a moment, to be governed by one of these same governments that make up the aforementioned majority. We need to speak plainly: the UN is actually invoked only to mask their inability to face the challenges of history trying at the same time to save his own good conscience "[72].

I reported this long quotation from a prestigious Italian intellectual particularly close to *neocon* ideology because behind his captivating prose conceals the main criticism of the offensive against the United Nations. I pointed out the main points, from which you understand how it is easy to do the work of mystification; it is sufficient confusing the real functioning issues of an institution with the principles on which it is based. To say that China, through the right of veto, can decide for Italy is only half of the true, and it certainly corresponds to the need to reform the rules of the Security Council; but the veto also corresponds to a policy of realism, because China has more political weight in the international system than Italy. Moreover, the fact that a country such as Italy, will be "stripped of their right to decide" on peace and war, is precisely the *raison d'etre* of an institution founded on the ashes of a war provoked by sovereignty and independence of States with regard to the peace or to war. Then one could not like that many UN members are dictatorships, so it is good that not like it, and the thing, as mentioned, is a problem to be solved; but not for the United Nations to do the fleas to internal schemes (on which criteria then, and decided by whom), because they are there to avoid war between international actors, sovereign and equal, regardless of their government. What would the solution be? Throw out from the UN the "villains", or the "good" leave the organization, with the risk or rather the certainty to make a war more probable? Still, it is not China or any other country that can decide whether a war is just or not. The international

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72 Ernesto Galli Della Loggia, *L'Italia e l'ONU un paradosso*, in "Corriere della Sera", 2 aprile 2004 [My emphases]

Chapter 6

law declares it, the law signed by all, including dictatorships, at the time of their entry into the UN.

2) The issue of preventive war is the real core of the whole neo-conservative ideology. We saw that they consider it necessary and just because they assume that the competitors of the United States, terrorists and dictators, arm themselves to the utmost and try to do their biggest damage. But the question must be examined separately, be it organizations like Al Qaeda, IS or a sovereign state. But first it must be said that introducing the lawfulness of preventive war is throwing out the window the whole international law and turn back to the world before the First World War, when everyone could decide it was going to be attacked and then "reacted" in advance. The UN Charter gives it the right to self-defence but in a reactive, not preventive way[73], and in terms of proportionality and immediacy (one can not respond to an encroachment of infantry of another country with the atomic bomb, and six months later), not to mention the fact that the attacked country should seek promptly the United Nations, who have the obligation to take charge of the problem. In short, according to the modern international law, preventive war is a war of aggression.

That said, a terrorist attack coming not from a state but from a transnational organization like Osama bin Laden's can not be stopped with a war of the traditional type, because, as repeatedly stated, it is an asymmetrical method of waging war. Raids of special forces, intelligence and above all political initiatives to frustrate the political ends of terrorism are useful; but traditional war does multiply the number of terrorists and expand their appeal, as historical experience has amply confirmed.

The real problem, however, lies in the conservative equation: possession-of-weapons-of-mass-destruction = terrorist/rouge state = certainty of the attack and then rightness of preventive action. It is a real scam because one can not equate a terrorist to a state: the terrorist can, and often want to, commit suicide, while no state would. As the balance of terror (and we had to face USSR, not a wet chick …) taught us the possession of the atomic bomb or other weapons of extermination introduces, whether it likes it or

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73 Unlike the case of the so-called *pre-emptive war*, which could be translated as "war of anticipation": you know you are about to be attacked within a very short time and that you can greatly improve your situation by taking the opponent off guard. This case can be equated, with many forcing, in the provisions of Art. 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, notwithstanding the duty of the immediate appeal to the United Nations.

not, a totally new and compelling logic. If one want to live, one has to make live your opponent and vice versa. Paradoxically, many countries possess weapons of mass destruction for decades and this has always been touted as a pillar of peace! Now, suddenly, everything changes; certainly, the neo-cons will tell you that the "good guys" have the bomb not to use it, while the "nasty" yes ... but it does really not change anything, because even the worst dictators do not want to lose their power in a nuclear exchange, instead he wants keep it for themselves and their children. Not even Hitler would have used the bomb if on the other side there had been a threat equal and opposite[74].

Indeed, the idea of preventive raid against a "rogue" state might induce this either to use its apocalypse weapons, if it already has, or to build them if does not own them![75] In this respect, the ideology that we are dealing with is unhistorical, counterproductive and totally devoid of strategic logic; without neglecting the fact that it is also inapplicable because, in fact, who would attack, in order to disarm, a country which has the Bomb?[76] To this objection, the neocons respond by relying on the great oracle of technology: mini nuclear warheads mounted on super precision bombs to destroy the nuclear sites of the "bad guy"; which in the meantime, knowing this, will be preserved from abandoning the bomb and using some chemical or biological weapon ...

3) It is indisputable that anyone can not oppose the Israeli strategic model in the Middle East. It is based on maintaining a constant technological supe-riority, on effective approaches to mobilize reserves and the population and a deterrent to more levels, from the nuclear one to that of individual infan-try, in order to deter any aggression. If, as has already happened, deterrence had had any sign of weakening, the option of pre-emptive strike would be always high on the list of Israeli planners. It should be pointed out that it was not just the unique geostrategic position to influence the way of Israel's war

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74 If the statement may seem gratuitous, it reflects the fact that despite a significant stock of Nazi nerve gas *Sarin*, *Soman* and *Tabun* were never used in combat, mainly for fear of reprisals of the same nature.

75 Thus strengthening, among other things, its despotic regime and gaining new internatio-nal prestige.

76 In fact, Iraq was attacked because they knew he did **not** possess such weapons, as shown by the revelations of the press and also the military logic: if those devices had existed, Americans would be suicide to attack the way they attacked (Bonsignore, 2004 Mini, 2003).

Chapter 6

but also, significantly, the experience of the Nazi extermination. The knowledge that the Holocaust must never happen again, and so it is better to strike first, is stuck like a nail in the collective mentality of the Jewish people. It is from this conviction that *neocons* are mindful: acquiescence and passivity against dictatorships is already the first step toward defeat. In this sense, it is even unimportant that a dictatorship has or not weapons of mass destruction: the mere fact of being such a regime should be isolated and then attached without a time flow, which always works in favour of the possibility of rearmament of dictators.

The whole point of a criticism of a so much admiration for the Israeli strategic model can only focus on the fact that the Jewish state is in a very peculiar situation, both for geographical and political reasons. Israel had no choice but to adopt an aggressive strategy, having no space and no time to yield to his aggressors; also we can not forget that Israel was never really alone to face his enemies, relying at all times on the determining help of at least the United States, if not the entire West. Israel's situation is therefore totally atypical, and extrapolate a strategic model valid for a superpower with global responsibilities like the United States is rather naive and dangerous.

4) The need to get rid of a hated dictatorship was certainly one of the justifications of the second Gulf War. It brings really to mind the noblewoman climbing on the guillotine: "Liberty, how many crimes are accomplished in your name!". Both the loss of life and the material destruction suffered, by Western propaganda apparatus, a process of relativization if not removal. Is everything acceptable in the name of the new-found freedom and democracy? Of course, this way of thinking is not only the result of bad faith; indeed, it also has deep historical and noble roots: on the one hand the tradition of national revolutions, on the other the great clash between democracies and nazifascism of Second World War. From our point of view, revolutions do not concern us, since they were the work of the people themselves who legitimately shed their blood for their freedom. The sore point concerns the other issue, that is what freedom and democracy are indebted to the war or how much better justification can be attributed to a war if it is waged with the aim to donate to the attacked people freedom and democracy.

One problem is that history does not provide clear answers. While many right wing totalitarian regimes[77] collapsed because of lost wars, it is also true

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77 I neglect here to delve into the very complex issue concerning the appropriateness of

that the other great totalitarianism of the twentieth century, the Soviet brand of communism, imploded on itself because of a competition which, though marked by clear military characteristics, did not result in open and bloody clash.

Also, the postulate that the only way to bring down fascism is the war needs to be discussed and verified. On the one hand, in fact, it is true that fascism is, by its nature, a bellicose regime[78] and that, historically speaking, fascisms lost all their wars, but, on the other hand, were they fought as political regimes or precisely because they had supported the part of the aggressors? In other words, have Hitler and his associates (his contemporaries and followers later) been addressed and won because they started the war or because they were bloodthirsty dictators?[79] And does the subsequent imposition of democracy in the defeated countries (most striking case to Italy, Germany and Japan at the end of Second World War) depend on the goodness of democracy or simply on the fact that the winner tends to impose on the defeated its own political system, any it is? Some might argue that these are piddling issues: if fascism is warlike, sooner or later it will undertake the war; it will follow a defeat and the collapse of the totalitarian regime. True, but this is not to decide whether it is right to respond to the aggression of a fascist country (and who could deny it?), but to decide whether it is just a war from a democracy to overthrow a tyrannical regime, and not the other.

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approaching fascism and communism as well as the use of the term "totalitarianism", on which many scholars have serious doubts. I intend to use that term to merely evoke those political regimes which, by their nature, are opposed to the liberal-capitalist democracies. In this sense, then, it allows me to use the term "fascism" in the broadest sense, a kind of model-distilled, indicating both the historical fascism that modern totalitarian regimes different from communism, including Saddam Hussein's regime or those and religious fundamentalists like the Taliban in Afghanistan.

78 Here again a scholar would have much to complain: it is very risky to talk about "nature inevitably warlike" of right totalitarianism; especially as an illustrious example, that of Franco's Spain and its neutrality during the Second World War, would tend to disprove immediately the proposed assumption. Nevertheless, it seems difficult to dispute that the war, its theory-preparation-exaltation, is a cornerstone of the ideology of the radical right.

79 In this regard, it would be good also not to forget that anti-fascism of the Anglo-Saxon allies vanished a lot, too, quickly, even before the Second World War ended: in the name of anti-communism, thousands of fascists criminals were saved, made escape or even enrolled for "freedom", while shovelling sand were dumped on the theory and practice of popular resistance against fascism.

