

Neoliberalism, Oligarchy and Politics of the Event

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At the Edge of Chaos

By

Žarko Paić

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To my sons Vedran and Slaven

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The book I seek to capture as an understanding of politics and the political in the era of global entropy denotes in some ways a summary of my own thinking of contemporaneity. It is worth keeping in mind that a close connection should be maintained between the basic concepts of the ancient political thought of Plato and Aristotle, modern political philosophy, and Karl Marx, Carl Schmitt, Hannah Arendt and the metapolitics of nowadays. Unlike some of the intentionally related approaches to the diagnosis of the spirit of the times in philosophy, sociology, political science, I believe that readers will see that there is an attempt herein to establish a critical discourse beyond the traditional disciplinary boundaries.

The reason, from my point of view, is that nothing more now has its autonomy and its right to exist without a relationship with the new totality of economy-politics-culture. The problem is that this totality encompasses the construction of an uncanny reality that places hybrid systems of social relations at the centre, and only society breaks down into fragments by becoming a network of communication protocols. In this way, politics and the political are reduced to acting without subject, and their substance is thrown into the ether of post-imperial sovereignty. So, things today become incoherent, and this is also the case in politics, which, in the age of neoliberalism, fundamentalism, and populism, addressed the narcissistic individual, at the same time indifferent to the events of the turn or revolution and hyper-politicized. The passion for thinking of politics is irresistible in an age that no longer has the issue of social revolutions as in Marx and Weber's age of modernity, but only the question of national/cultural identity and the return of cultural wars (*Kulturkampf*) in the form of a society of the spectacle, as if stopping in front of a wall of inability to come to the other coast, beyond capitalism, which is completely like the eclectic "language games" of rationality and cruelty, fun and hedonism, the subjugation of human desire and the new occupation of territory without any social responsibility.

This book can mainly be considered as the result of my philosophical and political interventions in contemporary reality in the manner of a triad: (a) the new information economy, (b) a policy of neoliberal consensus, and (c) the powerless production of "events" in an era of populism and post-democracy with a new face of a society of spectacle in which culture becomes an organized set of "rational ecstasy", as Hermann Broch put it in

his analyses of the mass psychology of totalitarian movements on the rise. When this happens, it lacks the stimulus to change. The vicious cycle of violence and consumption lasts forever. To leave it means to think radically of the immanence of the political as an event, without which life falls into the abyss of mere duration.

I would like to express my gratitude to Dražen Katunarić, my closest friend and companion in our common contemplations on contemporaneity, for his support and trust, as we have spent many years together editing a lot of the thematic sections in the journal *European Messenger*, and this book's main theme emerged in this fruitful critical dialogue. Also, many thanks to Dario Vuger, PhD candidate at the University of Ljubljana, for reading the text carefully and providing useful language advice. My gratitude also extends to associate professor Marijan Krivak, University J. J. Strossmayer, Osijek, and assistant professor Tonči Valentić, University of Zagreb, who have been following and supporting my research at all levels of theoretical insight. I owe my thanks, also, to Miss Rebecca Gladders and Mr Adam Rummens for their kind invitation to submit this book to Cambridge Scholars Publishing. Finally, thanks to Mr Anthony Wright for his proofreading, and the Faculty of Textile Technology, University of Zagreb, for their support in the realization of this project.

INTRODUCTION

In this book, the main attempt is to perform an analysis of the actions of the global order that governs the environment by the logic of the *network*. The system is formally based on the framework of liberal democracy. But in reality, the ideas of freedom are transformed into their oppositions. Instead of establishing the power of a sovereign nation, the reign of corporate-formed elites is at work. Regardless of existing cultural differences, the total mobilization of capital goes beyond all real and symbolic boundaries. Jacques Derrida, in the book *The Politics of Friendship*, signified this age with the image of the “dehumanized desert”. It should be already clear in advance how the uniformity of a technically designed space implies the unambiguity of abstract time. Here, however, we might argue that the problem of the justification of the perverted structure is that even the mafia has become a real political subject. In this way, the class-social dynamics of capitalism collapsed in internal contradictions. What is left of it we can determine as the recuperation of different platforms of action without a subject. There is no credibility anymore because it lacks what the subject gives to the essence. A time without its own substance requires a frenetic quest for the logic of substitution in all areas of life from politics to religion, from art to architecture.

The problem is, therefore, that neoliberal capitalism marked the outcome of technological advances and the apparatus of liberated desire. And this means that the desire for wealth and power destroys all the spiritual virtues that modern humanity has set to the purpose of its own meaningful action. Nothing in this could be an exception any longer, though the logic of the exception henceforth creates a new rule.

This book discusses, in six overlapping chapters, what is going on with the mutual relationships between neoliberalism, oligarchy, and the politics of the event, the problem of constructing the war and total mobilization at the planetary level, Rancière’s thinking of politics as a disagreement, Badiou’s political antitheology and attempts to think of the event beyond the metaphysical “big narrative” concerning the philosophy of politics for the upcoming times, and relationships between corporate governance and freedom and equality in the close connection to the rise of oligarchy and populism today. Finally, the last two chapters are devoted to analyzing cognitive or information capitalism regarding the issue of social

transformation in the face of the extensive rise of the *technosphere*. The main assumption is that political revolutions at the time of the global order as entropy are reduced to:

- (1) civil revolutions against oligarchic governance, and
- (2) national-religious counter-revolutions which, instead of universal freedom, put the concept of organic cultural identity first.

