

1914 - 2014  
**WWI**





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Thematic publication  
of the Ovi magazine

**WWI - 100 YEARS**

28 July 2014

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“One day the great European War will come out of some damned foolish thing in the Balkans (1888).”

— Otto von Bismarck



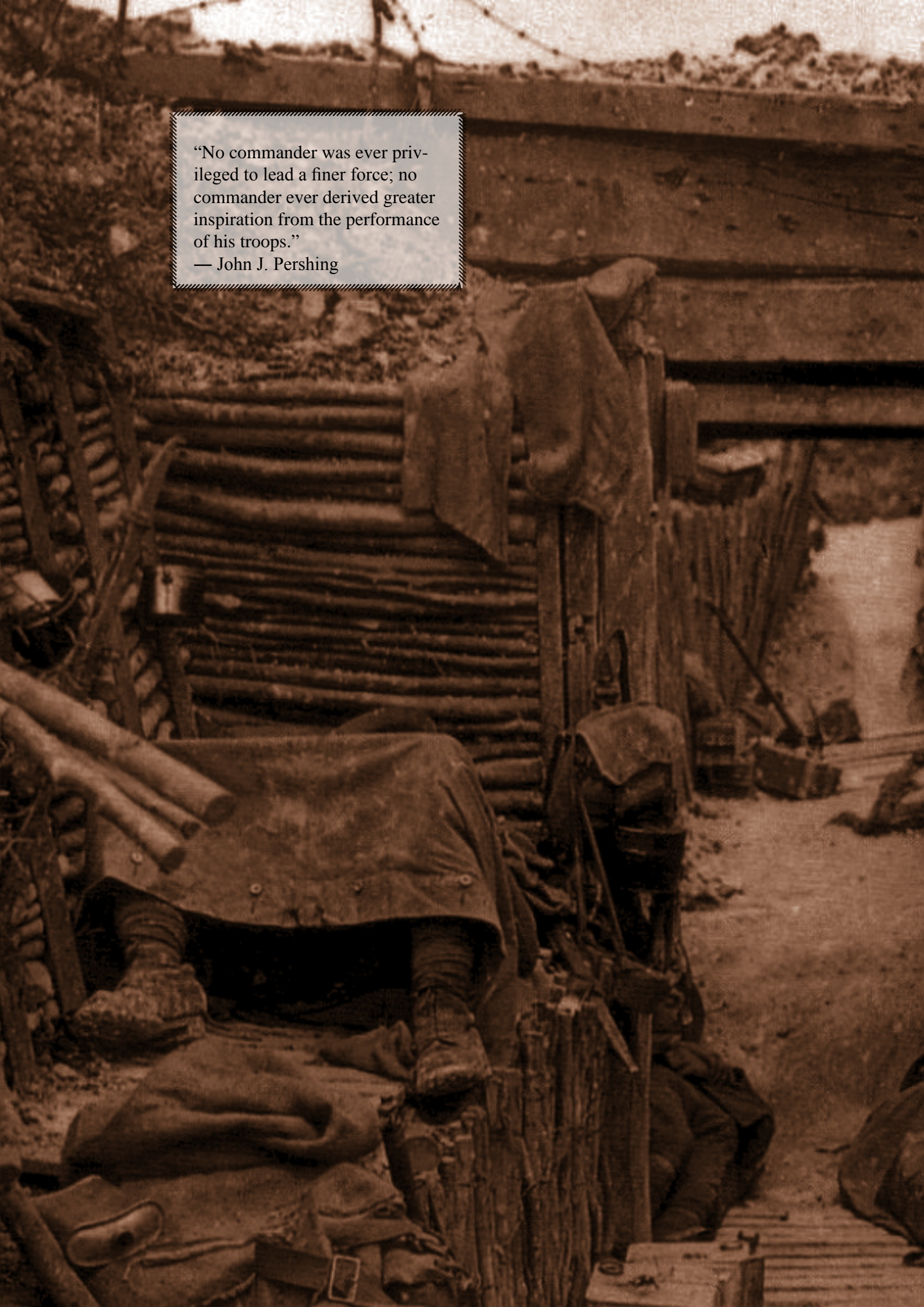


“My centre is giving way, my  
right is in retreat, situation ex-  
cellent. I attack.”

— Ferdinand Foch



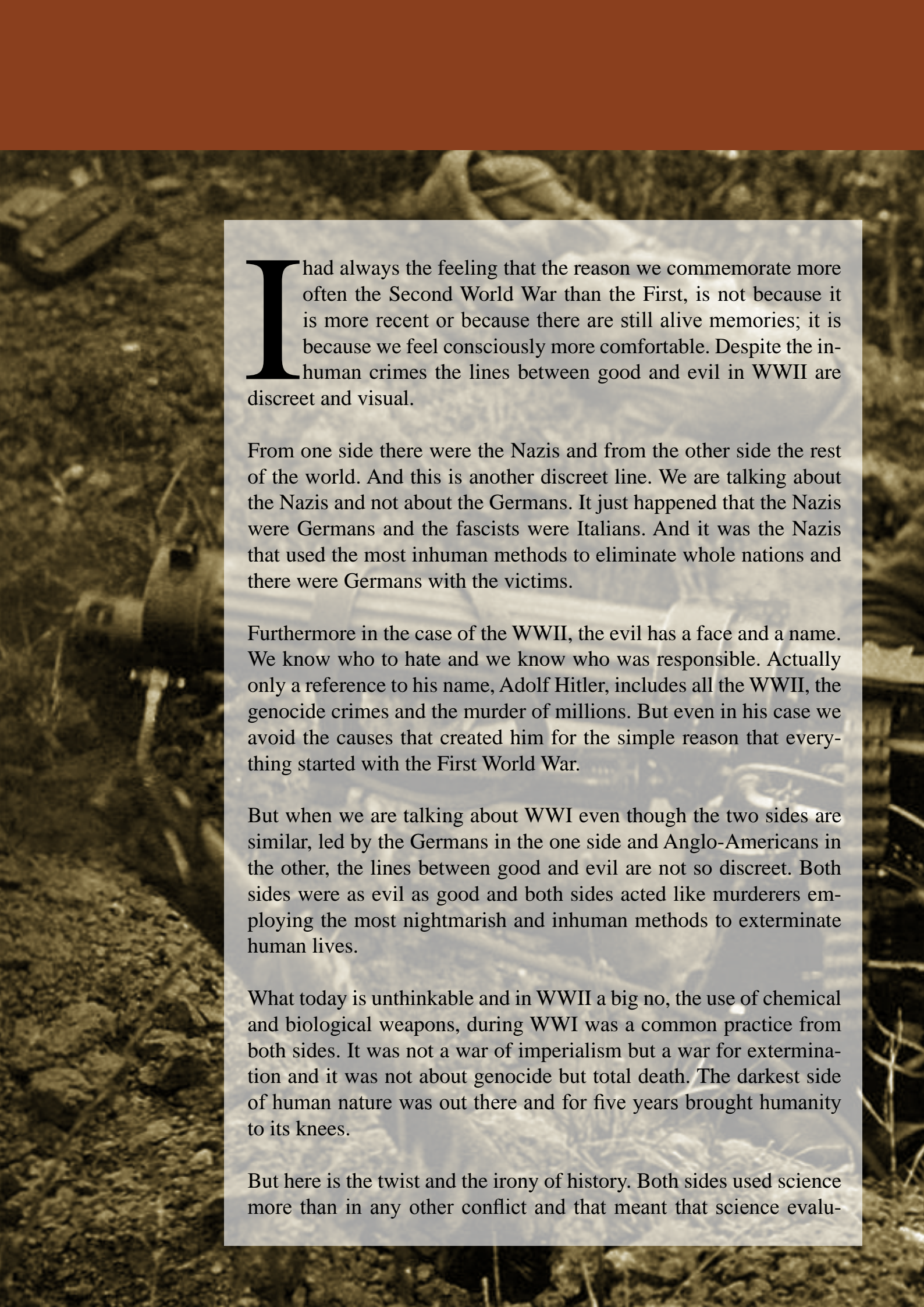




“No commander was ever privileged to lead a finer force; no commander ever derived greater inspiration from the performance of his troops.”

— John J. Pershing





I had always the feeling that the reason we commemorate more often the Second World War than the First, is not because it is more recent or because there are still alive memories; it is because we feel consciously more comfortable. Despite the inhuman crimes the lines between good and evil in WWII are discreet and visual.

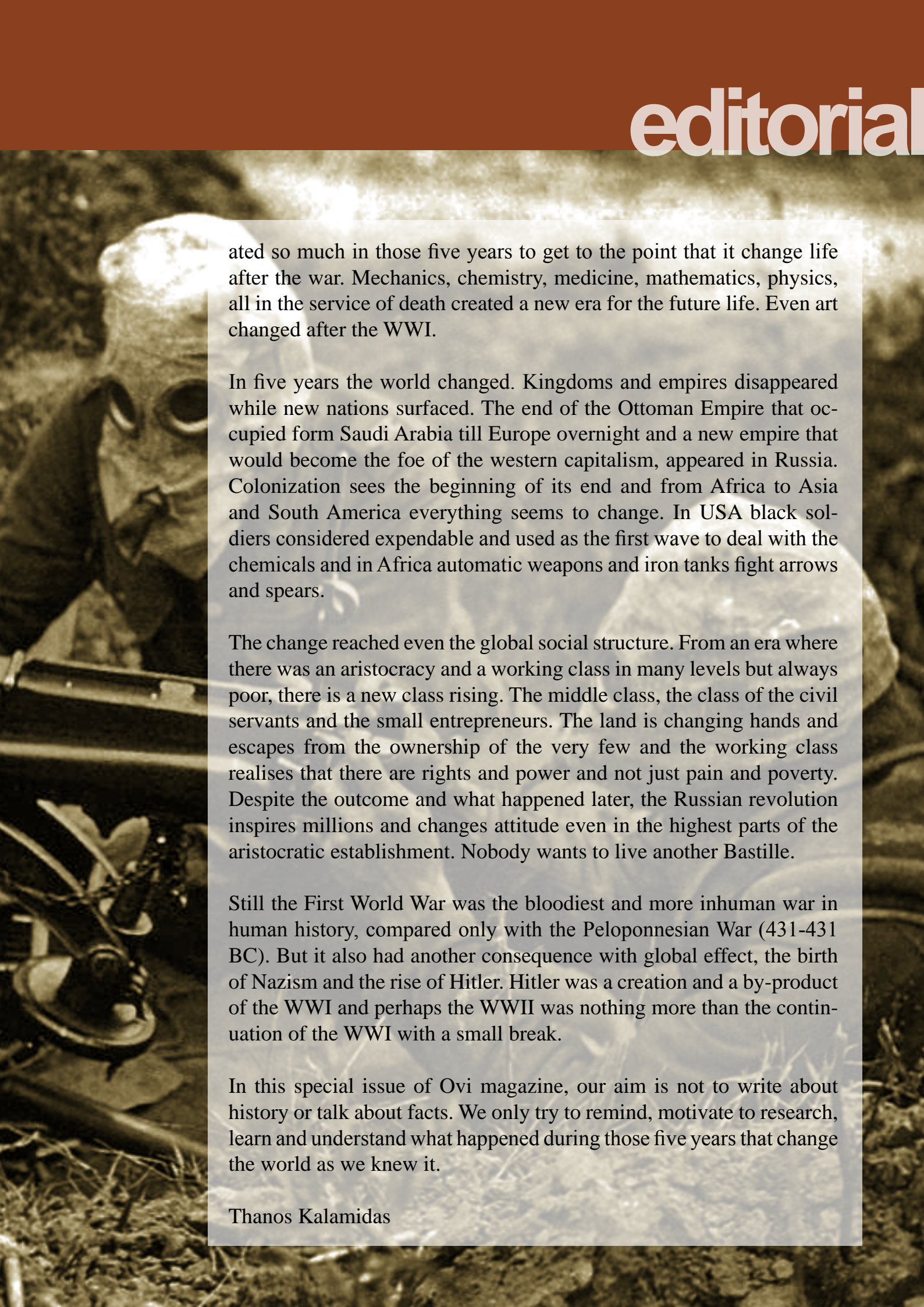
From one side there were the Nazis and from the other side the rest of the world. And this is another discreet line. We are talking about the Nazis and not about the Germans. It just happened that the Nazis were Germans and the fascists were Italians. And it was the Nazis that used the most inhuman methods to eliminate whole nations and there were Germans with the victims.

Furthermore in the case of the WWII, the evil has a face and a name. We know who to hate and we know who was responsible. Actually only a reference to his name, Adolf Hitler, includes all the WWII, the genocide crimes and the murder of millions. But even in his case we avoid the causes that created him for the simple reason that everything started with the First World War.

But when we are talking about WWI even though the two sides are similar, led by the Germans in the one side and Anglo-Americans in the other, the lines between good and evil are not so discreet. Both sides were as evil as good and both sides acted like murderers employing the most nightmarish and inhuman methods to exterminate human lives.

What today is unthinkable and in WWII a big no, the use of chemical and biological weapons, during WWI was a common practice from both sides. It was not a war of imperialism but a war for extermination and it was not about genocide but total death. The darkest side of human nature was out there and for five years brought humanity to its knees.

But here is the twist and the irony of history. Both sides used science more than in any other conflict and that meant that science evalu-



ated so much in those five years to get to the point that it change life after the war. Mechanics, chemistry, medicine, mathematics, physics, all in the service of death created a new era for the future life. Even art changed after the WWI.

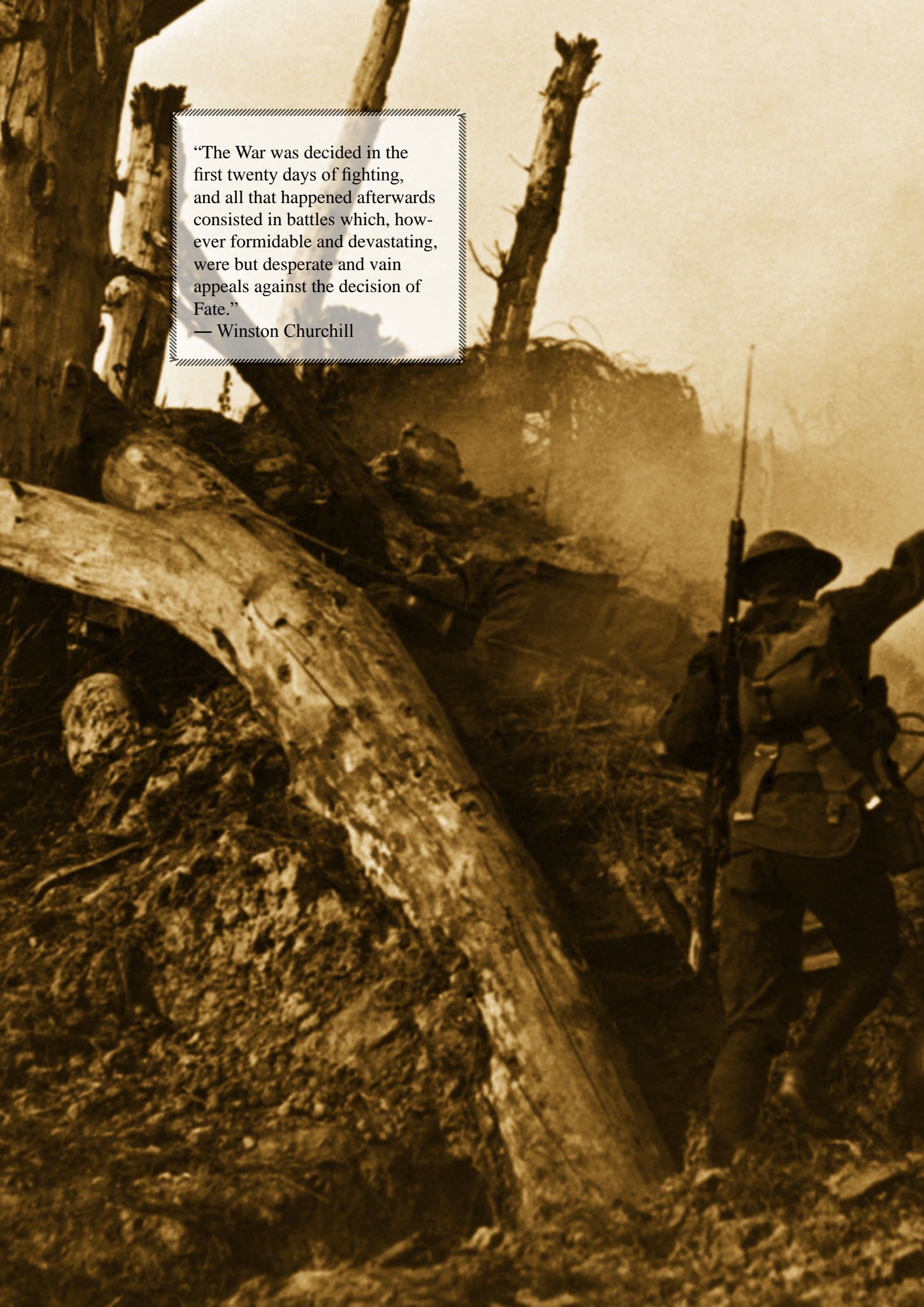
In five years the world changed. Kingdoms and empires disappeared while new nations surfaced. The end of the Ottoman Empire that occupied form Saudi Arabia till Europe overnight and a new empire that would become the foe of the western capitalism, appeared in Russia. Colonization sees the beginning of its end and from Africa to Asia and South America everything seems to change. In USA black soldiers considered expendable and used as the first wave to deal with the chemicals and in Africa automatic weapons and iron tanks fight arrows and spears.