Chapter 6

This not exactly precise correspondence between means (war) and goals (the establishment of a democratic regime) is particularly evident even if the reasoning turn it upside down. It was, for example, the loss of the war of the Falklands-Malvinas to cause the end of the dictatorship in Argentina in 1982, but the British thought only to recover the islands, not to send home the torturers. The same thing happened to Greek colonels in 1974, when they tried to recover Cyprus. Most recent example, the case of Milosevic: his defeating was not among the stated purpose of the intervention of NATO in 1999 (and, it is said, it is another macroscopic difference compared to the second round against Saddam), yet it is easy to be convinced that Belgrade people would not have ousted their leader if Serbia had not lost the war in Kosovo.

In short, to criticize this aspect of conservative ideology is easy and difficult at the same time and it is extremely complex to process an alternative theory that avoids as far as possible recourse to war but, at the same time, does not allow a dictatorship to last a minute longer. From the above it is clear that as a whole the ideology of "right wing revolutionary" is dangerous because from democratic side it provides to vital problems of the contemporary world responses that are likely to be morally reprehensible, but also effective, if not more appealing to the public that, as was the case for the Iraq war of 2003, is longing to be reassured by the use of strong-arm tactics.

6. 6 FOR AN ANTI-CONSERVATIVE THEORY ON WEAPONS AND DEMOCRACY

It is time to try to draw conclusions and to formulate, with the best degree of approximation, a reformist theory of the war in response to the problems that it poses to political democracy. Reformist because it clearly and sharply opposed to the formulation of the right wing policy.[80] Reformist, also, because only in part coinciding with the demands of more radical renewal, as

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80 That it is populist, conservative or radical here has relatively little importance: in view of the war, the differences between the many souls the right tend to thin, especially with regard to the reasons of the conflict and the methods with which to fight it. Some differences remain on the identification of the actors called to fight the real "holy" war between the pro-American without ifs and buts, and nostalgic, more or less dressed in black, a Europe counterpart of "Zionism", Islamism, of any form of "hybrid" and "decadence" Slavic and Asian.

expressed by the no-global, pacifist and non-violent movement[81]. We will begin with the less dangerous enemy, terrorism.

6. 6. *1* Terrorism

It may seem paradoxical to consider terrorism the lesser of two evils, given the media bombardment which we are subjected, and which tends to convince us that bombers, crazed sheiks and fundamentalists of every credo constitute "the" threat to our way of life. Taken for granted that putting at the bottom of the rank the terrorism does not mean denying the danger in an absolute sense, but we must make some considerations. Of course we want to talk about terrorism and not the so-called "terrorist states" such talk when it will be taken into consideration in dictatorships.

We said before that the main characteristics of transnational terrorism are the vastness of political ends, his being unbeaten from a strictly military point of view and repressive effects that triggers inside of the societies that it intends to hit. We also anticipated one of our conclusions: it is not possible to beat terrorism with a war of conventional type, which is instead entirely functional to the multiplication of terrorist forces. As a method of asymmetrical war, it must be fought in the same way.

It is far more effective to block suspicious money flows through the various tax havens than sending troops to fight in some remote marshlands of the world and it is especially vital that democracy strengthened in its own guaranteed spaces of freedom and not weakened in a spiral of repression. Regardless how much damage a terrorist attack can produce, it is episodic and can never match the effects of a real lost war, not to mention those of foreign military occupation in its territory. The terrorist method is really effective only in the context of a revolutionary war of liberation or within a certain territory occupied by a foreign power, not if it is exported. It is really serious that the fear of terrorism is used to restrict political freedom in the West, while the public is led to undervalue far more serious threats, such as

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81 The case sees a rampant anti-Americanism to forget that war has many fathers; the other in its folds more naive (like "boobs not bombs") is completely harmless and perfectly matched to the power system, and in its more serious connotations needs time so long as to be ineffective. Pacifism in general then, it should move a critical background, the tendency to favour peace at the expense of freedom. That said, I hope it will be clear that the areas of convergence and identification between serious reformism and radical approaches are more numerous and significant than you might think at first glance.

global warming or the drug cartels.

As for the political purposes of terrorism, many argue that correcting some of the many scourges of humanity would lead to a significant decrease in terrorist offensive. Given that one can not disagree with such a statement, it should be remembered that the political projects of terrorists elites are regardless of the resolution of world severe social problems. So they constitute ideologies, and radical Islamism is a prime example (Berman, 2004), more concerned to affirm a certain political vision of the world, rather than to raise the "wretched of the Earth" by their condition. Consequently, the only social reform is not enough, you also need a battle over values, a military action when necessary, an economic strategy in order to block the funding and a political response to broad level and breath. And, yet about radical Islamism, the real decisive card will be abandonment as quick as possible of dependence on oil and other sources of non-renewable energy.

In short, one can not speak of a "war on terrorism" except in a metaphorical sense; rather than of an anti-terrorist policy, based on a security strategy, which is a broader concept than a purely military defence because it includes factors of various kinds. This policy is the only one that can beat the logic of terrorism that wants to militarise the fight and make it eternal. Then this policy should be ready to anticipate the terroristic moves and not purely wait for them, which has nothing to do with either the pre-emptive war or with going around the world to spread conflict from which we do not know how to exit.

6. 6. 2 The crisis of international law

The problems of the reform of international law, supranational institutions and the treatment to dictatorships are closely related, though not identical. It is useful, however, first to say a few words about the state of international institutions, especially the United Nations. They are now macroscopically affected by their origins; being born after a markedly imperialist and ideological war, they wanted to emphasize, through consensus building between the peoples and governments, equality and independence of each other. But now, the model of the state does not correspond, does not overlap more with the precision of the past on the teeming reality of the actual people. The fault lines of hatred run through the states, huge masses of people lose their right to citizenship and are perceived as enemies by those other immense masses, who live under the same sky and the same worn-out flag. To all this, it must be added the unacceptability of considering still valid hierarchy output

from the Second World War: countries and continents are excluded from the permanent structure of the Security Council; whole parts of the Charter of the United Nations are disregarded, first of all the creation of real military structures, expressions of the international community.

Reading even distractedly the constitutive laws of the United Nations, a pattern emerges that has little to do with the war in the traditional sense. The fact that member countries expect the provision of UN armed contingents (Arts. 43-45), under the operational command of a Staff, dependent in turn by the Security Council (art. 47, never implemented) and formed by the highest officials of the countries that are part of the Board, is very far from the practice. It is clear then that the international community should, if the UN Charter had been fully implemented, take personally and directly responsible for the management of military force[82].

It would be foolish, here, try to formulate a recipe for reform of the Council, the Assembly, the General Secretariat and of their mutual relations; what is certain is that we need to remedy the lack of representation in the United Nations, both in the sense that states or clusters of states are not adequately represented in the decision-making process, and in terms of the recognition of the role of all the other non-State actors that drive the international scene. The full implementation of the provisions in the UN Charter, regarding the structures and functions of the organization, then, is the first and fundamental step to implement a serious reform policy of the war.

The other source of ineffectiveness of the United Nations and international law lies in the reasons that a war would be allowed; allowing it only in case of aggression or in order to restore peace and security among nations leaves out a case that has already been shown to be prevalent, or at least never absent, in contemporary conflicts, i.e. the planned use of terror within state borders by the local power at the expense of a more or less important part of its population; genocide as a weapon of domestic politics[83]. From Pol

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82 Let's open another book of dreams. I believe that a real military force of the United Nations, that is recruited and trained by the organization, should also have missions of a particular type, graded according to the severity of crisis to be addressed: non-violent diplomacy, reconnaissance and testimony, armed rescue of civil populations. In other words, the "new" blue helmets should not enter into the merits of political disputes between the contenders, but limit to the search for truth and protection of fundamental rights.

83 Valter Coralluzzo, in his essay "Nuovi nomi per nuove guerre" ["New names for new wars"] (in D'Orsi, eds, 2003), points out that 126 of the 194 wars that erupted between

Pot's Cambodia to the *desaparecidos* in Argentina, from Rwanda to Kosovo, the trend is growing and is a direct expression of the process by which the enemy is no longer necessarily outside the borders, but within them. This leads to a painful paradox: since the inside genocide not necessarily interferes with neither peace nor security, international law is not in a position to authorize any action to stop the carnage. In this sense, the war against Serbia in 1999 became paradigmatic: NATO has blocked the possible genocide of Albanian Kosovars, but substantially violating international law.

Here is the almost existential dilemma: democracy, placed in front of an internal genocide, has the right and duty to intervene and how? *De jure*, according to the Charter of the UN, the Security Council has no specific powers in relation to human rights. But the practice is more ambiguous; in fact, on September 16, 2005 was approved at the summit of the General Assembly the initiative called Responsibility to Protect, which, by defining national sovereignty, traditionally as a privilege and right as well as a source of responsibility, tends to bind the international community to help states in the protection of its own population or even to replace them, including by military means as a last resort, if the states are just the violators of fundamental rights. The cases are identified accurately: genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity, ethnic cleansing.[84] Unfortunately, this initiative does not have the strength of a true international law, so its effectiveness and binding nature is rather discussed.

A reformist theory of war must pose the problem of seeing recognized this right, codified in the form and under strict UN authorization. In the presence of a political power that in **theorized**, **planned and organized** way decide to break systematically and massively fundamental rights (as set out by the Charter of Human Rights of the United Nations, for instance) of a substantial part of its population, in order to implement an openly discriminatory political project, the international community should be able to legitimately

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1945 and 1995 can be defined as "internal wars".

84 The Member States declare "[…] prepared to take collective action, in a timely and decisive manner, through the Security Council, in accordance with the Charter, including Chapter VII, on a case-by-case basis and in cooperation with relevant regional organizations as appropriate, should peaceful means be inadeguate and national authorities are manifestly failing to protect their populations from genocides, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity". (quoted in Ugo Villani "Guerre giuste, Difesa preventiva e Interventi umanitari alla luce della Carta delle Nazioni Unite", Possenti (ed.), 2006, pag.165.

and legally set aside the principle of sovereignty and can wage war on this regime.

