



FOURTEEN NOTES ON THE VERY CONCEPT OF THE COLD WAR

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*“The well-known is such because it
is well-known, not known.”
--G.W.F. Hegel*

*“Ideas are displayed, without
intention, in the act of naming,
and they have to be renewed in
philosophical contemplation.”
--Walter Benjamin*

Introduction

Two debates took place last year on H-Diplo about the cold war, debates about the problems of conception and periodization. The first, during spring, concerned the ‘end’ and was occasioned by a remark I had made in passing that the cold war was really over in 1963. The second exchange, taking place in the autumn and virtually without reference to the previous exchanges, centered on when this putative war (or non-war) actually began. Aside from demonstrating a lack of institutional memory, the second debate revealed once again the extent to which the concept of the cold war is radically ‘under-determined’; by the time discussion petered out, we were back in the 19th century. The current debate, meanwhile, has typically branched out in various directions without analytical focus.

The following Notes will not rehearse my original periodization; I have argued for it elsewhere at some length. Instead I will attempt to deepen it by reflecting on the logical and ontological character of the cold war, on the conceptual conditions of possibility for talking about something called the cold war. The starting point for this genealogical exercise is the same as that of my periodization, namely, Lippmann’s critique of Kennan’s X-Article in late 1947 which introduces the term itself but also provides the historical key to its concept - though his book nowhere mentions ‘the cold war’ except in the title. The essential aspect here is that Lippmann spotted in Kennan’s argument a certain gesture of diplomatic refusal vis-a-vis the USSR; and it was this US move (I argued) that made the cold war a ‘war’ when the refusal was institutionalized under the sign of ‘no negotiation unless from a position of strength.’

Reading Lippmann, then, produced a diagnosis and a criterion but not any deeper conceptual determination. To achieve that, the cold war must be situated more distinctly within the very opposition that ultimately framed it: war and peace. If nothing else, one should consider what kind of surrender (or peace) the cold war presupposed and embodied; and that in turn requires a derivation of our notions of war and peace. I confess that a more immediate reason for doing this is exasperation with a very tiresome cliché: 'Now that the cold war is over, etc, etc.' Every article on international relations seems to begin with it, no matter what the author goes on to argue. As reified punditry, or something akin to advertising language, the pronouncement (often then followed by reference to that well known 'globalized economy') presumes a notion of an epoch so inflated and blurry that it can include everything and anything. Historical concepts certainly have the potential of reassembling past experience in novel ways, to serve new needs of the present. But the name in this case is a mere catchphrase. Moreover, behind it lurks not only a seamless, indivisible notion of the cold war as an epoch but also an essentialist principle, according to which everything is a reflection or expression of an original essence. That essence, of course, turns out to be the entire postwar relation, or conflict, between the US and the USSR. It has to be so, because what gives the epoch such a self-evident aura in the first place is its resounding 'end' with the Soviet collapse: the end is then retrospectively inscribed in the beginning and the trajectory of the 'period.' Histories of 'the cold war' can then be rewritten to explain that obvious 'end.' The effect is to conceal or obliterate variations in the nature of the relationship. Different periodizations of the era are also barred or simply subsumed, periodizations, say, in terms of 'decolonization,' 'the economic rise of Japan and Germany,' or 'the universalization of the European model of the nation-state.'

Historians, meanwhile, discomfited by this flattening out of the historical 'real,' tend to modify the image, not by re-examining the nature of the concept itself, but by adding all sorts of ancillary aspects designed to make the epoch 'fuller,' more 'realistic,' more 'accurate.' One way, worthy in itself, of achieving this 'reality effect' is to reintroduce on stage the extras of old times, now as part of an extended main cast. Another is to widen the stage itself. A third option, perhaps the preferred one, is to focus on the archival findings made possible by the 'end,' sources located in the east and so ensuring by default that re-investigation of the real will henceforth be framed in terms of Soviet (and Chinese) pathologies. These efforts, while generating important empirical knowledge, are simultaneously duplicitous in attenuating the very historical specificity of the cold war they were intended originally to attain. They fill in the 'blanks' but the picture is expanding and always will. For there is no final or 'real' cold war out there in the archives waiting to be discovered or uncovered.

The wager here, then, is that the 'cold war' as periodization can only be achieved through the exact opposite process - one of rigorous, relentless narrowing through conceptual inquiry. I want to see if the very concept of the cold war can be produced, if indeed it 'has' a concept or is perhaps better left on the heap of everyday banalities. In short, does it entail any imminent necessity? What must ultimately be interrogated is thus the polarity of the US and the USSR itself, its very givenness. To anticipate matters, once the polarity (itself a problematic metaphor) has been put into question and determined, it will be seen not as an essence but a kind of situation around which other processes, relations and antagonisms evolve and revolve, none of them homologous with it, much less 'the same.'

My procedure is essayistic as opposed to 'definitional.' Organized historically around a set of proper names, these are provisional Notes, schematic and incomplete. The analysis, nevertheless, turned out rather longer than anticipated. An elaboration of the concept of ideology, part of the original plan, has thus been excluded. Readers who get impatient with the history of concepts can skip ahead to the last Notes, where I make a few basic claims, chief of among them that (i) the cold war was a US project, and (ii) its nature or logic was laid out (unintentionally) by Franklin D. Roosevelt during the 1939-1941 and epitomized later in the notion of 'unconditional surrender.' I am assuming that 'the project' is analytically distinct from the related questions of 'origins' and 'justifiability,' or, for that matter, 'causes.' If nothing else this analysis might then serve to counteract reinvestigation of old historiographical issues in terms of neo-traditionalism, which I take to be a desire and a wish-fulfillment.

(1) Bond and Leamas

Let us begin, however, with James Bond in "Nigger Heaven." That, at any rate, was Ian Fleming's title of the chapter in *Live and Let Die* (1954) wherein Bond goes to Harlem. Fleming's villain is a Smersh (i.e. Soviet) agent known as Mr Big. Mr. Big stems from Haiti but now presides over a gangster empire in Harlem, whence he also serves his murderous Moscow controllers. By means of his Haitian voodoo art, the charismatic Mr Big dupes naive blacks into becoming an army of footsoldier spies, highly efficient because, as servants, they are invisibly omnipresent throughout (white) society. Bond is surprised when M tells him of this exotic master criminal since blacks, to 007, seem "pretty law-abiding chaps," unless of course "they've drunk too much." M, however, soon sets him right. For Mr Big, it turns out, has "a good dose of French blood" mixed in with his Haitian black, thus perhaps explaining his capabilities in the realm of sinister organization.

When, during the very height of detente in 1972-73, Fleming's book was turned into a film, Mr Big appears in an altogether different frame. He is now the head of a Harlem-based drug operation, whose object it is to flood the US market with enormous amounts of heroin, produced on a Caribbean island that he happens to control in another capacity and identity. Bond is called in to crush this threat to western civilization which now, of course, has nothing at all to do with any Soviet Smersh. By then, in fact, the Bond movies had been devoted for several years to combating supranational and non-Soviet threats. The spirit (in Hegel's sense) of the cold war was dead as a doornail.