The change reached even the global social structure. From an era where there was an aristocracy and a working class in many levels but always poor, there is a new class rising. The middle class, the class of the civil servants and the small entrepreneurs. The land is changing hands and escapes from the ownership of the very few and the working class realises that there are rights and power and not just pain and poverty. Despite the outcome and what happened later, the Russian revolution inspires millions and changes attitude even in the highest parts of the aristocratic establishment. Nobody wants to live another Bastille.

Still the First World War was the bloodiest and more inhuman war in human history, compared only with the Peloponnesian War (431-431 BC). But it also had another consequence with global effect, the birth of Nazism and the rise of Hitler. Hitler was a creation and a by-product of the WWI and perhaps the WWII was nothing more than the continuation of the WWI with a small break.

In this special issue of Ovi magazine, our aim is not to write about history or talk about facts. We only try to remind, motivate to research, learn and understand what happened during those five years that change the world as we knew it.


Thanos Kalamidas

A sepia-toned photograph of a World War I soldier in a trench. The soldier, wearing a helmet and a backpack, is positioned on the right side of the frame, holding a rifle. In the foreground, a large, weathered log lies diagonally across the trench. The background shows a hazy, war-torn landscape with bare trees and a distant structure. A text box is overlaid on the upper left portion of the image.

“The War was decided in the first twenty days of fighting, and all that happened afterwards consisted in battles which, however formidable and devastating, were but desperate and vain appeals against the decision of Fate.”

— Winston Churchill





“There is a price which is too great to pay for peace, and that price can be put in one word. One cannot pay the price of self-respect.”

— Woodrow Wilson



"The coming of the wireless  
era will make war impossible,  
because it will make war ridicu-  
lous."

- Guglielmo Marconi



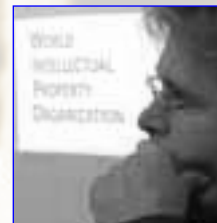


**Dr. Anis H. Bajrektarevic**

# **Europe of Sarajevo 100 years later: Was history ever on holiday?**

(Europe of Sarajevo 100 years later – From WWI to www.)





**E**urope of June 1914 and of June 2014. Hundred years in between, two hot and one cold war. The League of Nations, Cristal Night, Eurosong, Helsinki Decalogue – the continent that hates its own victims Coco Chanel, VW, Marshall Aid, Tito, Yuri Gagarin, Tolkien's troll, Berlin wall and Euro-toll Ideologies, purges, repeated genocides, the latest one coinciding with the Maastricht birth of the Union... a televised slaughterhouse and the Olympic city besieged for 1,000 days, just one hour flight from Brussels.

*E non so più pregare  
E nell'amore non so più sperare  
E quell'amore non so più aspettare<sup>1</sup>*

Key words in 1914: Jingoism, booming trade and lack of trust, assassination, imminent collision, grand war. 100 years later; Europe absorbed by the EU project, demographic and economic decline, chauvinism reloaded ...Twisting between the world of (Gavrilo) PRINCIP and global village of instant MONETISATION (of every-thing and everyone)... Are our past hundred years an indication of what to expect throughout this century?! What is our roadmap?! Is it of any help to reflect on the Sarajevo event of June 28<sup>th</sup>, 1914 which has finally fractured a fragile equilibrium of *La Belle Époque*, and set the Old Continent (and its world) into the series of motions that lasted for almost a century, before ending with the unique unionistic form of today's Europe?

*Four men leading one man bound  
One man whom the four men hound  
One man counted bound and led  
One man whom the four men dread<sup>2</sup>*

The following lines are not a comprehensive account on all of the events. Rather interpretative by its nature, this is a modest reminder of what Europe used and still tends to be, despite all our passions and hopes, visions and targets, institutions and instruments.

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1 Taken from the lyrics of *Miss Sarajevo*, the song written by Bono Vox of U-2 and Luciano Pavarotti, and performed together with Brian Eno (1994). This instant radio-hit was inspired by the true events, when Sarajevens – as a form of urban protest to the world indifferent to their suffering – organized the *Miss of Besieged Sarajevo beauty contest* only few hundred meters from the battlefield lines. Translated from Italian, this line states: "...And I don't know how to pray anymore / and in love I don't know how to hope anymore / and for that love I don't know how to wait anymore..."

2 Mak – Mehmedalija Dizdarević, Bosnian poet of the modern generation. The quotation is actually an ending part of his poem: "A Note about the Five" (trans. Francis R. Jones), from his *"Stone Sleeper"* poetry collection (1966-71) Svjetlost, Sarajevo.

Is the EU a post-Westphalian conglomerate and post-Metternich concert of different Europes, the world's last cosmopolitan enjoying its postmodern *holiday from history*?<sup>3</sup> Is that possibly the lost Atlántida or mythical Arcadia— a Hegelian *end of history* world? Thus, should this OZ be a mix of the locally domesticated Marx-Engels grand utopia and Kennedy's dream-world "where the weak are safe and the strong are just"? Or, is it maybe as Charles Kupchan calls it a 'postmodern imperium' (exhorting its well-off status quo by notoriously exporting its *transformative powers* of free trade dogma and human rights stigma<sup>4</sup>—a modified continuation of colonial legacy when the European conquerors, with fire and sword, spread commerce,<sup>5</sup> Christianity and civilization overseas), a kind of 'new Byzantium', or is that more of a Richard Young's declining, unreformed and rigid Rome? Hence, is this a post-Hobbesian (yet, not quite a Kantian) world, in which the *letzte Mensch* expelled *Übermensch*? Could it be as one old graffiti in Prague implies: EU=SU<sup>2</sup>? Does the EU-ization of Europe equals to a restoration of the universalistic world of Rome's Papacy? Is the Union a Leonard's *runner of the 21<sup>st</sup> century*, or is it perhaps Kagan's 'Venus'—gloomy and opaque world, warmer but equally distant and unforeseen like 'Mars'?<sup>6</sup>

Is this Brussels-headquartered construct, the 20<sup>th</sup> century's version of Zollverein with standardized tariffs and trade, but of an autonomous fiscal policy and politics? Thus, is the EU a political and economic re-approachment of sovereign states or maybe just an(other) enterprise of the borderless financial capital? Ergo, would that be a pure construct of financial oligarchy whose *invisible hand* tacitly corrupted the Maastricht Treaty as to web-up a borderless, limitless, wireless and careless power hub, while at the same time entrenching, silencing and rarefying labour within each nation state?

Is this a supersized Switzerland (ruled by the cacophony of many languages and enveloped in economic egotism of its self-centered people), with the cantons (MS, Council of EU) still far more powerful than the central government (the EU Parliament, Brussels' Commission, ECJ), while Swiss themselves—although in the geographic heart of that Union—stubbornly continue to defy any membership. Does it really matter (and if so, to what extent) that Niall Ferguson wonders: "...the EU lacks a common language, a common postal system, a common soccer team (Britain as well, rem. A.B.) even a standard electric socket..."?<sup>7</sup> Kissinger himself was allegedly looking for a phone number of Europe, too. Baron Ridley portrayed the Union as a *Fourth Reich*, not only dominated by Germany, but also institutionally Germanized. Another conservative Briton, Larry Siedentop, remarked in his

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3 One of the greatest historians of our age, Sir Toynbee, gives an interesting account of our civilizational vertical. He classifies as many as nineteen major civilizations: Egyptian, Andean, Sinic, Minoan, Sumerian, Mayan, Indic, Hittite, Hellenic, Western, Orthodox Christian/Russian, Far Eastern, Orthodox Christian/main body, Persian, Arabic, Hindu, Mexican, Yucatec, and Babylonian. Further on, there are—as he calls them—four abortive civilizations (Far Western Christian, Far Eastern Christian, Scandinavian, Syriac) and five arrested civilizations (Polynesian, Eskimo, Nomadic, Ottoman, Spartan). Like to no other continent, majority of them are related (originating from or linked) to European proper.

4 Lately, it looks like a Gay-rights *Jihad* at many places. The non-selective, but massive push without premeditation on the key issue here: whether homosexuality should be either tolerated behavior or promoted life-style, has to be urgently revisited and (re-)calibrated. As it stands now, this Gay-rights *Jihad* neither serves the human/behavioristic rights nor a worrying birth-rates decline. The European demographics is far more of a serious and urgent socio-economic problem, as it is closely related to the emotional-charge inflammable issues of migration and integration, and by it triggered (to say: justified) right-wing anti-politics.

5 Is globalization the natural doctrine of global hegemony? Well, its main instrument, commerce—as we know—brings people into contact, not necessarily to an agreement, even less to mutual benefits and harmony...Or, "If goods cannot cross borders, armies will" is the famous saying of the XIX century French economist Frederic Bastiat, so often quoted by the longest-ever serving US Secretary of State Cordell Hull.

6 "No venue has been created in which an EU-wide public opinion might be formed... European Parliament elections are not truly European because they are 27 different elections with different electoral systems after campaigns in which national issues predominate... Under present procedures, both the President of the European Commission and the President of the European Council are selected in private meetings of heads of governments...", says former Irish Prime Minister John Bruton. Bruton, J. (2013), *How real is the danger of an EU collapse?*, EU Journal Europe's World 23(13) 2013, Brussels

7 Ferguson, N. (2005) *Colossus – The Rise and Fall of the American Empire*, Penguin Books (page 255)

*Democracy in Europe* that it is actually France who is running the EU 'show', in the typical French way – less than accountable bureaucracy that prevents any evolution of the European into an American-style United States. Thus, Siedentop's EU is more of a *Third Bonapartistic Empire* than possibly a *Fourth German Reich*. The *Heartland* or *Rimland*?

After all, is the Union yet another virtue out of necessity, as Brzezinski claimed, that after centuries of colonial overstretch and of mutual destructions (between protagonists in close geographic proximity), Europe irreversibly lost its demographic, economic and politico-military importance, and that the early EU was more of an attempt to rescue a nation state than it was the quest for a true enterprise of the European Community building?

Despite different names and categorizations attached, historical analogies and descriptions used, most scholars would agree upon the very geopolitical definition of the EU. It is, thus, predominantly defined as a grand re-approachment of France and Germany after WWII, culminating in the Elysée accords of 1961. An interpretation of this instrument is rather simple: a bilateral peace treaty through achieved consensus by which Germany accepted a predominant French say in political affairs of EU/Europe, and France – in return – accepted a more dominant German say in economic matters of EU/Europe. All that tacitly blessed by a *perfect balancer*– Britain, attempting to conveniently return to its *splendid isolation from the Continent* in the post-WWII years. Consequently, nearly all scholars would agree that the Franco-German alliance actually represents a geopolitical axis, a backbone of the Union.

But, what does it mean, precisely? Why Germany, and why France? And why, besides the geographic (e.g. north-south, Nordic-Mediterranean) and political (e.g. the EU and non-EU Europe; the 'good old' West and new 'transitioning' East, or old EU 15 and new EU 13, or the Paris treaty core-6, etc.) categorization, do we need to take an additionally due look at the classification of historical Europes?<sup>8</sup>

### ***Una hysteria importante***

History of Europe is the story of small hysteric/xenophobic nations, traditionally sensitive to the issue of ethnic, linguistic, religious, and behavioristic otherness.<sup>9</sup> If this statement holds the truth, then we refer to events before and after the Thirty Years' War in general and to the post-Napoleonic Europe in particular. Political landscape of today's Europe had been actually conceived in the late 14<sup>th</sup> century, gradually evolving to its present shape. The universalistic world of the Holy Roman Empire and Papacy is steadily contested by the explicitly confrontational or implicitly dismissive political entities, be it ideologically (the Thirty Years' War culminating with the Peace of Westphalia) or geopolitically (Grand Discoveries and the shift of the gravity center westwards). The early round of colonizers, the two Iberian empires of Spain and Portugal, are the first entities that emerged, followed by France, Holland, England and Denmark. (Belgium too, although it appeared as a buffer zone at first – being a strategic depth, a continental prolongation of England

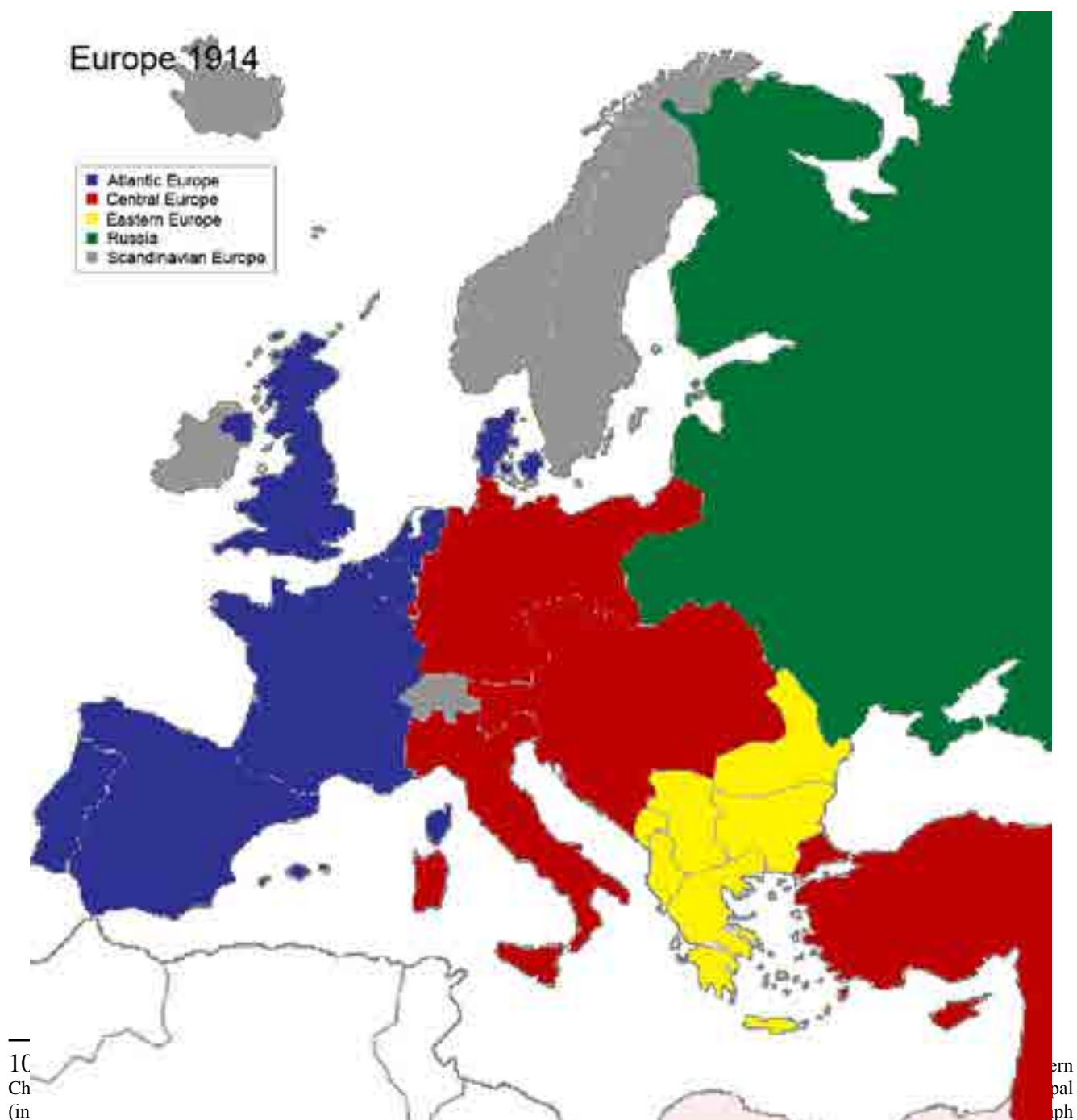
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<sup>8</sup> Classic division on north and south in the European newspeech originating from the London City and Frankfurt's banking circles would be *pigs* vs. *wings* (indebted south: PIGS – Portugal, Italy, Greece and Spain vs. prosperous north: WINGS – West, Industrial North, Germany and Scandinavia).