Of course, a basic principle must be firmly maintained: any intervention, that there has been an aggression, a threat to peace and international security or genocide, will have to be reactive: preventive war should be outlawed and banned! Some might argue that in this case we should wait for the genocide to occur before react, but the argument does not hold because a particularly serious violation of human rights can not be improvised overnight, and the international community would have the time to prepare.

Of course, critics to this approach are many and deep. They fall between critics to the decision to intervene and objections to the ways of intervention. With regard to the right to intervene, it is clear that we must focus only on violations of fundamental human rights, those relating to the existence and physical integrity of the community. In case of violations of other rights, although of great importance to humanity we should refrain from intervention. We must always remember that we are talking about a part of military intervention, which entails, by its very nature, other huge risks and the possibility of an extension, for the international community, to violate the sovereignty of a country, which, like it or no, is the pillar of the international system. So if you want to extend the cases in which the United Nations can make war on a country, you have to really be limited to those that are of the utmost gravity. For all others, refer to the discussion on dictatorships, of which we will mention shortly.

Many authors[85] argue that it is not easy to agree on what exactly is "human right", that the human rights are still an ideology or a formula established by Western culture and valid only for it not to other cultures, and that therefore the intervention of humanity would be nothing but a disguised way to make colonialism. This is why we supported that it must be restrictive and move only when large numbers of people risk their lives or physical integrity; on the other hand, although it is true that, historically speaking, the doctrine of human rights was born in West, is no less true that on one hand it has been implemented by international law, on the other we can assume with good reason that also non-Western peoples do not particularly like to be killed, tortured or deported *en masse*.

It is also true that there is another basic objection: how could you go to war,

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85 For example, Zolo 2001; it is necessary to point out that this criticism is shared by the
    radical left than the right, extreme and not.

Chapter 6

which is still a crime, like it is a legal valid act? It is argued that in fact the international law currently recognizes the use of military force (in self-defence of a state or the international community) but only as an exception and not as a faculty recognized for other reasons. Clearly here we are to the point: how can you judge "right" a war (because this is the result, enlargement of cases in which a war is regarded as such) not made for self-defence, but to punish (with death penalty, then ...) those who have violated human rights; and maybe not even the real violators but only the people they belong to? Those who oppose this objection claim the so-called domestic analogy: as the law states punishes by force (and sometimes a lot of strength) crimes that violate the social contract between citizens, and this violence is right because it is legal, so international law can punish international crimes through use of force, you can also define war, albeit a bit particular.

It is obvious that the supporters of the above objection do not accept the equivalence between domestic and international law. The fact is that this is a node that only politics in its highest meaning, can dissolve. If you decide that certain behaviours should be sanctioned, it is right that the political decision to get hands dirty is taken, as, in a very dramatic way, showed the Kosovo war. I think that a reformist theory of war must accept this burden, because the alternative, letting certain events happen, is morally too repugnant. It is true that a war, which always strikes the innocent, can not equate to a police action, which tries to protect the innocent; but it is also true that an anti-extermination war, like that of which we speak, is not the prelude to Auschwitz; on the contrary, is the way to prevent re-Auschwitz is true.

The ways of intervention are another dilemma not easily solved. A democracy that is about to commence an action such as the war on Serbia in 1999 can not and should not settle for a possible "rightness" guaranteed by the international community. Its methods of war are just as important and qualifying as its purposes: it must be clearly rejected the idea that "because we have to save them from genocide, we have a free hand." With the technology available to us we can and must afford not to follow the example of our grandparents, who were forced to destroy Europe to free it.

Again, we can draw from the war against the Yugoslav Federation some fundamental principles of action. First, who should be attacked is the regime, in its physical structures of power, and not the people, even if their consent to the government is strong: yes to the destruction of buildings and vital centres of the nomenclature, not to the bombing of populated neigh-

bourhoods. Secondly, using as far as possible all the tools offered by technology, the action must save damage to individuals and the environment. Thirdly, the action must halt the political project of the regime in its actual operating events: if they gather on trains thousands of people, destroy the rails. Fourthly, to the extent possible physical occupation of the territory should be avoided because it would inevitably create more victims[86].

The criticism that can be addressed against this approach are numerous and we can inspire, for example, to those that animated the debate during the 1999 war. It was said that Serbian citizens instead of Milosevic were bombed; that it was had to look at the consequences of their actions, not intentions: if the consequences are bad, they become even intentions; that a war according to the principles that we have outlined above would ultimately seem more "attractive" and "sold" to a "bad" war, which would make it more comfortable to public opinion and subject to several replicas. All very true. It is also true that it is utopian to think of any action without making mistakes or run into unintended consequences; in this kind of events, you must always keep in mind the alternative, doing nothing, that creates major disasters. On the other hand, if it happens that the police killed an innocent, the domestic law of a state does not collapse for this; nor it is conceivable that any work of the United Nations, and even the most legal and "right" does not lead to errors, abuse and accidents.

In summary, a reformist theory of war, which we are trying to define, should be based on the following assumptions: regarding the right to go to war (*jus ad bellum*), it must remain with a reactive character, and absolutely not a preventive one, while increasing the cases provided for international law including reactions to planned, continued and widespread violations of fundamental human rights. The serious coding and regulation of the right of intervention will serve, among other things, to prevent the pretext of humanitarian intervention to make wars for less noble reasons. As regards the modes of conduct of war (*ius in bello*), they should be as far as possible designed to save lives, assets and environmental integrity, thanks to precision weapons and non-lethal weapons, namely the intervention must be proportional and use an accurate choice of targets. It just has to hope that what happened in Syria, a country that has been left to sink in the horror because of public distaste for the very word "intervention" as the result of criminal en-

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86 I do not intend to go into details of what should or should not be done; I am just trying
   to present some examples to illustrate the principles behind a certain type of action.

Chapter 6

terprise in Iraq, does not happen again in the future.

In short, the law is always born from the force, but not only by it and especially not as it develops and progresses. The domestic rule does not exist just because the strength of the state is ready to punish those who infringe the social pact, but also because the majority of citizens shares consciously and unconsciously the norms. If the law lived only thanks to the force, after being born from it, the law would be not even law and the rule does not even exist. It would exist only mere brute force. What shocks, now, the enemies of military interventions decided by the UN is the obvious and immediate connection between the violation of rules and punishment of violators. But this is because international global law is "nascent". We should just wait and, if history does not do to humanity catastrophic setbacks in the future, men will internalize the rules of international coexistence and what now seems forced, or a masking of political interests of someone (which does exist, who can deny that?), it will no longer appear so outrageous.

If one agrees on the above, it follows that it is stupid enough to ask whether a war sanctioned by the UN is just or not. It is so if one looks at the violated rules of international coexistence. It is not so if one does not agree, in principle, on the idea of a law that is not only national or if one believes on moral grounds that the force and the war can not be, in any case, the right tools. In the first case, however, it denies that men can establish some form of international social contract similar to the social contract that exists within the States; in the second case it denies that those who violate international coexistence should be punished. For consistency, you should also oppose the pursuit of the offender in any civilized society.

Hence, some degree of violence is permissible by the highest international body. If UN wants to apply by force the principles of international law (and they must do so if we want to keep talking about the law), it will simultaneously "reinterpret", "reinvent" the war, however; UN will in short change the war. Moreover, UN will do it having in mind that the obvious and ultimate goal of any war is to win, regardless of the way and the principles with which the opponents will fight.

The UN should fill the gap between the phrases "make war" and "use force" with solid intentions and contents. It should fight against the elite and the masses that support them without willing to erase them from the face of the Earth. In a way, if we think about the nature of violence viable by the UN, it may come to our aid the Gandhian theory. In a situation where it was impossible to use non-violent methods, Gandhi preferred to passivity the use

of violence. But Gandhian violence can not be in any way comparable to that of the Nazis or otherwise that, brutal and indiscriminate which history has taught us. It can only be a controlled, punctual violence, strictly subject and subservient to the political domain: a violence that aims to solve problems and not to eliminate entire generations.

6. 6. *3* Dictatorships

If we leave the topic of international emergencies and consider the attitude that a democracy must take with respect to a dictatorship that does not implement neither war plans against the international system nor the mass repressive behaviour within its borders, the navigation between moral imperatives, political expediency and more or less palatable interests is even more perilous. Neoconservatives have indeed good game in charging liabilities democracies that allowed living undisturbed dictatorships that do no more than exercise their pervasive, vulgar and omnipresent power over their people, without destroying them, maybe using only "limited" torture. They can support, and they do, that the rights are globalized too, that we can no longer pretend that certain things do not happen and that, consequently, democracy being the only political system whose essence lies in the protection of rights, it is just, moral and convenient export democracy everywhere, by hook or by crook, even in those countries that, as smarter than the others, do not ever talk about themselves in the chronicles of criminal history. It will be hard to blame them, if the world is simpler than it is. Of course, the discriminating factor of the whole question lies on the use of "bad" methods to export democracy. We can safely refrain from discussing on "good" methods, that is, maybe insistent and propagandistic, but substantially non-violent, as long as you implement them seriously. The example of the Saddam regime is, from this point of view, a perfect one of how democracies do not have to behave: the Iraqi dictator has been pampered, nurtured, then fought a first time, then allowed surviving and finally demolished.

The right wing argues that at this point the problem shifts to effectiveness, of other means: certainly it is not a great discovery if it is stated that international isolation, economic embargoes, pressures of public opinion and so forth have not worked much so far. Much depends of course on whether a dictatorial regime, precisely as such, has many cards to play to withstand all these pressures, which in the end are still indirect actions. This is a serious problem, if we want to find a replacement to the "war of liberation", even because people under the dictatorship are still firstly to suffer because of these

discriminatory practices.

