

# LA TEMPESTA

The unforeseen Palestinian  
issue in the global war



March 2024

English version September 2024

single issue

sabotiamo la guerra assembly

# LA TEMPESTA

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Hazam Harb, *Dystopia is not a noun #1*, 2023

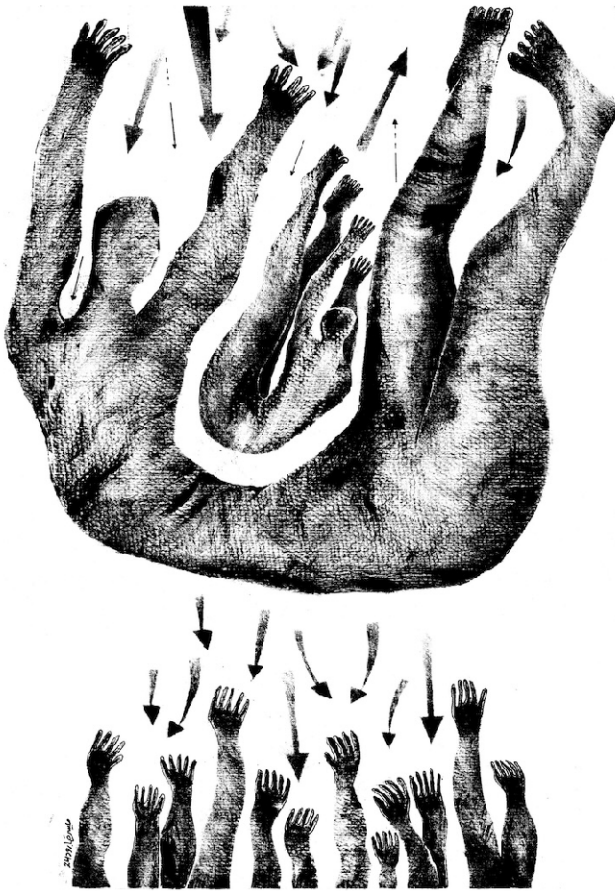
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Maisara Baroud, *I'm Still Alive No.1*, 2024

## Introduction to the English version

*by the translators*

The winds of war are blowing harder and harder, and as the more months go by, the more the global situation seems to drift irrevocably towards the globalisation of war. The delicate geopolitical balances are being deliberately and wickedly undermined by unscrupulous rulers who, as usual, have little regard for those who are forced to suffer on their skin the consequences of these decisions. From the time the texts in this single release were written by comrades of the *Sabotiamo la guerra* assembly, to the time they were translated by who is writing this introduction, a few months have passed. Not years or decades. Less than a year. But as we know, history does not wait for our analyses.

The Western bloc and all its supporters continue to forage the Ukrainian army with supplies and weapons of all kinds and, after a long period of deadlock, after the arrival of a huge amount of funding and equipment, after the ok from the US to use American weapons on Russian territory, the counter-offensive of the Kyiv army started, and it even managed to cross into enemy territory in the Kursk region. Now, between Putin's threats of a nuclear apocalypse and Zelensky's high-sounding proclamations, between aberrant claims of thermobaric missile strikes (half-tonne devices that can literally set the air ablaze with a huge beam of death and devastation) on the Russian side and loud cheers for successful bombing of the Russian regions of Kursk and Belgorod on the Ukrainian one, among all this remains the poor people, the oppressed, forced to submit to perfidious power games. Forced to be recruited on either side of the front. People caught in the streets, locked up and sent to die in the name of the "democratic" Fatherland. Prisoners taken from their cells and sent to the front with a one-way ticket to expiate their sins in the name of "denazification".

Meanwhile, on the other hot front, events are continuing to unfold and, if you like, to degenerate without end. The Israeli government continues in its work of extermination and ethnic cleansing on Palestinian territory, and at the same time, the Mossad, the only secret service that, as historically proven, does not seem to have to answer to any international code of conduct, carries out, as per tradition, reckless plans of enemy elimination on foreign territories, particularly,

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for now, in Lebanon and Iran. But other enemies are hosted in Qatar, and some others throughout history have found refuge in Russia, in Turkey, to mention only a few cases known to us. How far it will go is therefore unknown. To all this is added the bombing of consulates in Syria and the escalation in the Red Sea. If to every action there is a reaction, what is certain is that this adventurous Israeli foreign policy, and that of the entire Western bloc that supports it, is clearly changing the geopolitical situation in West Asia (and not only) and may have drastic repercussions in terms of widening of the conflict and potential new alliances.

As the global balance of power changes and the clash between blocs intensifies and becomes more complicated, so does the presence on the streets, day and night, of those who just refuse to shut up and keep their heads down. In Germany, in France, and England, there have been many actions targeting the accomplices of war. For months, actions have been taking place in Berlin against the headquarters of the Social Democrats of the SPD and the Grüne. Companies that do a lot of business with the war such as Tesla, CEMEX, Bauer, Thyssenkrupp, Deutsche Bahn, Thales and we could go on and on. Institutions such as the ZUG and the Confederation of the German Armed Forces suffered damage in May, not to mention the arson attack on the Berlin-Tiergarten municipal building, on whose facade was written: "If Gaza burns, Berlin burns".

Every Saturday, practically since the beginning of this latest operation to exterminate the Palestinian population, many people gather in the Neukölln district (where the Turkish and Arab presence is conspicuous) and not infrequently there is unrest between the demonstrators and the police. This is not a small thing given the current times, when street conflict is at an all-time low practically all over Europe, except maybe in France where tempers often continue to flare and even there, the intervention of the proletariat of Arab origin plays a significant role.

In the face of all this and the continuous evolution of war, we are convinced that our analyses must have that elasticity which is essential to understand and deepen the reality in its perennial development. Not to sit at a desk and dispense history lessons but to broaden the debate, develop it, update it and translate it into practice. By intervening in a revolutionary and internationalist sense in the issues that all of us, as oppressed, are facing in this historical phase.

As anarchists, it is essential for us to get into the depth of questions, avoiding any superficial and simplistic readings of existent. We are wary of anyone, whether institutional authorities or antagonistic *structures*, who wants to impose reduc-

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tive and dichotomous visions of reality on us (nonetheless, we find it interesting to note how much the approach to certain facts advocated by these two *seemingly* opposing entities is almost identical).

We are convinced that in critical situations, when the problems one faces become acute, every knot comes to the comb and it becomes easier to understand who can be relied on and who cannot. The only dichotomy we accept is the one that divides the world into oppressed and oppressors, into exploited and exploiters. We do not recognise any “urgency” that could justify *crossing* - even *temporarily* - this dividing line. We reject any form of interclassism and unity front in the name of a *supposed* lesser evil. History has shown us, and continues to do so, how antagonistic areas that consciously or unconsciously end up on this slippery slope, do nothing but lend themselves to power and become the *useful idiots* in the service of masters, counter-revolutionary forces (whether democratic or authoritarian) and recovery.

To those who accuse us of dogmatism, we reply in a very pragmatic manner that we want nothing to do with those who choose to collaborate in a miserably active manner with a regular army, and therefore framed within a State, with the secret services (internal and foreign) of the State at war, with its military police and all other State henchmen. We have and will never have anything to do with these people even after the end of war, because it will simply not be possible to build relationships of trust with those who have decided to go down these absurd paths. To those who tell us that we cannot express ourselves “not being under the bombs”, we reply that it is not our habit to let ourselves be silenced, and that it is precisely when one is not under the bombs that it is necessary and possible to elaborate lucid reasoning to prepare for worse times and to avoid, as far as possible, committing the same mistakes made by others. Our solidarity goes to those who are at the front not by choice, but by *condition*. To all proletarians forced to endure a capitalist war that is not their own.

Similarly, we reject the absurd platitude that one must necessarily and preemptively speak out against all the heinousness of the Arab world when criticising the Zionist genocide of the Palestinian people. We will not lend our side to those who attempt to misrepresent reality by framing the ongoing massacre as a simple *defence* following an attack. The attempt to wipe the Palestinian population off the face of the earth is a daily, structural and structured activity that has been going on for decades and is an “organising principle” of the State of Israel. We all know very well that this is the case. Even those who seek to disguise their pro-Israel positions by accusing us of anti-Semitism or of some *paradoxical* and

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unlikely support for the leadership of religiously motivated political organisations know this. We believe that confusing effect with the cause is a symptom of a tendency to relativize and a certain inability to get to the heart of the matter. We believe that the rise of certain authoritarian and reactionary organisations is the violent effect of years and years of Western abuse, massacres and violence in those territories. It is so in Palestine, it is so in Afghanistan, it is so in Iraq, it is so in Nigeria and it is so in many other territories where the West has always extended its dirty hands. We see certain phenomena as the natural and brutal expression (often in the absence of viable alternatives) of the vengeance, anger and revulsion felt by the oppressed and exploited who live in that part of the world that Westerners have chosen to enslave, rape, terrorise, starve and occupy. Instead of merely being indignant and outraged watching the news on our big smart TV from a comfy sofa against the despicable barbarians who fly planes into western skyscrapers, who shoot and blow themselves up inside a discotheque in one of Europe's most glamorous capitals, who launch themselves in hang-gliders toward those who have decided to go dancing five kilometres away from the world's largest open-air prison in the face of millions of desperate people, instead of just being shocked by these horrors, we said, well, we should at least ask ourselves a couple of questions. By this we certainly do not want to *legitimise* or worse *glorify* indiscriminate massacres of civilians, nor of course incense the groups, organisations and individuals who carry them out (we think it is *paradoxical* to have to point this out, but there it is), our intention is to clarify incontrovertibly what we mean by *deepening* and *analysing* reality.

We are well aware that certain positions provoke strong stomach aches in the reformist international, but we think that moderating oneself in the name of a spasmodic search for an illusory unity of movement is a counterproductive, short-sighted and highly energetic practice. On the contrary, we are convinced that clear words and coherence are useful tools to orient ourselves in the hostile world around us.

It was with these ideas in mind and with this spirit that we decided to translate *La Tempesta*. Because we believe that the *unforeseen Palestinian issue in the global war* demands a stance on the part of us anarchists. A stance that cannot be translated into either neutrality or direct intervention in the field. We are therefore not talking about taking up arms and going to fight in Palestine, and neither are we talking about supporting the birth of a Palestinian State on the ruins of the Israeli one. We are talking about revolutionary solidarity among the oppressed. We are talking about focusing on defeating the oppressors, engaging *first and*

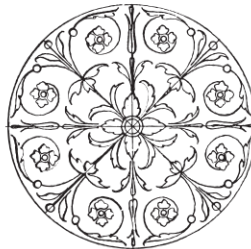


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*foremost* against those at “home” and acting accordingly. Not abstractly or symbolically, but with all the concreteness and intransigence of which we are capable.

