



Research Seminar Series

Lent Term 2005

Wednesday, 9th March 2005

The human habitat and armed conflict: Is war outdated?

Notes for a presentation in London.

Peter Lock, Hamburg (Peter.Lock@t-online.de) www.Peter-Lock.de

Academic warning: The following array of hypotheses and questions does not heed the rules of sound social science. They are intended to open a broad discourse and to encourage research in uncharted territory. They are presented to a social science audience because the methodological codes dominating the mainstream in political science tend to seriously limit the scope of the analyses. This is particularly obvious in the debate on the causes of war which hinges on the rather arbitrary assumption that the a simple binary coding of the states around the world in "war" and "not war" remains a meaningful categorisation. Putting it provocatively one might say, by rigorously breaking problems down to methodologically accessible levels fundamental problems tend to disappear.

A limited horizon of the debate on the transformation of warfare: The essential contention of this exploration concerning the future of war derives from the observation that the debate - mainly in military journals and neo-conservative media - on the transformation of the armed forces considered indispensable in response to perceived challenges pays little attention to ongoing, far reaching changes of the human habitat in all its manifestations. Every social change is also linked with a transformation of the forms of violence. The scale of the current processes of social fragmentation worldwide devalues established strategies of prevention as well as options to achieve political ends by means of conventional warfare. "Lessons learnt" from past experience are often of little help because in the meantime war and violence are fully embedded in the dynamics of shadow globalisation and its imperatives. The profound changes determining current and future warfare result from modernisation in diverse fields and lead to shrinking space and time frames in which conventional war fighting can still be conceived as a tool to achieve a political end. A central, though insufficiently analysed variable is the "survivability" of the civilian population. The apparently smooth military campaign in Iraq is owed to a unique constellation and deflects from the general dilemmata of fighting wars in today's human habitat.

In the new world of neoliberal globalisation the paradigm of controlling people and territory has also changed. During WW II masses of slave labour were still an important asset enabling the Nazi-war economy to reach a maximum output of weapon systems as late as 1944. However global economic integration throughout the last fifty years has turned slave labour into a burden, Gulags have become expensive and counterproductive. Thus, direct political control of a territory renders little, if any advantages. To the contrary, a corrupt dictator or a

greedy elite, under the best circumstances with a democratic make-up, are more likely to facilitate access to resources and cheap labour under the most favourable conditions than any form of direct control or trusteeship. The separation of social spheres and territories in “utile” and “inutile”, as was strictly pursued by the military dictatorship in Algeria or the Communist leadership in China, might eventually be regarded as the most efficient form of “indirect rule” in the quagmire of imposed neoliberal globalisation.

Time lag and the autistic performance of the security establishment: Entrenched military-industrial-bureaucratic interests as well as a few new entrants dominate the debate on the desirable military posture of the United States in particular. The dynamic poles of this largely uncontrolled discourse about mostly virtual scenarios are the continued expansion of the cosmos of perceived and invented threats on the one hand and the restless projection of ever more daring technologies on the other. The latter are supposed to cope with the imagined threats and render additional security. So far however, largely unnoticed or neglected in this debate, mostly immensely expensive weapon systems of Cold War vintage are set to be procured until 2020, even though they were tasked to perform a role in the virtual scenarios of the Cold War and have little, if any reasonable rationale in current and particularly in forthcoming scenarios.

The insane arms race during the Cold War can be described as a mutual, virtual performance of actors dominating the respective political systems who were basically interested in preserving their political hegemony. The dissemination of anxiety in the context the arms race was instrumental to achieve this end. The current debate in the United States on the appropriate military doctrine as reflected in journals like *Parameters* and *Aviation Week & Space Technology* can be interpreted in a similar way as an autistic race among security related corporate interests competing over shares of the defence budget. The cultivation of threats constitutes the “software” which legitimises the acquisition of the hardware in form of often wasteful technologies as well as the survival and even expansion of outdated institutions in the ever expanding realm “security production”. As the currently imagined enemy does not any longer have a clear territorial profile, the horizon for “security production” widens and penetrates all social spheres. The marker for this expansion is “homeland defence”.