<sup>9</sup> Enveloped in its own myopia of economic egoism, Europeans are in fact digging and perpetuating defensive self-isolation. While falling short to constructively engage its neighborhood (but not conveniently protected by oceans like some other emigrant-receiving countries), Europeans constantly attract unskilled migrants. The US, GCC, Far East, Australia, Singapore, lately even Brazil, India, or Angola – all have enormously profited from the skilled newcomers. Europe is unable to preserve, protect and promote its skilled migrants. Simply, European history of tolerance of otherness is far too short for it, while the legacies of residual fears are deep, lasting and wide. Besides, Europe still passionately hates its own victims.

for containment of Central Europeans, Dutch and Scandinavians from the open sea, while later on also becoming a strategic depth of France for balancing Britain and containment of Denmark and Prussia.)

Engulfed with the quest of the brewing French revolution for the creation of a nation state, these colonizers, all of them situated on the Atlantic flank of Europe, have successfully adjusted to the nation-state concept. Importantly, the very process of creation/formation of the nation-state has been conducted primarily on linguistic grounds since religious grounds were historically defeated once and for all by the Westphalia.<sup>10</sup> All peoples talking the Portugo-phone dialects in one state, all Hispanophone dialects in another state, all Francophone dialects in the third state, etc.<sup>11</sup> This was an easy cut for peripheral Europe, the so-called old colonizers on the Atlantic flank of Europe, notably for Portugal, Spain, France, England, Denmark, the Netherlands, and Sweden.



of western evangelic unity, which later led to the strengthening of western Christianity's supremacy intercontinentally.

<sup>11</sup> All modern European languages that are taught in schools today, were once upon a time actually a political and geographic compromise of the leading linguists, who – through adopted conventions – created a standard language by compiling different dialects, spoken on the territory of particular emerging nation-state.

Although geopolitically defeated and ideologically contained by the Vienna Congress and its instrument: the Holy Alliance of Eastern Conservative Courts, the very idea of a nation-state remained appealing. Once the revolutionary 1848 ousted the principal guardian of feudalism in Europe, Metternich, the suppressed concept got further impetus. And, the revolutionary romance went on... Hence, the very creation of central European nation-states was actually enhanced by Napoleon III. The unification of Italophones was his, nearly obsessive, intentional deed (as he grew up in Nice with Italian *Carbonari* revolutionists who were fighting papal and Habsburg's control over the northern portions of today's Italy). Conversely, the very unification of Germanophones under the Greater Prussia was his non-intentional mis-chief, with the two subsequently emerging 'by-products'; modern Austria (German-speaking core assembled on the ruins of mighty multinational and multi-linguistic empire) and modern Turkey (Turkophone core on the ruins of mighty multiracial and multi-linguistic empire).

Despite being geographically in the heart of Europe, Switzerland remained a remarkably stable buffer zone: Highly militarized but defensive and obsessively neutral, economically omnipresent yet financially secretive, it represents one confederated state of two confronting versions of western Christianity, of three ethnicities and of four languages. Absent from most of the modern European politico-military events – Switzerland in short – is *terra incognita*.

Historically speaking, the process of Christianization of Europe used as the justification tool to pacify the invading tribes, that demolished the Roman Empire and brought to an end the Antique age, was running parallel on two tracks. One of them was conducted by the Roman Curia/Vatican and its hammer: the Holy Roman Empire. The second was run by the cluster of Rusophone Slavic Kaganates, who receiving (the orthodox or true/authentic, so-called Eastern version of) Christianity from Byzantium, and past its collapse, have taken over a mission of Christianization, while forming its first state of Kiev Russia (and thereafter, its first historic empire). So, to the eastern edge of Europe, Russophones have lived in an intact world of universalism for centuries: one empire, one Tsar, one religion and one language.<sup>12</sup>

Everything in between Central Europe and Russia is Eastern Europe, rather a historic novelty on the political map of Europe. Very formation of the Atlantic Europe's present shape dates back to 14<sup>th</sup>–15<sup>th</sup> century, of Central Europe to the mid-late 19<sup>th</sup> century, while

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12 Annotated from one of my earlier writings, it states as following: "...Early Russian state has ever since expanded north/ northeast and eastward, reaching the physical limits of its outreach by crossing the Bering straits (and the sale of Russian Alaska to the USA in 1867). By the late 17<sup>th</sup> and early 18<sup>th</sup> century, Russia had begun to draw systematically into European politico-military theatre. (...) In the meantime, Europe's universalistic empire dissolved. It was contested by the challengers (like the Richelieu's France and others—geopolitical, or the Lutheran/Protestant – ideological), and fragmented into the cluster of confronted monarchies, desperately trying to achieve an equilibrium through dynamic balancing. To this similar political process will affect Russian universal empire only by late 20<sup>th</sup> century, following the Soviet dissolution. (...) Not fully accepted into the European collective system before the Metternich's Holy Alliance, even had its access into the post-Versailles system denied, Russia was still not ignored like other peripheral European power. The Ottomans, conversely, were negated from all of the security systems until the very creation of the NATO (Republic of Turkey). Through the pre-emptive division of Poland in the eve of WWII, and successful campaigns elsewhere in Eastern Europe, Russia expanded both its territory and its influence westwards. (...) An early Soviet period of Russia was characterized by isolated bilateral agreements, e.g. with Germans, Fins, Japanese, etc. The post WWII days have brought the regional collective system of Warsaw Pact into existence, as to maintain the communist gains in Europe and to effectively oppose geopolitically and ideologically the similar US-led block. Besides Nixon's reapproachment towards China, the collapse of the Soviet Union was the final stage in the progressive fragmentation of the vast Sino-Soviet Communist block (that dominated the Euroasian land mass with its massive size and centrality), letting Russia emerge as the successor. The sudden Soviet break-up, however, was followed by the cultural shock and civil disorder, painful economic crisis and rapidly widening disparities, as well as the humiliating wars in Caucasus and elsewhere, since the centripetal and centrifugal forces of integration or fragmentations came into the oscillatory play. Between 1989 and 1991, communist rule ended in country after country and the Warsaw Pact officially dissolved. Subsequently, the Gorbachev-Jeltsin Russia experienced the greatest geopolitical contraction of any major power in the modern era and one of the fastest ever in history. Still, Gorbachev-Jeltsin tandem managed to (re-)brand themselves domestically and internationally – each got its own label of vodka..." (*Verticalization of Historical Experiences: Europe's and Asia's Security Structures – Structural Similarities and Differences*, Crossroads – the Macedonian Foreign Policy Journal, 4 (1), page 111-112, M-MFA 2008)

a contemporary Eastern Europe only started emerging between the end of WWI and the collapse of the Soviet Union – meaning, less than 100 years, in best cases. No wonder that the dominant political culture of the Eastern Europeans resonates residual fears and reflects deeply insecure small nations. Captive and restive, these are short in territorial depth, in demographic projection, in natural resources and in a direct access to open (warm) seas, after all, short in historio-cultural verticals and in a bigger picture-driven long-term policies. They are exercising the nationhood and sovereignty from quite a recently. Therefore, they are often dismissive, hectic and suspectful, nearly neuralgic and xenophobic, with frequent overtones.

The creation of a nation-state (on linguistic grounds) in the Atlantic, Scandinavian and Central Europe was relatively a success-story. However, in Eastern Europe it repeatedly suffered setbacks, culminating in the Balkans, Caucasus and the Middle East, but also evident in the central or Baltic part of Eastern Europe.<sup>13</sup>

### Keeping the center soft

Ever since Westphalia, Europe maintained the inner balance of powers by keeping its core section soft. Peripheral powers like England, France, Denmark, (Sweden and Poland being later replaced by) Prussia, the Ottomans, Habsburgs and Russia have pressed and kept the center of continental Europe as their playground. At the same time, they kept extending their possessions overseas or, like Russia and the Ottomans, over the land corridors deeper into Asian and MENA proper.<sup>14</sup> Once Royal Italy and Imperial Germany had appeared, the geographic core ‘hardened’ and for the first time started to politico-militarily press onto peripheries. This new geopolitical reality caused a big security dilemma lasting from the 1814 Vienna congress up to Potsdam conference of 1945, being re-actualized again with the Berlin Wall destruction: How many Germanies and Italies should Europe have to preserve its inner balance and peace?<sup>15</sup> As the latecomers, the Central Europeans have faced the overseas world, clearly divided into spheres of influence.

In very simplified terms, we can say that from the perspective of European belligerent parties, both world wars were fought between the forces of status quo and the challengers to this status quo. The final epilogue in both wars was that Atlantic Europe has managed to divert the attention of Central Europeans from itself and its vast overseas possessions onto Eastern Europe, and finally towards Russia.<sup>16</sup> Just to give the most illustrative of many examples; the Imperial post-Bismarck Germany has carefully planned and ambitiously grouped its troops on the

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<sup>13</sup> Many would say that, past the peak Ottoman times, the aggressive intrusion of Atlantic Europe with its nation-state concept, coupled with Central Europe’s obsessive control and surveillance drive, has turned a magnificently mild and tolerant lands and intellectual exchange-corridors of southeastern Europe and the Near East into a modern day *Balkan powder keg*. Miroslav Křeleza famously remarked: “It was humans who transformed our swine to a pig.”

<sup>14</sup> Serves as a curious fact that the first border agreement ever signed by Mexico with any of its neighbors was with Tsarist Russia (delimitation of proper stretching over today’s western coast of Canada and the US state of Washington).

<sup>15</sup> At the time of Vienna Congress, there were nearly a dozen of Italophone states and over three dozens of Germanophone entities – 34 western German states + 4 free cities (*Kleinstaaterrei*), Austria and Prussia. Potsdam conference concludes with only three Germanophone (+ Lichtenstein + Switzerland) and two Italophone states (+ Vatican).

<sup>16</sup> Why did the US join up Atlantic Europe against Central Europe in both WWs? Simply, siding up with Central Europe would have meant politico-military elimination of Atlantic Europe once and for all. In such an event, the US would have faced a single European confrontation-potent block to engage with sooner or later, and would have lost an interfering possibility of remaining the *perfect balancer*. The very same balancer role, the US inherited from the declining Britain.

border with France. After the assassination of the Austrian Archduke in Sarajevo (28 June 1914), Europe was technically having a *casus belli* - as the subsequent mutually declared war between all parties quickly followed this assassination episode and the Austrian ultimatum to Serbia. However, the first armed engagement was not taking place on the southeastern front, as expected – between the Eastern belligerent parties such as Austria, Serbia, Russia, the Ottomans, Greece, Bulgaria, etc. The first military operations of WWI were actually taking place in the opposite, northwest corner of Europe and only months later. It was in German penetration of Belgian Ardennes. Still, the very epilogue of *la Grande Guerre* was such that a single significant territorial gain of Germany was achieved only in Eastern Europe. Despite a colossal 4-years long military effort, the German western border remained nearly unchanged.<sup>17</sup>



The end of WWI did not bring much change. The *accords de paix* – Versailles treaty was an Anglo-French triumph. These principal Treaty powers, meaning: Atlantic Europe, invited Germany to finally join the League of Nations in 1926, based on the 1925 Treaty of Locarno. By the letter of this treaty, Germany obliged itself to fully respect its frontiers with Belgium and France (plus demilitarized zone along the Rhine) with the unspecified promise to arbitrate before pursuing any change of its borders with Czechoslovakia and Poland. The same modus operandi applied to the Austrian borders with Italy, Yugoslavia, Hungary and Czechoslovakia. The Locarno accord

<sup>17</sup> V.I. Lenin leaves Switzerland in April 1917, and is heading to Russia by train (in the sealed off wagon) crossing all over Germany – a self-telling episode of the WWI.

actually instrumentalized two sorts of boundaries around Central Europe (Germany–Austria): strict, inviolable ones towards Atlantic Europe; but semipermeable and soft towards Eastern Europe.<sup>18</sup> That is how the predominant player from Central Europe, Germany, was accepted to the League, a collective system which the Soviet Russia (meaning: Rusophone Europe) was admitted to only a decade later (1934).<sup>19</sup> Soon after, this double standard sealed-off a faith of many in Europe and beyond.

In fact, the 1930s were full of public admirations of and frequent official visits to an Austrian-born Hitler. It was not only reserved for the British royal family (e.g. Edward VIII), but for many more prominents from both sides of the Atlantic. By 1938 in Munich, this ‘spirit of Locarno’ has been confirmed in practice when French President Daladier and British PM Chamberlain (Atlantic Europe) jointly paid a visit to Germany and gave concessions – practically a free hand – to Hitler and Mussolini (Central Europe) on gains in Eastern Europe. Neither Atlantic Europe objected to the pre-Munich solidification of Central Europe: Hitler–Mussolini pact and absorption of Austria, following a massive domestic Austrian support to Nazism of its 890,000 members of the Nazi party as well as a huge ring of sympathizers. By brokering the Ribbentrop-Molotov non-aggression deal between Berlin and Moscow, but only a year after the Munich-shame – in 1939 (including the stipulations on Finland, Baltic states and Poland), Stalin desperately tried to preempt the imminent: A horror of an uncontrolled expansion of Central onto Eastern Europe and closer to Russia, something that was already largely blessed and encouraged by Atlantic Europe.<sup>20</sup>

For some 300 years, Russia and the Ottomans have fought series of bitter wars over the control of the Black Sea plateau and Caucasus – sectors, which both sides (especially the Ottomans) have considered as geopolitically pivotal for their existence. Still, neither party has ever progressed at the battlefield as to seriously jeopardize the very existence of the other. However, Russia has experienced such moves several times from within Europe. Three of them were critical for the very survival of Russia and the forth was rather instructive: the Napoleonic wars, Hitler’s *Drang nach Osten*, the so-called “contra-revolutionary” intervention,<sup>21</sup> and finally the brief but deeply humiliating war with Poland (1919-21).