We are also convinced that the exchange of contents and international meetings can be a small step in a direction that we consider to be urgent and essential. That of creating affinities that can spill over into a movement capable of undermining the war machine, and all its ramifications. We have no ready-made recipes on how to stop the apparatus of war; on the contrary, we are used to being on guard by those who try to administer them to us. In this regard, we consider a broadening of the debate desirable and fundamental. We are convinced that confrontation - even tough - between individuals, and even more between comrades, represents a valuable opportunity for growth. Through knowledge and determination it is possible to find ways to intervene concretely and without rhetoric in the reality that surrounds us. Let us try not to waste the opportunities presented to us ■



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Hazam Harb, *Dystopia is not a noun #2*, 2023

# Introduction

*Don't you realise that every generation is waiting for a dreadful cataclysm; that it feels the storm rising, and that every bourgeois is rushing to protect himself against imminent death, even if it means the death of all those dear to him? What use is schoolteacher talk to people who are three-quarters drowned?*

Ernest Cœurderoy, *Jours d'exil*

If there are “people who are three-quarters drowned” today, it is undoubtedly the population of Gaza. Locked between two borders, systematically bombed for over four months, fleeing from the ruins, housed in thousands in emergency tents, exposed to hunger, thirst, disease. The destruction of hospitals and water desalination plants, the cementing of wells, the fire on ambulances, attacks on food supplies, a mass infanticide, the erasure of all historical and cultural memory: this horror without end has the unmistakable traits of genocide. What’s more: given the structural use of artificial intelligence (*Gospel* is the name chosen for the algorithmic planning of the shelling on Gaza), we are witnessing the first automated genocide in history. Contemporaries of a new Nakba - with representatives of the Israeli government openly proposing

the deportation of the Gazawis to the Sinai desert, Congo or to an artificial island -, only resolute action can save us from inertia, inhumanity or tears. What can words do, at the brink of such an abyss? In a text from 1937 (*Power of Words*) Simone Weil wrote: “Let us capitalise words that have no meaning, and at the first opportunity men will shed rivers of blood; by repeating them over and over again they will heap ruin upon ruin [...]; nothing real can truly correspond to such words, because they mean nothing.” “Democracy”, “Western values”, “International law” are not just empty words buried under the ruins of Gaza; they are the “safeguards” of those bombs, of that blood, of those dead. To *other words* - to mouths and hearts capable of feeling their full weight - the young Simone entrusted an opposite, necessary and impossible task: “Clarifying

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concepts, discrediting words that are intrinsically empty, defining the use of others through precise analysis, here is a job that, strange as it may seem, could preserve human lives". We must think, speak, and write *as if it were so*.

Within its ineradicable peculiarities - which pertain to the dual nature of the Israeli State: an outpost of Western imperialism and at the same time the only settlement colonialism not yet concluded - the war against the Palestinians is part of a worldwide conflict between different

Statal capitalistic blocks. For this, the Palestinian question is both a reflection of a world system and at the same time its unforeseen

outcome. Not only because the action of the 7th of October - however one might read it - signified the retaliation of the human and oppressed variant against the techno-military omnipotence, from its electronic walls, its drones, its mass surveillance; but also because the solution of the Palestinian question cannot take place without the dismantling of an entire colonial system and the western imperialism that supports it. Whatever is in the minds of the Palestinian resisters, liberation from Zionism can only come through a revolutionary clash against our own

oppressors. Here lies both the relationship between the class struggle in our latitude and the decolonisation of that land, and the need to give precise meaning to the expression "free Palestine". "Two peoples, two States" is now a joke stained with blood. The "occupied Palestinian territories" represent 22 percent of historical Palestine; one Israeli settler for every three Palestinians is installed in the West Bank; the Palestinian National Authority is a de facto policeman and prison guard

employed by the occupier. But above all: *never* in history has a State of colonized people existed next to a State of colonizers.

It is up to us to attack the masters at home, to break the collaborations between "our" State and the slaughterers of the Palestinian people

The prospect of

a single, non-confessional state to be erected on the ruins of the Zionist colonial system is certainly more logical and consequential (in fact, this has always been the Palestinians' claim from the late 1960s until Al Fatah's "betrayal" with the Oslo accords, and today it is forcefully back in the debate). But such a perspective - which, we repeat, presupposes a real revolutionary process both in the region and in international relations - would lead to the development of that Palestinian bourgeois class that within the colonial system can only remain little more

than a privileged and collaborationist class. In a nutshell: as has always been the case in history, in Palestine too, the state, any state, would block the way for a genuine *social* revolution, which is always possible until the time is up. If, as the German Jewish anarchist Gustav Landauer wrote back in 1907, “the State is the historical form that has replaced coexistence”, only the replacement of the Israeli state with a free federation of free communities can stop decades of violence and dehumanisation from impeding future coexistence with the creation of a new class domination. This is what “Free Palestine” means for us, an interweaving of decolonisation and radical transformation of post-colonial social relations. It is too late, in this sense, for school-teacher talk. Firstly, because when at stake are not the living *conditions*, as for the Western proletariat, but survival itself in a system that makes elimination an organizing principle, recourse to violence is an absolute necessity; secondly, because only those who are fighting in those lands can concretely decide their future. It is up to us to attack the masters at home, to break the collaborations between “our” State and the slaughterers of the Palestinian peo-

ple (collaborations that the military operation against Yemen turns into *direct* support for the ongoing genocide). Only an international movement capable of forcing the Israel system into crisis will have a voice in the common future of the land and of the Earth.

In the storm of a structural tendency towards war, while all the glorifiers of domination would have us remain open-mouthed in the face of the imperious necessity of Force, the forces at play are demonstrating their *contingent* character more and more every day. NATO is losing in Ukraine, Africa is boiling over, world trade is being undermined by one of the poorest countries on earth, US military bases are being hit by non-state formations. Thus the repression against immigrants (and comrades) is advancing. Thus the rearmament plans, the announcements of mass recruitment, the censorship that casts off all masks. “Revolution or war”: here is a concept that is already implicit in the substance of the world; a concept that, “strange as it may seem, could preserve human lives”. As the storm rises, this *single release* wants to blow in that direction ■

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Samah Shihadi, *Dair Al-Quassi*, 2023

## By the side of the oppressed Palestinians

As the current war in Palestine has to be read first and foremost from the Gazawi's *will* to rebel against increasingly inhuman and unbearable living conditions, it is equally clear that every political and military initiative is set in a context, and that every organized resistance considers when to act and what it expects to achieve (at least in terms of immediate objectives). It seems quite plausible to us that, with the action of 7 October, the *political* aim of at least some Palestinian resistance organizations was to insert themselves as a wedge in the process of normalization of the so-called Middle East (and further isolation of Iran) initiated by the

While in Ukraine the actual factions and their armaments make the fight both politically and militarily symmetric, there is a simply ferocious asymmetry in the conflict in Palestine

Abrahamic Pacts, which would definitively eclipse the Palestinian question from the horizon of the Arab-Islamic states; while the choice of the period in which the action was carried out, coinciding with the moment of maximum fatigue of the Kiev troops in Ukraine (and therefore of the western imperialism that arms them), does not seem casual to us. Having said that, the differences between the conflict in Ukraine and the ongoing massacre in Gaza seem to us absolutely relevant. While in Ukraine the *actual* factions and their armaments make the fight both politically and militarily symmetric, there is a simply ferocious asymmetry

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in the conflict in Palestine. On the one hand, a people-class without a State (to the extent of not even possessing passports), which has nothing to lose but its own imprisoned life; on the other hand the outpost-state of Western imperialism in the Middle East. On the one hand, a resistance that can at best arm itself with homemade rockets; on the other, one of the most *high-tech* armies in the world, as well as a world *hub* for war (and social) experiments of all kinds, that is everywhere exporting weapon systems and technologies that have been tested on the *corpore vili* of the Palestinians. On the one hand, those who slaughter thousands of men, women, elderly men and children; on the other, those who cannot give much more than their own blood to keep international attention on their cause.

If we move from the battlefield to the geopolitical level, the asymmetry is equally evident. The idea of a possible “international direction” (within that kind of informal alliance known as the Axis of Resistance, which brings together Iran, Hezbollah, the so-called Huthi of Yemen, the Iraqi Shiite militias and the semi-failed states of Lebanon and Syria, as well as Hamas itself) has only been denied in recent months. First, last 3rd November, came the speech of Hezbollah leader, Hassan Nasrallah, who assured in his apologia for the heroism of Gaza that the action

of 7 October “was conceived and implemented 100 percent by the Palestinians” (those who know the situation in West Asia know that both Palestinians and Israelis *trust* the declarations of Nasrallah, historically known for not speaking in vain); and then, above all, came the Riyadh summit on 11th November, attended by all the countries of the Arab League and the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation. From the Saudi “moderates” to the Iranian “extremists”, from Bin Salman to Raisi, all expressed words of condemnation towards Israel, while assuring that *no one* would lift a finger. Neither by intervening directly, nor by implementing economic sanctions, nor by closing their airspace to the air fighters and drones of Israel and its international accomplices. The reason is quickly stated. With its Suez Canal, its straits (such as Bāb el-Mandeb and Hormuz), and the gas and oil pipelines that cross it, contemporary West Asia is a true crossroads of political and economic interests that end up tying countries such as Russia or Turkey, China or the petrol-monarchies of the Gulf to both the one and the other wagon (to Israel and its Western godfathers as to Iran). Whilst historically the Palestinians have *always* been betrayed by the Arab and Islamic states (round and round, doing business with the West is more convenient than fighting it), today even those who would like to erase the



While the scenarios that could unfold simply make one shudder, a “disarmist” position in favour of desertion and “ceasefire” *on both sides* seems to us – in this case – to be completely unsustainable

Zionist state from the face of the earth suffer greatly from the destabilisation work carried out by the USA (and Israel itself) over the last twenty years. Amidst failed states (Lebanon, Iraq), partially occupied by others’ troops (Syria), strangled by debt (Egypt) or insufficiently equipped for a conflict with the West (Iran), all fear that a war would mark their end. Even an organisation like Hezbollah is forced to tread lightly, limiting itself to keeping busy a part of the IDF with launches on the Lebanese border. In case of a new war in Lebanon, in fact, Hezbollah would risk a very heavy political price, perhaps even the end of the organisation itself.

Palestinian resistance, in short, seems to have no saints in the paradise of States. It is rather the *peoples* of the Arab-Islamic countries, outraged by the inertia of their own leaders, who are trying to push them towards intervention; it is no coincidence that the only government that has shown concrete solidarity with the Palestinians is that of Yemen, which emerged from an insurrection against the previous pro-Western regime and the *proxy*

war that followed (first with ISIS, then with the Saudi monarchy and its allies as *proxies* for the US). To seek the widening of the conflict – starting with the attacks and “extrajudicial executions” in Iran, Syria and Lebanon –, conversely, seems to be Israel and the Western powers (led by the USA and Great Britain, with France, Germany and Italy in tow). The former in order to get out of the *quagmire* in Gaza and take over the Strip, something that is impossible without wiping out the Palestinian resistance and thus all its international supporters (first of all Iran). The latter in order to reassert its supremacy over the region, taking the opportunity to prevent it from being penetrated by the Chinese State (which has very close relations with Iran in the framework of the “Silk Roads” and to which the Iranian government exports about 90% of its national oil). We do not know where this situation may lead, but the possibility of a globally *waged war* seems to us to be more and more around the corner. If the attack on Yemen brings Iran into the arena, this could lead to the intervention of

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In a context such as this, supporting one warring camp (the oppressed Palestinians) by attacking the other (the State of Israel and its godfathers, who are also our direct oppressors) seems to us not a contribution, but an *antidote* to the widening of the conflict

China and Russia, with the domino effect typical of past planetary conflicts. After all, “a world war does not suddenly appear. It becomes one”.