This 'emptying out' was marked, in my view, more than anything else by le Carre's great novel *The Spy Who Came In From the Cold* (1963). With its brilliant inversions of the basic cold-war story of freedom and totalitarianism and its pervasive, gloomy greyness, the novel made a mockery of the Technicolour allure of the contemporary James Bond fantasies. Alec Leamas, existentially weary and manipulated by his British spymasters with the utmost cynicism, was an altogether more historically representative figure of the spirit of 1963 than Fleming's cold warrior. Bond (or his producers) took political notice and turned to comic book adventure in the name of the World. Fleming died around that time but earlier on, it appears, he had conjured up for his literary admirer John F. Kennedy a way to kill Fidel Castro by sprinkling his beard with radioactive material. His joke was taken seriously.

(2) Lippmann (i), Baruch and Swope

The cold war forms a whole semantic field of meaning, whose emergent boundaries may be traced initially through a simple terminological investigation, beginning with its entry into public usage. Who actually coined it is in dispute (and the lineage a good deal more complicated than indicated by the debate last fall). Walter Lippmann's book *contra Mr. X* put 'the cold war' into general use, but others could and did claim authorship. Bernard Baruch, for example, deployed the term in April 1947. Yet his speech was not in fact about the cold war but about the danger of inflation and the imperative, as this Wall Street financier would have it, for American workers to put in longer hours. He borrowed the expression (as he freely acknowledged) from his speechwriting friend Herbert Bayard Swope, who in turn said he had first thought of it in the context of Hitler and "the phony war" - a term Swope didn't like - in 1939-40. Lippmann countered that he had picked it up from French sources in the 1930s, "la guerre froide" and "la guerre blanche" being synonymous expressions for a state of war without overt war. French lexicographers dispute his account (and, for what it's worth, my own quick perusal of old French dictionaries and encyclopedias revealed no such terms).

All of which is well known and not particularly interesting except insofar as it points to the 1930s and the proliferation of intermediate 'states' between declared war and peace, more about which later. In the end, it remains that it was Lippmann who made the term a term, a historical and political term. Yet two other preceding uses are of interest here, one by Lippmann's contemporary George Orwell, the other by Don Juan Manuel in early 14th-century Castile (though, on closer inspection, this turns out not quite to be so).

3. Orwell and Burnham

Right after war, in October 1945, George Orwell talked about a "cold war" in the British Labour journal *Tribune*. His article ("You and the Atom Bomb") argued that the Bomb would become the preserve of a few Great Powers and thus relatively weaken the already weak, opening up a dystopian "prospect of two or three monstrous super-States, each possessed of a weapon by which millions of people can be wiped out in a few seconds, dividing the world between them." These states would probably then "make a tacit agreement never to use the atomic bombs against one another." Hence, Orwell surmised, "we may be heading not for a general breakdown but for an epoch as horrible stable as the slave empires of antiquity." Three such states, predicted Orwell, would emerge: the US, the USSR and China/East Asia, the last still being only potential. Each would be "at once unconquerable and in a permanent state of 'cold war' with its neighbours." The Bomb, then, would perhaps "put an end to large-scale wars at the cost of prolonging indefinitely a 'peace that is no peace.'"

A "peace that is no peace," "tacit agreement," geopolitical division of the world in an oppressive order of atomic Great Powers, "as horribly stable" as the old slave empires: Orwell's scenario illustrates some salient characteristics of what was indeed to come (the question is exactly when). However, his use of "cold war" passed unnoticed. The ensuing debate in the *Tribune* concerned weapons technology and how it might relate to bigger and smaller powers. Orwell went on, nevertheless, to redeploy the image of three globally hegemonic super-states in his relentlessly bleak classic *1984* (appearing in 1948, hence the inverted title), wherein "Oceania,"

“Eastasia,” and “Eurasia” fight meaningless, peripheral wars in the name of meaningless propagandistic slogans, every piece of news being manipulated and liable momentarily to be changed into its direct opposite.

Orwell took the geopolitical contours of this dreadful image from James Burnham's famous work of 1941, *The Managerial Revolution*. Burnham, at that earlier moment, had seen another tripartite division (one, curiously enough, with renewed meaning now): Japan, Germany and the United States. None of them would be able ultimately to conquer any of the other two, even in combination. A standstill would follow. Burnham's main point, from our perspective, was that there would be more and diffuse conflicts, but “since war and peace are no longer declared, it may be hard to know when this struggle is over and the next one begins.” Here again, then, we get an embryonic idea of the cold war as a condition outside the ‘normembryonic polarity of peace and war. In his next contemplation (1947) in the genre of ‘whither the world,’ Burnham argued that this war/no-war, what he otherwise referred to as World War III, had actually begun in Greece in April 1944. In the best of cases, however, it ‘might end its life in its beginning, like a new bud late-frosted.’ Evidently Burnham, too, was evoking wintry images in 1947.

By that time well on his way from Trotskyist renegade to arch cold-warrior (not in itself a very original route), Burnham was now advocating an American world empire. What he had in mind was “a state, not necessarily world-wide in literal extent but world-dominating in political power, set up at least in part through coercion” and extending “to wherever the imperial power is decisive, not for everything or nearly everything, but for the crucial issues upon which political survival depends.” He believed this empire, founded on the atomic monopoly and featuring strong interventionism, could be combined with democracy at home, at the core. If the US, an adolescent world power, failed in this imperial endeavour - by necessity an offensive one - the Soviet Union would succeed in its stead. An American empire, nevertheless, was already in the making, even if it was not being called that. Burnham's suggestion for an alternative and more congenial name - “the policy of democratic world order” - has a certain contemporary resonance.

The door was thus open for Burnham's ferocious attack in 1953 on the containment policy for its apparent lack of properly offensive qualities. Kennan's position, Burnham argued, was ‘pale and abstract.’ In a situation where there was “no clear line between war and peace” but “only different forms and stages of the continuous struggle for survival and dominance in the developing world system of the future,” the United States needed active warfare, political warfare. Containment was merely holding the line.

(4) Don Juan Manuel and the Muslims

A more ancient lineage goes back to Don Juan Manuel in early 14th-century Spain, or more accurately Castile. Juan Manuel was the grandson of the powerful Castilian king Ferdinand III, a major figure in the Reconquest of the Iberian peninsula from the Muslims; and Juan Manuel himself, aside from being one of the first prose writers in Spanish, was part of the same military, political, cultural and ideological struggle. He (and Iberians in general) had ample reason to ponder the nature of warfare between Christians and Muslims. Some modern writers (notably Fred Halliday) have seen Juan Manuel's analysis of the inconclusive, irregular skirmishes and raids with fluctuating frontiers and the context of

incommensurate religious worldviews as analogous to that of the cold war. Indeed, they claim that Don Juan Manuel was the first to use the term. Halliday cites no authority but my guess is that his source is Luis Garcia-Arias, a noted geopolitical thinker in Franco's Spain during the 1950s and 60s.

Don Juan Manuel's authorship, alas, happens to be something less than that. It would be more accurate to say that a 19th-century editor in Madrid coined 'the cold war' through mistaken transcription of Juan Manuel's work. The passage in *Libro de Los Estados* that Garcia-Arias was referring to in the 1950s actually speaks (in the Spanish of the 1320s) of *la guerra tivia*. *Tivia* (in modern Spanish *tibia*) means tepid or lukewarm, something metaphorically very different, of course, from what should have been *la guerra fria*. Garcia-Arias, however, was relying on the 1860 (Gayala) transcription and edition of Juan Manuel's book; and this version does indeed say *la guerra fria*. In a footnote, Gayala says that the 14th-century original seems to be *avia* (a microfiche transcript I found renders it *la g'rra (avia) [tivia]*); but, as this makes no sense to him, he goes on to exercise a certain editorial privilege by substituting the more sensible *fria* instead. Thus, then, the first known use of the cold war.