The remarkable complexity of tradition and technologies actually offers many ideas to fight a dictatorship in a peaceful manner. To those who are not satisfied, I should mention that this alternative is war; and then you have to make it clear that a democracy can not and should not go around the world to sow conflict against regimes that do not like them, either in the name of freedom: apart from the violation of another's sovereignty, something of which the contemporary right wing chuckles, but that is the pillar of equality among international actors, it would create a state of permanent war and a more accentuated proliferation of armies and weapons[87]. The argument that dictatorships eventually make war or bring to make genocide and therefore must be prevented does not worth: neither one nor the other are processes that take place in a day; of course we must constantly monitor the situation of freedom in the world, but implement measures to prevent future disasters could very easily make it happen before.

6.6.4 War

You will recall that among the causes that make problematic the relationship between democracy and war we have mentioned military spending, the virtualization of war experience (in the sense of its transformation into a pure spectacle), its confinement to a narrow elite of professional warriors, the growing robotics of arms and soldiers. All these processes are hardly stoppable and even opposing them can be a challenge too burdensome. We also mentioned the fact that probably the only way to prevent war "eating" democracy both internally to the states and internationally, is returning to politics, big politics of the rudder and of the responsibility on world affairs.

War as a problem and not as a solution, then. It is obvious then that we have to think about a model of peace, that does not sacrifice freedom in favour of aggression or oppression, but at the same time resists the ease ad-

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87 Problem: How would the reformists have behaved if the Americans in Iraq, instead of combining the bloody mess that have combined, had behaved as true liberators, like in the movies? Distribution of cigarettes and chocolate, stop the looting, fast withdrawal from the cities, just as prompt restoration of essential infrastructure, delivery of Saddam to a true international tribunal, and so, in the midst of a cheering crowd? Well, I think you would have to maintain, even in this case, the very clear rejection of preventive war, as has been decided. The wound inflicted on the international law is not a trivial passing of sixty years old rules, but the violation of a fundamental pact, and a permission for any international player to repeat the violation in the future, just come up with good excuses.

venturist that is indifferent to the reasons and especially methods of war. The models that history has so far proposed are essentially three, although with many variations. Peace for hegemony, one that arises from the balance of power and the one manned by law.

Peace for hegemony is the one which aspired to the "Bush brothers" (and their followers today), and it is an illusory and dangerous; illusory because it is condemned by the technology that also permits to small players a disproportionate and destructive power; not to mention the fact that the demographic and economic dynamics promise in the future an international revenge to many more countries than any empire can think of governing.

Peace through the balance of power has seen endless reruns, all ended in a conflict: only the last, the most recent and spectacular one, was over because one of the protagonists, URSS, leaft the court. In its own way, peace for balance is inevitable in the sense that it is in the logic of things that international actors will relate to each other and testing each other, tending to their convenience and interest. The balance, however, can be seen as a spiral: a descending one when fractures of reality (injustices, interests, problems of identity, questions of prestige, etc.) are faced in a regressive and repressive way that on time inhibits the conflict but then it inflames the conflict with a view of the outbreak final[88]. A rising one when to instances of human groups we are able to give an answer that does not recommend the opening of an armed conflict; for example, choosing to keep a nuclear limited component to the sole and sufficient deterrence sterilizes and prevents the arms race. In the latter sense, peace for balance is joined to that entrusted to the legal instrument.

Jus contra bellum, which joins that *ad bellum* and *in bello* (i.e. the ruling of the reasons to go to war and the fighting methods), is based on international institutions, on security based on cooperation and outlawed the vast majority of military options. It therefore gives rise to a model of peace opposed to the other two, and that is what a reformist theory of war must choose.

As the great Norberto Bobbio (Bobbio, 1997) reminds us, the law, thanks to its very existence, demonstrates both that war is not inevitable, and that it is possible to distinguish the use of force through the prevalence of procedures and shared rules. Only in this sense the contradiction between giving reason to who wins, as the war does, and winning who is right, as the

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88 Textbook example that applies to all: the treatment imposed on Germany after the First World War.

Chapter 6

law does, resolves. Certainly, the contradiction does not heal perfectly, and a fully pacifist spirit will never be satisfied; but in this deficiency and insufficiency there are still enormous potential for progress, that is materialized in holding a just war according to the accepted rules of law and not according to a one-sided view of morality or religion and convincing that the goal of law is peace and the limitation of violence, not revenge of one people over another.

If we have searched in the international scene the actors who have to create the new defence policy, it would be seemingly obvious to look in the first instance at Europe. The Old World is full of bloody history, which should have vaccinated against any warmongering temptation, it is unable to strategically influence the entire planet, but at the same time it is placed near at least two dangerous regions (the Middle East and the Balkans) where Europe could bring its moderating influence and offer an alternative model of resolution of long-standing conflicts, but the Old World suffers from severe delays and numerous limiting factors. The enormous historical weight of national sovereignty, the recurring danger of a wide and extreme organized political right wing and a muddle process of unification dampen easy enthusiasm about the possibility that Europe could be the only engine of change in the Western way of thinking and doing war. The resounding failure and real shame experienced by European leaders during the conflict that led to the breakup of the former Yugoslavia must remain as a warning and demonstration of political incapacity.

The world is too complex for Europe alone: its support for the reform of the United Nations, its intervention so that even genocide becomes part of the case of legalization of war and preventive war it is definitively excluded, the peace within its borders and in the near areas of crisis, its work in the fight against terrorism and for the reduction of armaments of all types: all of these objectives could not be reached independently without close collaboration with the progressive instances of entire West. However, the West is already fracturing inside because of a sort of "clash of civilizations", among those who seem to rediscover nineteenth-century models of conceiving international relations absolved of every legal obligations and supernazionalist, and those who attempt to invent the future by building it on the already acquired rules due to dearly in human lives in many conflicts.

I hope it is clear from what was said in these pages that we are at a crossroads, for which humanity has already found to pass, at the beginning of the nuclear age. Then the intense debate concerned how to use the new absolute

weapon: should it be considered only a more powerful bomb than the others and therefore in certain cases usable as armies had always used tanks, aircraft, battleships; or rather, should politicians become aware of its otherness and change from the past, adjust the mentality of war? Today **the absolute weapon is the whole war-system**. So, as then the sensible use of the bomb, the only way possible (to deter), was imposed, so today the alternative to new warmongering of "conservative revolutionaries" and their fundamentalist, Islamic or not, opponents goes through considering that the war, in its traditional conception, is the enemy of democracy and freedom as much as it is of peace and that its use must have exceptional character, proportionality and respect for international law, even if they are reformed properly at the time.

6. 7 TWO CASE STUDIES AND A (FOR NOW) HYPOTHETICAL SCENARIO

The wars of 1999 and 2003 respectively are similar, but with highly significant differences. The two common traits consist of illegitimacy according to international law and that both have seen a coalition of democracies waging war against two dictatorships, the Federation of Yugoslavia led by Slobodan Milosevic and Saddam Hussein's Iraq. But the differences are so profound that the two wars have to be considered as real turning points in recent history and they are authentic benchmarks in light of the problems we are studying. It is therefore worthwhile to dwell on the historical events of the last decade, in particular the Kosovo conflict in 1999, and the Islamic terrorist attacks and the war in Iraq, in order to clarify and supplement what has been said so far[89].

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89 Since the nature of this paper is essentially theoretic, the object of which are the principles and their application, we will leave in the background elements of the distinctly economic origins that delight those who consider the war a mere synonym for business. We will not deal with the famous "corridors" along which should pass the capitalist future of Europe and that would have motivated the attack on the Yugoslav Federation; also we will pretend to consider a mere accident that a country with large reserves of crude was invaded just by the nation that is the greatest consumer of oil itself. We will be not even concerned that the American attack has been sold to the public on the basis of well constructed by the media lies and fakes.

Chapter 6

6. 7. *1* Kosovo, 1999: Ambiguity of a "new" war

As you remember, the NATO armed intervention against the Yugoslav Federation was justified by the treatment suffered by the inhabitants of the Kosovo region, who had long aspired to substantial autonomy, if not independence, from Belgrade. After more than two months of bombing, Milosevic accepted the conditions of NATO and Kosovo was occupied by a military Western contingent; the defeat triggered a political crisis at Belgrade that led to the fall of Milosevic one year later.

The main criticism to NATO intervention focused on the fact that it acted in violation of the UN Charter that prevents the use of force except in self-defence or, on the basis of an agreement among the nations, to counter a country that would undermine peace and security. In this case, however, it was not sought any authorization and NATO acted, therefore, in violation of international law. Not only that, but it also broke the Treaty of the Atlantic alliance that calls for military response only in case of attack against the Alliance itself or one of its members. As you remember, the controversies were very heated and both fields enlisted in their ranks prestigious members of the international law[90]. The reason of so much animosity was that the main NATO justification, the need to avoid ethnic cleansing against Kosovo Albanians in addition to be morally very strong[91] put international law in front of a decisive contradiction: the practical impossibility to intervene in order to stop a current or potential genocide within a state that is not threatening peace and international security.

So if we want to attribute a merit to NATO war against Milosevic, after declaring its illegality in the light of the then international law, we have to recognize that it had indeed put its finger on a crucial sore in order to pointing out a gap in the fight against the dictatorships methods that internation-

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90 Just to mention a few names available in the bibliography:: Calore, 2003; Carnevale,

2004; Ferrajoli, 2005; Pirani, 2004; Ronzitti, 2000; Valdes, 2003; Zolo, 2000 e 2001.

91 It is of little importance the fact that this fear has proved excessive. One can not overlook the fact that the story of Kosovo was the last link in a ten-year chain of wars, massacres and atrocities (those caused by the dissolution of Tito's Yugoslavia) which we had not seen in Europe since the end of Second World War, included concentration camps and ovens for the cremation of corpses. Events, among other things, in which Europe, the United States and the United Nations itself sinned by omission, laziness and ambiguous complicity with the elites of the Balkan countries frantically fighting each other. It can therefore understand how the alarm relating to the repressive methods of the Serbs against Kosovo was able to achieve so egregious levels.

al law, designed to protect national sovereignty above all, had failed to fill until then[92]. Then a wrong war for just goals? Certainly, international law is international law, and a violation remains so even if it is done with the best intentions. The fact remains, however, that beyond the many mistakes[93] military intervention in Kosovo can provide a benchmark for the future, in anticipation of other incidents of internal genocide committed by authoritarian regimes or dictatorships.