While the scenarios that could unfold simply make one shudder, a “disarmist” position in favour of desertion and “ceasefire” *on both sides* seems to us – in this case - to be completely unsustainable. Not only because there is no *symmetry* between the state of Israel – one of the most oppressive, equipped and ferocious States in the world – and the Palestinians – one of the poorest and most oppressed peoples on the planet; not only because Israel has always been the outpost of Western imperialism in the so-called Middle East, while there is no defined capitalist bloc around the Palestinians (which may eventually form in the course of the war itself); and not only because it would be ethically unacceptable to ask a population that has been colonised, hunted down and murdered for more than a century not to rebel (while asking the Gazawi to “defect”... their open-air prison, would simply be

absurd). There is more. Assuming and not conceding that the State of Israel (currently led by a veritable Ku Klux Klan gang) is willing to stop and give up on the final solution to the Gaza issue, a “ceasefire” on Israel’s terms – i.e. *without the release of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails* – would only be a surrender. While in doing so the Palestinians would miss an historic opportunity, the Israeli-system would simply wait for a new pretext to complete the job it has always done throughout its history. Do we remember – without going too far back in time – Jenin, the “Cast Lead” and “Protective Edge” operations? And what about the 2018-2019 “March of Return”, when 234 Palestinians were killed (and almost 33000 seriously wounded) while parading almost unarmed near the electronic Wall?

If settler colonialism “is not an event”, but a “structure” that operates until it reaches its end, the palestinian question can only have two solutions: either the elimination of the natives or the end of the “structure” itself,

i.e. the Israeli colonialist State and the whole architecture of the colonial system. While it would be indecorous to abandon the Palestinians to their fate in the name of “peace” (which one? whose?), we strongly doubt that the conditions are there. In a context such as this, supporting one warring camp (the oppressed Palestinians) by attacking the other (the State of Israel and its godfathers, who are also our direct oppressors) seems to us not a contribution, but an *antidote* to the widening of the conflict (desired and sought in every way, it must be reiterated, by “our own”). If we do not do our part, with internationalist action from below, the initiative can only pass to the States.

We are convinced that internationalist mobilization could make a difference. The point is to wonder *how*. Although the Israeli economy is taking very hard hits from many sides (from the inside: *start-up* employees have been mobilized into the army for months, while Palestinian workers can no longer travel to work in Israel; from the outside: the Red Sea blockade, moreover at the moment only *exacerbated* by Western involvement; the international campaign of boycott and sabotage of Israeli-related activities, remarkable in its intensity and results already achieved), the economic weapon may not be enough. Engaged in a confrontation that is now *existential*, and moreover currently in the hands of

a government clique steeped in theocratic militarism, the Zionist State will have no choice but to go all the way. While attacking businesses in various forms is worthwhile in any case (and, in the case of the technology sector, is also an unmissable opportunity for turmoil concerning the link between research, warfare and the technological incarceration of society), it should not be overestimated either. The central issue is probably another.

Only a *deep social crisis* –  
that is, a generalized revolt  
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retreat. It is in this direction  
that we must push

As an outpost of Western imperialism since ever, Israel is being foraged by it (in both military and economic terms) *for exactly this reason and purpose*; and without the collective foraging of the West, Israel would not last long. If this is as true as it is, then only a *deep social crisis* – that is, a generalized revolt – within the various Western countries could lead Israel to retreat. It is in this direction that we must push; a direction, mind you, that the ruling class of “our” countries has feared since the aftermath of 7 October. Why did the German and French

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States repress all demonstrations in solidarity with Palestine with the highest degree of harshness from the very beginning? And why, conversely (and despite initial threats along these lines), have demonstrations been allowed in Italy?

The fear has been, from the beginning, of an uprising of the Arab and Islamic masses within Western countries, and their possible bonding with “white” discontent. Where the squares have shown a certain activeness several times in recent years (with semi-insurrectionary moments in the French case), the authority has pro-

ceeded with an iron fist; in Italy, on the other hand, after an initial moment, it judged that it was better to let it be. After all, as long as these Italians just parade... *it's better to take it easy*. Otherwise – to use a joke circulating abroad – *they might wake up, too*. While in Palestine pure horror has been on worldwide viewing for the past four and a half months, a world of horrors is being set up in all latitudes, including our own. Only a generalized revolt can stop it. In this sense, the salvation of the oppressed Palestinians is at one with our own. And it provides us with *a leverage* to achieve it ■





Mustafa El Hallaj, *Untitled*, 1968

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Abed Abdi, *Refugees*, 1967

# Notes on the Ukrainian front of the global war

## *War of attrition, civil war and defeatist perspective*

What has been fought in Ukraine for the past two years is the first “traditional” war to stain Europe with blood since the end of World War II. A symmetrical war that sees for the first time NATO and the Russian Federation directly counterposed, with a serious risk of nuclear *escalation*. A central chapter in a wider conflict between blocs of capitalist countries over the partition of the world. What is at stake is the supremacy and the redefinition of power relations within the international balance. Palestinian affairs are not autonomous and indifferent from the context of this international tug-

of-war, although they have their own specificity. In this article, we will try to take a look at the “eastern front” of this conflict.

### **An “internal” war**

The state that engages in war with another state must *first and foremost* force its own population to fight, i.e. to become cannon fodder. This is why Simone Weil wrote that war “constitutes first and foremost a fact of internal politics – and the most heinous of all”. This applies to any war between States, and the war in Ukraine is certainly no exception. Once the war has started, soldiers who die have to be

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replaced with others. Those who refuse are persecuted, beaten, arrested. The state fights on the *internal front* through real war policies against its own population: be they economic, repressive, ideological or disinformation policies, when not directly military.

While this is true in general, for several specific reasons the war in Ukraine qualifies as a *civil war* among the cruellest, certainly the most dangerous. First of all, because the con-

transactions with Western markets. The combination of the collapse of the State Capitalism regimes (with the consequent wave of anti-communism generated by the demise of the odious Stalinist dictatorships) and NATO's reckless expansion into Eastern Europe (whether through *soft power* and "voluntary" membership or to the sounds of depleted uranium bombs, as in the former Yugoslavia) has generated the geopolitical "masterpiece" of a

The war in Ukraine almost immediately became an industrial war, and the confrontation, with the massive plans of military aid from Western capitalism to the government in Kyiv, soon turned into a more general competition between the war-producing capacities of the two blocs of capitalist countries involved

frontation is being waged by those who only thirty years ago were the two major adherent republics of the Soviet Union. Not only has Kyiv played a fundamental and almost mythological role in the Russian epic since the early Middle Ages, but in more recent times Ukraine has had two Soviet presidents and, after the Second World War, maintained a small independent diplomatic representation in Stalinism's attempt to multiply its seats at the United Nations and to modulate areas that would act as a bridge for economic-political

veritable Balkanization of the former USSR, with consequences that are all the more dangerous because, in this case, a nuclear superpower is involved.

Secondly, in Ukraine a civil war in the strict sense has been fought since 2014. The events of Maidan and the gaining of relative hegemony by openly neo-Nazi forces are at the root of the shattering of the Ukrainian social tissue. This has developed in different forms. Crimea was immediately annexed by the Russian Federation, practically without fightings<sup>1</sup>.



What is involved in attrition warfare is a tug-of-war between technology, economics, and industry

In Odessa, street protests against the new regime had as response an atrocious anti-worker pogrom, with the Trade Union House being burned down by groups of neo-Nazis escorted by the police, and the death of dozens of protesters who had taken refuge inside. In the Donbas, the independence insurrection lasted for eight years and turned into an open war that left 14,000 dead. If all this makes the Ukrainian war a *fratricidal* war, then only *fraternisation* between the proletarians on both sides of the front can put an end to the slaughter.

### **The industrialisation of death and the fractures in the internal front**

After the first invasion attempt, the Russian armed forces soon turned towards the approach of a wearisome war of attrition, choosing the terrain on which they felt, probably rightly, that they were strongest. The war in Ukraine almost immediately became an industrial war, and the confrontation, with the massive plans of military aid from Western capitalism to the government in Kyiv, soon turned into a more general competition between the war-producing capacities of the two blocs of capitalist countries involved.

This has given significant input to scientific research, which has always been structurally interconnected with the military apparatus. Geolocation of targets, “intelligent” autonomy of missiles capable of evading interception attempts or conversely “chasing” them when it comes to anti-aircraft munitions, and massive use of drones. Lately, Ukrainian sources expressed concern that Russia was beginning to use swarms of drones connected by neural networks, so that they would not have to be remotely piloted individually, but would be able to devise collective strategies to attract anti-aircraft, detect their source and launch themselves against it, or drop individually on ground targets when they are detected.

Recently, an Italian study (by Dario Guarascio of the Sapienza University of Rome, Andrea Coveri of the University of Urbino, and Claudio Cozza of UniParthenope) highlighted the increasingly interconnected role of the military apparatus and so-called Big Tech. While the leviathan nature of the industrial-military apparatus is certainly nothing new, what is striking today is the small number of players involved at the top of the pyramid: a handful of billionaires hold the *clouds*

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Between autumn and winter, the bloody and futile efforts to shift the balance led to a significant deterioration in morale on both sides, with an increase in desertions and refusals to fight.

with the data used by the intelligence services, they own the space infrastructures that enable communication and geolocation, and they have the economic availability for massive investment in research into so-called artificial intelligence. This is as far as the Western field is concerned. If we add to this the large state-owned or semi-state-owned enterprises of *high-tech* and military research in China, or if we think of the peculiar structure of the Russian economy (with the so-called “oligarchs”), it is not a suggestion to say that we are faced with a situation that in many aspects resembles that of the classical age of imperialism: militarism, industrial development and monopolies (to tell the truth, with a difference today of many “zeros” in the current accounts of the monopolist themselves)<sup>2</sup>.

In this context, scientific research had to adapt to the tactical require-

ments of the conflict. High-tech but extremely expensive weapons proved to be ineffective. What is involved in attrition warfare is a tug-of-war between technology, economics, and industry. One must produce more than the enemy, at a lower cost, lose less than can be reproduced, and destroy more than the enemy can reproduce.

From this point of view, the consideration that in capitalism human beings are a commodity, just like other commodities, has never been more dramatic. The reproductive capacity calculation of the stockpile of humans to be sent to the front is one of the fields on which the friction between NATO and Russia in Ukraine is confronted. The expression “meat grinder”, used to describe the two major battles of the last year (Bachmut and Avdiivka) gives terribly the the idea. The life and death of soldiers at the front often depend on a fierce economic calculation, i.e. whether or not the cost of the equipment available to destroy a certain number of soldiers is worth the investment. This discourages the concentration of forces and contributes to the relative stability of the front line, prolonging the carnage.

Generally, the more losses in the field increase, the more nationalist sentiment gives way to a refusal to die, which spreads from soldiers to their families. Renunciation, desertion, flight, and protests by family members

make the tools of recruitment even more coercive, and the conscripted less and less “able”. This is what is happening in Ukraine, where episodes of desertion and clashes in villages to prevent the capture of mobilised soldiers by the military police are multiplying.

In early December, Zelensky himself admitted the failure of the counteroffensive. Ukraine is thus forced to entrench itself in defensive positions while waiting for Europe and the United States to decide that it is time to sit down to negotiations, with the territories occupied by the Russian army. Between autumn and winter, the bloody and futile efforts to shift the balance led to a significant deterioration in morale on both sides, with an increase in desertions and refusals to fight<sup>3</sup>.

In one episode on the Russian side of the front, 300 soldiers were kidnapped for their refusal to return to fight<sup>4</sup>. In many Ukrainian cities, protests by women to demobilise their sons and husbands, who in many cases have been fighting since the beginning of the war with ten days of annual leave, have continued and increased.