Widespread - the not so slow evaporation of military capabilities: Assuming that the currently dominant paradigm of global economic regulation prevails in the foreseeable future the armed forces in even more countries will lose their capacity to fight conventional cross-border wars. In fact, only a very few countries apart from NATO and the former Warsaw Pact ever had a credible military capacity to aggressively project their forces beyond the national borders. Furthermore apart from a few resource rich countries the armed forces watch their Cold War arsenals rotting while resources to replace them are not available and are not likely to become available in a foreseeable future. In the global race for inward investments more and more states will see their tax base shrinking further and lose the financial means necessary to provide basic public goods, most importantly “security” in all its dimensions. In some cases

the political class tries to stem the dehydration of the armed forces by renting them out to the United Nations for peacekeeping and peace enforcement. This stage can be considered as a hybrid or intermediate stage in the transformation towards self-privatisation of the armed forces in the absence regular salaries. This creeping privatisation of the provision of public goods is likely to accelerate. States mutate into an empty shell which can easily be usurped by a hegemonic group or leader to foster their private interests. But to the extent security ceases to be delivered by the state, social fragmentation intensifies and the territorial integrity of the state loses its rationale. It may easily fall apart as at the same time large parts of the ever expanding shadow economy become an integral part of dynamic global networks. They form the flip side of the neo-liberal drive to break down all barriers to allow for “efficient” financial markets to determine the allocation of resources and production and thus, inclusion or exclusion from the heralded social and economic benefits of the current wave of globalisation. I use the term shadow globalisation for the flip side because globalisation and shadow globalisation are Janus-faced, closely interrelated processes. Their co-existence includes a wide range of symbiotic spheres which ranges from money laundering, high risk investments, black labour, illegal trade leading to the transubstantiation of the commodities from illegal to legal which endows the brokers with “succulent” profits.

Absolute superiority in the “war against the terror”: The exploration of these secular, so far unbroken parallel trends of seemingly unlimited military resources in the hands of the remaining superpower and the structural weakening of the resources most other states have at their disposal to provide the classic public goods, first and foremost security, reveals an uniquely asymmetric military power structure at the global level. Most states are characterised by an accelerating diffusion of the monopoly of legitimate violence into the hands of private agencies whose status reaches from legal, informal, shadowy and criminal. The rule of law pertains often to a few economic exclaves while the rest of the society must arrange its life and commercial transactions under the spell of regulative violence and rackets. In other cases almost perfectly repressive regimes like Saudi Arabia or Egypt engender opposition. The sole superpower is rightly or wrongly perceived as the arbiter who maintains the undesired status. The United States is identified as the most important target of terrorist attacks because the opposition perceives terrorist acts in the circumstances as an efficient road to change because terrorist acts in the past in Beirut and Saudi Arabia produced the desired effects. Neither the nuclear nor the conventional military superiority are of much help to address the problem of terrorism. But since the triple B (Bush, Blair, Berlusconi) thought it to play out to their advantage when they categorically declared “war against terrorism” and put the rule of law into the backseat in their countries, an “authoritarian security state” is subtly replacing “liberal democracy”.

The auto-destructivity of the “war against the terror”: The categorical declaration of “war against terror” disguises the discrepancy between the “production” of the different institutional actors in the security sector and the new profoundly altered character of dangers. Terror in this war is but an arbitrary construct. The dynamic automatism ensuing from this

construct shrouds our accumulated knowledge on the interrelatedness between social change and altered forms of violence with ignorance. The “war against terror” can be seen as a continuation or at least a resurgence of an American foreign policy paradigm, namely the absolute determination to portray the enemy as a totalitarian actor who does not qualify to enter in political negotiations to end the war. The formula in WW II was “unconditional surrender” and the Cold War aimed at the elimination of the enemy as the only safe and acceptable outcome. Extermination or at least life-long isolation from the rest of world is the presidential formula in the open-ended “war against terror”. As opposed to its predecessors the “war against terror” lacks a clear territorial dimension. The three formulas have in common, however, the absolute, the unconditional, politically non-negotiable approach. The enemy is portrayed as an immutable actor who knows no limitation in the means to achieve his devious ends. Taking this image for fact one can not but to respond in kind. The values of liberal democracy take the backseat. A viable defence necessitates obsessive secrecy of government actions which are no longer obliged to account for compliance with laws or human rights in the pursuit of defence against perceived or invented threats. Terrorism and Counterterrorism become indistinguishable as Joseph Conrad already depicted in his novel “Under Western Eyes” which portrays the scene of Russian exiles and Tsarist agents in Geneva a few years before WW I. Anarchists and Agents of the Tsarist regime can not any longer distinguish who is who because all are guided by the same “terrorist” logic.

The lack of territoriality in this war transforms the entire world into a potential battlefield and all members of the defending society are potentially drafted to become actors in this war. In the absence of verifiable criteria which would allow to prove the effectiveness of measures taken by the government, the war turns into a shrewd instrument to perpetuate the procured political power. It has the potential to become a “perpetuum mobile” for the political elite installed and astute enough to use this manipulative design of war based on the arbitrary ascription of a totalitarian nature to the perceived enemy.