Small wonder, that in 1945, when Russians – suffering over 20 millions of mostly civilian casualties and by far the heaviest continental burden of the war against Nazism – arrived on wings of their tanks and ideology to Central Europe, they decided to stay. Extending their strategic depth westwards–southwestwards, and fortifying their presence in the

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18 Farce or not, history nearly repeated itself to the last detail in early 1990s: 25 and again 75 years after 1914 - meaning 1939 was nearly copied by the event of 9/11 in 1989. The western frontiers of Central Europe remained intact, while the dramatic change took place to its East. Besides *Anschluss* of Eastern Germany by the Western one, borders there in 1990s remained the same, but many former neighbors have one by one disappeared for good from the political map.

19 The Cold War era has prevented any comprehensive scientific consensus. The unbiased, de-ideologized and objective view on the WWII was systematically discouraged. Soviets consistently equated Nazism and imperialism while the US, for its part, equated fascism and communism. Until this very day, we do not have a full accord on causes and consequences of events in years before, during and after the WWII.

20 We should keep in mind that for the very objective of *lebensraum* policy (character and size of space needed for Germanophones to unhindered, live and prosper), the Jews, Roma and behavioristic minorities were the non-territorial obstacle. However, Slavs and their respective Slavic states in Eastern Europe were the prime territorial target of Hitler-led Central Europe’s ‘final solution’. Therefore, no wonder why so much *fifth column* among Slavs. For the speeding and smoothening of the *lebensraum* objective, Quisling was needed as PM in Norway, but Slavic *quisling*-elites in each and every of that time major Slavic state – *useful idiots* in Poland, in Ukraine, in Czechoslovakia, in Yugoslavia, in Bulgaria, etc.).

21 The 6-year-long insurgencies (largely financed and inspired by Western Europe as an overt ‘regime change’ intervention) at the time of the young Bolshevik Russia that saturated the country (bringing the unbearable levels of starvation and hunger up to cases of cannibalism), took away 5 million mostly civilian lives, and set the stage for ‘red terror’.

heart of Europe,<sup>22</sup> was morally an occupation. Still, it was geopolitically the single option left, which Stalin as a ruthless person but an excellent geo-strategist perfectly understood. Just a quick look at the geographic map of Europe would show that the low-lying areas of western Russia, Belorussia, Ukraine and Eastern Europe are practically non-fortifiable and indefensible. Their topography exposes the metropolitan area and city of Moscow to an extreme vulnerability. So, the geostrategic dictatum is that in absence of any deep canyon, serious ridge or mountain chain, the only protection is either a huge standing army (expensive and badly needed in other corners of this vast country) and/or an extension of the strategic depth.

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22 With the politico-military settlement of the Teheran and Yalta Conference (1943), and finally by the accord of the Potsdam Conference (1945), the US, UK and the SU unanimously agreed to reduce the size of Germany by 25% (comparable to its size of 1937), to recreate Austria, and to divide both of them on four occupation zones. The European sections of the Soviet borders were extended westwards (as far as to Kaliningrad), and Poland was compensated by territorial gains in former Eastern Prussia/Germany. The pre-WWII inclusion of the three Baltic republics into the Soviet Union was unanimously confirmed by the Americans and Britons in Potsdam, too. Practically, Russians managed to eliminate Germany from Eastern Europe (and of its access to central and eastern portions of Baltic, too), and to place it closer to the Atlantic Europe's proper.



In a nutshell, we can say that the very epilogue of both WWs in Europe was a defeat of Central Europe (challenger of status quo) against Atlantic Europe (status quo defender), with the relatively absent, neutral Scandinavian Europe, of Eastern Europe being more an object than a subject of these mega-confrontations, and finally with a variable success of Russia.

Finally, back to Franco-German re-approachment: This is far more than just a story about the two countries signing *d'accord*. It truly marked a final decisive reconciliation of two Europes, the Atlantic and Central one. The status quo Europe has won on the continent but has soon lost its overseas colonies. Once realizing it, the road for 'unification' of the equally weakened protagonists in a close proximity was wide open.<sup>23</sup> This is the full meaning of the 1961Elysée.

## Europe of Genocide and of Unification – Happy EU to You!

The collapse of the Soviet Union marked a loss of the historical empire for Russia, but also a loss of geopolitical importance of nonaligned, worldwide respected Yugoslavia,<sup>24</sup> which shortly after burned itself in series of brutal genocidal, civil war-like ethnical cleansings. The idea of different nations living together and communicating in different languages in a (con-)federal structure was (though imperfect) a reality in Yugoslavia, but also a declared dream of the Maastricht Europe. Moreover, this country was the only truly emancipated and independent political entity of Eastern Europe and one of the very few in a whole of the Old Continent. Despite the post-Cold War, often pre-paid, rhetorics that Eastern Europe rebelled against the Soviet domination in order to associate itself with the West, the reality was very different. Nagy's Hungary of 1956, Dubček's Czechoslovakia of 1968 and (pre-)Jeruzelski Poland of 1981 dreamt and fought to join a liberal Yugoslavia, and its internationally declared 3<sup>rd</sup> way!

By 1989-90, this country still represented a hope of full emancipation and real freedom for many in the East. How did the newly created EU (Atlantic-Central Europe axis) react? At least tolerating (if not eager to support), or actively eliminating the third way of Yugoslavia? It responded to the Soviet collapse in the best fashion of a classic, historical nation-state, with the cold calculi of geopolitical consideration deprived of any ideological constraints. It easily abandoned altruism of its own idea by withdrawing its support to

23 Nowadays, from the safe time-distance, it is easy to claim that the portion of Europe under Americans was of considerably better fortune than a part under the Soviet influence. Interestingly enough, the opposite situation was elsewhere: India – Pakistan, Vietnam – the Philippines, Cuba – Colombia, Egypt – Saudi Arabia, Ghana – Liberia. That means that the intra-European differences are beyond pure American–Russian influences, and therefore far more significant. Proof? The standard-of-living difference between London and Bucurest or Paris and Sofia today is of the same –or even wider – distance than it was some 40 years ago.

24 Yugoslavia was by many facets a unique European country: No history of aggression towards its neighbors, with the high toleration of otherness. Yugoslav peoples were one of the rare Europeans who resolutely stood up against fascism, fighting it in a full-scale combat and finally paying it with 12% of its population in the 4-years war. (Relative to the 1939 size of state territory and incumbent population within, the top WWII fatalities were suffered by Poland – 18%, the Soviet Union – 15%, Yugoslavia 12%, III Reich/Germany – 10%. For the sake of comparison, the Atlantic rim suffered as follows: France – 1,3%, UK –0,9%, the US – 0,3%.) Yugoslavs also firmly opposed Stalinism right after the WWII. Bismarck of southern Slavs – Tito doctrinated the so-called active peaceful coexistence after the 1955 Bandung south-south conference, and assembled the non-Aligned movement (NAM) in its founding, Belgrade conference of 1961. Steadily for decades, the NAM and Yugoslavia have been directly tranquilizing the mega confrontation of two superpowers and satellites grouped around them (and balancing their irresponsible calamities all over the globe). In Europe, the continent of the sharpest ideological divide, with practically two halves militarily confronting each other all over the core sectors of the continent, and with its southern flank of Portugal, Spain and Greece (and Turkey sporadically) run by the military Juntas, Yugoslavia was remarkably mild island of stability, moderation and wisdom. Domestically, Yugoslavia had a unique constitutional setup of a strictly decentralized federation. Although being a formal democracy in its political life, many aspects of its social and economic practices as well as largely enjoyed personal freedoms and liberties featured the real democracy. The concept of self-management (along with the Self-managing Interest Community model) in economic, social, linguistic and cultural affairs gained a lot of external attention and admiration in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. Still, there was neither enough sympathies nor mercy in the towards-EU-heading Europe, to save either the Yugoslav people from an immense suffering or the symbol that this country represented domestically and internationally.

the reformist government of Yugoslavia and basically sealed-off its faith. Intentionally or not, indecisive and contradictory political messages of the Maastricht-time EU – from the Genscher/Mock explicate encouragement of separatism, and then back to the full reconfirmation of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Yugoslavia – were bringing this multinational Slavic state into schizophrenic situation. Consequently, these mixed or burial European political voices – most observes would agree – directly accelerated inner confrontations of the Yugoslav peoples. Soon after, Atlantic-Central Europe axis contained the western Balkans, letting the slaughterhouse to last essentially unchecked for years.<sup>25</sup> At the same time, it busily mobilized all resources needed to extend its own strategic depth eastwards (later formalized by the so-called enlargements of 1995, of 2004, of 2007 and finally of 2013). This is the only answer how can genocide and the EU enlargement go hand in hand at the same time on such a small continent.

No wonder that the East has soon after abandoned its identity quest, and capitulated. Its final civilizational defeat came along: the Eastern Europe's Slavs has silently handed over one of its most important debates –that of Slavism and own identity– solely to the recuperating Russophone Europe.

As said, the latest loss of Russophone Europe in its geopolitical and ideological confrontation with the West meant colossal changes in Eastern Europe. We may look into geopolitical surrounding of at the-time largest eastern European state, Poland, as an illustration of how dramatic was it.<sup>26</sup> All three land neighbors of Poland; Eastern Germany (as the only country to join the EU without any accession procedure, but by pure act of *Anschluss*), Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union have disappeared overnight. At present, Polish border countries are a two-decade-old novelty on the European political map. Further on, if we wish to compare the number of dissolutions of states worldwide over the last 50 years, the Old continent suffered as many as all other continents combined: American continent – none, Asia – one (Indonesia/ East Timor), Africa – two (Sudan/South Sudan and Ethiopia/Eritrea), and Europe – three.

Interestingly, each and every dissolution in Europe was primarily related to Slavs (Slavic peoples) living in multiethnic and multi-linguistic (not in the Atlantic Europe's conscripted pure single-nation) state. Further on, all three – meaning, every second dissolution in the world – were situated exclusively and only in Eastern Europe. That region has witnessed a total dissolution of Czechoslovakia (western Slavs) and Yugoslavia (southern Slavs, in 3 waves), while one state disappeared from Eastern Europe (DDR) as to strengthen and enlarge the front of Central Europe (Western Germany). Finally, countless centripetal turbulences severely affected Eastern Europe following the dissolution of the SU (eastern Slavs) on its frontiers.

Irredentism in the UK, Spain, Belgium, France and Italy, or Denmark (over Faroe Islands and Greenland) is far elder, stronger and deeper. However, the dissolutions in Eastern

25 The brief but bloody 1989 televised episode of a witch-hunt, followed by the hasty extrajudicial and savage killing of Romanian president and his wife Ceausescu, shocked the world – but not for long. The first ever fully televised war with its highly disturbing pictures of genocidal Armageddon came by early 1990s. It remained on TV sets for years all over Europe, especially to its East. Although the Atlantic-Central Europe axis kept repeating *we do not know who is shooting whom in this powder keg and it is too early to judge*, this –seemingly indecisive, wait-and-see, attitude– was in fact an undeniably clear message to everyone in Eastern Europe: No III way will be permitted. East was simply expected to bandwagon – to passively comply, not to actively engage itself.

26 Ethnically, linguistically and religiously one of the most homogenous countries of Europe, Poland in its post-communist concepts reinvigorates the faith (as being, past the days of Tadeusz Mazowiecki, massively de-Slavicized). No wonder as the Polish-born Karol Józef Wojtyła served the Roman Curia as *Pontifex Maximus* from 1978, to be replaced by the German-born Joseph Ratzinger in 2005. Prizing Roman-Catholicism over ethnicity, even harshly denouncing any Slavic sentiment as a dangerous *roter russischer Panslawismus*, 'fortress' Poland effectively isolates itself on a long-run as none of its neighbors is Catholic. To the contrary, the four fifths of its land-borders are shared with other Slavic states. To externally mobilize, the elites (in any Eastern European state) would need an appealing intellectual case – not a mere ethno-religious chauvinism.

Europe took place irreversibly and overnight, while Atlantic Europe still remained intact, with Central Europe even enlarging territorially and expanding economically.

### **Deindustrialized, rarified, demoralized, over-indebted and de-Slavicized**

As early as in XVI century, the Eastern European thought – in the person of famous Sarajevan, Bosnian Machiavelli, Kafiya Pruščak – is spelling a universal and far reaching wisdom that *progress is both the focus of a vision and attainable reality for all*.<sup>27</sup> If this futuristic assertion is still accurate, then the progress itself is unthinkable without social cohesion. That would, consequently, necessitate shared interest which only comes with thorough debates affecting all segments of society (or at least its major interest groups). Is today's Eastern Europe a classic case of indirect rule? Is it a deep imperial periphery of nominally independent native rulers, while in reality the true power holder resides outside, although is domestically supported by a dense web of NGOs, multinational corporations and locally handpicked 'elites'?

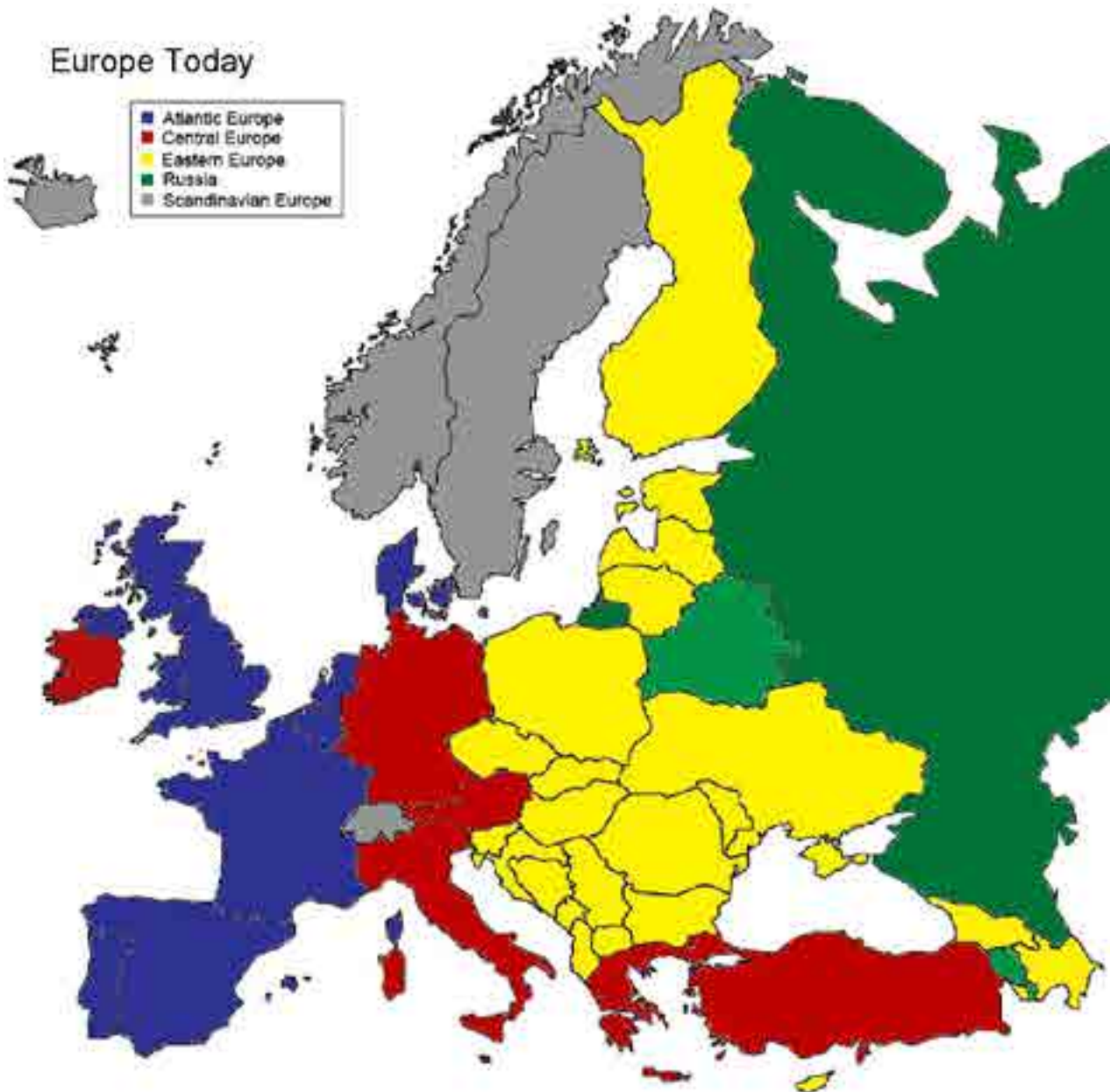
Accidentally or not, **for the last 25 years, our reporting on Eastern Europe was rather a matter of faith than a reflection of the empirical reality. This 'rhetoric' was dominated by fragmented intellectual trends that are more cultural (e.g. poetry, paintings, film, etc.) than coherently economic and geo-political in focus as they should be.** *How one defines a challenge largely determines the response* – effectively points out Brzezinski. Hence, the arts will always elaborate on emotions, science will search for and examine the facts. After all, where is no opportunity, a hope is on offer. And for the realization of opportunity a knowledge will be needed. For a lame hope, a belief is enough.