The *Arab Spring* was a model for both paths. Politics as an event, paradoxically, becomes a powerless alternative to the subject of system combat. That is a reason why it has only the features of resistance to the struggle for the rights of various minorities and the subversion of the ruling culture.

Based on insight into Foucault's lectures on biopolitics, which consider the notion of neoliberalism for all future relationships between individuals and society, the state and the economy, I come to the conclusion that the oligarchic model of politics and culture management has now become a result of the rise and fall of mass political movements. The ideologies of the end of the 20th century with which neoliberalism established a perfect balance—neoconservatism and libertarianism—are reflected in the combination of technoscience, rational choice and individualism. In this way, the rule is reversed into a cybernetic market as a management model. Transnational corporations nowadays control the states and their political subjects. Sovereignty is thus becoming an illusion by the obsolescence of the modern project. Since post-imperial order in the 21st century requires the expansion of total power rather than the fragmentation of freedom, it comes down to the hybrid relationship between economics and politics. The corporate system of activities denotes a subject of all forms of organization of the state and society, from the trade unions to the universities, from institutionalized religion to social welfare and sport. The consequence of this we can designate by the disappearance of the essence of society. And, thus, in the fragments of decomposition, we witness the process of the fall in solidarity between social-class actors. This book clearly delineates what the logic might be of world-historical progress from the cybernetic governance system and the new way of legitimizing capitalism in the 21st century to all forms of suspension of fundamental ideas that have marked the politics of modernity such as freedom, equality, justice and solidarity. The issue of the necessity of different meanings for terms such as politics and *political* in the era of the *technosphere* has been determined from the beginning of the discomfort of the relationship between freedom and power. It is no longer sufficient to talk of a formal

defence of civil and human freedoms (*liberties*). On the contrary, it might be, in general, a possibility of thinking of openness of appearance at the end of the historically played social matrix. That is the point.

The event that we have philosophically and politically discussed in this book cannot be identified with the thinking of the “second beginning” in the words of the late Heidegger, nor with the new metaphysics of the event of Whitehead, nor with various attempts to make this crucial world after the end of metaphysics in technology open to opportunities in the sphere of the aesthetic, political and ethical (from Deleuze to Badiou). In my previous books, I tried to think of the singularity of the event from the autonomous “essence” of the openness of new perspectives. The event does not happen as fate, nor is it “owned” by the subject of a radical change of the world. It should be sufficient to point out that the event might be thought out beyond any mystical adventure in the future in terms of the hope and expectation of sustenance returning to its source. This is by no means the construction of a new platform that—in the will to power versus the *technosphere* duopoly—has a relative autonomy of decision-making concerning the social construction of worlds. There has been a time of great anticipation aimed at shedding the utopian visions of the future.

Therefore, the *political* does not signify the condition of the new theory of decisive action. After all, after the end of the sovereignty of European nation-states, which Carl Schmitt pronounced in the *Nomos of the Earth* after the end of the Second World War as the final verdict of his early decisional model of politics in the scientific and technical era, what remained in the rest of the politics apart from service to *God* and the *technosphere* in the large area (*Großraum*) without history? But neither *God* nor the machines of cognitive evolution promise unique happiness for man in the upcoming era. Moreover, it is politically concealed in the name of the first cause and ultimate purpose; in any case, it is unkind to cling to the jumble of the technical framework beyond the human dimension of action. The irreducibility of politics derives from the irreducibility of freedom, not from the supreme power that is already too close to the bare and even “divine violence”.

Perhaps it might only be important to consider the reasons why the thinking of the *political* “today” is relieved of the false faith in messianic salvation and of the autonomous action of the uncanny power of the *technosphere*, such that the rest of the “human” is reduced to the applications, functions and structures of the inhumane. The political determinedly relieved us from “life” as a compelling certainty, necessity, destiny. This is a true challenge of another possible history. When life has

turned into an immeasurable duration at the larger degree of strength intensity, it is worth once again devising the possibilities of freedom as the openness of a singular event. Walter Benjamin left an indelible trace on this. At the moment of the rise of the totalitarian machine of Nazism, he wrote:

Only for the sake of the hopeless is hope given to us.

CHAPTER ONE

THE PERMANENT CONDITION
OF WAR-AND-PEACE:
FROM TOTAL MOBILIZATION
TO THE ABSOLUTE CONSTRUCTION
OF THE EVENT

Introduction

If there is no war, there is no history. Has this premise not been given in advance to a mythical discourse that presupposes a triumph: the golden age—the fall of the obscurity of history—redemption? It is not necessary to emphasize specifically that there is something almost metaphysical inborn in different world civilizations regarding the thinking of the life of man on Earth. In addition, history has come to its perfection and fulfilment in its goals and purposes to the age that determines the unconditional rule of what Ernst Jünger named the *total mobilization* of planetary technology in the 1930s (Jünger 1931). This certainly does not mean that there was a state of “perpetual peace” in the sense of Kant’s postulate of a cosmopolitan order. The conjunction *if* that we use here does not mean a sophisticated figure of thought. It is not about questioning without a response to the principle of the un-knowledge of what might be the subject of discussion. Instead of such scepticism, full of arrogant scientific habits of processing data in the numerous services that expand the knowledge of the world, it must be recognized that the relationship between war and peace can no longer be adequately thought about from the very heart of metaphysics. Some of its core concepts, like cause/effect and determinations/consequences, do not seem to apply to a new set of relationships. Because if there is no longer history, as Alexandre Kojève, the most significant French interpreter in the 20th century, pointed out in his comments on Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit* in his book *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*, what is left? Thus, it seems very often that the footnotes of the most important philosophical books are even more significant than the main