To overcome the auto-destructivity of the “war against terror” it would be necessary to dissect the as terror denounced acts and events into criminal and political components or dimensions and create empirically rich typologies. On the basis of such analyses preventive as well as reactive policies can be rooted in the real world and it will become possible to eliminate the numerous counterproductive self-appointed institutional players in the “war against terror”. The first step in this direction would be a drastic reduction of the paranoia enforcing absolutely unnecessary secrecy in government action.

Global social change and armed conflicts: The human habitat is irreversibly marked by urbanisation as well as market orientation and industrialisation of agriculture. Only in a limited number of rural environments the relative reproductive autonomy of peasant economies has survived until now. By far largest part of the world population is directly threatened within a few days in its capacity to survive major infrastructural disruptions and the ensuing breakdown of the flow of commodities. Conventional territorial wars inevitably

cause such disruptions. This particularly applies to the over one hundred mega-cities in the making throughout the world. The breathtaking expansion of these urban conglomerates reflects the dissolution world-wide of traditional spheres of life which were dominated by peasants. This global social change or rather modernisation severely reduces the “elasticity of survival” of the respective societies in case of major external shocks and infrastructural disruptions. In the process of modernisation they lose the capability to secure an autonomous survival in the local region as an alternative.

At the same time the social settings in which revolutionary ideologies believed to be able to organise violence aiming at overturning the incumbent government are disappearing. But even in the past their armed struggle succeeded only in exceptional cases. Mao Tse-tung’s theory of the guerrilla as a means of “liberation” took a viable peasant society for granted. “The water in which the revolutionaries can move like fish.” The sole “revolutionary” movement during the golden age of guerrilla ideologies, which attempted to bring about an overthrow of a government in an urban environment the Tupamaros lost out miserably against efficient policing.

Generally speaking, the structural reduction of societal “elasticity of survival” as a consequence of the on-going process of multi-dimensional modernisation can also be interpreted a tendency leading towards the impossibility to wage traditional territorial wars. Since territorial wars will predictably lead to major if not total humanitarian catastrophes under the conditions of modernity. These catastrophes are not any longer simply due to the economic chain reaction causing the loss of entitlements for those living in precarious conditions in any case as has been identified by A. Sen in his ground breaking study of hunger catastrophes. Today the breakdown of the circulation of commodities almost instantly produces a total crisis of supply which affects the entire population. The social strata in which the people are in a daily struggle to secure their most basic subsistence “just in time” are often the majority and at the same time the most vulnerable to even minor disruptions of the economic circulation. But privileged groups will be affected as well. They plunge into a total crisis of supplies if the electricity is cut off because its supply is indispensable for the conservation of their extensive stored supplies and their consumption.

If these arguments are sound, they should be testable by showing that in countries classified as being “at war” by political science conventions continue to exist pre-modern production structures at least in certain regions or at least some hybrid forms of semi-autonomous human reproduction. For example, in the failed project of socialist modernisation in former Yugoslavia under Tito a large proportion of the industrial workers remained linked to their small peasant origin and continued to cultivate small plots as an additional income and food safety. The failed project also allowed for and later relied on the massive, permanent legal and illegal labour migration, mainly towards Western Europe. This pattern reinforced created transnational family and clan networks whose collective income derives from traditional subsistence or small scale market agriculture, industrial and bureaucratic work in the dinar

economy and the foreign currency income of the diaspora of either legal or illegal status. These networks were not restricted to income sharing. They also had a considerable comparative advantage in operating certain legal and illegal niche markets. Not least they offered a shell shielded by mutual family bonds against outside intrusion which in some cases became involved in transnational illegal transactions like smuggling, drug trade and control of prostitution and illegal games. This elaborate hybrid mode of reproduction contributed to the tenacious resistance of all war parties in all wars during the dissolution of the former Yugoslavia against enormous pressure from the outside. Additionally the fighting capacity of the war parties was supported by the reception of large numbers of refugees in Western Europe. The cynical, counterproductive “triage” at the border with Austria made sure that all potential military personnel remained inside as only women, children and old people were allowed to pass. In this way the humanitarian policy, most likely unintendedly, became a facilitator of the wars in Bosnia. The fighting parties were relieved from feeding a large civilian population. At the same time the fighters could be rewarded with the property the refugees left behind. Of course humanitarian actions in other wars are likely to produce similar side effects influencing directly the pursuit of wars.