If the front of Atlantic-Central Europe lately suffered (an economic) problem which has been diagnosed as a distributional and compositional, then who and when is holistically and scientifically to examine the Eastern-Rusophone Europe and its burning geo-economic (distributional, compositional), socio-political/ideological (space-time in history) and geopolitical (logical and areal) problem? **There is a lot of (pre-paid and post-paid) attention diverting** and velvet-silencing, **but** besides this cacophonous noise **where is a serious research** on that? If the *equality of outcome* (income) was a communist egalitarian dogma, is the belief in *equality of opportunity* a tangible reality offered to Eastern Europe or just a deceiving utopia sold to the conquered, plundered, ridiculed and cannibalized *countries in transition*?

Thus, what is the current standing of Eastern Europe – state of its economy, the health of its society and the efficiency of its governance? By contrasting and comparing available HDI data (UN DP's Human Development Index) and all relevant WB, OECD, UNCTAD, ILO and WHO socio-economic and health indexes including the demographic trends of last two decades, we can easily spot a considerable green, economic and socio-human growth in Asia, in Latin America and moderate growth elsewhere. The only trend of negative growth (incl. the suicide and functional illiteracy figures) comparable by its duration and severity to this of Eastern Europe, is situated only in (the central-west, central to Horn/central-east portions of) sub-Saharan Africa. Euphemisms such as *countries in transition* or *new Europe* cannot hide a disconsolate fact that Eastern Europe has been treated for 25 years as defeated belligerent, as spoils of war which the West won in its war against communist Russia.<sup>28</sup>

27 Taken from Kafiya Pruščak, H. (1596), *Universal theory of the global governing wisdoms* (Usul Al-hikam fi nizami-el-alem, org. Temelji mudrosti o uređenju svijeta). At the time, he was nicknamed in Western Europe as the Oriental Machiavelli.

28 A sharp drop in LE (life expectancy) in Russia, from age 72 to 59, is something faced only by nations at war. The evidence



It concludes that (self-)fragmented, deindustrialized, rapidly aged rarified and depopulated, (and de-Slavicized) Eastern Europe is probably the least influential region of the world – one of the very few underachievers. Obediently submissive and therefore, rigid in dynamic environment of the promising 21<sup>st</sup> century, Eastern Europeans are among last remaining passive downloaders and slow-receivers on the otherwise blossoming stage of the world's creativity, politics and economy.<sup>29</sup> Seems, Europe still despises and hates its own victims.

East does not exercise its political sovereignty (gone with the EU), its military sovereignty (gone with the NATO), its economic and monetary sovereignty (gone with the massive domestic de-industrialization 'preached' by the IMF, EBRD, EIB and eventually ECB),<sup>30</sup>

that Russia has suffered such a steep decline, unreversed ever since the collapse of the Soviet Union, is unprecedented in a peace-time history of any industrialized nation. Although not so alarming like in the post-Soviet Russia, the rest of post-Soviet republics and Eastern Europe closely follow the same LA pattern – not to mention devastating birth rates, *brain drain* and other demographic data. E.g. the projected LA of the today's born Berliner is around 100 years, while of Muscovite is only 67 years. Simply, the East is unable to (re-) produce its own life. Or, once it is conceived, to keep the best of it at home.

<sup>29</sup> With some exceptions of *Visegrád* countries (such as Poland or Czech Republic, and lately Hungary) sporadically opposing a constant bandwagoning (but even that only in the domain of narrow EU fiscal or economic matters), Eastern Europe of today is unable to conceive and effectively promulgate a self-emancipating, balanced and multivector foreign policy. Fergusson goes as far as to claim for Eastern Europeans that: "they looked at Brussels (of NATO) the way former British colonies obeyed everything said and done in London."

<sup>30</sup> "The entry criteria for Eastern European states was particularly costly: the so-called small and open economies, de-indust-

and its financial sovereignty (gone by full penetration of German, Austrian and Swedish banks).<sup>31</sup> Most of the Eastern European states do not control a single commercial bank on their territory.<sup>32</sup> Additionally, this region does not effectively control its media space – media there (of too-often dubious orientation and ownership) is discouraging, disorienting and silencing any sense of national pride, influence over destiny direction and to it related calls for self-(re) assessment. East is sharply aged and depopulated – the worst of its kind ever – which in return will make any future prospect of a full and decisive generational interval simply impossible.<sup>33</sup> *Honduras-ization* of Eastern Europe is full and complete.<sup>34</sup> If the post-WWII Soviet occupation of Eastern Europe was overt and brutal, this one is tacit but subversive and deeply corrosive.<sup>35</sup>

Interestingly, the physical conquest, usually referred to as the EU enlargement, was

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realized and over-indebted didn't have any chance to be equal partners. For most of them, FDI (Foreign Direct Investment) is the only economic solution, which turned them into colonies..." – admitted even the Nobel laureate, economist Stiglitz in his *The Price of Inequality*. Moreover, the overly strong and rigid exchange rate of the domestic currencies in Eastern Europe is only good for foreign landers. It awards importers while disadvantages domestic manufacturing base and home exporters. This outdated anti-growth and anti-green economic policy has been universally abandoned long ago, even by the LDC (the UN-listed Least developed countries). No wonder that the GDP in the most of Eastern European states is below its pre-1990s levels, and their ecological footprint index is of an alarming trend.

31 According to findings of the Budapest Institute of Economics (Corvinus University of Budapest, Hungary), for the past two decades, the volume of Austrian banking sector has increased 370%. How is this spectacular percentage achievable for the country of a flat domestic economic and negative demographic growth? This covert occupation of south-eastern Europe by the foreign financial sector did not create new jobs or re-create any industrial base there. As the Budapest Institute concluded aftermath, it was only meant to dry-out the remaining liquid assets (and private savings) from the rapidly pauperized, defeated belligerent. In 1914, Austria controlled banks as well; in Croatia, Bosnia, Romania, Serbia, Hungary, southern Poland and western Ukraine. However, at that time, it also had a strict governing obligation as all of them were a part of the Monarchy. By having recognized the formal sovereignty to each of these entities, Austria today (like Sweden towards the three Baltic States in the northeast flank of Europe, and Germany in the central sector of Eastern Europe) has no governing obligations whatsoever. It can easily externally socialize (externalize) all its costs including banking risks, and individualize all profits (internalize), yielding it only for itself. Hence, the EU accession criteria, combined with a nominal independence of Eastern European entities (pacified by the *pre-paid* media and guided by the *post-paid* 'elites'), means that the economic and other assets are syphoned out, but the countries have to take a burden of the state maintenance solely on themselves.

32 Current labor relations in the most of Eastern Europe (Rusophone Europe, too) resembles pictures of the 18<sup>th</sup> rather than of the 21<sup>st</sup> century's conditions, especially in the private sector of employment. It is all with a weak or even totally absent trade unionism, dismal labor standards, as well as the poor protection of other essential social, environmental and health rights. "We have stringent labor conditions to the unbearable maximum, so that the few self-styled 'top managers' can play golf more frequently and for a longer time... how can you possibly build any social cohesion when disproportionately many suffer for the dubious benefit of the asocial, predatory few..." – confessed to me the Ambassador of one of the largest Eastern European countries who served as a mayor of his country's capital, before his ambassadorship in Vienna.

33 Some ten years ago, for the special OSCE forum for demographics, I warned: "...lasting political, social and economic changes including very important technological breakthroughs – throughout our history – primarily occurred at generational intervals. This was an engine of our evolution...Presently, with demographically collapsing East European societies (natality rates, generational and brain drain), the young cohort will never constitute more than a tiny minority – in the sea of aged, backward-looking, psychologically defeatistic and biologically incapable, conservative *status quo* keepers. Hence, neither the generational change that brings fresh socio-political ideas, nor technological breakthrough –which usually comes along – will successfully ever take place in future of such demographics." (For a detailed demographic outlook and tentative recommendations/ conclusions, see: Bajrektarevic, A. (2005), *Our Common Futures: EURO-MED Human Capital beyond 2020*, Crans Montana Forum, Monaco, 2005, as well as Bajrektarevic, A. (2005), *Green/Policy Paper Submitted to the closing plenary of the Ministerial (Chairmanship summarizing the recommendations and conclusions of the OSCE Ministerial Summit Prague 2005)*, OSCE Documents EEA 2005.)

34 Eastern Europe is *Hondurized* – this term refers to an operationalization of Monroe Doctrine in Central America, by which Washington allows its strategic neighborhood to choose their own domestic political and economic systems to an acceptable degree, while the US maintains its final (hemispheric) say over their external orientation. The so-called Brezhnev doctrine (of irreversibility of communist gains) postulated the Soviet (Suslov-Stalin) equivalent to Honduras-ization – *Finlandization*.

35 Eastern Europe, the (under-)world of dramatic aging which, is additionally demographically knocked down by the massive generational and brain drain. Passed the dismantling of the communist order, these *emerging economies, countries in transition* of the *new Europe* contain reactionary forces (often glorifying the wrong side of history), predatory 'elites' and masses of disillusioned (in a life without respect and dignity, humiliated and ridiculed in the triviality of their lasting decline). Even if the new jobs are created or old kept, they are in fact smoke screens: Mostly a (foreign-loans financed) state-sponsored poverty programs where armies of the underemployed and misemployed cry out miserable wages in dead-end jobs. Former Slovakian cabinet minister laments in private: "Our 'liberated East' lives on foreign loans, or in the best case as the industrial suburbia of West Europe, having these few 'generously' franchised factories like *Renault*, *VW* or *Hugo Boss*. Actually, these are just automotive assembly lines and tailor shops – something formally done only in the III World countries. Apart from the Russian *Energia-Soyuz* (space-program related) delivery system, what else do we have domestically created anywhere from Bratislava to Pacific? Is there any indigenous high-end technical product of past decades known? ... Our EU accession deals are worse than all *Capitulation agreements* combined that the Ottomans and Imperial China have ever signed in their history."

primarily the US-led NATO one, and only then the EU enterprise. Simply, no eastern European country entered the EU before joining the NATO at first. It should not be forgotten that the NATO was and remains to be an instrument (institutionalized political justifier) of the US physical, military presence in Europe. Or, as Lord Ismay vocally defined it in 1949: 'to keep the Russians out, the Americans in, and the Germans down'. The fact that the US remained in Western Germany, and that the Soviet Army pulled out from Eastern Germany did not mean 'democratization' or 'transition'. It was a direct military defeat of the Gorbachev Russia in the duel over the core sectors of Central and Eastern Europe. As direct spoils of war, DDR disappeared from the political map of Europe being absorbed by Western Germany, while the American Army still resides in unified Germany. In fact, more than half of the US 75 major overseas military bases are situated in Europe. Up to this day, Germany hosts 25 of them.

Admittedly, by the early 1990s, the 'security hole'— Eastern Europe, has been approached in multifold fashion: Besides the (pre-Maastricht EC and post-Maastricht) EU and NATO, there was the Council of Europe, the CSCE (after the 1993 Budapest summit, OSCE), the EBRD and EIB. All of them were sending the political, economic, human dimension, commercial signals, assistance and expertise.<sup>36</sup> These moves were making both sides very nervous; Russia becoming assertive (on its former peripheries) and Eastern Europe defiantly dismissive.<sup>37</sup> Until this very day, each of them is portraying the NATO enterprise as the central security consideration: One as a must-go, and another as a no-go.<sup>38</sup>

No wonder that the absolute pivot of Eastern Europe— Ukraine, is a grand hostage of that very dilemma: Between the eastern pan-Slavic hegemony and western 'imperialism of free market'.<sup>39</sup> For Ukraine, Russia is a geographic, socio-historic, cultural and linguistic

<sup>36</sup> Through the EBRD–EIB conditionalities and EU accession criteria, Eastern Europe was dictated to practically dismantle its essential industrial and service base. This dictatum upon defeated belligerent – euphemistically called *countries in transition* or *new Europe* – was followed by loans and assets received from the EU Accession and Structural funds. It was 'sold' to the East as award and as such presented to the deceived population. (However, it was rather to tranquilize the population at large and to pacify their local scenes, not at all aimed to modernize, re-industrialize or diversify economy, or to make production and service sector more efficient or competitive. Consequently, it was merely to subsidize the deteriorating purchasing power of the East – to make the peoples there accustomed to and encouraged for the foreign goods and services.) Thus, the funds were predominantly consumed for the western commodities. Ergo, Atlantic and Central Europe extended themselves geographically, while economically they skillfully managed to subsidize their own industrial base. To this very end, Eastern Europe's elites readily took loans, while –in return– laying down sovereignty in issuing the guaranties. By doing so, they indebted their own states beyond bearing, and hence, they finally eliminated their own countries as any current or future economic competitor or politico-military challenger.

<sup>37</sup> Since the end of WWII, there was no other external military interventions but to the Europe's East. To be accurate, in its long history (earlier and nearly double longer than of the Warsaw pact), the only two interventions of NATO ever conducted in Europe were both taking place solely on Eastern European soil. While the two Russian (covert) interventions aimed at its strategic neighborhood (former Soviet republics, heavily inhabited by ethnic Russian; Abkhazia-South Ossetia and Crimea-East Ukraine) and were (unsuccessfully) justified as the encirclement preemption, the US-led NATO intervened overtly. In both NATO cases (Bosnia and Serbia-Kosovo), it was well beyond any membership territory, and short of any UN-endorsed mandate, meaning without a real international legitimacy. "Humanitarian intervention in Kosovo was never exactly what it appeared... It was a use of imperial power to support a self-determination claim by a national minority"– wrote Michael Ignatieff about the 1990s Balkans events, as fresh and accurate as if reporting was from Sevastopol in spring 2014.