The passage indicates the difficulties of the cold war as a metaphor. Its antonym is presumably hot war, real war, rising temperature. But rising temperature could also mean a 'thaw,' an improvement, a lessening of the risk of real war. To the extent, however, that 'cold' also connotes frigidity in the sense of someone unresponsive, it is indeed quite suggestive. From that angle, Juan Manuel's image of the lukewarm war is actually not without relevance. While real war (*muy fuerte et muy caliente*) has real results - death or peace - *la guerra tivia* confers upon its respective parties neither peace nor honor. In short, it is not recognizable as a full-fledged, proper war between equal enemies. Inconclusive, it seems not have real peace as its object.

Don Juan Manuel had a good deal of military respect for the Islamic fighters he had to contend with but was in the end too much of a Christian feudal lord to be able to see them as the kind of enemies that were one's equals (he himself had more than a few of the latter in Castile and Aragon). Christian attitudes towards Islam - and Islam was in every way a fateful problem - actually underwent several changes during the Middle Ages. At no point, however, did this concern result in any real knowledge, for Islam could not be situated within the dominant intra-Christian division between orthodoxy ('the right opinion') and heresy. Islam was a strange bird, monotheistic and Abrahamic, yet also profoundly different. It represented, in short, a thorny problem of classification (cf. R.W. Southern).

The prevailing Christian view held that Muslim Saracens of Spain stemmed from Ishmael, Abraham's son by his Egyptian wife Hagar hence they were outside the original covenant. Christians, by contrast, descended from Isaac, Abraham's son by Sarah. Isaac prefigured Christ and so by extension also the medieval Church, while Ishmael had been expelled into the desert; and Saracens, of course, were men of the desert. Much analytical effort was thus expended trying to explain away the apparent phonetic paradox of 'Saracens' and 'Sarah'. Such were the preoccupations of the Church intellectuals, policy theorists of the medieval world.

Two monotheistic religions (and, bearing our cold-war problematic in mind, universalist) can not, if the respective communities understand themselves as vehicles for salvation, truly

recognize one another as geopolitical equals. The third Abrahamic religion, Judaism, sees salvation in terms of exclusion of the outside, a war for the preservation of the inside. Christianity and Islam, on the other hand, are marked by expansionary notions. Space over time will become unitary, the outside therefore conceived as a space eventually to be conquered. The question is really only what sort of relation of 'non-recognition' one will maintain with it. Unlike Christianity, however, Islam was territorialized from the very beginning and involved in military conflict. Non-recognition between the world or abode of Islam ('submission') and the world of war would not necessarily take the form of open war. On the contrary, one could engage in temporary treaties - truces - because the world was by definition temporary anyway. Thus *dar al-suhl*, the abode of treaty where one might for reasons of stalemate conclude agreements.

Islam also differentiated between various kinds of 'non-recognizable' enemies: Jews and Christians could be accepted as second-class citizens, while no compromise was possible with atheists and polytheists. Jihad ('strife' or 'struggle' in the path of God, 'holy war' actually being a Greek term) could take different forms. Truces, as they tend to do when prolonged, became permanent coexistence. Opinions differ on this, but 'real' peace treaties were concluded with Christian powers in the 16th or 17th century. Not until the end of the Crimean War in 1856, however, did Christian Europe, on its part, fully recognize the Ottomans as part of the 'family of nations' proper. Which brings us to the roots of the Christian view of war and peace.

(5) Augustine and Aquinas

Writing at the tail end of the Roman Empire and firmly convinced that the End of Time was near, Augustine put forth a set of terms about peace and war that would travel authoritatively down through the centuries, as Time in fact did not come to an End. By then, of course, Christianity had become state religion, territorialized and ready to persecute pagan and other dissent by violent means. Most of Augustine's view on the subject was taken from classical Roman authors, above all Cicero, with some crucial Christian (indeed 'Augustinian') elements added. World order was, in principle, about peace and justice, *pax* and *iustitia*, connoting a tranquil order of rest where everything would be in its proper, paradisiacally natural place. But life on earth after the Fall was inherently tainted by Sin, by definition merely temporal. Eternal peace, real peace, *pax aeterna*, could only occur after the Second Coming. Actually existing peace on earth, meanwhile, was nothing but a *pax temporalis*, a sort of simulacrum of the real thing (Augustine's neo-Platonic leanings are at play here).

Within that shadowy context of imperfection, however, it remained that Christians desired just peace while the heathen wanted an iniquitous one, a perverse peace of domination and subservience, a peace that is "not worthy even of the name of peace." Good and bad alike, nevertheless, seek some sort of peace. Even *pax falsa*, wicked peace, as opposed to *pax vera*, is thus peace of a kind. War, then, is derived and defined in terms of its goal, peace.

By the High Middle Ages, this Augustinian framework had been modified (along with his radical scission between the earthly and godly domains) so that *pax temporalis* could quite well be imagined in the here and now as *pax vera*. Thus Aquina's writing in the 13th century, distinguishes *pax vera* from *pax apparens* the peace of power and injustice. Unreal peace here

had become, significantly, the province, not of humankind and earthly existence as such, but of the heathen outside. Inside *res publica Christiana*, peace (following, notably, the arguments of that old teleological heathen Aristotle) was indeed the very condition that made it possible for human beings to be human. Aquinas, however, did allow for agreements ('concord') with heathens outside the normative community of Christians, technically signifying an existence 'along side' without violence.

(6) Hobbes and Grotius

Medieval peace, then, is understood as the 'natural' condition, marked by *iustitia* (meaning both 'right order and justice, *caritas, tranquillitas, securitas*. War is *disturbancetice*, upsetting the right order of justice and hence 'unnatural.' Private feud and public war are not clearly distinguished. The medieval order disintegrates in due course and individual states begin to emerge, themselves eventually falling into confessional civil wars in the early modern period. A situation of extreme insecurity ensues. These intra-Christian conflicts actually included absolute negations along the lines of a cold war. Consider Cromwell's position on Spain in the 17th century: "With France one can make peace, not with Spain because it is a papist state, and the pope maintains peace only as long as he wishes."

Hobbes, Cromwell's contemporary, is the theorist who breaks most decisively with the medieval conception by making war and insecurity the natural state, thus requiring all reasonable human beings to create an unlimited, absolute sovereignty, an artificial man, so as to prevent nature from having its way. Only thus could one make possible commodious living for everyone. Legitimacy, then, is for him solely a matter of *securitas pacis*. Justice has disappeared, or, rather, it is transformed into law and order. Authority makes peace, says Hobbes; Truth does not. Truth, on the contrary, is associated with religious claims and so, in his view, with the very fanaticism that had initiated the devastating civil wars.

Yet the imposing word of Hobbes was not everywhere in the 17th century the word of polite society. Theorists of 'natural rights' offered less radical alternatives, the most noteworthy here being that of Grotius. Hobbes, interestingly, had expanded the notion of war beyond 'actual fighting' to mean 'the known disposition thereto during all the time there is no assurance to the contrary.' The room for real peace in the sense of full security in external relations seemed correspondingly slender. Grotius, by contrast, maintains the conventional distinction based on the presence or absence of open fighting. He also insists (following Roman models) that war must properly be declared; but he takes one step further and turns it into a distinct condition or state. Warmaking as such is conceived as taking place in a 'theatre,' an external space of confrontation.