This impression is reinforced when we consider other aspects linked to the conflict. First of all, it is very interesting that the political aim of the war was clearly limited, in response to one of the golden rules that underpin the success of war: it was said clear, then, that the purpose of the military action was not the fall the Milosevic regime, but stopping his repression in Kosovo[94]; the fact that this had meant the bombing of Serbia in its military, industrial and logistics ganglia depended on inability to directly affect the Serbian troops and the need to block the Yugoslavia "system", as State at war. With a very bold similarity with the State law, it could say that the crime was prosecuted but not the criminal. A year later the people in Belgrade send home Milosevic, with an act that should have led to a better welcome in too cynical Western media[95].

The last factor to consider is that was more discussed together with the lack of authorization from the United Nations: the NATO claim to conduct a

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92 Beck (2003) also seems to confirm it: "Not even the Security Council, even if he had taken up the issue of Kosovo, would be authorized, according to the wording of the UN Charter, to intervene to rescue the persecuted in the region having to limit itself only to 'ensure world peace and international security' '' (p.275).

93 The worst of which, no doubt, was losing the peace after winning the war. The situation in Kosovo is far from having solved the problems at the origin of the crisis and only the euro-American military presence keeps the lid on the pot. That said, it seems frankly excessive to depend exclusively tribulations of a post-conflict country (be it Kosovo, or more recently in Libya) on the fact that it had previously tasted the Western arms. It is not that we can blame Napoleon III, who helped us in arms during the Risorgimento, for the problems of Italy after 1861 ...

94 See the statements of the then NATO Secretary General Javier Solana, cited in Sciso (ed), 2001, pp. 261-263.

95 In fact, the image of Milosevic trotting toward his prison should have come in the trophy room not only of the people of Serbia but also that of all Western democracies. They preferred instead to focus on other aspects of the story, such as "transaction" to the economical basis of the delivery of the dictator, the low credibility of the Court called upon to judge him, and so on.

Chapter 6

war based on the exclusive use of air power, with a low lethality in terms of civilian casualties, through the use of bombs and laser-guided missiles and satellites. The decision to not invade Kosovo or Serbia with ground troops was proclaimed loud and clear, causing more than one bewilderment among experts and analysts. Whether the statement was improvident or not, the decision arose some positive effects: put undercover all Western and Serbian troops, as well as civilians, by a bloody deterioration of the conflict, took off the best weapon of Milosevic's army, a long guerrilla, and forced NATO to better use its ace in the hole: the technological superiority. So long weeks of bombing came the nature of which sparked a real "happening", worthy of being studied in university courses of mass communications. The attention focused on some facts completely omitting others: it overlooked the fact that about thirty thousand bombs were launched and focused only aiming errors, which were more or less a hundred[96]. Civilian casualties were between five hundred and one thousand five hundred, and were rightly mourned, but few noted that, given the effort made by NATO and the results obtained, the number would be considered incredibly low. The fact is that the above mentioned NATO claim, that broke all the bitter remarks that sparked, was fully supported by the facts, so that considering methods and objectives at stake, the Kosovo War has to be considered the least bloody war after the Second War World[97].

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96 Nadan Petrovic in the essay "Il rispeto del diritto internazionale umanitario da parte delle forze dell'Alleanza Atlantica nel Kosovo" ["The respect of international humanitarian law by the forces of NATO in Kosovo"] (in Sciso, eds, 2001), argues that there were 10,484 attacks, with the use of 23,614 amog bombs and missiles and with the destruction of 900 targets. He also mentioned the prestigious Human Rights Watch, according to which the 90 (!) targeting incidents made between 489 and 528 deaths, of which 62 to 68% in only 12 incidents.

97 There were considerations linked to a really remarkable ignorance on the technology, such as Enrico Melchionda, in the essay "Il ritorno della politica" ["The return of politics"] (cited by, eds, 2002, p.161, note 3): **"Francamente, a prescindere dal giudizio sulle ragioni e sui torti, mi pare paradossale la pretesa della propaganda bellica occidentale di considerare i bombardamenti metodici e tecnologici della Nato, che colpiscono da distanza di sicurezza senza alcuna possibilità di risposta, *meno vili* [in corsivo nel testo, n.d.a.] delle azioni terroristiche suicide dei kamikaze fondamentalisti". ["Frankly, aside from the judgement on the reasons and wrongdoings, it seems a paradoxical claim of Western war propaganda to consider the methodical and technological NATO bombings, which strike from a safe distance without any possibility of response, *less vile* [in italics in the text, ed] of terrorist suicide kamikaze fundamentalists"] The author does not seem to have realized that suicide bombers want to kill civilians, NATO had used

The same political and strategic results would have cost a death toll of at least ten times higher even five or ten years before 1999. Therefore, regarding Kosovo the "precision warfare" was well more than a slogan. Yet, this was the current opinion. Leaving aside the controversy of the anti-war movement, it is symptomatic the fact that the mass media circuit was hysterically concentrated on the very low percentage of errors, ignoring completely the enormous amount of shots on target. The maximum of collective stupidity was on 27 March 1999 when a stealth aircraft F117 was shot down perhaps due to a tip-off or to an incredible stroke of luck: except for a few shy representative of the press, none dared to point out that it was the first shooting down of this kind of aircraft after thousands of flight hours in war, which was a record in the history of aviation[98].

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its technology to avoid doing so: if the intention had been that, instead, they would certainly had used million bucks cruise missiles. Even admitting so, there are much cheaper systems ... The collateral damages, so to speak civilians killed as a result of attacks not specifically aimed at them, can be divided into two categories. The first is formed by the people killed by bombs that went off target for an infinite number of reasons (pointing errors, failures, etc.). The second is formed by unlucky people hit in successful attacks against targets that they occupied (as the television studios in Belgrade), or which were close. In all cases, we can not forget that the primary purpose in this war, was hitting the targets, not killing civilians.

98 Therefore, the primary character of the contemporary air power, its flexibility coupled with the precision, expired to the rank of joke. In the future this would imply rather heavy consequences. One of the aims, if not declared certainly considered, of the Information Warfare, in fact, is achieving consensus among the public just by winning wars at a low price in human lives. But if NATO had been equated with Milosevic, despite its radically different methods and techniques, one would have wondered whether it is worth continuing to use an expensive knife when the public sees it anyway as a stick. If it really does not make any difference to try to hit a building, which is the desired target, leaving intact the district that contains it, one might as well pave the neighbourhood with B52s: it costs less and at least one is considered criminals for something. Fortunately the "precision warfare" is based on other reasons besides that of the political dividend, otherwise there would have to fear a return to more expeditious methods of warfare: a good result for the scourge of war Western mistakes. In Kosovo the new way of waging war has therefore politically and propagandistically drawn a blank. Personally, I do not hesitate to accuse for this phenomenon the media and the anti-war movement; both have been unable to read the context of the political and military events. This inability has given its worst when it was accredited and became commonplace the view that the Western bombing had caused the mistreatment of Kosovar refugees by the Serb police. If the old Albanian woman was killed or driven from his home, it would have been in short the fault of the American pilot who struck Belgrade: an authentic moral "shell

Chapter 6

The war in Kosovo has shown that Western weapons, in a broad sense, are for the moment without rivals. That one might politically "lose the peace" is here for the moment not relevant. Looking at the future, several issues of concern meander, though; especially the obsession with the loss of life (westerns not those of the enemy in turn, of course) and the over-reliance on technology, symbolized by air power. Along these two lines a debate has been developing which contains a precise and perceptible note of nervousness, which could be summarized in the question: is the western conception of war becoming a bit too post-modern (or even post post-modern) towards still modern or pre-modern rest of the world (the largest share of the world, by the way)? I mean, is it not that the "others" will eventually defeat the desperate few, chip-dependent warriors of the West under the eyes of a distracted and perplexed public opinion?

The lack of "desire" to risk their lives in combat strengthens the use of technology "do-it-all", which in turn decreases the propensity to shed his own blood. We have already said that this trend is historically well hinged in Western military prevalent model; this tendency was strengthened after the bloodshed of the First World War. Today the firepower with which until the fifties and sixties we tried to protect the lives of Western troops was replaced by the accuracy of fire; but the result does not change. Today the Western soldier is precious because it is rare (very expensive to the taxpayer) and is valuable because it is rare... We already mentioned a few pages ago, the process of removing the death, a key characteristic of wealthy societies. In short, the West is willing to pay only affordable prices, in monetary terms, if you have to wage a war. No wonder if this smell decay in many worry nostrils: what will happen if Western societies have been asked one day bloody and heavy sacrifices? Basically it is tempting to give a reason to the pessimists: no society can survive if the only thing that will do to defend itself is to sign a check ... But the fact is that this injury on the poor fighting spirit of

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game". It would have been the same to say that the landing in Normandy claimed the lives of a million more Jews, since the Germans were so angry... I want to make matters worse. Milosevic war was, at least in intention, a genocide. The fact that the Westerners have not dealt with it using traditional means of destruction, but instead using the white gloves of precision weapons, was a historical novelty that should be understood: this misunderstanding is also a consequence of the guilty historic removal of Nazism and its methods of struggle against unarmed civilians of which Europe was guilty in recent years; methods which the Serbs have offered a reissue. Europe has lost a historic opportunity at this juncture to meet and re-found values, those pertaining to the political-military defence of fundamental rights, a bit 'less prosaic of the Euro currency.

the democracies is an old litany played several time by all the "barracks-so-cieties" during history: all of them took regularly a good hiding. This is not to deny that the problem exists; if indeed Western armies have been composed of a small elite of Praetorian Guard, hopefully loyal to the institutions, operating in a context of absolute indifference by the public, there it would have to worry. This does not necessarily mean either that in these conditions a war should be lost inevitably, or that the public opinion could not return to have *vis pugnandi*.