<sup>38</sup> It is anticipated that Iran (and Syria) on the Russian southwest flank serve as a pivotal security buffer. Indeed, Teheran is in constant need of a diplomatic cover from Moscow – as it internationally seeks, at least, a turn-key technology legalization for itself. In return, Iran refrains from its own Islamic projection on and it shields the Caucasus and Central Asia – considered by Russians as their strategic backyard – from the assertive Wahhabism. On the other hand, boldness of Iran endorses a perfect pretext for a reinforced missile shield. This – interestingly enough – rather encircles Russia then it deters Iran, as the recent architecting of the Missile shield predominantly to Eastern Europe (from the Baltics, Poland, Czech Republic and Romania) has showed. There are exceptionally few reinforced Patriot missile batteries (of adequate quantities and configurations) stationed e.g. in Turkey– the only NATO member of a close proximity, capable to engage Syria or Iran. Hence, while such a missile hype does not deter Iran (does not democratize Turkey, does not bring stability to Iraq, nor the regime change in Syria), it still achieves a lot. It seriously compromises the 1990 CFE Treaty, since the US unilaterally withdrew from the 30-years-in-place ABM treaty in 2002, and poses a challenge to the OSCE guarded politico-military/CSBM cooperation among the Organization's 56 member states.

<sup>39</sup> This is further burdened by the *imperialism in a hurry* – an inflammable mix of the Lithuanian-Polish past traumas and German 'manifest destiny' of being historically yet again ill-fated; *impatient for quick results* – simply, unable to capitalize on its previous successes. One of my German students recently very vividly satirized: "The irony of unintended consequence is that the intense relationship between *Über-mutti* (Chancellor Merkel) and boxman at large Klitschko is interpreted by Moscow as asexual,

reality. These days, this reality is far less reflected upon than the seducing, but distant Euro-Atlantic club. Ukraine for Russia is more than a lame western-flank' geopolitical pivot. For Moscow, Kiev is an emotional place – an indispensable bond of historio-civilizational attachment – something that makes and sustains Russia both Christian and European. Putin clearly redlined it: Sudden annexation of Crimea (return to its pre-1954 status) was an unpleasant and humiliating surprise that will bring a lot of foreign policy hangover for both the NATO and EU. Thus drifting chopped off and away, a failed state beyond rehabilitation, Ukraine itself is a prisoner of this domesticated security drama. This false dilemma so tragically imploded within this blue state, of a 50:50 polarized population, over the question where the country belongs – in space, time and side of history. Conclusively, Eastern Europe is further twisting, while gradually combusted between Ukrainization and Pakistanization.<sup>40</sup> The rest of Europe is already shifting the costs of its own foreign policy moves by 'fracking' its households with a considerably higher energy bills.

### **Least to the East – Nest for the West**

The EU has secured itself on the southeastern flank, too. But, why does it matter? Residing between ancient Greece and ancient Rome, between Constantinople and Vatican, this flank of Europe also known as the Balkans is situated in one of the most fascinating locations of the world. It is a cradle of the eldest European civilization– thus, it is more than symbolically important. This antique theater is a place of the strong historio-civilizational attachment, the credibility and authenticity bond of Europeanness and its Christendom. And, our home, is always both, a place and the feeling. Less esoteric but equally important is the fact that the Balkans actually represents, along with the MENA-Caucasus, the only existing land corridor that connects any three world's continents. Therefore, it is an absolute imperative for the external/peripheral powers to dominate such a pivotal geo-economic and geopolitical theater by simply keeping its center soft. That means that the core geographic sector has to be fragmented, isolated, depopulated and antagonized (e.g. by pre-empting, preventing or hindering the emancipation that might come through any indigenous socio-political modernization and economic diversification). This is the very same imperative that has remained a dominant rational of inner European and Asian *machtpolitik* for centuries.

In the course of last few centuries, the Balkans was either influenced or controlled by Russia on the east (also by the Ottomans), Turkey on the south and center, Austria on the north and northwest, with the pockets of Anglo-French influence, too (Greece, Serbia, Albania). This reads that ever since the late 17<sup>th</sup> century (precisely, from 1686 when Russia joined the Holy League, and past the subsequent 1699 Treaty of Karlovci), the peripheries kept center of the Balkans soft, as their own playground. The only (pre-modern and modern) period when the center was strong enough to prevail, marks the time of the Balkans' Bismarck: Tito of Yugoslavia.

Presently, the Eastern Balkans (Romania & Bulgaria) is cutoff from any Russian influence by being hastily admitted to the Union (2007). Turkey is contained by Greece (1980) and

but not as apolitical." To say, overly cosmopolitan interest for a faith of foreigners living in Germany for someone who infamously said: "multiculturalism is dead in Europe..." (Sarkozy, Cameron and Merkel openly and repeatedly viewed and diagnosed 'death of multiculturalism', as if the cluster of Atlantic-Central Europe's national-states lived a long, cordial and credible history of multiculturalism on its soil.

40 *Ukrainization* could be attributed to eastern and western Slavs– who are fighting distinctions without significant difference. *Pakistanization* itself should describe the southern Slavs' scenery: In lieu of truth and reconciliation, guilt is offered as a control mechanism, following the period of an unchecked escalation, ranging from a hysteria-of-a-small-difference to a crime-of-otherness purge.

Cyprus (2004), and is waiting on the EU doorstep for decades without any clear prospect to join.<sup>41</sup> All that, as if it follows the old rational of the 1814 Vienna Congress as well as the Bismarck's dictatum to Andrassy at the 1878 Congress of Berlin. Reinvigorating these geo-economic and strategic imperatives, Austria does not hesitate to add and shed emotional charge: it is nearly neuralgic on the Turkish EU accession, Russian presence<sup>42</sup> or inner Slavic strength.

(It was not by chance that nearly all of the main European military campaigns outside of the Russian front conducted by the Nazi occupator during the WWII – from Kozara to Drvar – were taking place exclusively in Bosnia. Simply, who controls Bosnia, controls pretty much the rest of the Balkans, and from there the access to Black Sea, Caucasus–Caspian as well as further to the Afroasian proper, too. It was also not accidental that Austrian arrogant imperial occupation of Bosnian and its subsequent brutal annexation was one of the key diplomatic challenges from the Berlin Congress until the WWI outbreak. This careless Austro-Habsburg colonial expropriation of Bosnia has only accelerated, escalated and magified the forthcoming WWI slaughterhouse, in which southern and western Slavs were forced or decived to kill each others and eastern Slavs. Southern Slavs will readily butcher themselves – as useful idiots – for the benefit of Central Europe soon again, in 1940s and 1990s.)

In an attempt to control the core sectors of the Balkans, Austria jealously keeps the highest post in the Office of High Representative for Bosnia in its hands.<sup>43</sup> At the same time, it is the main protégé of Croatia's bid for the EU membership (2013). Deindustrialized, depopulated, over-indebted and increasingly de-Slavicized, Croatia – for that matter, of course, further fortifies the Austro-influence deeper in the Balkan proper.

The rest of the Western Balkans is still finishing the dissolution of Yugoslavia, by forming

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41 Why is the biggest and richest city of Europe, Istanbul, (still) outside the Union? Does it illustrate a Huntingtonian fact that the EU is not as multi-religious multilateral system as its younger (twin) brother – ASEAN, but only a nest for the western Christian Ummah? True, but not completely. The last spot of Europe with both economic and demographic growth is Turkey. Just one more European country also has a steady economic growth – Russia. Another commonality for them is that both are outside the system which portrays itself as a truly Europe-cosmopolitan and pan-European. There was another time when Europe claimed to have a comprehensive multilateral setting, while keeping two pivotal powers outside the system– interwar period. No wonder that the League of Nations did not prevent but, on contrary, only accelerated the pre-WWII events with its 'system error', (in)action and lack of outreach.

42 Following the Nazi defeat achieved solely by the Soviet troops, and after 10 years of occupation co-shared by the four occupying powers, the statehood restoration of Austria was finally conducted in 1955. That came at a time when Moscow could have easily accepted partition of that land. Conversely to the common belief, it was the Atlantic flank, most notably the US and UK who were very suspectful over the recognition of Austrian post-WWII governments. A political hindrance that constantly questioned and considerably slowed down the Austrian post-WWII rehabilitation and emancipation.

43 Colloquially known as the *Colonial Office*, OHR (Office of the High Representative) is the (US military base induced, the 19<sup>th</sup> century Congress look alike) 'internationally' set body with the supreme (legislative) prerogatives and highest executive (political) powers in the country. Disproportionate to its powers is the very poor achievement of the OHR. This non-UN-, non-OSCE-, and non-EU mandated office is increasingly criticized for its shadowy influence and opaque decision-making. Many high ranking Bosnians will quite openly admit that the top OHR officers are rather promulgating their respective national commercial interests in Bosnia than working on the very OHR mandate to stabilize the country. Whatever is true, the slim results are really worrying. Since its inauguration in 1995, the post of the chief OHR executive – High Representative (nicknamed as *Colonial Governor*), is dominated by Atlantic-Central Europe – 6 out of 7 individuals. With the tasks considerably smaller but of the earnings close to those of the UN Secretary General, monthly income of the High Representative is €24,500 plus additional benefits (unpublicized), and is of course free of taxation. Austria managed – like no other state – to get the top OHR post twice, and to stay in that office for already 9 out of 19 years. Domestically, this Alpine Republic is regularly criticized for its dismal score on protection of minorities, especially the south Slavic minorities such as Croats and Slovenes. Austrian regional authorities even ignored the strict orders of its own Constitutional Court to install the bilingual Slavic-German signs. Moreover, one of the powerful regional Governors even entered into a defying, humiliating and elsewhere unthinkable public debate with the Austrian Constitutional Court President. Amazingly enough, this is the country whose former President Kurt Waldheim was present at the worst atrocities against civilians in northwest Bosnia (Kozara and Neretva, notorious Operation *Schwarz I* and *Schwarz II*) during the WWII as the Military Intelligence Army Officer of Hitler's Reich. (For the successful genocidal Slavic-race cleansing of sick and wounded, pregnant or women with minor children, and elderly by the German forces in Kozara in summer 1942, future Austrian president –member of the Nazi party since 1939 and holder of the Iron Cross since 1941 – was outstandingly decorated with the Silver Medal of the Crown.) Moreover, this was the first and only country ever under the EU sanctions (for inviting its far-right political party to the coalition government in 2000). Austria was strongly condemned and sharply politically isolated by all EU members, but not in a devastated and terrified Bosnia, where it continued to keep the post of the High Representative all throughout that period.

the ever smaller, incapacitated un-greened and depopulated mini nation-states. (The prevailing political culture of the Western Balkans is provincial, anti-intellectual, xenophobic and irresponsible anti-politics). Less than a decade after President Tito's death, the tectonic changes in the Eastern bloc have caused the dramatic change of geopolitical position of Yugoslavia and the NAM. The external players and the local élites which they chose to boost and cooperate with, had silently agreed that for the amortization of revived Anglo-French, Germanophone, Russian and Turkish (traditional), and the US (non-traditional) projections on the region, the Southern Slavs should (de-industrialize, agonize, de-Slavicize, rarify, and) live in far more than two states. In the absence of compromise among the major external geopolitical projectors, the region still undergoes the fragmentational erosion, being kept (like once upon a time Germany) as a soft center for strong peripheral pressures.<sup>44</sup>

Bosnia is the best example of such an external intrusion, and of the powers that purposely set a dysfunctional government. No wonder, the only surviving state of the multiethnic constituency anywhere from Adriatic to Pacific, Bosnia suffers enormous external pressures.<sup>45</sup> Although assertive, none of the Four + the US wants to prevail in this core sector of the Balkans (and solely take a burden), but wishes to keep its presence strong enough as to observe and deter others.<sup>46</sup>

Nevertheless, ever since the Antique Roman times, the Southern Slavs territories (even all of the Balkans) have always existed within the larger multinational entities (be it Byzantium, Hungary, the Ottomans, the Habsburg Empire or Yugoslavia) – hardly ever in more than two states. Accommodation to a life in the numerous nano nation-state-alikes is a historical novelty. Therefore, it could be only a transitory stage for the Western Balkans.<sup>47</sup> The lasting solution may appear with the return to a historical legacy –life in a larger, multinational entity.

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44 How deep is the rabbit hole... Republic of Macedonia is a good demonstration case for it. No other European country was forced to abandon its own constitutional name, and seek the international recognition under the strange name of a saturated country that does not exist anymore for over 20 years – Former Yugoslav Federal Republic of Macedonia.

45 In his well-publicized Sarajevo speech, Turkish Foreign Minister Davutoglu returned the usual EU rhetorics back to the European front-yard: *"...I have to say that my country is disappointed that an important religious symbol, that of a minaret, has been subjected to a referendum in Switzerland. It is a mistake to put a fundamental religious right to a popular vote and I hope that this mistake will be rectified. The spread of human rights and fundamental freedoms may not have been possible, had countries chosen to put specific freedoms to referenda. It might be useful to recall that the Franciscan Catholic Monastery in Fojnica, some 35 miles from here-Sarajevo, holds the original document of an edict issued by the Ottoman Sultan on 28 May 1463. This edict protects the religious rights of Bosnian Christians and the sanctity of their churches. It is one of the oldest documents on religious freedom (nearly two centuries elder than the much celebrated freedoms of Westphalia, rem.aut.) in Europe ever."* (BiH MVP Archives, 14 DEC 2009)

46 By far the largest EU Delegation ever run is the Mission in Bosnia (Delegation of the EU to BiH). As the Mission's staff kept increasing over the last two decades, so did the distance of Bosnia from any viable prospect of joining the Union. Many around are bitterly joking if the Mission's true mandate is – in fact – to hinder, and not to assist the EU integration. According to the UN and ICTY, Bosnia has suffered genocide on its territory – the worst atrocities on European soil since the end of WWII. Judging the speed of admission process offered to Bosnia, seems that the EU does not like its victims. Sarajevo 20 years after is a perfect litmus paper: Bosnia is an EU barometer for the ethical/moral deficit of the Union and its members!

47 Bosnia as a habitual mix of cultures, ethnicities and religions has a historical legacy and strong quality of integration, a cohesive spill-over potential for the region. Therefore, instead of conceptual politics after the war, the territorial anti-politics (with the confrontational political culture) was at first externally imposed by the so-called Dayton Peace Accord, and further on strongly encouraged and supported in everyday practice for nearly two decades. It is clear that any conceptual, therefore inclusive politics, would sooner or later end up in a reconciliatory, integrative approach. Perpetuating the anti-politics in Bosnia aims at keeping the former Yugoslav (political, cultural, economic and territorial) space separated, antagonized – fragmented into little xenophobic and inward-looking quasi nation-states. Moreover, as the only surviving (last) state of the multiethnic constituency anywhere from Adriatic to Pacific, Bosnia has to remain purposely dysfunctional. Slavs elsewhere have to be painfully reminded that a single-ethnos based, nano-to-small sized nation-state is the best option for them.

## Cyclical. Cynical! Clinical?

The end of the Cold War came abruptly, overnight. Many in the West dream about it, but nobody have really seen it coming. The Warsaw Pact, Red Army in DDR, Berlin Wall, Soviet Union, one after the other, vanished rapidly, unexpectedly. There was no ceasefire, no peace conference, no formal treaty and guaranties, no expression of interests and settlement. Only the wonderer-boyboy face expression of that time Foreign Minister Shevardnadze who circles around and unconvincingly repeats: “we now better understand each other”. In his luminary work ‘The New Asian Hemisphere’, Mahbubani accurately concludes that Gorbachev – *not understanding the real success of Western strength and power, handed over the Soviet empire and got nothing in return*.<sup>48</sup> Does our history only appear overheated, but is essentially calmly pre-determined? Is it directional or conceivable, dialectic and eclectic or cyclical, and therefore cynical?