In the course of this argument, Grotius invokes the authority of Cicero to the effect that between war and peace there can be no intermediate. But the Ciceronian passage he refers to (in the Eighth Philippic) is actually talking about civil war. Cicero is concerned to classify it as a real war, not, as some would have it, as a mere *tumultus*. Grotius transfers this to the whole range of emergent rules and regulations designed to control war in post-confessional Europe, the process whereby war was banished to the outside of the state and, conversely, the inside became an inviolable, absolute sovereignty. War, from then on, is seen as a legitimate property and

defining aspect of that sovereignty. It becomes a political means, governed by certain explicit conventions that Grotius does more than anyone to codify as *ius gentium*, international law.

All in all, it is a dehistoricized, seemingly timeless order he construes. One of its founding pillars is indeed the razor-sharp distinction between war and peace. War is conducted for limited aims and does not, in principle, entail the liquidation of the enemy. On the contrary, the enemy is an equal - a just enemy - a conception which becomes the precondition for the edifice of Grotian juridico-political principles. Correct forms of hostility can not be based on confessional or ideological difference, provided one is a member of the European family of nations. This, in turn, permits theorization of land appropriations from indigenous peoples in the newly 'discovered' lands across the ocean, appropriations which were a precondition for the emergence of the European state system of limited war in the first place.

The medieval *res publica Christiana* is so recast into 'Europe' precisely through the emergence of this new system of regulated war, condensed at the Peace of Utrecht 1713 in the principle of Balance of Power. Diversity and proper balance, the absence of a single dominant or universal monarchy, is henceforth central part of the very definition of 'Europe.'

(7) Rousseau, Paine, Kant, et al.

Europe, in Rousseau's words, is thus "no mere fanciful collection of peoples with only a name in common as in Asia and Africa": it is a "real society" with common "religion, manners, customs and even laws." As was his wont, however, Rousseau sets up this idyllic extreme only to demolish it with a paradox or discrepancy. For this "resplendent sanctuary of science and art" is congenitally given to all manner of bloody carnage. "So much humanity, in principle," he says, "so much cruelty in deed." Europe is in fact nothing more in the end than a "pretended brotherhood" where nations are "in a state of war" with one another and treaties "represent passing truces rather than true peace." Hence the need for a system, rationally imposed, of collective security.

Rousseau (he is not very original on the topic) marks an important shift, the shift towards a critique of war within the 18th-century Enlightenment, or parts of it. Morality aside, the worst thing about war to these thinkers is that it is stupid. Balance and natural diversity are good, but war in the name of balance is bad and silly. Yet the condemnation of intra-European war as irrational entailed an interesting corollary. For the Enlightenment also reinvents the principle of just war as civil war against the state. What is reasonable is just, and reasonable human beings can determine what is reasonable; if the ruler/state fails to conform to this or suppresses this reasonable Truth and the right to express it, he/it is illegitimate, whereupon one has the right to inflict violence in response. Crucially, then, the inside (sovereignty itself) is no longer beyond dispute. It is subject to moral reasoning, questions of good and evil, good and bad, absolute notions of right and wrong, now in the name of reason, which is to say, a secularised version of God.

This could then be translated into a notion of international peace as intrinsically linked to the nature of domestic society and its political regime. Thomas Paine, for example, typically assumes that monarchy means war and republics peace. Europe he considers "too thickly

planted with Kingdoms to be long at peace,” though the republics that did exist there were “all (and we may say always) in peace.” Republican regimes, being natural, would reasonably negotiate any conflict; monarchies, by contrast, would go to war. Kant developed a concept along the same lines, if less radically. Perpetual (real) peace would only come with generalized republican government, a system he conceived as the opposite of “despotism.” Not to be equated with any democracy, a republican regime is an aggregation of free and equal citizens under a single law coupled with representative government. As a collectivity, these free citizens would naturally not consent to war because of all the “calamities” it would impose upon themselves. A “subject” (despotic) form of state could, by contrast, engage in war arbitrarily at any time, “as if it were a kind of pleasure party.”

Kant's view has similarities to Augustine's but is ultimately weaker; for everlasting peace does not imply 'tranquillity of order' modelled on heavenly repose, merely rational resolution of extant conflicts. This quintessentially bourgeois outlook then found a contemporary counterpoint in Adam Smith's (and Paine's) British understanding of open commerce as a symbol of, and means to, peace. Maximum trade, henceforth, will thus be contrasted to the phenomenon of the rigidly demarcated states that were conducive to war. War, in short, is inherently irrational. Bentham, utilitarian par excellence, called it 'mischief upon the largest scale.' Kant, writing in a different idiom, put it more pompously: 'from the throne of its moral legislative power, reason absolutely condemns war as a means of determining the right and makes seeking the state of peace a matter of unmitigated duty' (for which practical purpose, Kant opined, one would then need a federation or league of nations). Thus unlike Paine and the French Revolutionaries, Kant did not envisage any war to implement this new rationality, any war to end to all wars. But this was an always possible alternative understanding of the project.

The shift to domestic derivation was an epochal one. In various ways it would influence both US and Soviet self- conceptions later on in their understanding of what it is to lead in the progression upwards of objective history.

8. Hegel and Clausewitz

The American and French Revolutions implemented, in differing ways, this new philosophy of enlightened right. But the radical thrust of the French failed and the European system managed to regroup in the 19th century into a semblance of its old Balance. Parallel, therefore, to British models of rationality and commercial peace (under British commercial hegemony of course), the geopolitical notion of war as rational means of policy survived. In some quarters, it even transmogrified into a sort of 'bellicism' - war as a good thing for the fibre of society, war seemingly being inscribed anyway in the very struggle for survival that defined Life as such. Since the body politic was now understood as a people rather than merely as dynastic possession, war could serve to fuse the multitude as a collectivity. Hegel, against his 18th- century predecessors, was so able to deny that war was any “absolute evil,” though the traditional proviso still obtained that states would “reciprocally recognize each other as states” even during war. Legitimate war, then, would issue in a settlement, peace. The object of war was victory, but victory was not liquidation. War, in short, was not the 'total' one of the French revolutionary period but the limited version of yesteryear, professional and regulated according to 'civilized' rules, modelled on the old personal duel.

Hegel's thinking on identity and difference pertained to the European-centered 'family' of nation-states. Thus, like most Americans, he argued conventionally that international law only pertained to peoples recognized as equals and not to mere nomads or Amerindians. In a different register, however, Hegel also maintained that "religious views may entail an opposition at a higher level between one people and its neighbours and so preclude the general identity which is requisite for recognition." He had Jews and Muslims in mind, but the argument is of obvious relevance in our context.

Perhaps Hegel's original contribution here is indeed to be found in his phenomenological problematic of recognition and acknowledgement (*anerkennen* meaning both). A much simplified version would run something like this. The self-conscious Subject confronts the other as object, demanding recognition without according recognition in return. The other acts similarly and a struggle for death ensues. But such unilateral premises renders the situation contradictory. To gain acknowledgement as the universal Subject necessitates someone who acknowledges it. Killing him obviously destroys that possibility; but even if he relents and submits, my victory is hollow and trivial precisely because his recognition will not, insofar as he is subjugated, be a full or proper one in which I can see my value as Self affirmed and mirrored. To accord reciprocity, on the other hand, would mean relinquishing my claim to universality.