text. In the case of this overwhelming book that aimed to understand the existential turn in contemporary thinking with all its far-reaching consequences according to a different notion of metaphysical questioning, we should remember that one footnote was so remarkable that it was a reason why Agamben, for instance, tried to answer the question of differentiation between animals and humans, the beginning of the *post-historical situation*. In it, technology determines the conditions for the further development of man. But this development goes beyond the boundaries of the human being and becomes the third concept on the path of the animal over man to the machine (Agamben 2003). Before we make a full note on this famous footnote on “the end of history”, it should be said that the echoes in the contemplation of contemporaneity are multifaceted. Well, they range from the notion of politics and technique to art and play, and they also cover the area of the psycho-technology of life itself in the difference between man and animal. Anyway, whoever tries to think of the difference between war and peace in the ontological sense of the word might want to clarify the reasons why, instead of binary oppositions, dialectical contradictions and negations on which the speculative thought of modernity was strongly built, what can come after history can no longer be preserved in this difference we are talking about. Why, instead of this important historical, epochal difference between two conditions, instead of its indefinable “being”, it should be easy to say that we live in an age without “time”, an age that in the planetary-global determination is being overseen by the logic *too-either*. And this only means that everything is not only possible but even necessary, and that reality is nothing but a constant and necessary transformation of potential and *vice versa*, with all the consequences of this thought and worldly chaos. So, if it is no longer a matter of the logic *either-or*, then everything must have been thought in that way since Nietzsche opened a new assemblage in the *context* of constant becoming (*Werden*), as well as in the processes of change without end and, finally, in the control of the spirit’s own life when post-humanism and cybernetics govern over uncertainty and the un-determination of the nature of the things to come. Thus, in this footnote, Kojève says the following:

The disappearance of Man at the end of History is not a cosmic catastrophe: the natural World remains what it has been from all eternity. And it is not a biological catastrophe either: Man remains alive as an animal in harmony with Nature or given Being. What disappears is Man properly so-called—that is, Action negating the given, and error, or, in general, the Subject opposed to the Object. In point of fact, the end of human time or history—that is, the definitive annihilation of Man properly

so-called or of the free and historical Individual—means quite simply the cessation of action in the strong sense of the term. Practically, this means the disappearance of wars and bloody revolutions. And the disappearance of Philosophy; for since Man no longer changes himself essentially, there is no longer any reason to change the (true) principles which are at the basis of his knowledge of the World and of himself. But all the rest can be preserved indefinitely; art, love, play, etc., etc.; in short, everything that makes Man happy. (Kojève 1980: 158-159)

What if, however, the history of the end of the era of “the disappearance of wars and bloody revolutions” leaves something else ultimately undefined and not just “everything that makes Man happy”, in which Kojève includes art, love, play, etc.? Can we remain undefined by what extends the agony of reality to an even greater extent than the creation of destruction in the times when “revolutions” and “civil wars” were in the service of the flywheels of historical “prosperity” and “development”? Both questions are basically the same, and can be formulated as follows: can something be defined at all if it is absent from a logic that allows it to be indelibly determined from something else rather than from itself? It is well-known that the most significant political theoreticians of the 20th century—Carl Schmitt, Hannah Arendt and Leo Strauss—sought to consolidate this indomitable and insignificant human Being. To him, however, belongs the possibility of a radical change of mind, starting from the relationship with the “being” of that political activity, not just of its metaphysically committed circumcision in the sense of enduring purpose in it, as it is understood in Aristotle. Wars and revolutions are nothing autonomous, irreducible in themselves and in anything running in from the outside. These are the events of the fallen state of Being. However, even in this existential interpretation of Hegel’s theory of history, the events are at the disposal of History as such. The reason why history is absolutized here lies on the border between a Being and the event. Being without history cannot be “more”, it is not one wherein we do not have each other as authentic words to explain what “is” and what is “going on”, but it might be necessary to establish clear criteria according to which the thinking *of* history as a Being and *to* history as the event takes place both outside and within the metaphysics itself. What does that really mean? Only that history, in the sense of its destiny and the unbending of insanity, cannot be “more” reasons for various “wars” and “revolutions”. Nor can it be what history has given the odds of absolutization, regardless of whether it is an idea, work, freedom, play, life, and so on. If there is nothing in it that is enough to serve anything else, and “it” is God, man, and the world in the sense of the metaphysical framework, everything slips into the abyss of

non-existence. All is thus doomed not to “be” for eternity. Also, the internal starter is missing in the direction of the unknown. Only then can we speak about the chaos of contingency instead of the meaning of history. Its last act would be exactly what Kojève so praiseworthy magnified—the transformation of history into a new “zoo” on Earth, in Hegelian terms. However, the consequence of this is the emergence of a techno-genetic park with an extremely dubious way of founding a “new man” (Sloterdijk 1999).