The Soviet Union was far more of a classic continental military empire (overtly brutal; rigid, authoritative, anti-individual, omnipresent, secretive), while the US was more a financial empire (covertly coercive; hierarchical, yet asocial, exploitive, pervasive, polarizing). *Bear* of permafrost vs. *Fish* of the warm seas. Athens vs. Sparta. Phoenicia vs. Rome... Consequently, the Soviets went bankrupt by mid 1980s – they cracked under its own weight, imperially overstretched. So did the Americans – the ‘white man burden’ fractured them already by the Vietnam war, with the *Nixon shock* only officializing it. However, the US imperium managed to survive and to outlive the Soviets. How? The United States managed its financial capital (or an illusion of it) insofar as to be(come) a debtor empire through the Wall Street guaranties.<sup>49</sup> Titanium-made *Sputnik* vs. gold mine of printed-paper... Nothing epitomizes this better than the words of the longest serving US Federal Reserve’s boss, Greenspan, who famously said to then French President Chirac: “True, dollar is our currency, but your problem”. Hegemony vs. *hegemoney*.

This very nature of power explains why the Americans have missed to take the mankind into completely other direction; towards the non-confrontational, decarbonized, de-monetized/de-financialized and de-psychologized, the self-realizing and green humankind. They had such a chance when, past the Gorbachev’s unconditional surrender of the Soviet bloc, the US – unconstrained as a ‘lonely superpower’ – solely dictated terms of reference.<sup>50</sup> Sadly enough, that was not the first missed opportunity

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48 Or, by the words of the senior UN diplomat who, contemplating with me over the question whether a middle-power foreign policy is adequate for a great power, recently told me in Geneva: “The difference between Russia and the Soviet Union is that the Federation desperately looks around for respect, but leaves the world responsibilities solely to the US. As known, admiration and respect is earned not given for free.” Clearly, the post-Soviet Russia avoids any strategic global competition with the US. Still, it feels rather insulted with the current strategic global partnership – as both the US and China treat Moscow as a junior partner. Is it possible to (re-) gain a universal respect without any ideological appeal? That could be debated, but one thing is certain; even the mid-size powers such as Brazil, Indonesia or Turkey have moved on from a bandwagoning, reactive, opportune and slow to an emancipating proactive, accurate and extensive foreign policy.

49 How was a debtor empire born? One of the biggest (nearly schizophrenic) dilemmas of liberalism, ever since David Hume and Adam Smith, was an insight into reality; whether the world is essentially *Hobbesian* or *Kantian*. The state will rob you, but in absence of it, the pauperized masses will mob you. The *invisible hand* of Smith’s followers have found the satisfactory answer – sovereign debt. This ‘invention’ means: relatively strong government of the state, heavily indebted – firstly to local merchants, than to foreigners. With such a *mixed blessing*, no empire can easily demonetize its legitimacy.

50 One of the biggest ideological victories of the US is the fact that, only two decades after the Soviet collapse, Russia today has an economy dominated by oil-rich class of billionaires. The assets of this new *caste* are 20% of country’s GDP –by far the largest share held by the ultra-rich in any major economy. The second largest ideological victory for Americans is reported by the *New York Times*. It states that the outgoing Chinese President, leader of the country that officially still rests on ideology of oppressed working class, has allegedly accumulated family wealth of 1,7 billion in less than a decade of his rule (‘only’ 1 USD million every second day). Some in the US are not that happy about it, and are wondering – like Fukuyama in his luminary essay – “where is a counter-narrative?” To ease the pain for all balance-seekers: Even if the American ideological triumph might be a clear cut, geopolitically it remains undecided. While Russians were absorbing the shock of loss of their historical empire, the ‘lonely hyper-power’ did not quite know what to do with its colossal gain. The fact that there is no (yet) clear leader of the post-Western world, does not mean that the post-Christian and post-industrial West – as a place and as the geo-economic and ideological model – is unquestionably accepted as it was before.

for the US. The very epilogue of the WWII meant a full security guaranty for the US: Geoeconomically – 52% of anything manufactured in the world was carrying a label *Made in USA*, and geostrategically – the US had uninterruptedly enjoyed nearly a decade of the ‘nuclear monopoly’. Up to this very day, the US scores the biggest number of N-tests conducted, the largest stockpile of nuclear weaponry, and it represents the only power ever deploying this ‘ultimate weapon’ on other nation. To complete the irony, Americans enjoy geographic advantage like no other empire ever. Save the US, as Ikenberry notes: “...every major power in the world lives in a crowded geopolitical neighborhood where shifts in power routinely provoke counterbalancing”.<sup>51</sup> The US is blessed neighboring oceans.

Why the lonely might, an *empire by invitation* did not evolve into **empire of relaxation**, a generator of harmony? One of the leading architects of the American foreign policy, Simon Serfaty laments: “The irony is plain for all to see. Ten years after the fiasco in Iraq, the global demand for American power has never been higher, but its credibility rarely lower and its reliability more in doubt...a preponderant power must be right...for its enemies it must be strong, it must inspire trust...” What are we talking about here – the intensity of our (confrontational) push or about the course of our (civilizational) direction?

Indeed, no successful and enduring empire does merely rely on coercion, be it abroad or at home. However, unable to escape its inner logics and deeply-rooted appeal of *confrontational nostalgia*, the prevailing archrival is only a winner, rarely a game-changer.<sup>52</sup> Hence, to the above asked question whether our history is dialectic or cyclical, the current Ukrainian events are like a bad-taste *déjà vu*.

*End of the Cold War* – such a buzzword, of a diametrically different meaning. East interprets it as the final end of confrontation – beginning of the age of a mutual respect, harmony and understanding. The Westerners have no such an illusion. To them it is the end of war, which only came after the unconditional surrender of East. Another powerful evidence to support our claim: Just 20 years ago, distance between Moscow and NATO troops stationed in Central Europe (e.g. Berlin) was over 1.600 km. Today, it is only 120 km from St. Petersburg.<sup>53</sup> Realities have dramatically changed for the Atlantic-Central Europe and for Russia, while for Eastern Europe much remains the same – East still serves others as a strategic depth.

In short, Atlantic Europe is a political powerhouse, with two of three European nuclear

51 Ikenberry, G.J. (2014), *The Illusion of Geopolitics*, Foreign Affairs Magazine 93(3) 2014

52 There are many who would claim that the West was unable to capitalize on the collapse of the Soviet Union, and that the real winner in the superpowers’ playoff is actually the third. It is not only that Asia is resurfacing very self-confident. Deeper and structural, the issue is more subversive as well: One of the most remarkable achievements in the world history of capitalism is happening last 20 years under the leadership of the largest Communist party on this planet. (While one of the biggest collectivisations *à la* communism was taking place in the cradles of capitalism –the US and UK financial hubs.) At this point, let us recall what was the epilogue of a lasting ideological confrontation between Byzantium and Sassanid Persia and of their colossal geopolitical overextension? Clearly, it was an appearance of the Third Power Center on a geopolitical and ideolo-gical terrain, which was gradually prevailing from the 7<sup>th</sup> century onwards. Byzantium and Sassanids corroded and imploded.

53 Despite the (formal) end of the Cold War, and contrary to all what we celebrate as a technological progress, our Gini coefficients’ distances are far larger than they were two decades ago. Additionally, as the EU was getting closer to Eastern and Russophone Europe, the socio-economic inequalities and politico-cultural exclusions there, were growing wider. The contemporary world (believes it) has unprecedented wealth. Although over the last four decades the global working force has tripled from roughly 1 to 3 billion, the world today holds mass poverty – like never before, especially in underdeveloped Africa and de-industrialized East of Europe. The newly set ‘economic system’ in Eastern Europe in fact reproduces poverty, even among the fortunate ones – people with a job, victims of low wages and long hours. According to the World Bank, total global wealth was \$241 trillion in 2013 and is expected to rise to \$334 trillion by 2018. The WB defines the UN standard poverty line with a threshold of \$1,25/day. Lant Pritchett, a critical WB/IMF developmental economist, advocates a more reasonable bottom-line of \$10/day. If his calculation were applied, between 90 and 95% population in the East-Rusophone Europe would be well below dignified life, deep under the poverty line!

powers and 2 out of five permanent members of the UN Security Council, P-5. Central Europe is an economic powerhouse, Russophone Europe is an energy powerhouse, Scandinavian Europe is all of that a bit, and Eastern Europe is none of it.<sup>54</sup>

### From **WWI** to [www](#). 9/11 or 11/9?

Throughout the most of human evolution both progress as well as its horizontal transmission was extremely slow and tedious a process. Well to the classic period of Alexander the Macedonian and his glorious Alexandrian library, the speed of our knowledge transfers –however moderate – was still always surpassing cycles of our breakthroughs. When the breakthroughs finally turned to be faster than the speed of their transmissions – that was a point of our departure. Simply, our civilizations significantly started to differentiate from each other in their respective techno-agrarian, politico-military, ethno-religious, ideological and economic set-ups. In the eve of grand discoveries, that very event transformed wars and famine from the low-impact and local, into the bigger and colossal. Faster cycles of technological breakthroughs, patents and discoveries than their own transfers, primarily occurred on the Old continent. That event marked a birth of mighty European empires and their (liberal) schools of applied biologism, racism, genocide, organized plunders, ethno-social engineering and eugenics, and similar forms of ideological justifiers. For the past few centuries, we lived fear but dreamt hope – all for the sake of modern times. From WWI to [www](#). Is this modernity of internet age, with all the suddenly reviled breakthroughs and their instant transmission, now harboring us in a bay of fairness, harmony and overall reconciliation?<sup>55</sup>

In the pan-European hype of early 1990s, Fukuyama euphorically claimed *end of history*. Just two decades later, twisting in a sobriety of inevitable, he quietly moderated it with *future of history*. Was and will our history ever be on holiday?

100 years after the outbreak of the WWI on 28<sup>th</sup> June 2014, young generations of Europeans are being taught in schools about a singularity of an entity called the EU. However, as soon as serious external or inner security challenges emerge, the compounding parts of the true, historic Europe are resurfacing again. Formerly in Iraq

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54 Does anyone still remember 'heroic' labor union *Solidarność* from the Gdańsk shipyards? Well, today there are no more unionists. Their leader Lech Wałęsa is forgotten, as there are no shipyards ever since Poland (eager, but without careful preparations have) opened its EU accession talks... The similar termination of all public subsidies is stipulated in chapter 8 (Competition Policy) of the accession treaty admitting Croatia to the EU, and the European Commission has been closely monitoring the implementation of the 'restructuring' program for the Croatian shipyards. This ongoing shipyards demise will complete Croatia's de-industrialization – adding to the already record high unemployment of some 25% in the coastal areas. All over the globe, states assist shipbuilding as it is a formidable job provider: In Italy, the Fincantieri shipyards are entirely in public hands; in France, the state is still a minority shareholder in the biggest yards such as STX-Chantiers de l'Atlantique. Even in South Korea, the world champion in naval construction, the state subsidizes shipbuilding. Seems, what is globally acceptable is forbidden in Eastern Europe; all the way from Poland to Croatia - in the name of 'European integration'.

55 At this point, let me allow myself a little story in bracket. It is not to romanticise the past but to note on an erosion of one very important governmental post, which is a key for daily execution of international relations... By my free account, in 1815 at the time of Vienna Congress, there are not more than 50 ambassadors worldwide. By the Berlin Congress, their number is still well below 100. Each and every one of them is an exceptional individual of the high moral grounds, of a deep passion affection and loyalty, of an excellent professional standing. Well-mannered and well-informed, erudites, thinkers of paramount analytical insights, charismatic charming and highly intelligent, they represented intellectual *crème de la crème* of that time societies. By the 1945 San Francisco Conference, the world already counts several hundreds of active ambassadors. At present, there are some 25-30,000 individuals with this title (20-25,000 active national, and some 5-8,000 retired national, as well as up to 1,000 paradiplomats of ambassadorial ranks serving IOs). Sadly enough, in more than a few cases, this post is obtained today by persons who are simply career opportunists, without sufficient professional or moral merits to hold ambassadorial position (individuals who just climbed their careers by being yes-men, no-action-no-mistake-stance grey apparatchiks, disloyal bed mannered and ill-informed but well webbed-up in either nepotistic or crony networks, political removals, rich individuals who bought the post much like the car is purchased). In this gradual but total erosion of ambassadorship, something still remains firm and stabile: privileges, immunities and of course a paycheque /Source on figures: author's free account./

(with the exception of France) and now with Libya, Mali, Syria and Ukraine; Central Europe is hesitant to act, Atlantic Europe is eager, Scandinavian Europe is absent, and while Eastern Europe is bandwagoning, Russophone Europe is opposing.<sup>56</sup> The 1986 Reagan-led Anglo-American bombing of Libya was a one-time, headhunting punitive action. This time, both Libya and Syria (Iraq, Mali, Ukraine, too) have been given a different attachment. The factors are several and interpolated. Let's start with a considerable presence of China in Africa. Then, there is a successful pipeline deals between Russia and Germany which, while circumventing Eastern Europe, will deprive East from any transit-related bargaining premium, and will tacitly pose an effective joint Russo-German pressure on the Baltic states, Poland and Ukraine.<sup>57</sup> Finally, here is a relative decline of the US interests and capabilities, and to it related re-calibration of their European commitments. All of that combined, must have triggered alarm bells across Atlantic Europe.<sup>58</sup>

This is to understand that although seemingly unified; Europe is essentially composed of several segments, each of them with its own dynamics, legacies and its own political culture (considerations, priorities and anxieties). Atlantic and Central Europe are confident and secure on the one end, while (the EU and non-EU) Eastern Europe as well as Russia on the other end, insecure and neuralgic, therefore, in a permanent quest for additional security guaranties.

"America did not change on September 11. It only became more itself" – Robert Kagan famously claimed.<sup>59</sup> Paraphrasing it, we may say: From 9/11 (09<sup>th</sup> November 1989 in Berlin) and shortly after, followed by the genocidal wars all over Yugoslavia, up to the Euro-zone drama, MENA or ongoing Ukrainian crisis, Europe didn't change. It only became more itself – a conglomerate of five different Europes.

**Prof. Anis H. Bajrektarević**

**Chair Intl. Law and Global Pol. Studies (and Editor of the Addleton's GHIR Journal)  
Vienna, 13. JUN 2014**

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<sup>56</sup> Before too long, Washington will have to decide: either containment or accommodation – a viable truce with Moscow or unconditional backing of Russia's closest neighbours. If Putin finally abandons the non-confrontational course, and regularizes the play on a *confrontational nostalgia* card, the US-led West might award Moscow by returning Baltics, some central-southern portions of Eastern Europe, along with Central Asia and Caucasus to Russian sphere of influence. If the history of Russo-American confrontations is (noisy or) deep, wide and long, their ability to broker a deal is remarkably extensive, too. Or, as prof. W.R. Mead elaborates: "...In deciding how hard to press Russia over Ukraine, the White House cannot avoid calculating the impact on Russia's stance on the Syrian war or Iran's nuclear program." (Mead, W.R. (2014), *The Return of Geopolitics*, Foreign Affairs Magazine 93(3) 2014)

<sup>57</sup> In late spring 2011 Chancellor Merkel has surprisingly but repeatedly and firmly promised to her fellow Germans the closing of all national nuclear plants. Mixing it with the growth and stability move, many applauded to this heated political rhetoric, as a long-awaited and badly needed plan for the High/Green Tech renewal of the EU. Adding a flavor of emotional charge to it, most analysts have interpreted the Chancellor's bold word of promise with the safety concerns related to that time brewing Japanese Fukushima drama, as if Germany shared Japan's geography, reactor technology and seismic activity. However, the majority of commentators remained silent on the timing which was well coinciding with the successful completion of the first phase of the so-called North Stream. It was the first of several planned, long pipelines that delivers hydrocarbons from Russia directly to Germany via the North Sea seabed. This arching pipeline eliminates any transit bargaining premium from the Eastern Europeans and poses in effect a joint Russo-German pressure on the Baltic states, Poland, Ukraine, and even as far as Azerbaijan and Georgia.