Iraq, a unique constellation: (Lack of time did not permit to translate this section, please accept my apologies. I thought French would be the better compromise than German). En dépit des perturbations massives des flux économiques faisant suite à l’attaque conventionnelle menée par une coalition d’Etats conduite par les Etats-Unis, la population civile irakienne était singulièrement bien préparée à survivre. En effet, après plus d’une décennie d’une politique de sanctions appliquée sur la base de résolutions des Nations Unies, le programme «Pétrole contre nourriture », dont la mise en œuvre a été confiée aux Nations Unies, a entraîné une centralisation de la structure administrativo-économique du pays qui régissait l’ensemble de la population. Il n’existe guère d’autre Etat au monde où le recensement exhaustif de la population était aussi bureaucratiquement développé qu’en Irak. La pratique de la distribution égalitaire des denrées alimentaires a entraîné une sécurité exceptionnelle dans l’approvisionnement, même s’il est resté à son plus bas niveau durant de longues périodes. En prévision des perturbations qui risquaient d’affecter la répartition des denrées alimentaires, avant même que n’éclate le conflit, l’Etat avait distribué à l’avance de la nourriture prévue pour une période allant de six semaines à deux mois, de sorte que la population disposait, pour l’essentiel, d’une sécurité d’approvisionnement, même si elle se situait à un niveau modeste.

Une telle situation explique pourquoi l’on n’a pas assisté en Irak, pendant la guerre, à des mouvements massifs de fuite de la population civile. L’industrie humanitaire internationale avait mis sur pied, dans la hâte, des camps de réfugiés situés surtout en Jordanie. En se fondant sur les chiffres des expériences passées, on s’attendait à ce que ces actes de guerre déclenchent des mouvements d’exode. Car partout où la sécurité de l’approvisionnement dépend du bon fonctionnement ininterrompu de la circulation des marchandises et des marchandises afin de répartir adéquatement les moyens de subsistance ou de survie, les

guerres mettent en péril immédiatement la situation d'approvisionnement et ce, à grande échelle.

Pour mieux se représenter la scène, imaginons que les Etats-Unis attaquent le Mexique, le Brésil ou l'Afrique du Sud à partir de la frontière nord du pays, comme c'était le cas en Irak. Dans cette hypothèse, il faudrait alors s'attendre à un effondrement rapide de la situation d'approvisionnement – déjà fragile en temps normal – pour l'immense concentration de population qui vit dans les agglomérations métropolitaines. Les perturbations économiques prévisibles résultant d'actes de guerre se déroulant dans des zones encore géographiquement éloignées du théâtre des opérations suffiraient déjà à provoquer un tel résultat¹. La raréfaction de l'approvisionnement qui en découle, dans des conditions de marchés qui prédominent presque partout, à l'exception du programme des Nations Unies en Irak, se traduit par un recours à des prix spéculatifs, qui a pour effet de trier les populations en compétition pour leur subsistance.

Dans la logique présentée dans ces lignes, certains facteurs laissent à penser que la guerre en Irak constituait, pour les forces conventionnelles américaines une opportunité unique, peut-être la dernière chance de prouver leur utilité pour la politique, de se donner une pseudo-légitimation et d'assurer ainsi à cette corporation dinosaurienne la poursuite de l'octroi de moyens budgétaires importants pour les années à venir. Si l'on considère les sommes inscrites aux budgets des programmes d'acquisitions militaires, qui avaient encore été conçus en partie pendant la Guerre froide et qui ont été récemment approuvés par le Congrès, surtout dans le domaine des avions de combat à pilotage humain, on a l'impression que le calcul cynique² des forces armées US a porté ses fruits en dépit de leurs énormes rivalités internes.

Indépendamment des dommages infligés à la capacité d'action américaine dus à l'aventure irakienne, du fait des limites structurelles précédemment décrites, il ne peut être question pour les USA de répéter cette opération militaire couronnée de succès vis-à-vis d'autres Etats récalcitrants de la région ou encore d'une autre manière. En raison des changements structurels des modes de vie qui affectent le monde entier, le potentiel militaire impérial s'avère de plus en plus, sous l'angle politique, un tigre de papier dont le potentiel de

¹ On pourrait objecter ici le fait que le régime de Milosevic en Serbie-Monténégro est parvenu à résister assez longtemps aux attaques de l'OTAN dirigées contre ses infrastructures. Mais malgré des destructions massives infligées aux infrastructures par les attaques de l'OTAN, la sécurité relative du pays en matière d'approvisionnement reposait sur la survie d'une production agricole assurée par de petites exploitations, sur les rapports fréquents entre un emploi salarié dans le secteur industriel et la gestion de petites parcelles agricoles, auxquels s'ajoute le maintien de relations coutumières entre villes et campagnes. Le caractère arriéré de son agriculture, mesuré à l'aune de la concurrence mondiale, et le fait que la collectivisation de l'agriculture s'est avérée irréalisable après 1945, ont conféré au régime une souplesse d'approvisionnement atypique en comparaison internationale, au vu des perturbations massives des infrastructures et de la logistique que le pays a dû subir en raison de la guerre.