All this has political repercussions for the Ukrainian ruling class. The most sensational episode, potentially fraught with consequences, was the replacement of the charismatic commander-in-chief Valery Zaluzhny after months of controversy and disagreements with President Zelensky. At the

root of the disagreements were the strategic choices on how to continue the war. Zaluzhny (who is certainly no moderate and has repeatedly been photographed in the company of Pravyj Sektor leaders) would have preferred to withdraw his forces and place them in more defensible positions in certain specific situations. At the same time, Zaluzhny insisted on a new mobilisation of 500,000 men. The positions of the Soviet school general derive from the technical knowledge of how a war of attrition should be conducted, trying on the one hand not to waste all material in lost battles (including material in *human flesh*), and on the other hand to acquire new one. By contrast, the checkmate Zelensky finds himself in is all political, fearing the social consequences of a new mobilisation and at the same time not daring to announce retreats to his own public opinion and especially to international supporters.

Instead, a draft law has passed that provides for, among other things, the recruitment of Ukrainian citizens living abroad (on pain of having their passports invalidated) and online recruitment (via e-mail, already used by the Russian army), thanks to the recent digitalisation of military registers. With these now increasingly desperate attempts to procure *cannon fodder*, while prison sentences for conscription defectors increase and prisoners are sent to replace miners engaged at

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the front, the need to defend themselves against Russian occupation is being replaced for many Ukrainians by the need to defend themselves against their *own army*<sup>5</sup>. During the autumn, there was a wave of attacks on houses and cars of magistrates, police offices, and on both sides of the front-line arson attacks on recruitment centres.

## **A global war**

Since the so-called “doubling” of the Suez Canal, the geopolitical category of the “enlarged Mediterranean” has become fashionable in financial, diplomatic and military circles: this refers to the world region of the Mediterranean and the seas directly bordering it (the Red Sea and the Black Sea) as a single logistical and financial flow. From Crimea to Yemen, via Palestine, not forgetting the migration crisis in North Africa and the Balkan route, we see that it’s the whole area to be on fire. We are already in a Great War. If we consider that the only Chinese base abroad is in Djibouti and that Sudan is one of those African countries that has recently come under Russian influence, we realise what a crazy friction of forces runs through the area.

The war in Ukraine, as well as the conflict in West Asia (a definition that seems to us decidedly less Eurocentric than the so-called Middle East), are chapters, for certain aspects different frontlines, of an increasingly

heated global conflict, which sees in prospect the direct clash between the USA and China within the strategic horizon of the slow loss of hegemony by Western capitalism, even if it remains largely dominant for the time being.

However, one must not overlook the huge differences between the Ukrainian situation and the Palestinian issue. In Ukraine, a fratricidal war is being fought between two states, otherwise in Gaza a genocide is being carried out by a regional power supported by the United States and its allies against the remaining Palestinian population already decimated by 70 years of military occupation and mass deportations. Far from forming an opposition, local and international, between symmetrical forces, the Palestinians have been abandoned by all Arab countries. The latter has even refused to prevent, in most cases, the overflight of their airspace or the navigation of their sea space by Western vehicles loaded with military aid for Israel. Putin’s Russia itself has historically maintained a solid alliance with Israel (also dictated by the fact that the latest generation of settlers comes for the most part from Jewish populations living in the Soviet Union). Only recently has this alliance been soured by the Russian government’s moderate criticism of the Zionist military policy, described as “disproportionate”.

As far as we are concerned, we will continue to consider “our” state the main enemy. Not only as a matter of principle and internationalist consistency: Italy is severely compromised in the ongoing global carnage

The defeatist principle remains valid everywhere, whereby the struggle of the exploited during a war must first and foremost be directed against their own state. But if for the Ukrainians and Russians this means overthrowing their respective governments, the only state the Palestinians have known during their lifetime is the Zionist state and its military occupation regime (or at most the collaborationist bureaucracy of the PNA).

The Palestinian story can certainly be framed within the ongoing global conflict, but the form in which it presents itself is that of the *unforeseen*. The same international solidarity that has developed and the important episodes of class struggle that many of the world’s workers have put up against the genocide (the blockade of ports, international solidarity strikes, direct actions) are giving new life and energy to the internationalist struggle against all wars.

### **Deserting the global war by nailing our rulers to their responsibilities**

As far as we are concerned, we will

continue to consider “our” state the main enemy. Not only as a matter of principle and internationalist consistency: Italy is severely compromised in the ongoing global carnage. Our governments are supporting the Kiev regime militarily and economically, they are training the Ukrainian military on Italian territory, they are participating in the trade war through a policy of sanctions that impoverishes above all the proletarians of our country. At the same time, the Italian government is engaged in diplomatic action to support the genocide of the Palestinians, in many ways even more brazenly than other Western governments (see the abstention votes at the UN). While the slaughter goes on, it continues to provide weapons and scientific collaboration to Israel. There is no lack of ideological collaboration, with a communication system monopolized by Zionist propaganda, starting with State TV. A protagonism that was finally rewarded with the Italian military command of the European naval mission in the Red Sea against the Huthi.

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Emphasizing the responsibilities of the Italian state also allows us to clarify the position of anarchists with respect to possible opportunist temptations of various origins, including those of a certain opposition to NATO wars that tend to reduce the faults of the Italian ruling classes to a mere colonial servitude to the so-called star-studded “Empire”. On the contrary, the role of military leadership assigned to an Italian admiral in the Aspides mission against the Huthi confirms a direct responsibility of tricolour militarism in what is a dirty deterrence operation in support of the genocide of the Palestinians and, more generally, a very important commitment along the fault line that from the Red Sea leads to the Black Sea that has been mentioned. Then again, the NATO spy planes that fly over Crimea and provide precious indications for the Ukrainian bombardments depart from military bases located on Italian soil (in particular from Sigonella).

All this is rewarded through rich quotas in the colonial booty. In this sense, it is simply shameful the agreement between ENI and the Israeli Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure for the allocation of six licenses to extract gas from Gaza (in the so-called ‘Zone G’, 62% Palestinian according to international treaties). Quite simply, a robbery deal. This is happening while both wars are making staggering prof-

its for the Italian arms industries, with Leonardo reporting an 82% increase in market capitalization in 2023.

All the more urgent for us to oppose the war by nailing the ruling classes of our country to their responsibilities. They must pay - let this not be a rhetorical statement ■

1. In the first edition of this single issue, the sentence was: “Crimea was occupied by the Russian armed forces from the outset, practically without fighting”. The modified version as it appears in this reprint had already been discussed and agreed by the editors for the first issue.

2. Giovanna Branca, “Two sides of the same coin: Big Tech and the military industry”, interview with Dario Guarascio, “Il manifesto”, 14 February 2024 (online at <https://ilmanifesto.it/due-facce-della-stessa-medaglia-big-tech-e-industria-militare>).

3. “‘War, Prison or Disability’: Russian Military Desertions Surge”, “The Moscow Times”, 5 December 2023 (<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2023/12/05/war-prison-or-disability-russian-military-desertions-surge-a83319>).

4. Tim Lister, Katharina Krebs and Anastasia Graham-Yooll, “Anger on the front lines and anxiety at home as Russia’s mobilization is mired in problems”, CNN, 17 November 2022

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(<https://edition.cnn.com/2022/11/17/europe/russia-soldiers-desert-battle-field-intl-cmd/index.html>).

5. “Strike at a military airfield and other refusals to fight in Russia and Ukraine. Mid-autumn 2023”, reported in lib-

com.org, 26 October 2023 (<https://libcom.org/article/strike-military-air-field-and-other-refusals-fight-russia-and-ukraine-mid-autumn-2023>).



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Akram Al Halabi, *Cheek by jowl*, 2017-2022



# Untermenschen from all over the world, let us unite!

In order to understand what is happening in Gaza (and the West Bank) and to give a liberating perspective to solidarity with the oppressed Palestinians, it is necessary to go beyond the chronicle – albeit a chronicle of horror – and to grasp the basic socio-historical elements. Without a deep understanding of what settlement colonialism is, regardless of the ideology under which it is disguised from time to time, one runs the risk of applying inadequate or even misleading interpretative schemes to the Palestinian context.

A historian wrote that “the colonial invasion of land to create set-

Palestinians are not proletarians whom Israeli capitalism wants to exploit, but indigenous people whom Zionist colonialism wants to eliminate. The theft is not of labour time, but of space

tlements is a structure, not an event”. A structure that continues to operate both against the native population and within colonial society, since the constant project of eliminating the former (“elimination is an organizational principle”) produces the total mobilization of the latter.

Palestinians are not proletarians whom Israeli capitalism wants to exploit, but indigenous people whom Zionist colonialism wants to eliminate. The theft is not of labour time, but of space. The more the colonial system manages without the Indigenous labour force – and this tendency of the Israeli apparatus has

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intensified particularly since the 1990s – the more the colonized masses become *excess*. “As Palestinians become more and more useless, the Gaza Strip and the West Bank resemble increasingly less Bantustan and more and more reserves or the Warsaw ghetto”. The time then becomes ripe for two solutions – the first intrinsic to colonial logic, the second always possible in case of resistance: deportation to another territory, or mass murder.

headquarters, its own universities. The indistinctness between the civilian and the military, the settler and the soldier, the professor and the officer, the mobility of its borders – to which correspond that of its legal foundations – as well as the psychology of siege, mean that every innovation – technological, architectural, doctrinal – is constitutively *dual*. It is precisely because civilian-military fusion is now a widespread trend that Israeli high-

The system-Israel, however, exports not only weapons, technologies, and techniques of police, military, and urban administration but also a model for dealing with one of the problems of our time: what to do with the masses that capitalism no longer wants or can integrate

However, there are two aspects in which Palestinians are needed by the Israeli state and technology industry. Everything that the system-Israel exports – and that guarantees it, alongside the U.S. support for its economic structure – is being tested on the bodies and lives of Palestinians. The Israeli techno-military machine is at the forefront of the world because it tests its technologies and weapons permanently and directly, just a few kilometres from its own laboratories, its own

tech products were sold in 2021 to 130 countries and that more than 40 percent of the world’s funding in the IT sector was absorbed in the same year by the Israeli technocracy. The system-Israel, however, exports not only weapons, technologies, and techniques of police, military, and urban administration but also a *model* for dealing with one of the problems of our time: what to do with the masses that capitalism no longer wants or can integrate. In the incremental worsen-

ing of war entanglement, ecological disaster and algorithmic human replacement, where today's exploited may become tomorrow's displaced person or "climate refugee", and the technocrat a new settler moving with arms and baggage to another "productive ecosystem", the structure of settlement colonialism is not a remnant of the past, but rather a *working program*. After all, administrative detention – an invention of historical colonialism

is largely dependent on international "donors". On these funds and supplies, the State of Israel imposes both its control and its "tax levies" and then it redistributes the small slice to the Palestinian National Authority, around which a privileged (and collaborationist) elite has thus gathered. Techniques of torture and humiliation, exploitation of clan and social divisions, false agreements with the moderate Palestinian and false disagreements

That in the only democracy in the Middle East a few million people belonging to a "hostile population" are openly called animals or subhumans (untermenschen, doesn't that remind you of anything?) reveals not only the genocidal nature of settlement colonialism, as well as the perfect compatibility between democratic form and extermination practices, but also the extent of Palestinian liberation

and relaunched by the State of Israel itself – has long been operational in most parts of the world against undocumented migrants.