We will want to return to this logic later. Let us turn briefly now instead to Hegel's contemporary Clausewitz. These two extraordinary thinkers travelled in the same circles in the late 1820s, but their relation, if any, is undocumented and the question of 'intellectual influence' an open one. Both, at any rate, died prematurely in the cholera epidemic of November 1831.

What is of central interest here in the military theorist is his key concept of 'polarity.' Clausewitz railed, rightly, against the empty technicism and metaphoric language of authoritative writings on war in his day. But he himself actually deployed a whole range of metaphors taken from 17th and 18th-century science, chiefly but not exclusively physics: friction, mass, force, gravity, evaporation, vacuum, refraction, equilibrium, electrical charge and so on. Within this cluster, polarity seems to be derived from electromagnetics. Yet by the early 19th century it had also become an ontological commonplace in German thought: the idea, in other words, that life and things really consist of an interlocking unity of 'attraction and repulsion.' Kant had systematized this notion (on dubious grounds he thought it Newtonian). Through Herder and others it reached Hegel, for whom, famously, it became not only an interactive principle but a negational one: the identity of the opposition is based on negation of the Other and is thus negational in itself.

Later in the 19th century, the use of 'polarity' turned nebulous and metaphorical, signifying entities or forces moving in opposite directions. How the term eventually entered international relations theory, I do not know; but there it seems to mean mere opposition, systematic opposition in a spatial configuration of power centers. Hence the beloved 'bipolarity' and 'multipolarity,' both of which, electromagnetically speaking, would seem absurd: redundant in the first case, oxymoronic in the second. Polarity is presumably by definition a duality. This is in any event how Clausewitz uses it. Thus for him (and Hegel) it means a situation where the negative and the positive "exactly cancel one another out," more concretely, a confrontation of

two sides engaged symmetrically in a battle for victory. You win or you lose. But the point (metaphorical or not) is also that there is continuous interaction (“Wechselwirkung”). In a way, then, it is a dialectical opposition. Identity ceases to exist when one pole disappears and the opposition does as well.

Thus Clausewitz sees struggle for victory through decisive battle as the very nature (*Wesen*) of war. Bloodletting is to war what cash payment is to commercial transaction. “Like two incompatible elements, armies must continually destroy one another. Like fire and water they never find themselves in a state of equilibrium, but must keep on interacting until one of them has completely disappeared. Imagine a pair of wrestlers deadlocked and inert for hours on end!” War, then, is about throwing the enemy down, eliminating his will to fight. But this ontological proposition is then, in typical Clausewitzian manner, modified in ‘reality.’ Because, among other things, defence is inherently stronger than offence, war can lapse into a desultory state and lose much of its basic polarity. Intensity here is however also a function (famously) of politics, political purpose. The less maximalistic one’s political aims, the less intense therefore the polarity.

(9) Marx, Engels and Lenin

What Clausewitz generally had in mind was war in a European frame, war as epitomized in a battle performed in a baroque theater. Yet his formative experience from the age of thirteen onwards had been devastating war with the French and he remained uncertain about ‘total war’ as political liquidation. Hegel, on the other hand, stuck to the traditional view that the enemy’s internal order was beyond attack. International (i.e. European) law protected “domestic institutions” in times of war.

Hegel’s lineal descendants Marx and Engels thought otherwise. Nation-states to them were irrational and bound to be undermined by the globalization of capital. More originally, they also claimed that the whole apparatus of inside and outside, sovereignty in short, served to hide the real nature of the state, namely, class rule. In a way, then, one was always already in a sort of war, a class war, whether openly declared or merely smouldering. Class conflict was a state of affairs, resulting from a certain mode of production; and as long as it remained, there could be no *pax vera*, only *pax apparens*.

Traditional war between states, meanwhile, was ultimately irrational and bad, but one had to contend with it as intrinsic to an unjust order that had to be abolished. That act of ‘contending’ on their part actually shifted character several times, from the view that capitalist war would provide openings for revolution to the opposite one that it would prevent it. Indeed Engels, who wrote professionally about war, ultimately came to think that war would mean a world war and be a disaster.

Lenin carried this Marxist-Enlightenment critique to its fullest expression. The state was for him as well inherently unjust as an instrument of class rule and so, there was the international state system of capitalist rapacity. Against this, he set the legitimacy of class war, his Marxist reformulation of the just civil war so abhorred by Hobbes and every conservative statesman ever

since. Capitalism, then, was war, struggle to death. No Augustinian peace could be envisaged until the world had become socialist and rational.

This was merely reworking Marx's concept of legitimate class war as an always existing structural contradiction of antagonism. Going beyond Marx, however, Lenin also militarized party politics, eventually rendering it positively Clausewitzian. Class war is class politics by other means. The Party thus becomes the equivalent of the State and politics a matter of battles, alliances, strategy and tactics, all organized around the pivotal notion of a single 'main enemy.' This is an absolute enemy precisely in the sense of Clausewitzian battle but also one bereft of legitimacy.

Had that concept prevailed in the ensuing century in the form of global class warfare, the question of the cold war would have corresponded much better to the picture of historiographical traditionalism. But the Revolution was territorialized in a single, if huge, land mass. By 1923 the international civil war had failed everywhere except in Lenin's native land (and perhaps he was right in thinking that it would then fail there as well). His vision was followed not by Trotsky's internationalism but Stalin's Fortress USSR. At no time was Trotsky's notorious formula at Brest Litovsk - 'neither war nor peace' - in the basic interest of Stalin's Fortress. Lenin's view did survive, however, in different and reinvigorated form in the figure of Mao, theorist of protracted civil war and invasion of the enemy's social order; but that is another story.

(10) Stalin

The anomaly of a revolutionary socialist state amidst capitalist ones was resolved by Stalin from the mid-1920s onwards. He did this first by territorializing Marx's and Lenin's always existing contradiction between capital and labour into one between the Soviet Union and the outside. The historic interests of progress henceforth were lodged on Soviet territory - or, more precisely, in the Kremlin and the class interests it represented. (A corresponding notion of historical chosenness and progress towards true humanity reigned of course since long in the US.) Yet the contradiction of capital and labour, conceived in Marx as a single structure of continuing interaction between two antagonists, could be defused, at least potentially, in the Stalinist reworking because of the physical separation from the outside, the severing of real interaction. And separation was indeed Stalin's instinctive strategic aim. Once situated at the geopolitical level, the "fundamental contradiction" could thus take any number of forms since interaction (or the dialectic) was no longer *a priori* present in the structure itself, much less its defining feature. The Other was externalized, symbolically present on the inside only as a constituent hostile outside or, alternatively, as foreign agents.

Stalin's second move (which he did not originate but sanctioned) had to do with alliance politics. Put simply, if monopoly capitalism, based on an ever-slimmer class basis, was inherently stagnating and so tending to resort to war at home and abroad, then it made no sense at all, once the power of fascism had been grasped, for the USSR to engage in any drastically offensive manoeuvres - or for that matter, after 1945, in any cold war. On the contrary, building coalitions of the widest possible kind against the narrowly based monopoly factions would be the marching order. Thus there was nothing as such in the Soviet position after 1935 that made impossible traditional, stable and non-revolutionary relations with capitalist powers because the 'main

enemy' was not intrinsically linked to bourgeois states or their nature per se. Contradiction had to do with a transnational class, or more accurately, a small fraction of that class. Whereas the political embodiment of Progression was thus always to be found in the Kremlin, the embodiment of Reaction could be found in a variety of places. Its precise location was contingent, subject to decision in typically voluntarist Stalinist manner. Hence the constant postwar reference to the mysterious influence of 'reactionary circles' on western state policy, when the latter turned hostile to Moscow's position.