If we look more closely, we can only argue that the historicity of history cannot be reduced to war or the military in its two-directional movement: (1) a circle that corresponds to the artistic understanding of the meaning of Being on earth as opposed to what belongs to gods and animals; (2) which, in accordance with the modern Christian concept of “advancement” and “development”, is no longer related to the activities of human creativity (*creatio, poiesis*). Now it is all about getting into what goes beyond human projects. As a feature of the technical constellation of Being, it might be impossible to penetrate the moving of the humane to the inhumane, the earth to the universe, techniques and technology into the *technosphere*. In the first case, the mythical saying gives the narrative of “destiny”. And that means that human freedom has its limits in its finality and death. Hence, history is essentially confined to the sovereignty of the decision. Its peoples are everlasting from the territorial necessity of the displacement or settlement of a nation in brutal and dangerous conflicts. They originate from tribal wars for land until the occupation of the sovereign territory by the Other in the name of “natural law” and the will to power. The interruption of this “limited” function of the territory war in the circular movement of the old peoples emerged in Europe on the ruins of the Roman Empire. In this way, the age of the rule of the metaphysical subjectivity of nation-states was established. But war in this understanding can no longer be, as Hegel said, the heroic confrontation of man with nature in the struggle for dignity and power in the form of One or Multiple (monarchy, republic, democracy). Instead of this political-anthropological determination of war as the means/purposes of the will to power, as it was determined by thinkers from Machiavelli and Bodin to Hobbes, the word represents a technical turn in history. With it, the meaning of war can no longer be something that is only a function for other purposes and goals, whether we are faced with a war for freedom and a just war by an oppressed nation against an evil one lord/ruler in their midst and on the edge of the Empire (anticolonialism and post-colonialism), or, alternatively, with a civil war on a global scale between nation-states in

the form of imperialistic power-struggles, as it was in the First and Second World Wars in the 20th century.

In this regard, I will strive to show a fundamental turn in the way the dynamics of the binary oppositions of war and peace take place in the planetary-defined space of post-national sovereignty:

- (1) the transition from the metaphysics of modern history with its binary machine of the nation-state in the biopolitical production of power in a global-scale conflict between “empires” (the United States, Russia and China) and “rogue states”, which calls into question the ontological definition of modern wars as civil, religious or ethnic conflicts;
- (2) the conception of the world’s total mobilization (technoscience and capital), which necessarily leads to the possibility of total war as the absolute construction of events at the planetary level; and
- (3) re-examining the enlightenment idea of Kant’s “perpetual peace” in correlation with the permanent “state of exception” at a global level, leading to the fact that instead of the Manichean logic of “either war or peace”, we live in times characterized by the logic of “either war or peace at intervals of constructed crises of world security”.

For that reason, the question of “human nature” being evil or good does not seem decisive anymore in philosophical matters, nor in the theological problem, since the ethics of responsibility only becomes important with the appeal to preserve life on Earth, and the theology of salvation also presupposes the fight against evil in the form of negative theodicy. The question of rule thus becomes a question of the separation of power as *auctoritas* and *potestas* in the new era (politics and rights, in the narrow senses of the words). It is therefore obvious that the modern state seeks the unity of these powers. The reason lies in the fact that, without synthesis, it cannot achieve absolute authority over a territory in its struggles with other states. This is at the same time the reason why, after the Second World War, history in its political meaning should be understood through the attempt to fulfil a universal world state. It loses the feature of statehood because it no longer has the territorial sovereignty of a modern nation. Instead, its mission might be reduced to the regulation of the interest of anything that is no longer political, whether it be science, technology, demography, economics, or culture, in the wider sense of the word.

1.1 The chaos and logic of exception

Clausewitz's well-known and distinctive assumption that war denotes a continuation of politics by other means represents a perfectly clear metaphysical framework and understanding of Being as a will to power in modern times. In this way, Heidegger completely destroyed the meaning of that definition in his *Black Notebooks (Schwarze Hefte)*. For example, the definition neglects that the essence of the political cannot be independent of the outcome in modern times without the "legitimacy" and the "legality" of action that is the technique itself. In the second turn, Heidegger shows that the contradiction of so many repeated definitions of modern war derives from the impossibility of establishing the logic of the subject and object ("master" and "servant", "winner" and "defeated") at the end of the entire epoch of the modern era. If war became "total" in the 20th century, then politics could no longer be a subject-substance of warlike action against the Other as was customary in ancient, medieval and modern ways of occupying a country. What would change circumstances like the loss of political power? At first glance, not so much. Politics became a means of establishing a techno-scientific drive to global capitalism. After the horrific experiences of totalitarianism in the 20th century, the transition to one's own borders would follow. The mystery of the work of the "new" era as a performative event of liberty within the limits of the *technosphere* requires the overturning/reevaluation of the legacy of contemporary thinking on politics. This is primarily based on the assumptions of the leading theorists on the inscrutability of the political as a decision and as the theory of the exceptional state. But this is, of course, connected to Carl Schmitt. The guideline of his decisionism theory could be described in a way wherein the political must be separated from the assemblage of technology, science, society, economics, culture, and religion (Schmitt 1996). It is a binding thought that "total war" has taken the drive of "politics" to be more serious than what it looks like in reality because it will not result in the triumph of winners over the defeated:

Fighting like the war *it is not the* 'father' of all 'things' if this name covers anything that is not in the widest sense, it is *nothing*. He is never the creator and ruler of the *Seyn*, but only always *of the beings*—the *Seyn* don't designate pro-ductio and does not indicate any mastery. *Seyn* 'is' unchangeable and un-relational—because it is an event in the abyss. (Heidegger 2014, 152)