The other aspect for which Palestinians are raw material to be exploited is somehow collateral to the first. The construction of technologically guarded ghettos (and panoptic colonial fortresses), territorial shattering, and violent repression have made impossible any economic autonomy in the Palestinian territories, whose survival

with the particularly brutal settler, dosage of "breathing space" (an expression used to denote the calculation of calories needed to ensure mere survival for the people of Gaza) and space of terror – all this is very palatable *know-how* in an age where the line between the "humanitarian" administration of life and the industrial production of death tends to become blurred. It only takes "a single move on the command dial" to set off the "blood-fueled turbine". That in the *only democracy in*

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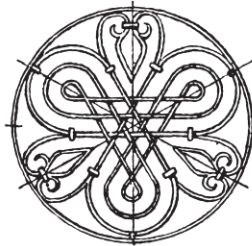
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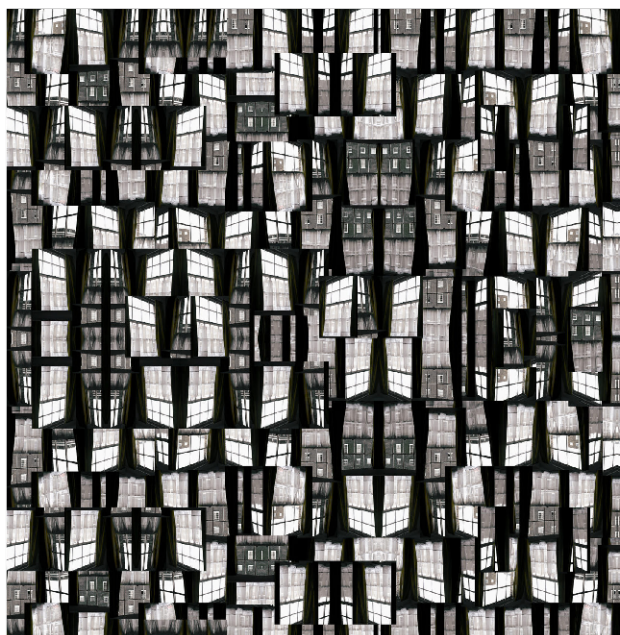
*the Middle East* a few million people belonging to a “hostile population” are openly called animals or subhumans (*untermenschen*, doesn’t that remind you of anything?) reveals not only the genocidal nature of settlement colonialism, as well as the perfect compatibility between democratic form and extermination practices, but also the extent of Palestinian liberation. The dismantling of the Israeli colonial system – that is, of the imperialist garrison in the Middle East – can only have a breakthrough effect on the exploited and oppressed throughout the world. In the squares, thousands of immigrants are not only shouting “Terrorist Israel”, but also “Gaza will win”, testifying how anguish and anger over the ongoing massacre are mixed with enthusiasm and a deep need for retaliation.

Anti-Zionist liberation can only be against the Palestinian National Authority and the system of privileges on which it is based. And it marks the human (and class) variant revenge against the electronic Wall, its automated checkpoints, its sensors, its drones – that is, that society of gateways under construction even in our latitudes, ready to leave out all those *who do not fit*.

Toward where can the current situation lead? We do not know. What we do know is that if the outcome is always the result of the forces at work, we must put our own spin on it. First by *practically* disassociating ourselves from “our” state and “our” capitalism, active accomplices in the ongoing genocide in Gaza. The hatred for what the West is accomplishing is indelible and without return ■

In the squares, thousands of immigrants are not only shouting  
“Israel terrorist”, but also “Gaza will win”, testifying how  
anguish and anger over the ongoing massacre are mixed with  
enthusiasm and a deep need for retaliation





Steve Sabella, *In Exile*, 2008

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Abdelrahman Al Muzayen, *Palestine Series*, 2000

# Internationalist glimmers in solidarity with Gaza

In the Western world, the solidarity from below with the oppressed Palestinians to impose a ceasefire on Gaza has manifested itself in very different forms, but all converging on the need and urgency to be on the streets and to act concretely against the genocide that the State of Israel is carrying out towards the Palestinian people and against the Israel-system. In both England and the United States, some of the largest demonstrations ever in support of the Palestinian cause took place, involving hundreds of thousands of people, some of them promoted by explicitly anti-Zionist Jewish organisations, such as the occupation of Grand Central Station in New York and the invasion of Congress in Washington; while in France and Germany the squares defied the legal prohibitions imposed by the authorities on several occasions since the beginning

of October.

The solidarity with Palestine also took shape in logistical blockades: roads, railways, bridges (particularly striking was the Bay Bridge in San Francisco, where protesters threw their car keys into the water to obstruct the restoration of traffic) were blocked, and in European, American (one for all, the partly successful attempt to set up a “coordinated” blockade between the port of Oakland and Tacoma) and Australian ports, the operations of ships engaged in the transport of weapons, in particular those of the Israeli company ZIM, were obstructed and in some cases blocked. Some port unions have declared their refusal to transport arms to Israel.

Many actions have targeted arms and military technology manufacturers. In this sense, the campaign against the Elbit conglomerate in En-

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gland was particularly vigorous, with the occupation of its headquarters in London and the halting of production at its factories in Southampton, Edinburgh and Bristol. Leonardo UK, the UK branch of the Italian company, was also affected by the campaign and one college suspended relations with the company following student protests, while banks and investment groups were attacked for funding the war industry.

There have been and are many direct actions that have indicated as responsible for the genocide the multinational companies that have tight relations with Israeli capital or make profits from commercial activities in the occupied territories: McDonald's, Starbucks, KFC, Carrefour, Puma, Zara; a responsibility extended to the media apparatus for its complicity with the Israeli narrative of the war from the actions against BBC, CBC, Fox News, New York Times. In the universities, students responded to the appeals of young Palestinians demanding an immediate end to relations with Israeli universities and companies that, not

only militarily, collaborate with Israel. Offices and facilities of government agencies, as well as offices of government parties, were occupied and damaged.

A fact that seems to emerge along with the constancy of the demonstrations is that the mobilizations that show the most continuity and "participation" seem to be inspired by the model of *campaigns against specific targets*: the actions in this case seek to put the spotlight on the collaborations of a specific element of the economic and political system in relation to the genocide carried out by Israel in an attempt to strike at its profits or to stop such agreements. As in

As in an X-ray, these actions bring out, behind the facade of a West in which peace reigns, the network of military, economic, commercial, political, and academic relations that guarantees the functioning of the Israeli death machine

an *X-ray*, these actions bring out, behind the facade of a West in which peace reigns (and which perhaps even allows itself the occasional rebuke of Netanyahu when the carnage touches the most atrocious peaks), the network of military, economic, commercial, political, and academic relations that guarantees the functioning of the Israeli death machine. Through this map of interventions, the decades-long op-



pression and current genocide of the Palestinians are revealed as *deeply and structurally rooted* in our latitudes.

In Italy, the movement of solidarity with Palestine has not reached the intensity of other countries, both in participation in demonstrations and in the initiatives to attack the complicity of Italian companies in the massacre, but some facts seem to be moving in the right direction, in an attempt to make the national master and others pay the price for their (co-)responsibility in the conflict.

The internationalist conflictual syndicalism, in which part of the immigrant proletariat that has been fighting with greater determination in recent years in the logistics of large-scale distribution is organized, shortly after the beginning of Israel's war against the Palestinians in Gaza (on 20 and 21 October 2023) promoted two days of mobilization and struggle against the war and in solidarity with the Palestinian resistance, proclaiming for the 20th a general strike of all categories (then repeated on 17 November) and for the 21st calling a demonstration in Ghedi, attend-

ed by some of the largest Palestinian organizations in Italy. In the ports of Genoa and Salerno, workers and solidarists blocked the gates to impede the transport of arms and condemn the connivance of the Italian terminal operators with the Israeli company ZIM.

Students occupied various universities throughout Italy demanding the cessation of their universities' relations with Israel in response to a call for mobilization by the University of Birzeit in the West Bank: the objectives included opposition to the militarisation of research and the university's relations with the war industry, starting with Leonardo s. p.a. And many protests have been and are being held in various parts of Italy to at least boycott the companies that collaborate with the Isreal-system, from Carrefour to McDonald's to local businesses. And if in some cities, the street mobilizations in solidarity with the Palestinian resistance seem to struggle to be the occasion for a real moment of unity of the anti-war instances and of concrete internationalist solidarity, sometimes being characterized by an imbalance

The risk is to run into the misunderstanding that the Palestinian "question" is a separate issue and as such should be dealt with, rather than becoming an opportunity to criticize the entire research and university system

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in the composition (where the protagonism of Italian activists or militants is more significant, there is a scarce presence of Arab immigrants, and vice versa), in other cities, this convergence seems to be stronger. Thousands of people pour into the main streets of Milan every Saturday, just to give a few examples. However, a closer look at the composition of the squares and the different initiatives, with a few exceptions, reveals how the interclass nature of the aggregate that mobilizes, mainly the world of activists, moves towards ethical-moral drives in which little appears, or is only on the horizon, in the way of material reasoning about the ongoing war and its consequences on our lives.

The mobilizations in universities and the world of research are a perfect testimony to this. Thanks to the appeals of Palestinian universities, in fact, an attempt has been made to identify the agreements between Italian and Israeli universities as a point of criticism, demanding their termination through the practice of occupation and, in the case of research, through letters and stances by researchers who do not want to feel co-responsible for the massacre. From this position, however, they have often not moved forward. Not always, in fact, is there a critique of the need to which these agreements respond in the world we inhabit, and what trend they reinforce. The risk is

to run into the misunderstanding that the Palestinian “question” is a separate issue and as such should be dealt with, rather than becoming an opportunity to criticize the entire research and university system.

If we take into account the previous difficulty in constructing an opposition to the war in Ukraine and the separation – in discourse, in practice – in which this is maintained with regard to the genocide taking place in Gaza, we can see how the Palestinian “question” runs the risk of being perceived as a separate issue. If the above-mentioned asymmetry explains this difficulty (in Palestine, the results of centuries of oppression are concentrated and condensed in number and intensity), there remains the risk of not being able to see what unites the current conflicts and the context in which they are taking place (the global dispute between the USA and China and the multiple conflictual flaws it opens up in regional contexts; the possible development of war on a global scale), and therefore not being able to build up, over time, an opposition that can provide a response, albeit a small but effective one, to the new scenarios that are increasingly taking place every day.

A new opportunity was given in the days of struggle on 23 and 24 February called by grassroots syndicalism, taking up the call of the Young Palestinians to block Italy against the posi-

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tion of the government, NATO, European and Western states that support the genocide that Israel has been carrying out since 7 October and the colonial occupation that has lasted over 75 years in Palestine.

These two days were born out of the need to give a united, internationalist response that is capable of exer-

cising solidarity with concrete acts, in an attempt to build “opportunities” to interrupt the economic flows of the masters by bringing together all those who are paying or will pay for the consequences of the current world conflict, giving strength to an internationalist anti-war movement ■



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Walid Abu Shakra, *Sand storm*, 1978

# Global civil war and the internal front

## *Considerations and pre-occupations*

Since the newly elected catholic pontiff coined the formula “world war in pieces” in 2014, it has become a ubiquitous analytical mantra. By finding a historical category for a series of war restitution phenomena, such as attacks on European soil, political instabilities more or less far from the West, and

the words of journalists, pre-paid or improvised geopolitical analysts, and even – though not with papal reference – in the texts of the variegated militant Italian scene.

If Clausewitz said that “war is nothing but the continuation of politics by other means” and Foucault that

Current times require us to bring back to the forefront what we mean by “war” and to refocus on what we have always known and what Alfredo Bonanno has clearly written several times:

“The State is war”

forms of cyberattacks on digital infrastructures, thus not ascribable to the old Caporetto imagery, Jorge Bergoglio has been accepted *urbi et orbi* as a philosopher of history, thanks God!