It is wrongheaded, therefore, to pose the historical question in terms of putative contrast between a realist Stalin and a communist Stalin (or between realpolitik and ideology). There was every reason for Stalin to maintain stable, if distant, relations with the major capitalist powers in the name of a common anti-fascist legacy. This, on his view, was prudent Marxist-Leninist geopolitics, though it did not turn out that way.

Stalin lost the political contest over anti-fascist legitimacy after the war, partly because of the massive western superiority, partly because, as a crude reductionist, he had a very limited understanding of how the west in general, and the US in particular, actually operated. Thus he found himself faced in 1949 precisely with the kind of scenario he most devoutly must have wished to avoid, a huge and powerful US-led coalition directed against his regime in a cold war. Short of an all-out war, it is difficult to imagine a more disastrous turn of events from his standpoint.

(11) Wilson and Roosevelt (i)

It is time, then, to turn west again. The American experiment in Enlightenment politics was allowed to expand, largely undisturbed, in the name of Reason and Light across the continental expanse. The US, embodying Right, could thus by definition not wage unjust war. Dispute arose in domestic politics about the perversion of this original and universal Right, about its concrete meaning. Could it, for example, include slavery? A huge domestic war settled that question. Yet the self-conception of universal Right certainly survived.

Fast-forward now to the end of World War I and Woodrow Wilson. Wilson, of course, spoke famously in the name Humanity and rendered all enemies by nature therefore Inhumane and/or criminal. In doing this he was, as he himself said, merely expressing American traditions, which were also those of humanity at large. War to end all wars (once it had been decided upon) was perfectly legitimate, just as the radical Enlightenment had said all along; and the opposition to such an obviously legitimate aim had to be eliminated forthwith, or at least not allowed participation in the new normative community of the World.

The resort to war as an "analog" (Leuchtenberg) is a common one in American history: war against depression, war against drugs, war against poverty, war against a whole range of ills, amounting to nothing less than a homespun sort of metaphorical bellicism. Wilson fused, firmly in the American tradition, this secular concept of reasonable conduct with a thoroughly Protestant notion of election and mission into a full-fledged ideology of US exceptionalism. His project of a new international order of law, discussion and economic openness met with not

much more success than Lenin's alternative, both projects ultimately defeated by the spectre of fascism that their originators, in a weird way, each had foreseen.

The time, then, has come to make my more radical claim about FDR and also to tie these remarks together. For the matrix or logic of the American cold-war project after the war was established by Roosevelt during 1939-41 in his attempt, in my view generally justified, to prepare the United States for (and perhaps steer it towards) the 'inevitable' open war.

As alluded to at the outset, the background here was, pace Grotius, the proliferating 'intermediate' states of war in the 1930s. Thus the Japanese war against China was known as an 'incident;' the Italian Fascists invented the term 'notwar making' to describe their intervention in the Spanish Civil War; and Hitler expanded his territory by means of threats and bullying but without any open war. The whole set of conventional distinctions and institutions pertaining to war and peace (declaration, rules of conduct, rights of non-combatants, neutrality, in short, international law) that had emerged from Hobbes and Grotius onwards and been most extensively codified in the Hague Convention of 1907: this system seemed increasingly meaningless. Not accidentally, it was now, too, that the Roosevelt Administration came officially to class the naval war of 1798 against France as a 'quasi-war;' FDR referred to this term in 1939 precisely with regard to the difficulties in retaining the old distinctions of peace and war. The intense legalism that had marked the 1920s - not a return to just war doctrines of the medieval type but the institutionalization of legal procedure as international norm - had the paradoxical effect in the following decade of actually increasing the space for war as non-war.

FDR noted this. Already in the Quarantine speech in October 1937, he was referring to "times of so-called peace." Once war had broken out in 1939, this view developed into an explicit dismissal of any possible settlement. Hitler's unabashed lawlessness (until Pearl Harbor, notably, Roosevelt spoke almost exclusively about Hitler) rendered any sort of agreement useless: 'Live at peace with Hitler? The only peace possible with Hitler is the peace that comes from complete surrender. How can one speak of a negotiated peace in this war when a peace treaty would be as binding upon the Nazis as the bond of gangsters and outlaws?' It would be hard to guess that the United States was technically 'at peace' with Germany at this point (July 1941).

As FDR saw matters, it was in fact inherently impossible to deal with dictators: 'normal practices of diplomacy... are of no possible use in dealing with international outlaws.' Out of this notion came the notion of 'unconditional surrender' enunciated at Casablanca in 1943 but actually present from the beginning in Roosevelt's outlook. Symptomatically, he took the formula (he said) from U(nconditional).S(urrender). Grant and the Civil War, a kind of conflict that could indeed only be fought to that end. Henry Stimson expressed this logic in a more unequivocal and radical fashion when he projected onto the whole world Lincoln's famous dictum that no nation can survive half slave and half free: from now on it was the world itself that had to be either free or slave. This was a prescription for limitless war, indeed the reinvention of war as civil war on a global scale in the name of total victory and the principle of universal right. The idea followed in the spirit of Wilson's earlier one that the only really secure world would have to be one in accordance with US principles (i.e. those of 'humanity'). Less obviously, it was also symmetrical with Lenin's notion of international class war.

To be free as opposed to slave was then given substantial political meaning in the Atlantic Charter and the Four Freedoms. FDR referred to the latter Freedoms in the following context: “we know we ourselves shall never be wholly safe at home unless other governments recognize such freedoms.” His point was not only that the US would remain ‘insecure’ as long as other governments failed in this respect but also that such failure justified action to rectify it. Very quickly, indeed, FDR’s vision took on a globalist tinge: “An attack today begins as soon as any base has been occupied from which our security is threatened. That base may be thousands of miles from our own shores. The American Government must, of necessity, decide at which point any threat of attack against this hemisphere has begun; and to make their stand when that point has been reached” (July 1941).

The interventionism conjured up here contradicted another Rooseveltian notion, the idea that the western hemisphere now under threat on a global scale had achieved peace of a permanent kind, not of the balance of power variety but a genuine *pax vera*, stemming from generalized respect for one’s neighbors. Living in the New World was to live in peace and without fear of invasion, where the vice of covetousness had been conquered. As long, therefore, as one allowed no internal dissension (FDR was referring here to Trojan Horses and alien conspiracies), the Western Hemisphere had reached the end of history, some virtually Augustinian “tranquillity of order.”

Any peace with lawless aggressors, then, was a mere *pax falsa*, merely “another armistice” as FDR said. Having formulated a maximalist notion of ‘peace’ and simultaneously divested all non-western spaces of the traditional distinction between war and peace, Roosevelt had really declared that the United States was always already in a state of quasi-war and would so remain until, negatively, the last dictator had been eliminated and, positively, the Four Freedoms had been every where secured. This state of affairs, argued FDR, was not any American doing; it was the Nazis who declared themselves civilizationally against the American way of life.

This outlook can be condensed into three propositions: (i) everything that is not *pax vera*, a true peace, is by definition war, whatever the actual current relations; (ii) there can be no true peace with power X because of certain qualities Y in the domestic makeup of that power; and (iii) whoever is not my explicit friend (friendship being a question of identity with a set of universals) is my explicit enemy. This, in all its essentials, would become the matrix of the cold war as a US project.