² Le calcul est cynique parce qu'alors qu'on disposait de connaissances militaires qui prouvaient la nécessité d'aller au combat avec un volume de troupes important, on a cédé à la pression des dirigeants politiques néo-conservateurs, et on est entré dans cette guerre en faisant appel à des troupes en nombre insuffisant au vu de la mission qui leur était impartie.

destruction – jamais atteint à ce jour – n'est pas approprié pour imposer la défense d'intérêts, qu'ils soient impériaux ou politiques.

Beyond Iraq: Apart from Iraq a unambiguous tendency prevails which is eventually heading towards a structural incapacity to wage territorial wars other than achieving total annihilation of which Falluja was probably a precursor. This tendency leads to a transformation of violent societal conflicts which manifests itself most likely in a deterritorialisation and diffusion of forms of armed violence. Current indications of this tendency are as already mentioned on the one hand the mostly undercover interventions of SOFs (Special Operations Forces) in more than sixty countries according to Aviation Week & Space Technology and the high number of victims of armed violence “off war” on the other. Again a reduction of registered wars may not indicate a reduction of armed violence. A number of observations suggests that we are most likely observing a transformation in which a combination of “regulative violence” and “situational violence” due to lack of normative orientation among young people living in a social apartheid substitute territorial warfare. This hypothesis is partly corroborated by the fact that the number of violent deaths in several post-conflict scenarios was reported to be higher than the number of victims during the war.

Within the dehydrated state structures private suppliers of legal and illegal police and military services see their markets rapidly expand either profiting from governmental outsourcing or creating beyond the monopoly of legitimate violence new arrangements of privatised violence which determine the social configuration of the social order.

Economic parameters of armed violence and war:

Economic strategies to provide the necessary resources and logistics for combat forces of any fighting party have to be sustainable and stable in its linkages to global markets either through regular or shadow operations. Since at least one party in most armed conflicts lacks international recognition, wars depend in one way or another on a stable integration into the realm of shadow globalisation. But given the fragile resources of most recognised states implicated in current wars they are likely to be linked to transnational shadow transactions as well. Armed violence, based on whatever motivation, presupposes that the respective leaders are in a position to reliably secure sufficient supplies. Any warring party will only succeed if its economic and military strategies are compatible and go hand in hand. In short: In the context of such conflicts a general must be an excellent entrepreneur and trader, in order to become a successful general. This is a demanding role, since he must be versatile enough to negotiate with transnational shadow-economic networks while keeping the doors open to the “regular economy”. Even military operations at a low level depend on international trade of some kind, ammunition for example. Reliability and contractual enforcement are indispensable. This requires unflinching social control of all actors taking part in the generation of the resources and the international transactions. Ideologies of identity are an efficient and economical means to foster social control. This explains the often cynical intensification and abuse of identity ideologies in the course of armed conflicts. The leading “general and entrepreneur” of a war

party must have the talent of an agitator, because social control exclusively on the basis of clientelistic corruption rapidly leads to an exhaustion of the available resources.

This typological sketch appears to resemble the profile of a warlord, but the condition under which the political leaders of weakened or even failed, always rather poor states are acting has much in common with the survival strategy of a warlord. It should be noted that extremely poor countries carry a high risk to become involved in armed conflict. In these countries informalisation and criminalisation of the economy have deprived the state of the access to sufficient resources for its production. Thus, governments inevitably develop survival strategies which can not really be distinguished from strategies warlords employ. As a result the stage, onto which all parties of armed conflicts have to find their role in order to survive is the global economy in its regular and its shadow configurations.

In the current economic environment whose most dynamic feature is most likely the shadow globalisation which is conveniently overlooked in mainstream discourses, it is perfectly feasible for non-state actors in armed conflict to act as suppliers of commodities, often booties from the “battlefield”, to run rackets and offer criminal services, in order to obtain the foreign currency required to purchase the needed weapons on international black markets. In addition the leaders have little difficulty to stash away part of the looted resources in private bank accounts abroad.