Keeping track of how the concept of war is derived from Clausewitz to Carl Schmitt should be something we are able to see, paradoxically. In the ancient Greek concept, war is determined by conflict between city-states (at the internal level of obtaining the freedom of community members) and the conflict between the *poleis* of the Greeks and the despotism of the Persians (at the external level of border protection). The mythical founding stories of the *poleis* as primordial communities of free and equal citizens are not devoid of the devastation of war and conquest by other territories both within and outside Greece. After all, the beginning of Western history is precisely in those exceptions as the law of exception. It affirms the “necessity” of colonialism by other means. Hence, this was, of course, the case of the war of the Achaeans with the Trojans. In Homer’s *Iliad*, this war becomes the mythical beginning of Western history. We must not forget that, in the *Republic* (*Πολιτεία*), Plato links the emergence of a democratic order with civil war between the *oligarchs* and the *demos*. In a more recent interpretation of the impacts of anger in the planetary period, the war against terrorism as the main phenomenon of the post-historical *ressentiment*, Sloterdijk introduces the term *thymos* into the discussion. What Hegel still calls the need of the subject for its own confession might be the minimal definition of that term. So, the struggle for recognition signifies the will to maintain a subject at the level of history. Hence, it is not accidental that Hegel, early on, held that war in its negativity determines the historical right to the emergence of the state as a confirmation of the objective spirit. The natural right, therefore, is the result of the war, not peace (Hegel 1974, 103-199). From that follows an assumption of how the war’s analysis should inevitably be directed in the political struggle towards the recognition of the oppressed subjects/actors, from states to ethnic groups.

Undoubtedly, that means that it cannot be politically understood in its democratic governmental structure without the insight into the psychological mechanisms of the creation of a new subject. In the assemblage of disagreement and emptiness, his identity could no longer be determined by the sphere of the mind. The turn appears long before the post-modern obsession with the ethics of psychoanalysis, which is the initiator’s right to desire, as Lacan most radically stated. The psychopolitics of affective anthropology can thus become a condition for understanding conflict with the tendency of transition to the state of war (Sloterdijk 2006). Obviously, the paradox is that policy has to precede politics, but not as a freedom that falls into the waste of power. In this case, the right to conquer other territories is uncannily established by the argument of natural law. This is done on behalf of the political goals of freedom, equality and justice.

Thus, it would not be difficult to conclude that the origin of the contemporary paradigm of the intervention of the West in wars in the global age (the United States and NATO) has been legitimated by *arché* of history. The Greeks, for instance, came to another conclusion: to enlighten the barbarians who inhabited the Arcadian wilderness, granting them further benefits of democratic legitimacy. In addition, it might be paradoxical, therefore, that the right to freedom appears in the sign of contesting the right to sovereignty of one who does not respect the fundamental “values” of universal meaning. Freedom hence arises as being formally opposed to the logic of power in the name of a request for more power that does not really belong to it. There are no significant differences between the ancient Greeks, imperial Rome, crusaders against the Arabs, modern colonialists from England, Spain and Portugal, or modern Americans. The political is also the essence of the fateful event without rational explanation. That is a reason why it necessarily splits between the requests of righteousness and the uncanny calls of the will to power, as Nietzsche argued in his writings (Meier 1973). What is the perversion of the so-called moral values in modern times in the ethics of duty? Only what Nietzsche has already clearly pointed out: that morality does not follow its own logic of the Crucified on the cross. On the contrary, moral instinct is rationalized as the power of the other nature of sinfulness. In the name of the will to power, one judges what “is” good, true and just, but not in the name of the good, the truth, and justice. For that reason, war of the modern era is no longer considered differently from the realism of the interest of the nation-state. Everything has since been measured by reference to which the means become a purpose, and the purpose is to reach the goal. The only exception to a series of thinkers from Hobbes to Hegel and Schmitt was undoubtedly Kant. His magnificent idea of “perpetual peace”, unfortunately, serves only as a regulatory scope of what the authentic faith of Christianity usually preaches. But as a matter of fact, it must remain essentially politically ineffective. The reason is that it would be a matter of acting in relations between states, bringing down order, politics, and internal security affairs in the modern cosmopolitan world. For our purpose of considering the relationship between a Being and the event that war becomes a permanent balance with intervals of peace, and beyond the dialectical scheme of negativity-positivity. So, let us go back to what Heidegger claims for the terms “totality” and “planetary” with regard to the modern age. Nobody wins in “total war”. And all others become “losers” too. What does this statement mean? It seems undeniable that “total war” is no longer just about occupying the territory of the Other (state/race/culture) in unconditional obedience; the

question of the “subject” of warfare in the planetary period of the world requires, first and foremost, a clarification before continuing with that concept by using what comes from the historical development of metaphysics itself. The answer cannot be found without attempting to overcome metaphysics. Within this framework, it appears that it is what Nietzsche named “Platonism for the masses”, referring to Christianity as an anthropomorphism of goals and purposes beyond “this world”. In other words, the principles of contingency and exception (singularity) give to the event the politically real possibility that war as “total mobilization” can be overcome, starting from the essence of technology. In Heidegger’s critical remarks, with the notions of “worker”, “totality”, “mobilization”, “planetary” and “world state”, in Ernst Jünger’s philosophical and literary reflections, this thought is constantly interwoven through the dense weavings of Nietzschean origin. In one place, we can see how this becomes the highest praise for Jünger’s achievement of thought:

What Jünger sees clearer than Nietzsche is what Nietzsche could not yet see in these phenomena since they were concealed in reality. In whole, these techniques appear as a fundamental way of directing and securing a reality as a will to power. (...) What Ernst Jünger, however, does not see because it cannot be seen because it is only available in the thinking is the essence of the will to power as the *reality*. It is the essence of ‘reality’ as the essence of being. This is, moreover, the definition of Being in a beingness that develops from its beginning as Being. (Heidegger 2004, 264)

Seeing and thinking obviously designate the same but essentially different things. If we are trying to understand why “total war” essentially goes beyond the historical sense of conflict between nations and states, becoming “more” than the war as such, then it must be noted that the difference between the end of history, what is still undefined in the remnant of the end of the history of Being and the beginning of an uncomplicated event is as wide as an abyss. The abyss is furthermore expanding into contemporaneity. When “wars” and “revolutions” lose the character of world events, this does not mean that their sense is below the level of the worldliness of the world. It is that the notion of “the world” after the experience of “total war” and the centuries of totalitarianism loses its metaphysical rank. This loss must somehow be compensated. And so, instead of world-historical events with the ideas of “progress” and the “development” of the freedom of consciousness, which is a clear Hegelian trace of speculative-dialectical thinking, the time of “globality” and “planetary” is finally born. Speculative dialectic concepts and ideas

replace techno-genesis and new worlds that are virtually designed. This does not mean that “wars” have been neutralized and suspended in the very core of what has a political and historical legacy of the transformation of the state. The difference between world history and the global-planetary state is determined by the difference in the way of thinking about the action of metaphysics and its shattered heritage. In this respect, it can be said that “wars” and “revolutions” today only serve to consolidate the geopolitical power of the new empires in the various techno-scientific constructions of artificial life. Instead of there being a space for the development of the idea of freedom, as there was from the Greeks and Romans through the Middle Ages to the ending of the history of totalitarian order in the 20th century, the daily struggle for post-imperial “sovereignty” has become a new task. So, that means that it might only be a question of what is left of the metaphysics of the history of the will to power and the nihilism of “total mobilization” in the essence of global capitalism (Paić 2011).

All terms with which Jünger sees what Nietzsche could not see because the matter was concealed relate, therefore, to the technical organization of Being as *will to power*. If it becomes technically complete, fertile soil is created for the Earth’s devastation. It is entirely wrong to declare this setting “reactionary” in relation to the unconditional right to perfect man in the horizon of the future. The problem should be considered in a radical way. The technique is not the result of the ontology of society and culture in the sense of derivation from an original set of directives. On the contrary, when Being is understood from the technical constellation of the world-historical path to the arrival event, it is only in the coming age that the time is reduced to “actualization” and consequently to “punctual momentum”. The loss of original time will now be compensated for by narrowing the spatiality in which events flow. The impossibility of information signifies a new concept of this complex reductiveness of Being. Its meaning is not just compression instead of stretching in all directions. The result should be that history, as an informational “black hole”, responds to the challenges of the oblivion of one’s own memory, so in contemporary societies, the main problem becomes the distinction between *memory* and *recollection*. First, memory belongs to the unconscious structure and refers to the loss of relation to the proxy because of the “present” rule in the form of virtual updating. Secondly, recollection makes a network of data controlling timing by means of a *technosphere* that “memorizes” every event by storing it in digital machine files. In the newer theories on the trajectory of *complexity*, *singularity* and *contingency*, time becomes a construct of reality.

Therefore, the modal category should be transformed into the virtualization process. The philosopher with whom we reach out to the digital age is surely Deleuze, and his distant predecessor was Leibniz (Zourabivilli 1994; van Tuinen and McDonnell 2004; Davis 2000). Hence, it is not the space of freedom, but the closeness of power within a technical way of thinking. Three major categories are represented here as follows:

- (a) calculation
- (b) planning
- (c) construction

The calculation determines the practical or pragmatic way of thinking; planning refers to the rational editing of the space and time within which life-control processes are being conducted; and construction, ultimately, assumes the act of creating a “new” based on a mechanically organized system and a method of producing new artificial worlds. These three categories are crucial to understanding Being as a technique that makes the condition of the “progress” and “development” of science possible. The emergence of the “new” cannot be described differently than the way Ernst Jünger did dramatically in the conclusion of his book *A Worker (Der Arbeiter)*:

Entrance to the imperial space precedes the temptation and determination of planned landscapes that cannot yet be imagined today. We are approaching astonishing things. On the other hand, the democracies of work that are being processed and transposing the content of the world known to us are the outlines of national arrangements beyond the possibility of comparison. Nevertheless, it can be predicted that there will be no more words about work or about democracy in our established sense. We are just about to discover the work as an element of fullness and freedom; it also changes the meaning of the word of democracy when the fatherland of the people appears as the bearer of a new race. (Jünger 1981, 153)