(12) Roosevelt (ii) and Truman

Roosevelt, being Roosevelt, adjusted his frame politically after 22 June 1941 and began de facto to differentiate between dictators, pragmatically deciding that the actual dynamics may well require that one such dictatorial regime had the potential, if treated as a would-be member of the world of peace, eventually to become a real one. So while the matrix remained in place, the juggling began (Kimball). Roosevelt, in other words, had to engage in a game of simulation, hoping that the world of events and realities would come to approximate the world of shadows. Hence the playing for time, hence the exclusive focus on things military, hence the avoidance of fundamental political problems and contradictions.

Regrettably, this did not work. One of the reasons was precisely differences in the Soviet and US conception of the wartime coalition. The former was negative, logically so in accordance with the theory of anti-fascist class and state alliances: common interests from bourgeoisie to working class dictate that monopoly capitalism in its most reactionary and warmongering form be prevented. 'Winning' would not completely remove these avatars of stagnant monopoly capitalism, but the postwar coalition of antifascist forces could, if properly managed and maintained, keep them under wraps. The preconditions for a *pax vera* would then doubtless come at some undefinable future date, once the historic example of rationally planned production would have been demonstrated near and afar. This is why, even after 1947, the official line of opposition to the US took place defensively under the name of 'national independence,' not socialist revolution. The American stance, by contrast, was positive. It was not only a matter of preventing something from reoccurring but of achieving, in principle, *pax vera* in the here and now. Once, on closer inspection, it turned out that the Soviet Union did not fit positively the bill of a true friend, it could logically only be a true enemy, not an equal enemy of the duellist kind but an absolute enemy with whom there could be no real peace, only a peace, in Augustinian terms, "not worthy even of the name of peace."

By that time, the New Deal elements in the original Rooseveltian peace ('freedom from want' etc) had been compressed by Truman into an entirely abstract notion of Freedom, defined positively as that which resides in the United States and negatively as that which is the opposite of Totalitarianism. Deciding who was a true friend from then on was comparatively easy. Because of current obfuscations, however, one should add that freedom was not yet directly equated with capitalism, at least not unblushingly. The collective memory of preceding experiences was still fresh enough to make one liable to think that behind 'free enterprise' lay enterprise but nothing automatically free.

The totalitarian Other, then, was constitutively present in symbolic form as a constant threat to universal Freedom and concretely as evil foreign bodies. Given concrete historical sanction through the lessons of Munich, Roosevelt's original matrix was thus recast and redeployed in a project of unprecedented global scope, military, political, ideological and economic.

NSC 68 epitomized this new and transformed negation. The enemy is said here to expound "a new fanatic faith, antithetical to our own," to seek "absolute authority over the rest of the world" by "violent or non-violent methods in accordance with the dictates of expediency," to have initiated a "cold war" by its very nature. All the basic Rooseveltian themes of the implacable enemy, infiltration and subversion, civilizational negation, worldwide struggle and infinite strategic needs are present in NSC 68. "The cold war," says NSC 68, "is in fact a real war." Only by "frustrating" totalitarian designs will the Free World eventually "force the Kremlin" to change its aim of domination and "negotiate acceptable agreements." This agenda of global frustration of evil design would then of course have to be a lot more active than implied by the simple concept of containment.

The authors also express concern, however, not to make the existing "diplomatic freeze" into a prolonged period; but the potential openings they have in mind are in fact defined a priori as modifications and retractions of the Soviet position, deemed altogether too powerful and

aggressive at present. Negotiation, in the end, must thus always be deferred until a proper relation of strength has been achieved and Soviet Union can be "forced" into the realm of the "acceptable." Success on that score would, given the essential nature of Soviet expansionism, eventually spell the end of the Soviet Union itself. Meanwhile, then, massive expansion of the war machine.

(13) Lippmann (ii) and Kennan

All of which brings us full circle back to that famous non-debate between Lippmann and Kennan in 1947-48. For in the end I want to argue that Kennan's early postwar position did express (let us leave aside his 'intentions') the logic of the US-induced cold war perfectly and that Lippmann saw this instantly and quite rightly hit him hard. Built in to Kennan's notion of containment was a deliberate moment of diplomatic refusal, a period of recharging the western batteries and rearranging the power configuration. To Kennan's later chagrin, that temporary recharge became a more or less perpetual and accelerating recharge, coupled with endless deferment of diplomacy. Kennan himself actually imagined the future along the lines of a metaphor he took from Molotov at the time, the image of a longterm fencing match, a game of thrusts and parrying, back and forth, not a lethal exercise but within the range of measures short of war, eventually resulting in some new and perhaps more favorable situation. In that sense there would be real dialogical interaction, though conflictual.

But his original formulation was duplicitous in the actual movement to freeze things. Kennan's vacillation between the idea of Moscow as nefarious power professionals and Moscow as nefarious fanatics locked in the shadow world of Plato's cave meant that he could never offer a real rationale why Washington should risk dealing with them. And Washington never really did, much to Moscow's surprise. Kennan himself was surprised. At one point he was even baffled to discover that it was the Soviet Union that was behaving like a 'traditional' great power while the United States was unorthodox. So, in that perspective, one should take seriously the ensuing Soviet conception, however self-serving, of the cold war as the western policy of 'strength' and non-negotiation as opposed to Moscow's line of 'peace' and reduction in tension. One need not embrace the Soviet position to see that the cold war as embodied in the American stance was utterly against Stalin's interests, that he would have liked precisely what he said he wanted: negotiations, deals and reduction in tension, coupled with relative isolation, above all, recognition as an equal. Instead the USSR became a pariah.

One can object that this was exactly what the regime deserved because it had impinged unduly on the security interests of others and/or because it remained wedded to revolutionary long-term goals. Here, I side with Lippmann. Lippmann saw in containment the danger that diplomatic dialog, normal relations, probing negotiation and resolution of issues of mutual interest, would pretty much cease. We don't have to like them, he said, just negotiate their and our own withdrawal from central Europe and a certain normalcy and independence will return. In the end, it would take half a century, an arms race of unimaginable waste, and a collapse to achieve that 'normalcy.'

14. Politics, Polarity and Space

For the United States, communism was the equivalent of war and the communist HQ lay in Moscow. There could be no real peace, consequently, with the Soviet Union, indeed no real peace in the world as such, unless the Soviet Union ceased being the Soviet Union and communism ended. For the Soviet Union, on the other hand, there could be peace with the United States but not until the influence of 'reactionary, warmongering monopoly capitalism' had been neutralized and the regime assumed a more 'normal' bourgeois character. The index of such normality and obverse decrease in reaction was of course the precise extent to which it responded to the Soviet-led overtures for interstate peace in the world. Such a theoretical procedure would have been unthinkable to Marx, but it was one plausible codification of the unexpected necessity of a post-Leninist geopolitics. This, then, was the structural 'difference' or discrepancy that gave rise to the cold war as a situation and provided its laws of motion.

The master signifier around which the struggle initially came to be articulated was World War II, or more precisely, what it had meant to negate fascism in World War II. No one could question that act in itself, it was a universal Right. But to claim the same role now and, obversely, to cast the former ally and present enemy in the role of fascism, was not mere repetition. It was a new constitution of the Other and a new affirmation of the Self as the negation of that which was thus being excluded.