NATO's war in Kosovo could therefore be seen as aggression against Serbia. In this case, however, it can be challenging trying to thrash out a bit of the issue. If the attacked country is a fierce violator of human rights, albeit against a part of its population, is it reasonable to apply the concept of "aggression" that in the spirit if not the letter of international law indicates a frankly and clearly imperialistic act? The crime of aggression in its contemporary sense is so because the two world wars of the twentieth century were originated by the attack on the sovereignty of independent states by other states and therefore the UN (and the connected body of legal international rules) was created to preserve peace through the protection of the sovereignty of all States: but if a state uses its sovereignty to commit genocide inside its own territory?

Moreover, it is questionable the idea that, if the behaviour of a state is not permitted by international law, it is unlawful; for example, to justify NATO's intervention one might invoke the "state of necessity": lacking international law, which operationally speaking is more attentive to the protection of international harmony that the systematic massacres, lacking the main international institution, no other choice is left than to "attack" Serbia in order to prevent another genocide in the heart of Europe.

Meanwhile, the spotlights on Kosovo have been turned off; a few months later they are switched on again on East Timor and Chechnya. In all three cases there have been serious violations of human rights, but they were dealt with three weights and three sizes. In Kosovo the international community did not move with a legal support but only part of it (NATO), which is a military alliance; in East Timor UN intervened; in Chechnya, no one: the Russian attack was developed in substantial indifference and complicity, at least that's the feeling out of the secret rooms, of the international community. This difference in treatment has naturally sparked a controversy

Chapter 6

which aims to de-legitimize not only the intervention in Timor, but also in Kosovo. The main subject is obvious: "Do not speak about human rights, which since their universal and fundamental character should apply under the every heaven and against any enemy because international community takes action, according to the convenience, one time and the other no. "

It is interesting that in this dispute are united both advocates of "never intervene" and those of "always intervene". Supporters of the "never" carry around with great pride their cynical and disenchanted "realism": since when, they say, a war is waged to defend human rights? The war is for specific interests to be protected. So let's stop this hypocrisy by beautiful souls. In the meantime supporters of "always" tear their clothes: what did Kosovars have that Chechens do not? Alongside there are those who argue the futility, inconsistency and immorality of military means for the defence of law, which should be secured with non-violence and a different management of world affairs; they argue that it is tragically ironic and shameful to wage a war that kills and pollutes to save human rights.

The issue is much more complex than the public can assume, because it is influenced by simplifications and by "scandalism" of the international news circuit which all (pacifists and militarists) provide equally arguments of a strictly propaganda. These arguments go to feed what I would define as the "syndrome of humanitarian war" of which I will try to outline some aspects; the first of which concerns the hurry. During kosovo war, the chronological time counted a lot. Milosevic aside, all have had a hell of a hurry. After a few days of air strikes, on the newspapers concerned requests of concrete and tangible results already appeared; it seems that President Clinton is expected to end in a week; public opinion after two weeks was tired of hearing about Kosovo...

And yes it was to defeat a country, Serbia, much more structured and organized than Saddam's Iraq, for which in 1991 it took forty days of bombing. Advocating a duration of attacks of several months would not have been so absurd and pilgrim... The fact that it took, essentially, the same time period used for *Desert Storm* was almost miraculous[99]. Why such a hurry then? The cause of so much psychological suffering during a war are basically two: the conception of technology which has settled in the collective unconscious,

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[99] Actually, the calendar days were about the double, but the bad weather has been aborted a very high percentage of missions.

and the whole Western attitude of bad conscience towards the use of military violence. Regarding the first point, today the technology is not seen as a tool to do things well, but a way to make them quickly. Within six months PCs before considered fast expire the rank of old carts asthmatic; the TV most important element is not the screen, not even what is transmitted, but the remote control that allows rapid "tastes" of tens or hundreds of channels, none of which is really and thoroughly explored; and so forth, the examples are matters of daily experience for each of us. This is a form of attribution and / or recognition of a certain kind of omnipotence of technology: Today we honour what is fast. When this character is associated with weapons, there are some additional mechanisms. Weapons are already traditionally associated with the idea of power, and omnipotence; if it regards technological and very advanced weapons, then the expectations of instantaneous performance grows dramatically. People expect, claim that the super-weapons, cream of Western technological knowledge, solve in a flash the annoying task of the war. And when it does not, the hassle, the impatience and disappointment in public opinion take over, however, this feeling is not at all correct by its leaders and intelligentsia, who forgot very quickly, the training of centuries of war: the armed conflict has its own rules, even temporal rules; the clash is about wills, as well as means; there is what Clausewitz called the '"friction" (the case, bad weather, the terrain , etc.). Faced with what Kosovo showed, one wonders whether from the point of view of psychological tolerance it would never be repeated the experience of the two world wars of the past century, with their years and years of more or less stoically lived and endured sufferings.

As for the second point, it is closely associated with the first, and I think this kind of magic, which is attributed to hyper-fast technology, is used to remove the guilt associated with the use of weapons and is functional in the process of removing the dead so characteristic of Western societies. Here, in the "rich" world death has become a fault, an "accident", an unpleasant, smelly practice, an impediment to research by consumerist way of happiness. Do away quickly with the war, then, it is necessary to forget that death is the language of war; so this is a bad conscience, inability to look in the face the given and received death.

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Chapter 6

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Another aspect of the syndrome we are examining and closely linked to the first, is the underestimation, if not a denial, of the real character of war, that is an act of murder and destruction aimed at achieving not contingent political ends. That is, in other words, war is something deadly serious and tragic. What the priests of super technologies of war are trying to do, which is defining as "clean" the war of more or less intelligent machines, is deeply dishonest and deceptive. On the other hand, however, lashing out at the war consequences over the life and the environment, forgetting the reasons why the war was waged, and its causes, can also be misleading and essentially useless. Misleading and useless in the sense that the tragedy of the war, by the very fact of being a tragedy, has always excuses linked to its political motivations; these latter set the price to pay. Price that may also be acceptable. The line between admissibility and inadmissibility can be very thin because today the powerful weapons' technology destroys civilian technology, that is rather delicate: pollution and related deaths, deaths possibly caused by depleted uranium, stress on children, etc. On the other hand, however, it is necessary to consider the following facts: the Kosovo Albanians are still alive and the dictatorship of Milosevic is over; these results were obtained with quite innovative methods of war, while in a not too distant past you would have to bring down Serbia until the last stone to achieve them. While human rights are not directly defended by force of arms, it is true that they are defended indirectly fighting the policy that gives rise to the violations. The difference is subtle, but it is crucial because it shows that evil lies not in war but in politics. So it is useless to point out that "changing the minds of Serbs" could not be obtained with the war: no one claimed it; Serbs can also keep their ideas of leadership against the rest of the world, it is important that they understand that implement these ideas into a political project entails a punishment of military conflict[100].

But is there a right meaning of the term "humanitarian war", beyond the slogans and exploitation of pacifists, militarists, mothers and journalists? In other words, was this war a "neo-war" or not? Can it give us any indication about the conflicts of the twenty-first century? Well, "humanitarian war" could also mean that the connection between war and human rights has changed (or rather, is changing) nature, in the sense

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100 It is all too obvious that I do not think the Serbians, as any other people, the worst. This
      time in history they were concerned; in the future it's up to others…

that the violation of rights is ceasing to be simply a result of the war to become even cause or purpose. The issue is complex and must go in order, in an attempt to formulate the hypothesis that "humanitarian war" is more than just an empty verbal expression.

There is a moral aspect of the "humanitarian war", and there is a political one. The moral one is composed of two elements: the reasons why one goes to war and the fighting method used. If the "humanitarian war" will be a historic case and not a slogan that will so because it will (also: was, if Kosovo is already covered in this case) a war not of extermination waged against a political project of extermination, a project that contemplates the theory, planning and execution of organized massacres as purpose and tool, not only affect combat activity. We have already spoken about the fighting method: even considering all the damage it causes, the new Western way of war is incomparably less bloody and harmful than that of even ten or twenty years ago. The increasing use of massive precision weapons is a historical trend that can not be overlooked or mistaken for simplistic propaganda; ethically speaking, it is instead the necessary complement to the anti-extermination justification behind the military intervention.

The political aspect is equally important. If in Kosovo the extended violation of human rights stops to be exclusively "effect" of a war to become an instrument or even "purpose" of it, the nature of NATO intervention takes on new characteristics of inevitability and no more on choice of more or less propaganda. Well, many scholars have supported (Beck, 1999 and especially Kaldor, 1999) that the crisis of the state leads to a change in the nature of war, such as to move the violation of human rights precisely from effects to the purpose of the war itself. This is the reasoning: firstly economic and then political and cultural globalization emptied of meaning and essence the vast majority of states. This means that the group identity does not catalyses any longer in the idea of the state, but in other forms of identity, crossing across old national borders; those who decide to embark on a war consequently no longer do against another state and in the name of nationalist ideology, but against that part of its own population that does not share (or is presumed not to share) a vision that is not more nationalistic, but based on other values that can be ethnic, tribal or masking purely patronage-mafia interests. At this point, in the state that goes to war, it happens that it is not tended any more to gather and unite all the people because they stand up against an external threat, but it is the case that part

Chapter 6

of the population is viewed as internal danger to eradicate at all costs. It must be clear that this is an evolving process full of contradictions and ambiguities. So, for example, the aggressive policy of Milosevic contained traditional and new elements: those hyper-nationalist (but that were already working more like domestic propaganda use) and the much more important patronage-Mafia because they had to ensure the permanence in power of post-Tito nomenclature. This was the real engine of the Yugoslav tragedy. If this global scenario is plausible, it is clear that the violation of human rights has extended the real purpose of the war, or at least is one of its main purposes and in any case it is the main instrument. So make war on these states mean, automatically, take the field for a military-humanitarian.