There is a need to distinguish three ways of historical “progress” and “development” techniques: (1) the *technique* as a means of exploiting the resources and potential of the Earth in industry, thus making human work a condition for the wealth of “people” and “states” (the national or political economy of capitalism); (2) modern *technology* as the purpose of the foundation of social “progress” and “development”, making history neutralized in the liberal-democratic understanding of man as “citizen” and “consumer”, while the “worker” is replaced by a machine; and (3) the contemporary *technosphere* that has emerged from cybernetics and

informatics as the reign of the inhumane in the form of *A-intelligence*, which goes beyond the causality and vigor of history and replaces interplanetary lurking with a singular “living machine” (Paić 2016, 126-148). By introducing this distinction, it would be possible to speak historically-epochally about “wars” and “revolutions” starting from the contemporary condition. Jünger calls it the most famous expression for the essence of what is “not” but is “happening” due to the way of the transformation of the being into the virtual update event. This term determines the demise of work and democracy in favour of the permanent process of “total mobilization” (labour, capital, information). In this respect, the “progress” and “development” of human history are identical to the technological-evolutionary path of the construction and disintegration of a living machine. If the technique belongs to nature and the technology to culture, then it is *technosphere* beyond all the differences between the earth and the sky, the struggle and being of God and man, creation and production. Since the *technosphere* can be understood only as *autopoiesis* in the self-confirmation of the life of “new nature”, it might be possible to assume that the time of “total mobilization” means war in the “big space” (*Großraum*). People and states are no longer fighting here (Schmitt 1997). The machines of destruction and demolition, referring to the logic of the *technosphere*, overwhelm inhumanity as far as being no other or different from mankind’s humanity. It might be the event of the apocalyptic openness of Nothing itself. In its two forms, devastating and creative potential, nothing completes the history of wars and the revolution of metaphysics that belongs to the West. The nihilism of world history after “total war” becomes a planetary destiny. With Schmitt and Jünger, this was the deepest thought made by Heidegger himself in the late 1930s.

But, from Heidegger’s point of view, what here is controversial at the end of the metaphysics of subjectivity? With it, the history of wars between “nations”, “states”, “races” and “cultures” almost disappears. Why? Simply, it is because overcoming subjectivity signifies simultaneously overcoming the essence of modern society. It is happening in a way such that, in liberalism, a state has its last purposes/aims in the enterprise economy. So, these purposes categorically appear in the essence of planetary globality: *infinity, measureless, number, computation, flatness, homogeneity, emptiness*. It is not a “total war”, therefore, just the astonishment of the destruction and devastation of the Earth with the “progress” and “development” of planetary technology that switches the power of weapons into the space of heaven and the air, rocket systems and satellite control of systems of destruction. Far from it. Rather, it is

something more significant than leaving the Earth that is pervading Being as such. The transformation of the war from “global” into the post-human state of the “Star Wars” was announced in the works of two of the most significant representatives of the so-called German Conservative Revolution (in favour of the essence of the thing itself, we must also connect Martin Heidegger with this as well). In spite of this movement and of its special role in the closeness of and differences between Nazism and the 1930s, Heidegger’s analysis concerning the essence of technique and “total war” is still far-reaching and stimulating for the current discussion (Paić 2015, 135-206). There remains, however, a lack of clarification about the differences between world history and what is still undefined in terms of “planetary” and “global” concepts. It seems that in the “big space” (*Großraum*) we enter into what is *in-between*: on one side, there is Being and events; on the other side, the earth and of the sky. If the airstrikes of the Allies during the First and Second World Wars on German cities overruled any possibility of heroism and adventures in the realm of nihilism, because planes and megaton bombs do not embody the fight to the death between the living for recognition, then it should be clear that the notion of totality (mobilization, work, technique, capital, science) necessarily leads to the universal destruction of the planet and the globe. Apocalyptic literature that talks about this includes work by the German novelist and essayist Hans Erich Nossack and the literature written by W. G. Sebald in his wake (Nossack 2004). In a totally different meaning to that of Kojève, the end of history in the interpretation of Hegel is no longer related to the end of the possibility of fulfilling the idea of freedom. It is the end of the possibilities of any illusion of “naturalness”, “inborn purpose”, or performing the plan constructed in God’s mind (positive or negative theodicy):

The perfection of the technical means of power is in the ultimate state of purpose and the possibility of total destruction. (...) Already in the last war, there was a zone of destruction whose scene can only be described if compared to natural disasters. (...) The romantic thought is that social contracts can spit the rampage of these energies, their application in the struggle for life and death. The premise of these thoughts is that a man is good – but a man is not good, rather good and bad at the same time. In each budget that needs to be passed the test of reality, it must be included that there is nothing that man is not capable of. Indeed, it is not determined by moral regulations, it is governed by laws. (Jünger 1981, 99)

The war in the “planetary” age and the era of “globality” goes into a state between two equally indefinite events: the former might be the struggle for

post-imperial sovereignty, and the latter indicates a struggle for the establishment of the “world state” with terror and the state of exception. The transition from one form to another does not mean that the war should be considered differently than the way Clausewitz has defined it. Less important, however, is the continuation of imperial-totalitarian or imperial-liberal politics by other means.¹ What arouses special attention and thoughts of distress could be the definition of politics as something inexperienced yet close to war, military and warfare as such. So, Schmitt’s theory of partisan or guerrilla war against the world order as a “universal world state” denotes only a continuation of politics by other means (Schmitt 2006). In both cases, we encounter a negative definition of the concept of the political and concept of war. What gives the “world war” its worldliness? Nothing but the transitions in the form of the territorial sovereignty of the European nation-states, which Jünger has described as “the order of Baroque states” in the form of imperialism. It is, therefore, to be said that planetary nature determines a condition of globality. No doubt, the symbolism of planetary power loses the features of the grandeur of European sovereignty, which inherited it while retaining elements of Eastern despotism and theocracy. Those are, of course, the symbols of the sovereignty of power that are embodied in royal palaces, gold and silver, swords and a serpent in symbiosis with the prerogatives of the divine authority of ecclesiastical authority. When sovereignty breaks down and replaces the symbols of total control, in the foreground comes the picture of the globes, the abstract figures of the Earth’s territory and the celestial spheres.