What now finally remains is a brief elucidation of the ensuing 'epoch' itself. I need to raise, in particular, the question of Clausewitzian polarity and Hegelian recognition. If all politics is in some sense about polarization, dualistic configurations of friend and enemy, the problem is still if this particular polarity is a battle to death, a clash of two wills to complete victory, or another kind of antagonism. A battle to death the cold war certainly was, but to a kind of abstract death. Elimination of the enemy's will to fight - victory - meant more than military victory on the battle field. It meant, in principle, the very liquidation of an enemy whose right to exist, let alone equality, one did not recognize. Liquidation alone could bring real peace. Liquidation is thus the 'truth' of the cold war. In that sense, civil war is the real analogue. Yet all of this is 'in principle.' For the more important fact is of course that the cold war was never a 'real' war. The authors of NSC 68 got it wrong. As Raymond Aron says somewhere, the leaders of the US and the USSR always made every effort to avoid real war. Only for very brief moments (Berlin, Korea) did it even approximate Roosevelt's concept of 'quasi-war.' NATO and Warsaw Pact powers never once went to war with one another. Soon, indeed, the cold war took the impossible Clausewitzian form of deadlocked wrestlers rather than armies continually destroying another. By no means was it a lukewarm struggle, but it brought 'neither peace nor honour' to its antagonists. Had the struggle escalated into open war or one of the two parties 'capitulated' very early on, there would have been nothing much to ponder. So it is the deadlock that warrants exploration: a struggle to death which is at the same time Orwell's 'tacit agreement.'

The terminological problem here has already been noted. 'The cold war' is tricky because it is both metaphor and not metaphor. Its meaning hovers uncertainly between war and war-like. Absolute hostility, the antithesis of peace, is coupled with the absence of real war. 'Interaction' freezes, or is reduced to ideological and political monologues, the polarity marked by immobility and frigidity. In a way, then, it is the very reverse of a Clausewitzian understanding of war: the political purposes are total, maximalistic, intensely polar, but unlimited enmity is not reflected in real fighting. The defining, decisive battle never comes. Unlike the escalating intermediate

forms of war leading up to World War II, this one freezes at the center. Spatial demarcation and immobility marks the polar 'axis.' The cold war both produces a space and is produced by it. Perhaps, then, the original magnetic metaphor is better than Clausewitz's appropriation would have it: in the very middle a neutralized nullity between poles locked in the equilibrium of attracting opposites.

One might thus reformulate the matter as a paradox: the cold war is war-like in every sense except the military. Its truth is 'war for unconditional surrender' but the reality is the kind of war one has when war itself is impossible. It is war as an ideological, political and economic claim to universality, taking place not in the two-dimensional space of traditional battles but mediated through other realms when not, as universality, actually eliminating space altogether. The militarization of the respective inside and the attendant strategic games are an interaction of continuing mutual destruction endlessly deferred. Real war, meanwhile, is displaced beyond the militarized heartlands onto the 'periphery,' articulated in regional and local conflict which often had little to do with the polarity as such. Thus the cold war appears in spaces of the third kind as militarization and death, as crushing effects; but is not exactly the same. If the term designates a certain kind of antagonism between the US and the USSR, the specificity of these other kinds of conflicts and processes can be preserved and grasped. The cold war was not everything that happened between 1947 (or any other year) and 1990.

If one sees the relationship accordingly as a conflictual mixture where both sides are utterly opposed but also always realize the impossibility of open war, then the real driving force of the cold war is the contradictory unity of non-war and non-recognition, where the latter dominant is not only warlike but the 'higher' kind of lack of equality that Hegel is referring to in situations of normative incommensurability. The end of the cold war, in my analysis, will then come when that contradiction or discrepancy is sublated, when both sides recognize each other explicitly as legitimate antagonists whose conflict can never be resolved by means of war, when China goes its own way, when the Cuban Missile Crisis is over and the Test Ban Treaty is signed, when deterrence replaces liquidation as the master signifier and new dominant, when Leamas dies his defiant death in Berlin because both sides have essentially become the same and when because both sides have essentially become the same and when Bond goes on to fight villains of a new kind.

-- *Anders Stephanson, New York, May 1996 (reissued in February 2007)*

Bibliographical note

Aside from my use of the obvious classical texts (e.g. Augustine's *City of God*, Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*, *The Science of Logic*, *The Philosophy of Right*, etc), I have necessarily borrowed from a variety of secondary sources. First among them are Wilhelm Janssen's two extensive entries 'Krieg' and 'Friede' in *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* (ed. O. Brunner, W. Conze, R. Koselleck). I have also followed more generally the work of Reinhart Koselleck and, a bit more distantly, Carl Schmitt (see especially the latter's "Die Geschichtliche Structure des Heutigen Welt-Gegensatzes von Ost und West," in *Freundschaftliche Begegnungen. Festschrift für Ernst Junger zum 60. Geburtstag* (Frankfurt: Klerstermann, 1955) and "Die Ordnung Der Welt nach dem zweiten Weltkrieg." in *Schmittiana-II* (Brussels: Piet Tommissen, 1990). Don

Juan Manuel's *Libro de Los Estados* is available in a reliable Oxford edition in Spanish (1974). On Christians in the Iberian frame, see Elena Lourie, "A Society organized for War: Medieval Spain", in *Past & Present*, 1966, 54-76. For Luis Garcia Arias, see his "El Conceptio de Guerra y la Denominada 'Guerra Fria' in *idem, La Guerra Moderna y la Organizacion Internacional* (Madrid, Instituto de Estudios Politicos, 1962) [I do not pretend, by the way, to any expertise in Spanish: my delineation was done with the help of dictionaries, French, an Italian restaurant owner in New York and a waiter from El Salvador]. On the historico-juridical question of war, see Frederick H. Russell's excellent *The Just War in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: CUP, 1975); Fritz Grob, *The Relativity of War and Peace: a Study in Law, History, and Politics* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1949); Josef L. Kunz, "Bellum Justum and Bellum Legale" [1951] in *The Changing Law of Nations* (Columbus OH: Ohio State UP, 1968); John Kelsay, James Turner Johnson, eds. *Just War and Jihad: Historical and Theoretical Perpectives on War and Peace in Western and Islamic Traditions* (NY: Greenwood, 1991); Majid Khadduri, *War and Peace in the Law of Islam* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1955); R.W. Southern, *Western Views of Islam in the Middle Ages* (Cambride MA: Harvard UP, 1962). George Orwell's article "You and the Atom Bomb" in *The Tribune* appeared on 19 Oct 1945. See also Alfred Allan Lewis's chatty *Man of the World: Herbert Bayard Swope: A Charmed Life of Pulitzer Prizes, Poker and Politics* (Indianapolis: Bobbs- Merrill) and William Safire, *Safire's Political Dictionary* (NY: Random House, 1978) [though he gets only part of the story and some of it wrong]. On FDR, see Raymond G. O'Connor, *Diplomacy for Victory: FDR and Unconditional Surrender* (NY: Norton, 1971) and Anne Armstrong, *Unconditional Surrender: The Impact of the Casablanca Policy on World War II* (New Brunswick: Rutgers, 1961). On Marx, see Amanda Peralta ... *med andra medel: Fran Clausewitz till Guevara - krig, revolution och politik i en marxistisk idetradition* (Gothenburg: Daidalos, 1990). Aron's *Clausewitz* is a bit disappointing considering the philosophical credentials of the author but says some useful things about polarity. Barry Rubin's article on physics in the collected volume called Hegel and Newton was very helpful here but I haven't got the reference ready to hand.

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