But of course there are also other reasons, this time of convenience, to act internationally by military force for the defence of human rights. If we listen to the words of Secretary of State Albright (quoted by Beck, 1999),

"Support for human rights is not only a new form of international solidarity. It is essential to our security and our well-being, because governments that trample the rights of their citizens sooner or later end up for not respecting even the rights of others. In this century, regimes that oppressed the political rights of its citizens have almost always attack other states. The same regimes that spread insecurity because oppress minorities, harbour terrorists, trade in drugs or secretly prepare weapons of mass destruction."

It is clear that in the sentences of Albright one can also read the downside. It is still the policy to decide military interventions and the risk that there are genocides passed over in silence is real, and will be fought only those that realize the television and / or those in which the intervention will agree to the dominant power.

Actually, Ulrich Beck (1999) has right when he says:

"The outbreak of war in Kosovo has focused one thing: a new post-national policy of military humanism, the intervention of transnational powers that move to enforce human rights beyond the limits of national boundaries is born. The good news is also bad: the hegemonic power decides what is law and what human rights. And war becomes the continuation of morality by other means. It is no exaggeration to speak of democratic crusades, when the West in the future will also fight in order to renew their self-legitimization."

Going back to what was said earlier about the critics of ''intervention in Kosovo yes and elsewhere not", one must realize that say "always in-

tervening" means, in fact "never intervening" because one can not always intervene neither physically nor politically. Of course, in this case, you can agree that you should always speak with non-violent means, in the broad sense; but the advocates of non-violence have to work for their practical feasibility; we can not expect that in a few years humanity commits an evolutionary leap of this magnitude. Meanwhile, what we do: do not intervene ever, anywhere?

On the other hand, supporting the idea of "not doing anything ever" (always to defend human rights, of course) also results in unpleasant consequences. First of all moral consequences: charges of "variable morality" linked to the supporters of the "sometimes" can be safely returned to the sender in the form of "moral indifference". It is hard to escape the impression that the "realists" never ever would fight Hitler: "Who did we do?". The realism in political work in the instrumental sense, unethical; otherwise it becomes mere complicity. The most serious problem is still a political one. The above mentioned quote of Secretary of State Albright contains a great truth: regimes that are massively violators of human rights are also a serious threat to peace, because they can hardly manage to separate the "bad" part of their policy (the internal one against a part of the population) from the "good" part (the foreign one, referring to their international relations).

In short, it is quite clear that those who say "never" or "always" presupposes a moral conception of politics (even the immorality of "never" is a moral) that is a conception of international relations affected by some kind of "having to be"; which is fine... but is it not always said that morality and politics are two separate spheres? Nobody wants to deny the need to inject strong dose of morality in world politics, but then, perhaps, the "sometimes" has a better chance of realization and effectiveness.

Concluding and summarizing, the war in Kosovo can only be read as yet another dirty conflict, but instead it may have represented something new. This innovation would be born from the synergy between, on the one hand, a new (surgically and not indiscriminately) way of warfare and, on the other hand, the predilection for the extermination policy as purpose and instrument of war. The war in Kosovo has perhaps marked the beginning of two important developments of historical significance, at least for the West: a progressive sterilization of cruelty of war; the other (complementary to the first) of new modes, for democracies, in dealing with the eternal enemy, the totalitarian thought, taking into account that it does not predominantly coagulate any more in one state-form. Perhaps the "humanitarian war", although

Chapter 6

taken for convenience, represents progress; indeed, it would be fulfilled fully only if the baton has been passed to Institution that is true custodian of international law. History as Nature, however, does not do leaps, rather it proceeds by trial and error.

6. 7. 2 "Boots on the ground": The wars of the Bush era

As previously mentioned, the intervention against Iraq shares with the war against Yugoslav Federation in 1999 the illegality from the point of view of international law and the fact that this was a campaign of democracy against dictatorship. We also mentioned that the two wars (three, with one in Afghanistan) are, however, in many ways very different from each other.

A key fact, for example, is the different nature of the violations of international law, especially when they are considered in regard with the given justifications: in Kosovo it is possible, I think legitimately, to argue that NATO has taken advantage of a lack of international standards, where international law was silent about actions against massive violations of human rights as *casus belli*. In Iraq, however, it was a violation of an existing, founding and of the utmost importance rule: the prohibition of preventive war.

I leave open the question whether the first case has "progressive" connotations in the sense that has called for a new standard, and the second one is "regressive", by making the international coexistence a decisive step back ... In other words perhaps Kosovo 1999 has assumed to men of good will the need to integrate international law, while Iraq in 2003 forced them to repair the same. It is certain that the feelings that the two conflicts arouse, at least in this writer, are something post-modern compared to a more nineteenth-century style war, that on the Mesopotamia.

Another notation has to be made. The choice, made in 1999 probably more for fear than anything else, not to be trampled soil of the Republic of Serbia (and Kosovo, if not to surrender Milosevic took place) by the boots of NATO soldiers was, in reality, of strategic importance and rich in meaning. Behind this decision, as I said, there was the conception of a paralysed and inhibited enemy in its ability to function rather than invade and conquer. Perhaps we will sin of naivety, but I read again a post-modern character: an attack on the state system of Milosevic, rather than any kind of messianic crusade to conquer "hearts and minds" of an entire people. In contrast, the two "Asiatic" wars of Bush jr. appear, beyond connected energetic interests, linked to vice territorial, to the idea that we can really only win occupying a territory.

Connected to everything, there is the question of technological choices adopted in the two conflicts. If we consider the destructive possibilities offered today even to the most derelict insurgent, wars in Iraq and Afghanistan appear losers from the start; not for nothing they last for years and have never seen the end. It could not be otherwise: Western technology, at the time when it lowered to fight on the ground, is faced and hindered not with bows and arrows, but with mobile phones used as primers, improvised, but sophisticated (as well as from the usual, and admirable, Kalashnikovs and RPGs), explosive devices, and then with a whole panoply of weapons that are less, but not so much, sophisticated than Western tools.

The more relevant question, however, is of course political. In general terms, we can say that a war is won the more completely and quickly, the more the political goals are clear and defined and, therefore, better suited to be achieved through technology and the available organization. In other words, the more the political purposes are broad, vague and ambitious the more things get complicated because the enemy reaction will have more space and opportunities to unfold and become effective. If all this is true, the comparison between the first war and the other two is almost disarming. Compared to extremely limited stated goals for the Kosovo war (which we have already mentioned), we found in the Middle East and Afghanistan two authentic crusades with such ambitious proclaimed aims to allow, on the one hand, the use of lies and, on the other hand, the possibility for the enemy (however you want to identify) to oppose rather easily their own vision and narrative of the two ongoing conflicts, especially in world public opinion, in particular the Muslim one.

The above observations lead to the conclusion that the conservative ideology, eliminating all the economic interests below, shows a remarkable intellectual poverty, to make it feel more a marketing strategy than a real political strategy. This is true mainly for two aspects: the naive optimism in assessing the gap between the American military deployable technology and that of his opponents, as if globalization and the spread of destructive potential is not a phenomenon known for years; second, the paradoxical contrast between the "hurry" implied in the principles neoconservatives (forcing in the policy-making process, which is entrusted to more sales pitches television that a serious democratic debate, speed in hitting the enemy, unlimited trust in the goodness of their cause with which " illuminate "the minds of the people) and the actual bogged down in difficult and far theatre of war, with zany costs and very serious losses. If the story has been a really listened teach-

Chapter 6

er, the ideology of "Bushites" would have been dead for some time, having failed on their own field test. Instead, it is looking forward to re-painting and re-issues, perhaps even in more radical version, with the advent of the new administration in the White House.

6. 7. 3 Scenario: An outlaw Bomb

A spectre is roaming the world: the possession of the atomic bomb by a fundamentalist, especially Islamic, regime especially if it calls Iran... As we have already partially said, in this case the mechanisms provided and theorized by neo conservative ideology would infallibly be triggered, immediately linking theory and practice. "You are a fanatic regime, you have a completely different culture from the West, you have an enemy that you consider worthy only to disappear, you have the Bomb... then surely you will use it... then we have to strike first, otherwise the damage that you might cause (in our scenario, the destruction of Israel) is completely unacceptable for us. A preventive, even nuclear albeit limited, war against you is right, holy and inevitable."

How much is this argument right, or, in another way, how could a military alternative vision rebut this mantra?

Let's establish some points. 1) Israel can not endure even a single nuclear attack without being hopelessly crippled or destroyed. For Israel the concept of escalation does not exist, given the paucity of its territory and population if it has taken one shot, it would be over. This places the aggressor (in our case, Iran) at an advantage. 2) For the attacker it would be suicide not only because Israel has enough warheads to annihilate any other Middle Eastern country, but because they would be added to other weapons from allied countries, primarily the US. It is also to be remembered that the Israeli deterrence is partly based on submarines, thus completely invulnerable to first the attack. 3) From a historical point of view, this situation places Israel in the uncomfortable position to be the leading candidate for the launch of the third nuclear device in history, which could so preserve their existence but would create a tremendous impact on its, already quite discussed, reputation all over the world. 4) The pre-emptive strike of Israel would have little chance of success if conducted only with conventional weapons: given the multiplicity of sites, the vastness of the Iranian territory but also the lack of a second chance for another try, the more likely scenario is to an attack with mini-nukes high penetrating power, in order to uproot the foundations facil-

ities, ramps, etc....

On this basis, we can get a series of questions.

1) Does t**he above proposed scenario have points of contact with the atomic situation, which we have known over the years of the Cold War?**

If the answer is yes, the possibility of implementing an alternative policy to that of the "hawks" might have some opportunities. What I mean is, for example, that an smart policy could establish a link between the ability of Israeli nuclear retaliation and those of the Europe or the US: this extended deterrence would follow that in force during the Cold War. Soviet leaders understood that a nuclear attack on a European city would be considered equivalent to that against an American city. This linkage, as it was then called, could also be considered a bluff (Would really the Americans risk retaliation on New York to avenge the destruction of Hamburg, for example?), but the fact is that no one, not even the more Stalinists among Soviets, ever went to "see" the bluff.