The emphasis on the spatiality of the dimension of war echoes daily in

the continuation of the war is the politic, maybe their relationship is a little more complex and consubstantial to be represented in these continuums that pass from one sphere to the other in such a formalized manner, whatever the direction of the vector. To

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rely today on an analytical landscape that traces international rights and to believe that there is an ascertainable alternation of territories at war and others at peace, albeit in a changing

the State is always war does not mean however ignoring the particular atrocities of the hot fronts, of the war being fought. Indeed, the more than 30,000 dead bodies in the Gaza Strip are not

Militarisation is not an ongoing process but a founding principle of modernity, a presupposition of it

process, would be short-sighted or naive. Rather, current times require us to bring back to the forefront what we mean by “war” and to refocus on what we have always known and what Alfredo Bonanno has clearly written several times: “The State is war”. Thus, there is no factual risk such as that of world war in pieces, but there is a horrifying reality in which Western politics has completely divested itself of the positive theatrics mask carried on for a few decades with certain pieces of the indigenous population. Its true face has always been that of almost total coincidence with belligerence, and it feels no need to conceal it any longer: politics is war, war is politics. There is no possible right of the people to act as a brake or opium for the peoples and beautiful souls, but it reigns absolutely that of finance, industry, and technology with their tendency to extreme conquest and consequently to extreme terms, to police bombing, to pure annihilation of which Günther Anders spoke. Keeping in mind that

just another number or statistical variant, but the most heinous consequence of the epistemological and technical model of this factory of death. In its paradigmatic example, the elimination of the human problem through decimation is the generalized form of all instituting action and excludes even the well-trodden biopolitical practices of social prophylaxis.

Precisely from these awarenesses, it is imperative to be able to look at the relationship between belligerence, peace and politics on the one hand, and enemy, citizen and state on the other, with the gaze untainted by the dominants and logics of international rights in the era of its blatant unveiling, as well as the aforementioned one of politics. We need it above all to understand what we can do here, in the proximity of experience, and not get lost in the stream of news reaching us from the four corners of the globe in a sophisticatedly mediated – if not totally false – manner, chaining us to a dependence on informational channels,

displacing in virtuality our presence in the world, and bending us addicted to the pornography of pain. From these premises, what follows are two thematic nodes: first, which is the political space where war acts and how it does not correspond to a relegation outside the national limes; second, how the extension of war is not to be ascribed only to the military element, but how it is at one with the civil, social and economic elements, once presented as separate and now shamelessly organized ever more closely by the lords of the abyss. Sometimes a naivety emerges in our comrades' words whereby the historical categorical binomials of the political doctrines of state-society and civil-military would be broken down; words that forget that these elements have never been separated, but certainly in the past set in a more complex dialectic in which social conflict in the last century played a central role. Why should we think of these elements as historically separate when they are now explicitly brought back into unity even in political discourse? On the other hand, however, it does not mean taking refuge in the same old refrain of militarisation, the one that sees only the most overt phenomena, such as soldiers in the streets, bringing forward the argument that the military should be extended to civil society.

Militarisation is not an ongoing process but a founding principle

of modernity, a presupposition of it. Moreover, in the last decade, remaining with the well-known example of dual-use technologies, the wars we have heard about suggest more and more often that their extensive use is first tested in the general "civil" environment, especially in urban contexts, and then refined in armed conflicts. Start-ups and sector companies – given the way production (and competition between "player") is organized – in highly capitalized contexts first launch their sordid products through the local administrations with which they have territorial growth agreements, along the lines of the smart city, and only after they have been roped in and subsidized for an economy of scale, do they move on to the broader market. Although the juxtaposition may seem peregrine, equally significant is the use in recent weeks of reservist Israeli settlers as official soldiers precisely in the territories occupied by them, so that in the West Bank many Palestinians have found themselves having to submit no longer unofficially but officially to the abuse of the land robbers, who have become military authority overnight. The intention here is not to deny that the general framework of a certain technological production had its primary input in the administration of the military, but rather that the general scope of the war-policy has different fields of research and different imple-

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mentation regimes that cannot be sectorialized.

Militarisation, given this organization of domain relations, falls into its meaning of becoming, of a kind of enlargement, and confirms the identity of war and the State. What is happening today is the blatant unveiling of this unity, the collapse of any fictitious emancipatory promise of State and capital, as it was fictitiously presented to the generations of the welfare state, who were basically nothing more than those who had seized a relationship of power less crushed by the panoply of the dominant. The institutional ideology that presents the “State”, with capital ‘S’, as an abstract product of international agreements of the last two centuries, as a combination of pacts and laws balanced in a normative framework of progress towards ever more mature forms of the political, in which the element of war would be given as an “exception” in time and as a process of “militarisation” in space, is a fakery good only for those who would like to claim more locally guaranteed legal orders and more balanced international protection organs. This would not lead very far, for example, from the cultural agony for a better and more democratic school or for academic research that is less colluded with the big-armed multinationals. It certainly does not mean ignoring or deserting situations in which aggrega-

tions against the processes of war production, such as the university, could develop, but rather keeping the bar straight in thinking about the substantial difference between goals for the reproduction of institutions less bound to the economic sector of war and the tension for a free life.

Concerning how the ranks of the State apparatus are closing around its pivotal institutions (a.k.a. the P.A.) or its cultural compartments (schools and the like), it is possibly more cogent to find communicable words about the change regarding how the State looks at the citizen and about the quality of the social relationship it builds with them. In practice, it seems that there are no longer any free zones in the practices of social space, the ones that democrats once thought were safe from active participation in what is a total and continuous mobilization of the population of European states. And yet this State of things is not primarily based on trying to put the helmet on the citizen or make him the object of the bayonet, but on verifying his readiness to be continuously mobilized in the reproduction of life relations. Without questioning himself, with obedience, with a continuous demonstration of his filiation to authority, under threat of elimination from the civilized community. The two-year Covid period with a daily decree even about attending cousins



and uncles on alternate days is in this sense a paroxysmal representation. It is no coincidence that the protests that arose against pandemic management have never been directed towards the demand for something, for an extra right of movement or service, but towards the invocation of a general freedom from this oppressive relationship.

If in recent years world history seems to have taken unexpected turns, sometimes described as accelerations, other times as overturning or changing of a world order previously conceived as stable, we cannot forget that the trends of domination are long-standing, some clear since decades. To orient ourselves in this chaos, an important intellectual figure such as Carl Schmitt gives us a suggestion somewhat devoid of ideology: that of the friendship/enemy paradigm, which in the final phase of his life he no longer sees only in the relationship between States but in a panorama of global civil conflict. In a neutral space of pure domination in which citizenship rights or their absence, military or civil status, moral or legal discrimination of the adversary, are nothing but bodiless phantoms in the face of the universality of technology and police apparatus. The figure of the enemy, once a nomenclature attributed by the State only to certain combatant groups, is destined for the German jurist to become general. In the time of a generation, we have also

been able to see how this has happened, reaching even the ordinary citizen, who could find himself identified as an absolute terrorist/enemy even for just two lines on social networks. In epochal diagnoses, this analysis is certainly not new. It has been almost a topos in some lectures of the last two decades, whether in the analysis of the militarization of urban space post-2001 or in the so-called “criminal law of the enemy”. What, therefore, is unheard today? First, the issue that the enemy is potentially anyone, not just specific groups, depending on the various emergencies that are now not only fast-moving in succession but overlapping and tending toward governmental entropy (contradicting laws, regulatory conflicts between central and local governments, the chaos of digitization and online life with attempts at legal framing, glaring contradictions between people’s real-life possibilities and legal apparatuses, the decision-making autonomy of various state organs). Second, the fact that the population is seen in various ways as criminogenic because there are no longer intermediate bodies and soft practices of social holding and control such as the welfare state. But the absolute unprecedented is that more and more low-conflict, or even a-conflictual, individuals are the object of such “charge” like the case of two trade unionists in Lille, who were investigated

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for terrorism starting with a pro-Palestinian statement. If the State's gaze toward the citizenry, toward the home front, thus now emerges manifestly as politics-war, the other side of the coin must be taken into consideration. The gathering of this relationship, that of civil confrontation, of civil war, is not unidirectional and tends to activate much broader and anomic circuits of violence. The sharpening of the struggle of all against all for life chances has

already set in place dynamics that are no longer about social struggle, but increasingly atrocious conflicts between people in spaces of horizontal proximity, such as in some European suburbs. Some of the phenomena of war restitution, such as those mentioned at the beginning, may target unconscious people and also those who, like us, although aware, may find themselves having to watch their backs not only from the forces of authority ■





Mustafa El Hallaj, *Untitled*, 1977

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Samira Badran, *Limits of confinement 4*, 2015

## The megamachine dripping with blood

The State of Israel's military response to the events of 7 October is making visible the result of a century of settlement colonialism in the land of Palestine. The process of subjugating native Arabs has progressively assumed the appearance of a huge experiment in high-tech prison engineering. One of the world's most developed advanced-capitalist democracies is becoming guilty of abnormal atrocities in an attempt to permanently crush a resistance that, despite attacks, expulsions, daily anguish, and apartheid, is still able to raise its head. As the situation in Gaza grows more dramatic with thousands dead, with hundreds of thousands fleeing from an almost completely devastated territory, the

conflict continues to spread. The axis of resistance, with the backing of all Arab formations that support it, is exposing the U.S. to increasing pressure with direct attacks on U.S. bases in Iraq and Syria and Red Sea trade routes. The bottleneck created in the Bab el-Mandeb Strait not only threatens European interests but also puts Egypt's already disastrous economy in serious trouble with possible repercussions throughout North Africa. The increasingly massive U.S. bombing response against so-called Iranian *proxies* and Anṣār Allāh positions in Yemen consequently opens up scenarios that could have unpredictable developments. All this fits within the broader global clash between great

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powers for military and technological supremacy, starting also with the war in Ukraine.

In this framework, one aspect that deserves attention and puts us immediately in the heart of the clash is certainly the growing role and military weight of the European Union, which without any decency is made explicit in the so-called “defence of the values of the West” and thus in perfect continuity with the genocide of the Palestinian people. The attempt on the part of the EU in today’s restructuring cycle is to have more weight in international scenarios where a delay in direct intervention could mean the opening of a deep economic and social crisis. If the EU’s involvement as a key part of the Atlantic alliance appears to be getting stronger and stronger, also individual actions aiming for political autonomy are multiplying. In this context should be read the important signal given with the 50 billion funding signed at the end of January by the EU in support of Ukraine (with an addition of 5 billion for the European Peace Facility and the Armament Group Procurement Assistance Fund) exactly in a moment when overseas funding hits an historical minimum. In this regard should be read the European flanking of the Anglo-American-led Operation Prosperity Guardian and the autonomous intervention of Italy, France and Germany, via the Aspides mission, in

the Red Sea (which in turn adds to existing missions). At the same time, the EU’s increasingly prominent role in NATO stands above all as the driving force behind a proper “Marshall Plan” of technological and military restructuring of the Western bloc.