Globality is signified as a world-historical event in the era of scientific-technological development. In fact, after the United Kingdom, the only two world-historical empires of the 20th century were America and Russia. What connects them despite their ideological-political differences is a “third” thing. Namely, the state as an empire at the end of modernity is exactly that which Kojève, in correspondence with Schmitt in 1955-1960, called a “universal and homogeneous state”. And that means that the differences in the mode of governance are only deployed into a space of culture that stores the idea of the speciality of “lifestyle” and the (national) identity. If we keep this in mind, then it is no longer acceptable to speak of “wars” and “revolutions” only in the meaning of political events that have a big opportunity to change the path of world history. World history, paradoxically, only became a union of concept and reality in the 20th century. Indeed, only with the effects of “total war” in the First and Second World Wars did it become possible to establish what links the centre and the edges. The world, as a nascent event of war, was elevated to

the spatial level, a check with matching processes that Deleuze and Guattari call *detrterritorialization/reterritorialization* (Deleuze and Guattari 1987). We are not far from the truth, which is that all of these events have represented just a continuation of the technique by other means. Politics and economics, culture and science, even religion and art, cannot fulfil their mission unless they are faced with the aporias of the loss of the world and of history in the age of cybernetics, which controls the life itself. Instead of metaphysical illusions about the origins and purpose of the issue of the features of wars, it seems much more appropriate today to show why the world is being replaced by planetary movements, and history has lost its essence in the simultaneity of globality. Therefore, instead of asking the classical philosophical question of what something is (*quidditas*), in this case, war and peace, the issue is how to reverse the direction of the questions and explore how the being and beings are emerging (*quodditas*)? We can see that its assemblage has been transformed into a process of the destruction and creation of a “new” as a case, an indefinite and an exception. How, then, can we explain that the end of metaphysics represents the openness of a network of events that cause to be questioned the overall notion of the relationship between the political and politics with regard to the “phenomena” of war and peace?

In other words, the disappearance of history designates the time of permanent war and intermittent peace. But this is the uncanny assemblage of something that essentially changes the whole psychopolitical and geopolitical meaning of what we call the “world”, although it might be obvious that this term is no longer valid for what is happening. So, what should it be, and what is happening?

1.2 The end of sovereignty and the power of “big space” (*Großraum*): “wars” without “revolutions”?

The philosophical approach to “war” and “peace” must include what is metaphysically enduring and what is missing at the epochal finitude of Being. One cannot do without the other. That is why it is not about bare binary oppositions. This much was clear in the pre-Christian era of Greek philosophy. Already in the designation of what moves in space and time, there is the presence of action and non-action, the power of penetration, and the power to stop the entire process. Greeks used the word *polemos* (Πόλεμος) for the goddess of war, who, according to Pindar, was the daughter of the god Alala. In a relationship with other gods, her meaning becomes synonymous with that of the angry god of war, Ares. But polemic is not aggression in the sense of wanting to destroy an opponent by his

physical removal. From the polemical relation with the Other (ego) as a subject named, I get the recognition of my own power in that tendency-latency relationship, if we might be served by Bloch's terms, which is meant to provoke an unclear fear of the disintegration of order. Therefore, war encompasses a condition of peace, not *vice versa*. Paul Virilio is indeed right when, in one of the talks with Sylvère Lothringer in the book *Pure War*, he claims that "total war" did not stop even after the end of the Second World War. Its other forms have been very active even until nowadays. The transformation which took place in the "Cold War" between the US and the USSR and in anti-colonial and guerrilla wars, which, due to the progress of biotechnology, are becoming an "informatics bomb" or are being introduced into the planetary leadership of the global war, is basically a sign of the constant and permanent arming process. But instead of including nation-states, what is happening now might be determined by the non-reciprocal relations of the world's empire network, which is permanently in conflict with renegades (rogue states) from the "new world order" (Virilio and Lothringer 1988).

What comes out of it should be nothing but ambiguity and contingency. The inability to positively define war beyond the logic of the metaphysics of the eternal struggle for recognition against the Other, as Hegel did in *Phenomenology of the Spirit*, creates totally paradoxical relations. War is no longer the opposite of peace and *vice versa*. In the footsteps of Jünger and Heidegger, Paul Virilio, in his deliberations, articulated the essence of the contemporary *dromosphere*—the main term for the acceleration of civilization that cannot establish a distinction between "progress" and "development". That returns us to the starting point of the problem (Virilio 2000). Indeed, it seems that war in the state of peace within the technically marked spaces of the global-planetary system has its "pause" precisely because the machine of the techno-genetic constructions of the event requires a continuous production of the either-or in between Being and events. Therefore, it is thus possible to get between "totalitarian" and "globalitarian" war. Since globalization is enabled primarily by the development of telecommunication systems whose condition is based on the utilization of the internet, it becomes obvious that mere social phenomenons such as *A-intelligence* strategies, artificial life, maps of the human genome and the post-human condition, as well as cloning projects in conjunction with the militaristic logic of the empire and the techno-scientific drive, speak of the essential inability of man and his freedom of disobedience. No doubt, we are faced with the conceptual turn and must say that we are no longer dealing with the opposition of war to peace and *vice versa*, but instead the permanent *war-and-peace* way of action of