Though the precondition at this level is the secure control of some territory. But apart from their demand of weapons, these “general-entrepreneurs” are like the many other participants in the dynamic shadow circulation of commodities and services which ignores borders. Attempts to institute embargos by the United Nations or measures to fight the illegal drug trade and consumption at the supply end usually only increase the risks for the networks involved, but they are compensated by the fact that these interventions only increase the profit margins, while their impact on the availability is small. Against the background of the dynamics of shadow globalisation as a reflection of the increasing number of weak and failed states where law and order are not being enforced the aim to interrupt the illegal flows is not realistic. For example the repeated attempts by the Security Council to economically isolate UNITA led to an expansion of the profitable network tasked to market the illegal diamonds involving several African states. Their heads of states (Eyadema in Togo for example) snatched the war economic opportunity to enrich himself by acting as broker for the illegal diamonds and as issuer of fake import licenses for weaponry to be forwarded to UNITA.

At this point I will cut short a discussion of the literature on the economies of war and focus on the economic imperatives which restrain “general-entrepreneurs” in their military activities. A successful entrepreneur in the shadow economy necessarily relies, if only indirectly, on the credible threat of violence to enforce contracts should it become necessary. If he is interested in smooth and successful operations, he attempts to minimise the actual need to fall back on violent enforcement. It may imply the avoidance of territorial conflict in order to preserve lucrative business which marks the beginning of a conversion of “general-

entrepreneurs” into “criminal entrepreneurs” interested in controlling transnational shadow networks rather than wielding territorial power. This development adds a transnational vertical dimension to the territorial fragmentation of war-torn, weak or failed states.

Who will rule the spaces in dehydrated states, generals or entrepreneurs as managers of group identities?: That the infrastructural conditions which allow to fight territorial wars between countries are rapidly disappearing as a result of “modernisation”, if one excludes the possibility of wars with genocidal consequences for the entire civilian population. Hence war-like activities will mostly occur within states. But even there the conduct of armed conflict requires a certain level of “elasticity of survival” among the civilian population. This condition pertains mainly where a certain level of pre-modern modes of production still forms part of the economy. In the absence of packs of dollars by CIA-agents the shadow economic base of the fighting parties determines the scope of military campaigns. How big is the temptation for the “general-entrepreneurs” to conceive of the military campaign as strategy of personal enrichment? Does the fighting convert into strategies of competing violent networks which increasingly follow the imperatives reigning the spheres of shadow globalisation. Although shadow globalisation ultimately relies on “regulative violence” – in the absence of law enforcement provided by functioning states – the operational logic of its economic transactions requires utmost restraint in the actual use of violence as a means to enforce contracts.

It follows as an hypothesis that we will observe the diffusion of open armed violence in wars into acts of regulative violence. The falsification of this interpretation confronts extremely difficult empirical issues like the separation of “regulative” violence from acts of “situational” violence which manifest themselves in the same environments like post-conflict chaos. The road to exit from war are the economic imperatives fighting parties have to heed which tends to hook them onto dynamic shadow economic networks whose functional logic eventually dominates the behaviour. One might describe this syndrome as an emerging socialisation of current war scenarios through the much larger complex of shadow globalisation. Shorter: “consolidation of peace” through transnational criminalisation.

Addendum I (2000)

Three economic spheres: a heuristic tool to interpret the current process of globalisation: The representation of economic activities in official statistics is but partial and economic policies effectively regulate only a fraction of the global economy. The daily economic endeavours of large sections of the global population to secure their survival are not accounted for in economic statistics, while many important productive activities are deliberately kept from public accounting, because they are considered illegal and take place in hiding. With this in mind a three-sector model of globalisation will be developed, in order to provide a more inclusive scheme of the functioning of the current global economy. Though this model does not lend itself to a precise quantification, it helps to elucidate the social dynamics of

globalisation and its linkages to various forms of social violence. Three sectors are distinguished: the regular, the informal and the criminal sector

The regular, legally operating economy: This is the only sphere properly studied and statistically fully registered by economists. Economic research is rarely concerned with a comprehensive study of all economic undertakings, it comprises a much limited part of all human productive endeavours. The older German terms for what is today the trade of economists “Nationalökonomie” (national economy) and “Volkswirtschaft” (people’s economy!) still convey a more comprehensive notion which has largely been lost in the dominant discourses in the current academic discipline.

In relation to the reproduction of the state the customary boundary of modern economics is relevant however, it delineates the sphere of regular markets where the law protects the actors and where taxes can be levied. But taxes, it should not be forgotten at any time, form the basis of statehood, in short without taxes – no state. But under the pressure of the prevailing neo-liberal doctrine national economies are being increasingly transformed to become part of a single global financial market. This development undermines the state-based nature of national economies and societies. One important factor fostering this trend is the fact that governments are forced to compete for foreign “inward” investments with a virtually unlimited number of other potential locations by lowering the tax rates and offering other advantages and subsidies. The regulatory capacity of states is structurally diminished by the ensuing downward spiral of tax revenues.