On February 17 and 18, 2024, the leaders of the Alliance’s armed forces met in Brussels for the NATO Military Committee. The hot topic: how to accelerate the process of transforming strategies and “combat capabilities” and how to ensure the immediate implementation of the new “defense plans” approved at the Vilnius summit last summer. These are the words of the committee’s deputy secretary, Dutch Admiral Rob Bauer: “Never before have the defense plans of NATO and the member nations been so closely interlinked [...]. They contain the Force Structure Requirements, by which the number and types of required equipment and weapons systems have been set, in all geographical regions and domains. Militarily, the new defense plans call for more people, more training activities and exercises, more arsenals and operational capabilities, and more defense investment programs”. Instead, this is the statement of Chris Badia, deputy supreme commander of Allied Commander Transformation (ACT), the Virginia-based command in charge of leading NATO’s strategic transformation processes: “Because

tomorrow's warfare will be even more complex from the perspective of multiple domains, we need to be even faster from all points of view and better than our adversaries [...]. We will achieve this through integrated multi-domain operations, thus conducting seamless conflict in the naval, land, and air domains. But along with these classic domains are two new ones, cyber and space". And with regard to the space and *cyberwar* sector, General Chris

tainly not new as technological upgrading and transformation constitute two fundamental aspects of military deterrence, and, especially in the cyber arena, such programs have been continuously overlapping since World War II. Today, however, the means of modernization and innovation are undergoing unprecedented acceleration thanks to the push of quantum and artificial intelligence research. "Quantum technologies are on the

The rhetoric associated with *human enhancement*, also called *human augmentation*, is particularly effective: through the indefinite and endless promise of improvement and progress, we become familiar with that dehumanization of the human being which then comes to fruition on the battlefield

Badia explained that NATO aims to increase cooperation with non-military actors: "Particularly in the space sector, there are several civilian infrastructures. It is not necessary to duplicate everything in this field but on the contrary, it is better to move toward joint extension and transformation. How can we cooperate with the civilian world and find all these synergies? By synchronizing and converging for example military and non-military actors [...] coming to their integration".

Statements of this kind are cer-

verge of revolutionizing the world of innovation and can change the rules of the security game, including those of modern warfare" NATO leadership explains. "This is why quantum is one of the technology areas that the Alliance has prioritized because of its implications for defense and security. It includes artificial intelligence, data collection and computing, automation, biotechnology, and human enhancements".

This race to modernize weapon systems is intertwined, through sci-

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entific research, with the activities of leading academic institutions, bodies and corporations both public and private, European and international, and enjoys a discrete amount of public advocacy. In this respect, the rhetoric associated with *human enhancement*, also called *human augmentation*, is particularly effective: through the indefinite and endless promise of improvement and progress, we become familiar with that dehumanization of the human being which then comes to fruition on the battlefield. The same concept ultimately runs in the world of *wargaming*, a term broadly used in the military to define software that creates virtual warfare scenarios but which are primarily developed in the commercial gaming environment. Such is the case with the Milan-based company Slitherine, which with Command Modern Operations, a universal military simulator capable of replicating in detail every aspect of both logistics and warfare, has rocketed through the world market in the field. By the admission of its CEO, “the breakthrough” came with the massive use of its “games” during various lockdowns throughout the pandemic. Today the pro edition of Command is used in 23 different countries and by more than 150 entities, which among others include the U.S. Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps, the U.K. Defense Science and Technology Laboratory

and the Luftwaffe, as well as contractors such as Boeing, Bae and Lockheed Martin. “Wired” magazine in this regard reports, “what Ralph Chatman, a senior member of the U.S. Defense Science Department in the early 2000s, claimed: “Virtual games don’t teach you how to walk in tall grass, but they do teach you what to think about when you walk in tall grass, and that is a major advantage for when you are actually in tall grass”. Seemingly trivial, the reflection confirms how much the electronic surrogate is not pure fiction, but telos, praxis and ethos, end, act and ethics. The fact that simulation is a strategic training environment is well known. Somewhat less that is now a key part of AI and machine learning development. These software, in fact, play against themselves and against real-life military experts, self-learning how to implement the best strategies to apply in real-world scenarios. It is no coincidence that the powerful “computing machines” that make AI applications possible use the famous GPUs (Graphics Processing Units: ultra-powerful graphics processors also developed in gaming and object of commercial wars for years already) instead of the normal CPUs (Central Processing Units). We can see the results of these *wargames* being applied directly in Gaza, with *targeting* systems such as Gospel, used by the Israeli army to produce targets to hit in



a very short time.

This mad race for supremacy in the speed of data transmission can be found both in the field of H.A. (Human Augmentation), both in the euphoric style of Elon Musk's announcements (with Neuralink), and in the far more worrying studies of research organizations such as the RAND Corporation. While in the former the rhetoric is all about the possibility of treating certain diseases, in the latter the human-machine interface "could

technical innovation of the military machine is already sufficient to outline some basic aspects of the current wars including the current confrontation in Palestine. The policies of national States cluster together in dynamics very similar to those that preceded the great wars of the last century: mobilizing civil society to ideally and physically adhere to the precepts of the reference block (in our case, the rhetoric of the values of Western-style NATO-led democracy) and great plans

To the difficulty in concretizing both forms of attack and the construction of otherness compared to the dominant system, today is added the powerful role played by technologies, especially information technologies, in sublimating instances that would otherwise explode in all their materiality

serve as a means of ultra-fast communication during military operations". The study "Plagues, Cyborgs, and Supersoldiers. The Human Domain of War" published by RAND on January 2 states among other things that: "genetic engineering will be a field of absolute importance in the strategy of future warfare [...] and for the creation of super-soldiers also through genetic modifications that would improve the physical and psychological capabilities of individuals".

This partial picture in the field of

for restructuring. But it is urgent at this stage to grasp the elements of discontinuity from the past. The unprecedented impact that new technologies and contemporary production relations seem to have on the degree of alienation of the masses manifests itself in a substantial difficulty in turning widespread, although still ethereal, opposition and discontent into concrete acts that can reconstruct a revolutionary perspective. To the difficulty in concretizing both forms of attack and the construction of otherness compared to

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the dominant system, today is added the powerful role played by technologies, especially information technologies, in sublimating instances that would otherwise explode in all their materiality.

This process of sublimation is now taking place at all levels of individuals' lives and, unless it is derailed, will quickly see the disappearance of human activity as we know it (through AI, quantum and genetic engineering). At stake is that know-how, never in danger as today, which requires all our physicality.

Power is showing, again and like countless other times, its true face (alas, also thanks to Telegram) and what were threats the day before yesterday are now real aggressions on both the internal and external fronts. In this unfolding clash, the great variable remains the degree to which the masses are internally involved in the production processes that give rise to war, where the means of production coincide with the means of destruction. To such a level of alienation in which not even a live-streamed genocide stirs conscience is added the States' will to power with their death-dealing devices. After all, the artificialisation of living consists precisely of this: the replacement of the natural environment and human action by something programmable and domesticated. We must always remem-

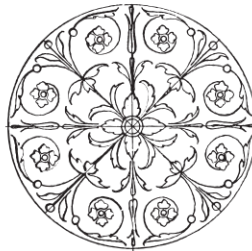
ber it: the technical management of the catastrophe plays in favour of this substitution, which is the only anchor of salvation for murderers in uniform. The cry of Gaza and Palestine is telling us just that. There is still a humanity that, despite the very high price paid, does not give up. The form of Palestinian resistance is a peculiar one, in which very complex social and cultural factors play a role. Forms of struggle that are sometimes distant from ours as they are corroborated by religious beliefs, permeable to internal and external power games, but still represent, after all, one of the last fronts of directly anti-colonial struggle. This front does not only consist of military opposition. This front is one of the last bastions of that attachment to the land intended as an inseparable place from life and culture. Land with which there is a relationship of equal interchange, where gesture still has a direct value of cause and effect. Without this attachment (diametrically opposed to the artificial Zionist attachment) the Palestinian people would have already been kicked out. As anarchist internationalists, we have a huge responsibility at this time. The historical themes that agitated the revolutions of the past are crystallized in front of our eyes, unresolved, in the form of a new totalizing scientist nightmare. What works in our favour is not a small thing: the more complex the machine becomes,

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the more fragile it becomes; the more pervasive it becomes, the more it exposes itself with a thousand ganglia scattered throughout the territory. The

more barbarity manifests itself, the more the reasons of those who oppose it will fuel the possibilities of its sabotage ■



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Hosni Radwan, *Exile 1*, 2022

# Media strategies of domination and Palestine

In times of war, controlling the hearts and minds of the population is of fundamental importance to those in power. The media have the function of building consensus and are firmly in the hands of the ruling system. Despite this, it is interesting to note that there is a growing distrust of the official media. This mistrust is linked to an obvious detachment between a part of public opinion and the choices made by the governments of Western capitalist countries regarding recent serious international crises: the SARS-CoV-2 epidemic, the war between Russia and Ukraine and the conflict in the Middle East. In order to deal with the SARS-CoV-2 epidemic, a state of health emergency was applied, which led to a full-fledged military management of the pandemic. Power was able to experiment with mass control and manipulation, exploiting the fear

of death and disease. The media implemented real war propaganda, and those who did not submit to the dominant narrative were singled out as the enemy, ridiculed and criminalized.

The emergency device was also applied to the war between Russia and Ukraine, whose outcome was easily foreseeable from the outset: Ukraine would be devastated, the entire Europe would be impacted, and humanity would be subjected to the risk of a global, nuclear conflict. The European political class not only refused the path of diplomatic mediation but, on the contrary, sacrificed the Ukrainians by arming and financing them for suicidal action in the service of international capitalist interests. To secure these interests, the media's depiction of the war in Ukraine is pure fiction. Not only because the fragments of the story are false - for example, video game

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sequences have been passed off as real scenes, images documenting completely different episodes have been used, and numerous news items have been invented out of thin air –, but it is the overall sense of this tragic event that is completely falsified, with the aim of influencing a largely European public opinion that is against military adventures on its own continent.

The media discredited and censored every critical voice, including those of liberal intellectuals, to induce a camp choice according to the friend-enemy dichotomy: or you stand with the free and democratic world's painful but necessary war, or you are a pro-Russian, a Putinist.

In the war against the Palestinians, Israel and its Western bloc have on their side the majority of the international media, whose function is to delegitimize the 7<sup>th</sup> October action of the Palestinian resistance, justify the military operation and the genocide of the Palestinians, conceal and criminalize the international mobilization in support of the Palestinian people, and finally justify the extension of the conflict. The media systematically use a double standard when describing and commenting on the actions of Westerners and those who are considered enemies. For example, if the parts were reversed, the naval blockade implemented by Anṣār Allāh (the so-called Huthi) in the Red Sea would

not be described as a terrorist action, but as a humanitarian intervention in compliance with international law.

War propaganda, i.e. the narration of events in favour of one's own side, dates back to antiquity, from Homer to Julius Caesar's *De Bello Gallico*, and goes as far as the use of artificial intelligence to create parallel realities. The role of the press in promoting the war-mongering choices of governments has always been of primary importance, just think of Benito Mussolini, editor of the "Popolo d'Italia", whose interventionism pushed Italy to participate in the Great War.

During the Vietnam conflict, the freedom of action granted to Western journalists had allowed the general public to know at least part of the reality of the war, undermining the internal front and contributing to the emergence of fighting movements that influenced the defeat of the United States. Subsequently, military strategies to control information evolved, and with the military intervention in Iraq in 1991, the US military imposed the model of *embedded* journalism, i.e. subjugated and incorporated into the war machine.