In short, if the Europeans[101] or the Americans, or both, covered up (and declare *urbi et orbi*) Israel with their nuclear umbrella, would it not increase the Israeli deterrence and not discourage the more fanatical Islamists? It would be a war of words, of course, but the nuclear grammar has, as we should have learned, a huge burden and certainly would be a better option than a catastrophic pre-emptive strike.

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101 Let us return for a moment to talk about Europe. Placing its nuclear deterrent to cover Israel's security, may not be one of not many but significant things that the Old World could do to increase international security and to increase the chances of peace in the world. It is true that Europe is suffering, and will suffer even more in the coming decades, a decrease of status in the world; the pendulum of history is moving towards the Pacific. Moreover, we know, and we remembered, how slow, listless and tiring the process of European unification is. But that "not many things" that Europe can do might be very important; having to move the story in the second or third row can also bring benefits, it can afford to be daring decisions that old and new superpowers do not want or can afford ... Tacking decisively towards an economy not dependent on non-renewable energy; win a permanent seat on the Security Council as the European Union; help reform the United Nations; encourage in his youth the opportunity and the desire to become UN peacekeepers; accept UN observers at its nuclear carriers; proclaim the principle of nuclear no-first-use and forbid herself any strategy and military-industrial policy that can lead to or allow new adventurist temptations ...

Chapter 6

It is clear that we will cover the same old ground already screened during the confrontation between the two superpowers: even at that time the "hawks" of the two parties were pressing to attack before being attacked and then, and hopefully today and tomorrow, the strategic nuclear logic said they were wrong. Of course, this asymmetrically, reformist way to conceive the confrontation with a "fanatic" (if it really is) country like Iran should provide the carrot of a grant recognition status at the international level as a result of the acquisition of the Bomb, in addition to showing the stick; where would the scandal be? Nothing more than the old good political realism, which should be revived in front of "new political right" adventurism. Certainly, a terrorist could be tempted to a nuclear attack, but even supposing that it could not be stopped, we would seek a long way to respond to a nuclear attack of this type; we would try it and never find it. But a state does not think like a terrorist, the USSR did not reason this way, nor North Korea did, neither India nor Pakistan.

But we have said before that Israel does not have the possibility to suffer even a single atomic insult: from this point of view, its geostrategic situation can not be compared to those of the US and USSR, that they could even think of undergoing some nuclear attacks without disappearing from the face of the planet. The fact is, however, that this case was entirely theoretical: no American or Russian leader has ever thought about starting a limited nuclear war... because it would have been limited not for long. Whether it is a single bomb or tens or hundreds, then, the result is the same: the mechanism of deterrence holds or fails in both cases. The fact that deterrence worked between US-USSR is a great argument to apply it in the Middle East.

2) Does t**he conception of suicidal Islamic fundamentalism have the same characteristics as that of their Western culture?**

In short, if we admit that for Islam, in its politically radical course, death is not death but life, that is synonymous with paradise, the true and final survival, what could we oppose? We said earlier that a terrorist can (and should, and will) commit suicide, but a state would not do that ... but maybe do we affirm this due to our conception of State? And if does the Iranian people, pushed or tricked by their leaders, decide to sacrifice themself to finally destroy Israel and triumphantly enter the afterlife accompanied by the prayers of all Muslims in the world? Perhaps are Israel and Iran only two mice in the corner? Israel survives if attacks, Iran might want to survive spiritually if it commits suicide by attacking Israel.

If that were really so, Israel would completely destroy Iran with nuclear bombs, because any limited attack would expose Israel to chemical, biological or similar reprisals to which Iran would not give up. The technology offers many ways to implement this purpose. Iran should be wiped off the map.

But is it permissible what we have admitted above, namely that Iran wants to commit suicide for the sake to destroy the State of David...? Is it really possible, western culture or not, holy war or not, that a nation full of past and future wants to be destroyed, disappearing from history and being reduced to a radioactive wasteland, full of deformed babies? Is it not more likely that Iran wants the bomb for the same reasons that other countries have wanted, to acquire a greater political role, also in relation to other countries of the international system and to be assured of not being invaded ?

But could be the same said of the new bogeyman, the Caliphate, the terrorist movement of black flags? We could accept the idea that it represents a sort of reactionary utopia, that is, who wants to react to a certain type of Islam, to the challenges not so much as of the Western world but as of the rich, agnostic if not secular, projected towards the new challenges world that science and new technologies are preparing. It would seem that the bomb may be the right shortcut to impose on all those who do not share the project of the Caliphate not as much a conversion, but as a punishment, revenge for their blasphemy. But how is this scenario realistic? The fact that the Caliphate points, at least at the current state of things, to establish itself as a new state in the Middle East, is totally counterproductive to the project. A state can be boycotted, isolated, attacked well before it could acquire nuclear weapons and their delivery means. The same management of nuclear apparatus involves problems and needs of huge organization, and we may have some doubt that a society so exclusively theocratic can address and resolve them. But let's assume the Caliphate acquires weapons of mass destruction, nuclear-chemical-biological one, and that, unlike other states like North Korea or even Iran, it is not interested in their possession as mere political card but trivially and brutally it is devoted to their use, in a gigantic kamikaze act. We could only accept the challenge, trusting in the incontrovertible fact, that only the great powers such as the US, China and Russia are able to destroy with their arsenals life in the entire planet.

Chapter 6

SUMMARY CONSIDERATIONS

I n one of his taxonomies, in which the clarity of ideas and language excel, Norberto Bobbio identified the main ways in which humans have always looked to the war. Apart from a minority, that, however, becomes more prevalent during periods of severe social and political crisis, that considers the military conflict as a good event (in the name of a radical ideological, political, racial, Darwinism), the majority of public opinion is divided between those who consider the war an inevitable evil, and instead those who, while considering it always a disaster, recognize its inevitability and think that sooner or later humanity will be able to get rid of the war. From a political standpoint, the first approach is expressed in what is generically defined political realism and its various shades are arranged in a range that goes from a resigned and passive, even morbid at times, acceptance of the ineradicable human defects to an active search for remedies, without illusions and utopia, that are recognized, however, provisional and contingent. The search for a balance between the powers, the distrust of ideological impulses, the primacy accorded to the political than moral issues, the pursuit of negotiations without betraying the national interest: all these attitudes belong to this area. We could call it, using other words, conservatism, more or less enlightened, more or less projected on or long-term goals.

Even the last idea, that considers the war as an avoidable harm, contains in itself a very varied repertoire of ways of dealing with the problem of war. They range from the sole dominance of moral motivations, or from paranoid attribution of responsibility for the war to a single cause or a single actor (consequently eliminating them, the golden age will return) to the realization that the elimination of war from History needs long time and radical changes, but for this reason they have to be shared as much as possible and implemented by a large part of humanity enough to do mass than other parts that do not want or can not operate actively in favour of Peace.

It is clear that there are areas of convergence, of proximity between the two above mentioned approaches. The more the political realism considers utopia not as an obstacle but as a stimulus to act, and the more the military reformism, let's call it for the sake of synthesis, maintains rationality, the more the two poles tend to converge and mingle.

I hope that the reader is able to convince himself or herself that in this ar-

ea this book is located. We must resign ourselves to the idea that death is more than just the final result and the language of war. At the individual level death is experienced by most people as an unacceptable scandal, collectively it receives from war, whether it is given or received, a sense, the ultimate meaning to be given to their existence on the planet. Here is the inseparable link between war and death: because it is inevitable in the long run, this link will be broken only if there are changes in the nature of war and/or the social perception of the individual and collective death.

History, which already undertakes to disprove after a long time the "rightness" of many massacres, has offered humanity the ability to clearly and immediately see the hidden deception in attributing meaning to death through war. It did it through the advent of nuclear weapons. Therefore, they should be used, since it is impossible to do without, as last embankment against the possible Holocaust after their use. Use means therefore reduced, controlled, operated as a regulatory mechanism, as they were a feedback mechanism, to prevent humanity to commit suicide.

The other weapon in our hands to tame the war, that is ourselves in war, is the power of the law. The law testifies both the inevitability of evil, and the chances of surviving it as individuals and as part of a group that wants to live again in the future. International law, and the institutions that follow from it, have to acknowledge that nation states are no longer the unique and privileged actors in the world arena, or, in other words, are not the only owners of that bit of sovereignty, to conquer and defend, that can enable to unleash the collective violence. In such a confused and fragmented scenario, it is my opinion that laws and international institutions should give up manage international crises as processes with a beginning and a predictable end; perhaps it would be more feasible the idea of returning to the essential, minimal tasks of international community, that is, proposing peaceful solutions, witness and document for future reference that happens, save as many innocent lives as possible. All tasks are impossible to perform without a force truly independent of the United Nations.

The term "new wars" has become an axiom, and in literature it has given life for classifying a real craze, in which sometimes seems to run out the intellectual capacity of many civil and military scholars. On the one hand, it is true when it tries to anticipate the outcome of a technological revolution, which grows in both civil and military level, of enormous scope and that will change the face of humanity. On the other hand, we need to understand that the war keeps its essence, it is only changing its colours, like the chameleon

in the clausewitzian comparison. In short, the "new wars" are both the wars of the new and future machines, and the war of the new political actors in competition with the old sovereign state, which, however, is far from extinction and could once again be the protagonist of future major conflicts. Then, considering the contemporary scene as exclusively dominated by terrorism and counter-terrorism is, therefore, in my opinion a serious mistake of underestimation.

Therefore, political democracy does not have to think about COIN (counterinsurgency) as the only paradigm of the war in the near future. It besieged democracy on all sides, on the rising tide of technology, climate change, social inequality and the population explosion. Terrorism is certainly the nearest and noticeable enemy, not so much for the damage it can do but due to the authoritarian temptations that we are already observing at work against the freedom of the citizen; but other threats are more serious. Democracy must therefore consider war as part of the problem of the survival of a civilized humanity. No longer, or only in the rare legitimized by international law cases, democracy has considered war as a solution of the problem.

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Works to be published

- "Tecnologia militare: La variabile dominante", paper in a collective book edited by Prof. Valter Coralluzzo

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