In this course of events the security sector is often weakened to such an extent as an indirect result of diminishing tax revenues, that the police and the military are not properly paid and cease to provide the stable and secure environment required for the economy to perform well. Private security services emerge as an alternative and provide islands of order and security for those who can afford to pay for the service, including foreign owned industrial compounds. Current trends in many countries suggest that these features have turned into a process of causal circularity

The informal economy: This term describes the extensive spheres in which the majority of the world’s population is forced to organize its survival. This half of the world’s population lives in a state of constant legal and physical insecurity. The state monopoly of the legitimate use of force offers them little or no protection, it does not apply to their living environments. In turn these excluded social groups pay little or no taxes. The social contract between state and citizen, expressed by the payment of taxes among others, is not operational in the vast informal sectors around the world. In the ensuing vacuum the monopoly on force is usurped by criminal groups at local levels, while corrupt state officials are perceived as menacing intruders. This view is based on experienced or observed violence and extortion³. Security

³ This is reflected in victimisation surveys in various Latin American countries which show that less than 10% of crimes are reported to the police. See: José María Rico, Laura Chinchilla, Seguridad Ciudadana en América Latina, México D.F. (Siglo veintiuno editores), 2002.

turns into an expensive commodity in what amounts to “markets of violence”⁴. Communal efforts to provide mutual security stand little chances to succeed against criminals who impose their violence-based social control in the vacuum left by the state.

The informal economy generates high levels of economic migration as well as migration caused by the pervasive violence (refugees), which continuously reinforces one of the most dynamic spheres within the current process of globalisation. Migration massively manifests itself in the twilight areas of all societies and has created huge labour markets sustained by push and pull factors. These markets are illegal, but have at the same time become an indispensable, often very large part of the economy in the host societies. They engender important remittances and are part of transnational networks upon which many ethnic, religious or otherwise formed groups have come to depend for their collective livelihood. The ensuing international financial flows both inside and outside the regulated markets provide a convenient operational space, the manpower and the necessary cover for trafficking of commodities and people.

The openly criminal economy: The criminal economy can be described as an unknown number of globally operating violence-based rather flexible networks. They are constantly extending their reach parasitically into the regular economy and are extorting protection-money in the informal economy among others. Drugs are perhaps the major driving-force of global networking in the criminal sphere. However, analytically one must confront the bitter irony that the extraordinary revenues generated in this illegal market entirely depend on the extremely costly prosecution of drug consumption. In fact from a purely economic point of view it can be argued that the drug market is the most subsidised market in the wealthy industrial nations⁵. Experts estimate that the global gross ‘criminal’ product (GCP) annually amounts to 1500 billion US dollars, about 40 % of which are attributed to drugs. The diffuse global financial markets provide the operational medium for the activities of the criminal economy whose actors ultimately aim at laundering their unlawful profits and invest them in the regular economy, real estate⁶ being one of the favoured investment targets.

⁴ This term has been introduced by Georg Elwert, *Gewaltmärkte. Beobachtungen zur Zweckrationalität der Gewalt*, in: Trutz von Trotha(Hrsg.), *Soziologie der Gewalt, Sonderheft 37/1997 Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie*. Unfortunately this very useful paradigm has not been adopted in the Anglo-Saxon discourse on violence.

⁵ In the United States alone more than one million persons, mostly Afro-Americans and Hispanics, are kept in prison for drug offences costing the tax payer far more than the same number of university grants would require. Drug control both nationally and internationally absorbs many billions of dollars per year around the world. In the absence of objective medical indications the war against drugs amounts must be identified as an ideology. Without the fundamentalist cultural zeal to suppress the supply of drugs in financial terms this market would be very small and not particularly profitable. The suppression of supply is not likely to succeed, because it serves as reciprocal incentive. At the same time little is being done to educate the consumers (demand side). An implicit collusion between the political classes in the United States and large parts of Europe and the criminal entrepreneurs controlling the drug business best describes the current situation.

⁶ The cyclical price hikes in the real estate sector in emerging economies which regularly end in asset value bubbles are linked to the inflow of dirty money. But laundered money flows into real estate in London, Miami, Switzerland or Mediterranean resorts as well. For a case study of the linkages between financial crises and money laundering see: Guilhem Fabre, *Criminal prosperities, financial crisis and money laundering: the case of*

In short the present global economy can be schematised as a dynamic process currently under the spell of the neo-liberal doctrine of globalisation which is accompanied by social fragmentation and polarization. It equally provides a fertile ground for the dynamic expansion of a parallel pattern of shadow globalisation which comprises the combined informal and criminal spheres of the global economy. Internal armed conflicts articulate themselves in this environment and display the economic features already discussed, namely their indispensable integration into the global shadow economy. But the connectedness to the global shadow economy is not restricted to countries suffering a recognized armed conflict on their territory. In many countries the shadow economy features prominently and sustains strong organised crime embedded in global networks as well. Shadow globalisation is a pervasive feature which truly lives up to its name, it is in the last instance regulated by violence or the unflinching threat of it.