Currently, the Israeli government prevents journalists from circulating freely in war zones. As "Repubblica" admits, in order to be allowed to enter the Gaza Strip, newspapers must be incorporated into the Israeli army and

comply with a protocol that, according to the newspaper's editorial board, applies military rather than political censorship. But evidently Raffaele Oriani, a contributor to "Venerdì" of "Repubblica", must not have felt reassured by the impartiality guaranteed by this protocol, so much so that he resigned after twelve years, declaring that "This massacre has a media bodyguard that makes it possible. This bodyguard is us".

Comparing the media strategies used by power to construct the narra-

as a "response" to an enemy attack. According to Zionist propaganda, the Palestinians have been the ones provoking the war since 1947, i.e. since the Palestinian leadership's decision to boycott UN Resolution 181. A decision that provided for the partition of land between two political entities and by which, de facto, the international community legitimized Zionism's colonialist project. Similarly, the invasion of Ukraine by the army of the Russian Federation is described as the beginning of the war at the hands of Putin's

Comparing the media strategies used by power to construct the narrative of the two war scenarios (Ukraine and Palestine), one can see that the manipulation techniques are the same

tive of the two war scenarios (Ukraine and Palestine), one can see that the manipulation techniques are the same.

Decontextualization: the Palestinian resistance action of 7 October is recounted as a terrorist aggression isolated from context and history. Omitting the fact that for years Israel has been militarily attacking civilians, causing thousands of casualties, and carrying out a process of ethnic cleansing, is a camp choice meant to attribute responsibility for the conflict to the Palestinians. Historically, Israeli military actions are always described

expansionist raptus, whereas the destabilization of the region conducted by the NATO front to enlarge its area of influence has been operational since at least 2014, with Euromaidan and the bombing of the Donbas and other Russian-speaking regions.

Falsification: controversial episodes are used to support one's propaganda. News stories with no certain sources are fabricated and frequently debunked as soon as their instrumental use is no longer indispensable. For instance, the Western media initially attributed the Nord Stream pipeline

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But the latest trend in media manipulation is to make people believe that the Western capitalist bloc disassociates itself from the Israeli government's violence and seeks peaceful mediation

explosion to Russia, even though Biden had previously openly stated that "If Russia invades, there will be no Nord Stream 2". Later, since the thesis of self-sabotage lacked credibility and to absolve NATO of responsibility for having destroyed a strategic infrastructure for Europe, the media spread the hypothesis that unspecified "Ukrainian forces" were responsible.

Similarly, the 7 October military attack in the immediate aftermath was only reported as an indiscriminate massacre of civilians, whereas according to later and more accurate sources, more than half of the victims were soldiers and policemen, and some of the civilians were killed by the Israeli army's bombing in compliance with the well-known "Hannibal protocol". Furthermore, it must be considered that the colonies are military settlements, the settlers are armed and are an active part of the occupation of the territories and the expulsion of the natives.

Emotive narrative: The media focus on the atrocities allegedly committed by Palestinian resisters (beheadings of children and sexual violence against women), going along with

Israeli propaganda without reporting the denials of the other side, hiding the atrocities perpetrated by the army, Israeli police and settlers systematically for decades. The aim is to lead populations to instantly and emotionally side with the Zionists. Violence is thus presented as an illegitimate weapon only for the enemies of the West, while it is denied that at the heart of every colonial process is violence, and that colonised man can only liberate himself in and through the violence that defines the oppressive system in which he lives.

Personalisation: we are told the biographies of the few Israeli hostages, to make us identify with them, while the thousands of Palestinian dead and hostages held in Israeli prisons are a shapeless mass with no face, hidden behind the term "side effects". Similarly, news about victims from regions considered pro-Russian is scarce while narratives about Ukrainian victims abound, and when it comes to neo-Nazi soldiers they are often incensed as heroes who fell for freedom.

The war-mongers apply one of the worst levers of consensus: the dehu-



manisation of the enemy, which has always served to justify the most infamous massacres. Arabs and Slavs are still described using zoological language, as inferior and subhuman beings, according to the worst racist and Nazi rhetoric.

### **The media as agents of preventive counter-insurgency**

In support of the Palestinian population, a large international solidarity movement has been activated, a real thorn in the side of the Israeli State and the bloc of countries that support it. Punctually, the media attempted to disrupt this movement, again with a strategy that unfolded in various stages. Initially, the protesters were accused of supporting terrorism. Subsequently, anyone who supported the Palestinians or criticised the actions of the Israeli State became anti-Semitic. Anti-Semitism is thus instrumentalised, and it is no coincidence that when the media count the number of anti-Semitic actions, they put real racist actions in the same cauldron with critical initiatives and actions in opposition to the Israeli government. This has led to the paradox of accusing anti-Zionist Jews of anti-Semitism, who, by demonstrating all over the world in solidarity with the Palestinian people, make it clear that attacking Netanyahu's government and anti-Semitism are not synonymous.

But the latest trend in media manipulation is to make people believe that the Western capitalist bloc disassociates itself from the Israeli government's violence and seeks peaceful mediation. This narrative is at odds with the reality of the facts: Western countries send funding, weapons and fleets to support Israel, warn neighbouring countries not to intervene, and oppose resolutions condemning Israel in international institutions.

Evidently, Israeli military operations are agreed and shared with the US and the EU. The propaganda in this case serves to clear Westerners of co-responsibility with Israeli crimes. Western governments could intervene to stop the genocide in Gaza and instead they fuel the expansion of the conflict into a regional war. At the same time, the media try to minimise and normalise the war in order to accustom public opinion to the situation and to quell protest movements.

### **War on truth and the limits of telematic communication**

The war on truth waged by the Zionist regime is not only ideological but also material: more than a hundred journalists have been killed by the Israeli Defence Forces in Gaza, many as a result of targeted attacks with drones or guided missiles. In the rest of Israel, non-aligned journalists have suffered dozens of arrests and administrative

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If anarchists and communists managed to publish their newspapers even during totalitarian regimes by recurring to clandestinity, how will we act within a communication system increasingly hostage to technologies whose access is not free but hostage to the will of companies and governments?

detentions. The Israeli government has thus tried to gain a monopoly on information, but this is not succeeding thanks to the strength of resistance and the courage and sacrifice of many activists.

The main media belong to the large financial and industrial groups or governments, Western journalists are trained within the dominant paradigms of neo-liberal capitalism, and the *strong* instrument of censorship is no longer even needed to guide them. Some truthful descriptions remain in countries where certain professional deontology resists, such as the United States or France, but certainly not in Italy, where the falsification of reality is so blatant that part of the population has stopped believing in it. This is demonstrated by the collapse in television news ratings and the increasingly poor sales of national newspapers. It is no coincidence that this trend has intensified in the years following the media handling of the Covid epidemic. Certainly, there is a substantial part

of the population that ideologically adheres to the system and a part that is politically disinterested and dispossessed of the desire for knowledge and cognitive faculties. But there is also another substantial part that does not trust the system and believes what it is told to be false. The fact that there is a growing distrust in the dominant system is a positive element, but it must be acknowledged that for now, this scepticism seems to act only on the level of the consciousness of the excluded, who are beginning to cut some of those bonds that used to tie them to society, including, precisely, that of recognition in the media-spectacular system of domination.

On the other hand, alternative information channels have an increasing following, which denotes a desire for what would once have been called counter-information, and this is a fact that must be assumed regardless of the quality of the content and the political orientation of the various blogs, Telegram channels, and so on.

The Internet is the place where these *different* sources propagate because of their simplicity of use, their endless potential for diffusion, and their costs, which are decidedly low compared to traditional counter-information tools (press and radio). But if virtual space seems to redefine the media system by giving some illusion of decentralisation, this seems more and more distant from the promise of freedom that web theologians of the left and right used to take for granted. Through the oligopoly of the companies that own the network infrastructure, the capitalist system has granted an apparent fluidity to telematic communication only to facilitate its growth and global expansion. But in these times of war, the trend is reversing: now non-aligned communication tools are victims of police control and repression, they are blacked out or singled out as spreaders of fake news. After all, “without some form of censorship, propaganda in the strict sense of the word is impossible”. Some examples of this censorship clampdown are the hunt for so-called “fake news” during the Covid pandemic, the closure of Russian channels after the war with Ukraine, and the closure of internet networks in Gaza. Even at our latitudes, we have experienced how the tools of telematic communication are not as free as they appear – it is enough to make a post in support of Palestine

to find one’s social profile obscured or the DIGOS (police departments dealing with political offenses, t/n) at home, as happened to an Algerian refugee here in Italy – and with the escalation of military conflicts and the desirable increase in social conflict, the true nature of the web will only emerge.

The telematic communication system has intrinsic limitations that are poorly suited to the needs of those who wish to combat an increasingly pervasive domain: the physical structures that make it work are highly centralised and firmly in the hands of the military-industrial complex, they are highly energy-consuming and in the event of a revolution one would not have the technical skills to manage them; the platforms are owned by private individuals who can exclude at will content they do not share, and the dictatorship of the algorithm automatically promotes pro-system content, blocking antagonistic content; furthermore, these tools are always dual, i.e. they allow communication but also serve the police to control and repress subversives.

The prodromes of the repression against freedom of expression can be identified by recalling the house raids several people underwent during the Covid, guilty of writing dissenting posts on social networks. About the more strictly militant sphere, the re-

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pressive clampdown on those components of the anarchist movement that have maintained an active conflict against the State and capital in recent decades is a litmus test of the ongoing evolutions. At the top of this trend is the use of the 41 bis prison regime, a veritable war prison reserved for enemies of the State. In this regime, any kind of external-internal communication is prevented, and revolutionary prisoners can no longer communicate with the world outside prison. As an example, we cite the statement made by the anarchist Alfredo Cospito to the surveillance court of Sassari on 20 October 2022. That political document was censored and still cannot be, and has not been, spread. Other examples of censorship concern the increasing use of “incitement to commit crimes” accusation, sometimes with the aggravating circumstance of terrorist purposes, the requests for arrest for speaking at rallies, and the application of precautionary measures for writing articles.

Some recent judicial investigations against anarchists (Scripta Marent, Sibilla, Diana, Scripta Scelera) have also, or mainly, involved the publication of newspapers and the run-

ning of websites, and there have also been seizures of publications, as well as the seizure of a commercial printing house and the shutdown of websites. The West is increasingly dominated by emergency policies and democracies are evolving towards increasingly authoritarian models of government. A near future of censorship and manipulation lies ahead. With regard to the latter, the introduction of artificial intelligence – a sophisticated new tool for manipulating reality – introduces new and disturbing scenarios. If anarchists and communists managed to publish their newspapers even during totalitarian regimes by recurring to clandestinity, how will we act within a communication system increasingly hostage to technologies whose access is not free but hostage to the will of companies and governments? We are convinced that the authoritarian drift, of which censorship and war propaganda are expressions, represents a sign of crisis and weakness of capitalist domination that will be beneficial for a break between the excluded and the system, as is already timidly happening. If the word returns to fear today, it is because it can find ears willing to listen to it ■







In the storm of a structural tendency towards war, while all the glorifiers of domination would have us remain open-mouthed in the face of the imperious necessity of Force, the forces at play are demonstrating their *contingent* character more and more every day. NATO is losing in Ukraine, Africa is boiling over, world trade is being undermined by one of the poorest countries on earth, US military bases are being hit by non-state formations. Thus the repression against immigrants (and comrades) is advancing. Thus the rearmament plans, the announcements of mass recruitment, the censorship that casts off all masks. «Revolution or war»: here is a concept that is already implicit in the substance of the world; a concept that, «strange as it may seem, could preserve human lives». As the storm rises, this *single issue* wants to blow in that direction.