Addendum II (2002)

Intergenerational apartheid: As all of this were not bad enough the current globalisation produces a social fragmentation which I describe as “intergenerational apartheid”. Historically, the present time will probably be recalled as an age of mass youth unemployment. The economic (dis-) order that is currently unfolding in line with the neo-liberal paradigm has nothing to offer to the majority of the world’s young people when they reach working age. There is no role for them, either in the present-day ‘regular’ economy or in traditional rural structures. These latter are in the process of disintegrating all over the world under the pressure of modernisation. Neither the modern industrial nor the service sectors can absorb the up-coming generations into the regular labour force. It is part of the neo-liberal logic of global competition that rationalized, capital-intensive production methods and marketing strategies should ultimately triumph pervasively throughout the world, not withstanding their problematic social impact.

Worldwide a large part of the rising numbers reaching working age is being involuntarily driven into the no man’s land of informal economies and is thereby becoming an inexhaustible resource for criminal entrepreneurs in search of manpower. A clear example of this dilemma is provided by the present situation in Algeria. The Algerian society, like many societies in the Third World, is burdened with a youth bulge, as the phenomenon has been denominated in the sociological literature. About half the population is less than 15 years old. It is estimated that at present about 60 per cent of those looking to enter the job market for the first time remain unemployed as far as the regular economy is concerned. There is little prospect of any improvement. The young people in question (males only) are known as hitistes (‘those who prop up or lean on the wall’). They are always on the look-out for a chance to do a good deal on the trabendo circuit—casual smuggling, mostly with France—or

to bolster their existence and thus also their identity, by some other means, mostly within the grey area of the informal economy or if they are lucky by rendering some criminal service. In their life time neo-liberal globalism for all its growth prospects is unlikely to provide a workplace for them in the regular economy. Increasingly young people in various countries develop a realistic understanding of their fate. The praise of violence as a means of personal advancement is a pervasive theme in local Hiphop songs around the world.

In many countries, more than half of all young people belong to this excluded group. In such circumstances, devoid of any prospect of advancement, the use of instruments of force such as an automatic rifle becomes an extremely attractive proposition. With a weapon in his hand, for the first time in his life, a young man suddenly feels respected by others—even if the sentiment in question is actually sheer angst in the face of terror on the part of the persons under threat. Force exerted through an automatic rifle becomes the means of resisting social exclusion. Force promises access to the world of industrial mass consumption—to which there is constant media exposure, even in the farthest corners of the world.

Following the end of the so-called liberation movements and the almost total disappearance of the concomitant utopian ideas of social equality, now almost exclusively young males figure as violent protagonists in armed conflicts and armed violence. This is probably due in part to the fact that economic modernisation brings with it a radical devaluation of those roles in the production process that were previously assigned exclusively to men. As a reaction to this, and in the absence of cultural-emancipatory and economic alternatives, male identity is construed in terms of acts of violence that offer give a feeling of superiority and autonomy. The lost position in the production process is replaced by participation in the social production of violence. This logic is also reflected in the crime figures and the prison population in developed countries where young males belonging to discriminated minorities have the highest rates of violent crime and form the majority of inmates. As a result of ascribed roles offences involving firearms are overwhelmingly the preserve of young men.

Political wheeler-dealers with criminal economic interests who operate in civil-war scenarios make cynical use of the impulsive urge of young men to take up arms to defend themselves against social exclusion, deprivation and the ensuing denial of an accepted role. Hence the phenomenon of the child soldier in the Third World has more in common with youth gangs in highly industrialized states than the mostly separate discussion of these two social pathologies would suggest.

The never-ending civil wars and the pervasive “regulatory” violence elsewhere are fuelled, amongst other things, by the total exclusion of the rising generations in the context of state collapse or social fragmentation. From the perspective of young men seeking the role of a “soldier” or a “child soldier” presents itself as an attractive option; it commands respect and income. Moreover, the chances to survive as a soldier are probably greater than in the violent chaos of societies paralysed by the war or in destitute refugee camps. Working as a ‘soldier’

is therefore not just highly attractive to young men; in the jargon of modern economics, it is a 'rational choice'.