<sup>58</sup> In response to the MENA crisis, Europe failed to keep up a broad agenda and all-participatory basis with its strategic neighborhood, although having institutions, interest and credibility to do so. Europe compromised its own perspectives and discredited its own *transformative powers*' principle by undermining the indigenous and authentic institutional framework: Barcelona Process (EU), the Euro-Med (OSCE). The only direct involvement was a military engagement via the Atlantic Europe-led coalition of the willing (Libya, Mali, Syria). The consequences are striking: The sort of Islam that the EU supported (and the means deployed to do so) in the Middle East yesterday, is the sort of Islam (and the means it uses) that Europe gets today. No wonder that Islam in Turkey (or in Kirgizstan and in Indonesia) is broad, liberal, pacific and inclusive while the one of the Northern Europe is dismissive, militant, assertive and vindictive.

<sup>59</sup> Kagan, R. (2004) *Of Paradise and Power*, Vintage Books (page 85)

## **Post Scriptum**

How can we observe and interpret (the distance between) success and failure from a historical perspective? This question remains a difficult one to (satisfy all with a single) answer... The immediate force behind the rapid and successful European overseas projection was actually the two elements combined: Europe's technological (economic) and demographic expansion – from early 16<sup>th</sup> century on. However, West/Europe was not winning – frankly speaking – over the rest of this planet by the supremacy of its views and ideas, by purity of its virtues or by clarity of its religious thoughts and practices. For a small and rather insecure civilization, it was just the superiority and efficiency in applying the rationalized violence and organized (legitimized) coercion that Europe successfully projected. The 21<sup>st</sup> century Europeans often forget this 'inconvenient truth', while the non-Europeans usually never do.

The large, self-maintainable, self-assured and secure civilizations (e.g. situated on the huge Asian landmass) were traditionally less militant and confrontational (or the nation-state 'exclusive'), but more esoteric and generous, inclusive, attentive and flexible. The smaller, insecure civilizations (e.g. situated on a modest and minor, geographically remote and peripheral, natural resources scarce, and climatically exposed continent of Europe) were more focused, obsessively organized and "goal-oriented". This includes the invention of *virtue out of necessity* – a nation-state, too. No wonder that European civilization has never ever generated a single religion. Although, it admittedly doctrinated, 'clergified' and headquartered the Middle East-revelled religion of Christianity. On the other hand, no other civilization but the European has ever created a significant, even a relevant political ideology (to uniformly galvanize masses for the desired cause).

***This work is at first published in Bahasa language, Jakarta 2011 (Seputar Indonesia). Its advanced version was published in Italian language, Rome 2013 (IsAG-Rome), and by the Foreign Policy Journal of Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur 2013 (JDFR). The first English language version was published by the Routledge/Francis & Taylor and IAFOR (London – Washington 2013). This, extended, version: 'Europe of Sarajevo 100 years later' is prepared parallel for the Sarajevo magazine (BH Dani) and the Addleton's GHIR (New York, 2014).***

\* ***All displayed maps per the author's idea made by Anneliese Gattringer.***

\*\* ***The 100-years anniversary poster made by Amna Mahić.***

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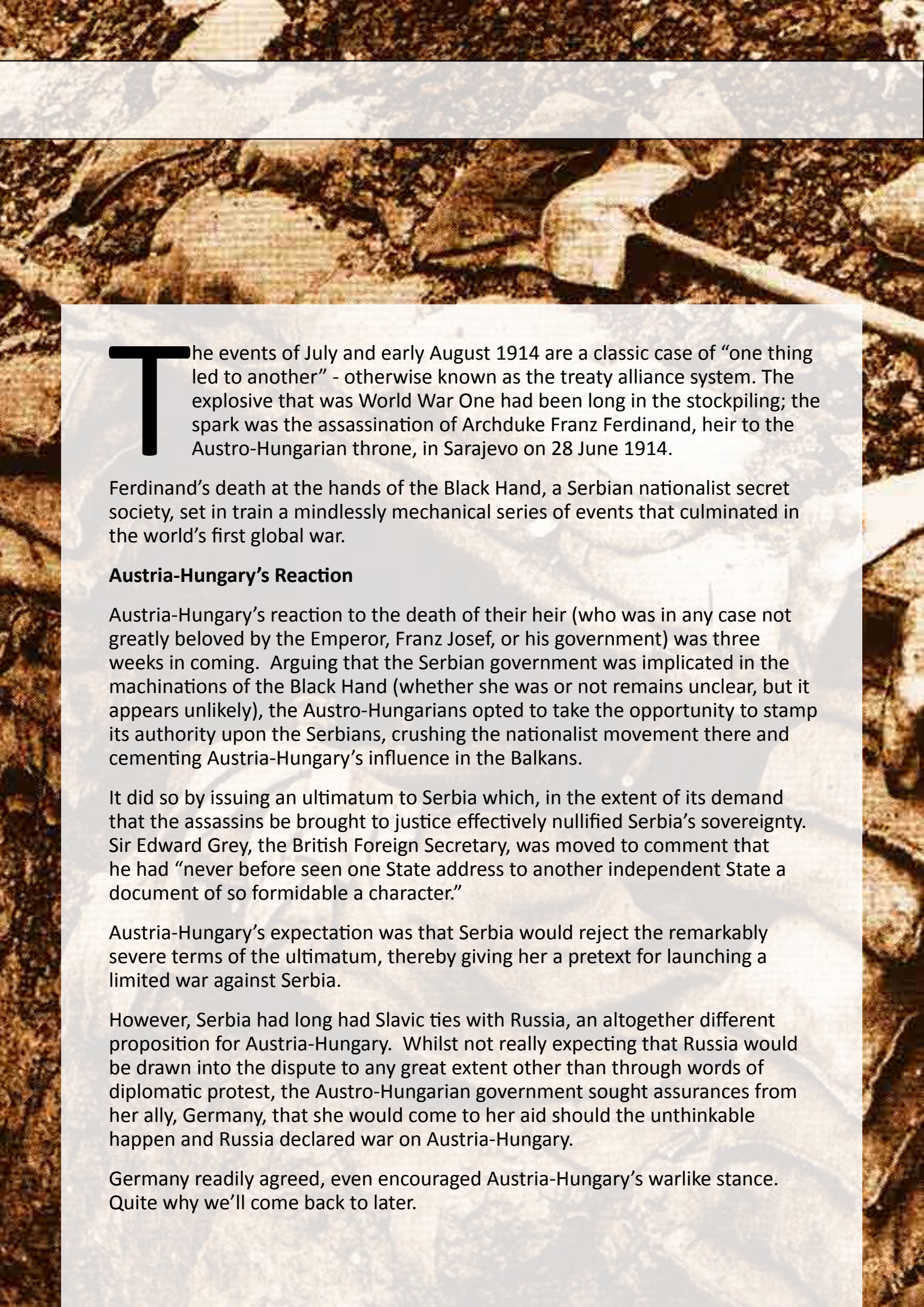
## ABSTRACT

Some 20 years ago the genocide of worst kind was taking place just one hour flight from Brussels. That time, assassination of different kind from the one of 1914 has enveloped Sarajevo. While massive European ignorance turned Bosnia (and the Union of different peoples – Yugoslavia) into a years-long slaughterhouse, the Maastricht dream was unifying the Westphalian world of the Old continent. Today, two decades later, Atlantic Europe is a political powerhouse (with two of three European nuclear powers, and two of five permanent members of the UN Security Council, P-5), Central Europe is an economic powerhouse, Russophone Europe is an energy powerhouse, Scandinavian Europe is a bit of all that, and Eastern Europe is none of it. No wonder that as soon as serious external or inner security challenges emerge, the compounding parts of the true, historic Europe are resurfacing again. Formerly in Iraq (with the exception of France) and now with Libya, Sudan, Mali and Syria; Central Europe is hesitant to act, Atlantic Europe is eager, Scandinavian Europe is absent, Eastern Europe is bandwagoning, and Russophone Europe is opposing. Did Europe change (after its own 11/9), or it only became more itself?



# The **Causes** of World War One





**T**he events of July and early August 1914 are a classic case of “one thing led to another” - otherwise known as the treaty alliance system. The explosive that was World War One had been long in the stockpiling; the spark was the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne, in Sarajevo on 28 June 1914.

Ferdinand's death at the hands of the Black Hand, a Serbian nationalist secret society, set in train a mindlessly mechanical series of events that culminated in the world's first global war.

### **Austria-Hungary's Reaction**

Austria-Hungary's reaction to the death of their heir (who was in any case not greatly beloved by the Emperor, Franz Josef, or his government) was three weeks in coming. Arguing that the Serbian government was implicated in the machinations of the Black Hand (whether she was or not remains unclear, but it appears unlikely), the Austro-Hungarians opted to take the opportunity to stamp its authority upon the Serbians, crushing the nationalist movement there and cementing Austria-Hungary's influence in the Balkans.

It did so by issuing an ultimatum to Serbia which, in the extent of its demand that the assassins be brought to justice effectively nullified Serbia's sovereignty. Sir Edward Grey, the British Foreign Secretary, was moved to comment that he had “never before seen one State address to another independent State a document of so formidable a character.”

Austria-Hungary's expectation was that Serbia would reject the remarkably severe terms of the ultimatum, thereby giving her a pretext for launching a limited war against Serbia.

However, Serbia had long had Slavic ties with Russia, an altogether different proposition for Austria-Hungary. Whilst not really expecting that Russia would be drawn into the dispute to any great extent other than through words of diplomatic protest, the Austro-Hungarian government sought assurances from her ally, Germany, that she would come to her aid should the unthinkable happen and Russia declared war on Austria-Hungary.

Germany readily agreed, even encouraged Austria-Hungary's warlike stance. Quite why we'll come back to later.

## One Thing Led to Another

So then, we have the following remarkable sequence of events that led inexorably to the 'Great War' - a name that had been touted even before the coming of the conflict.

Austria-Hungary, unsatisfied with Serbia's response to her ultimatum (which in the event was almost entirely placatory: however her jibbing over a couple of minor clauses gave Austria-Hungary her sought-after cue) declared war on Serbia on 28 July 1914.

Russia, bound by treaty to Serbia, announced mobilisation of its vast army in her defence, a slow process that would take around six weeks to complete.

Germany, allied to Austria-Hungary by treaty, viewed the Russian mobilisation as an act of war against Austria-Hungary, and after scant warning declared war on Russia on 1 August.

France, bound by treaty to Russia, found itself at war against Germany and, by extension, on Austria-Hungary following a German declaration on 3 August. Germany was swift in invading neutral Belgium so as to reach Paris by the shortest possible route.

Britain, allied to France by a more loosely worded treaty which placed a "moral obligation" upon her to defend France, declared war against Germany on 4 August. Her reason for entering the conflict lay in another direction: she was obligated to defend neutral Belgium by the terms of a 75-year old treaty. With Germany's invasion of Belgium on 4 August, and the Belgian King's appeal to Britain for assistance, Britain committed herself to Belgium's defence later that day. Like France, she was by extension also at war with Austria-Hungary.

With Britain's entry into the war, her colonies and dominions abroad variously offered military and financial assistance, and included Australia, Canada, India, New Zealand and the Union of South Africa.

United States President Woodrow Wilson declared a U.S. policy of absolute neutrality, an official stance that would last until 1917 when Germany's policy of unrestricted submarine warfare - which seriously threatened America's commercial shipping (which was in any event almost entirely directed towards the Allies led by Britain and France) - forced the U.S. to finally enter the war on 6 April 1917.

Japan, honouring a military agreement with Britain, declared war on Germany on 23 August 1914. Two days later Austria-Hungary responded by declaring war on Japan.

Italy, although allied to both Germany and Austria-Hungary, was able to avoid entering the fray by citing a clause enabling it to evade its obligations to both. In short, Italy was committed to defend Germany and Austria-Hungary only in the event of a 'defensive' war; arguing that their actions were 'offensive' she declared instead a policy of neutrality. The following year, in May 1915, she finally joined the conflict by siding with the Allies against her two former allies.

## **The Tangle of Alliances**

Such were the mechanics that brought the world's major nations into the war at one time or another. It's clear from the summary above that the alliance system was as much at fault as anything in bringing about the scale of the conflict.

What was intended as a strictly limited war - a brief war - between accuser and accused, Austria-Hungary and Serbia, rapidly escalated into something that was beyond the expectations of even the most warlike ministers in Berlin (and certainly Vienna, which quickly became alarmed at spiralling events in late July and sought German reassurances).

It's possible to delve deeply into European history in the quest to unearth the roots of the various alliances that were at play in 1914. However, for our purposes it serves to date the origins of the core alliances back to Bismarck's renowned intrigues, as he set about creating a unified Germany from the loose assembly of German confederated states in the 1860s.

## **Bismarck's Greater Germany**

Bismarck, first Prime Minister of Prussia and then Chancellor of the German Empire (once he had assembled it), set about the construction of Germany through high politics judiciously assisted by war against Austria and France.

Appointed Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Prussia by Kaiser Wilhelm I in 1862, Bismarck was consumed with a desire to achieve the creation of a German Empire out of the collection of smaller German states largely led by Austria's influence (another German-speaking nation).

His first step was to oust Austria as the prime influence among these German states. He achieved this by engineering war with Austria in 1866 over disputed territory in the duchy of Holstein (much against the wishes of his own Kaiser).

The resulting war lasted just seven weeks - hence its common title 'The Seven Weeks War' - and ended with the complete dominance of the supremely efficient Prussian military.

In a peace mediated by the French Emperor, Napoleon III, Bismarck extracted from Austria not only Schleswig and Holstein, but also Hanover, Hesse, Nassau and Frankfurt, creating the North German Federation. As importantly, Bismarck had successfully displaced Austria in the spheres of influence over the many small German states.

Having assembled a united assembly in the north Bismarck determined to achieve the same in the south - and so unite all of the German states under the Prussian banner.

How to achieve this? Bismarck resolved that war with the French, a common enemy, would attain his aims.

First, he needed to engineer a credible reason for war. Thus, in 1870, Bismarck attempted to place a Hohenzollern prince on the throne in Spain. Napoleon III, fearful of the prospect of theoretical war on two fronts - for the Hohenzollern prince was a relative of Kaiser Wilhelm I - objected.

Bismarck turned up the diplomatic heat by releasing, on 14 July 1870, a doctored version of a telegram ostensibly from the Kaiser to Bismarck himself, called the Ems Telegram. The effect of the telegram was to simultaneously insult both France and Prussia over their inability to resolve the dispute over the Spanish throne.

Napoleon III, facing civil revolt at home over quite unrelated matters, and receiving encouraging noises from his military commanders, responded by declaring war against Prussia five days later, on 19 July 1870.

Once again, as was the case against Austria, the Prussian military machine demolished the French forces. Napoleon III, who personally led his forces at the lost Battle of Sedan, surrendered and was deposed in the civil war that boiled over in France, resulting in the Third French Republic.

Meantime the Prussian forces laid siege to Paris between September 1870 and January 1871, starving the city into surrender.

The consequences of the war were numerous. Aside from the usual territorial gains - France ceded both Alsace and Lorraine to Prussia and was forced to pay swingeing reparations (equivalent to around \$1 billion today) - the southern German states agreed to an alliance with their northern counterparts, resulting in the creation of Bismarck's cherished German Empire.

### **Bismarck's Need for Alliances**

Bismarck's creation of a unified Germany was of direct relevance to the outbreak of war some 43 years later, since it resulted in the assembly of the key alliances that later came into play.

For, having achieved his life's aim, Bismarck's expansionary plans were at an end. He had secured what he wanted, and his chief desire now was to maintain its stability. He therefore set about building European alliances aimed at protecting Germany from potentially threatening quarters.

He was acutely aware that the French were itching to revenge their defeat at the earliest opportunity - and the loss of Alsace and Lorraine to Prussia would prove to be a lasting sore. Indeed, the French plan for war in 1914, Plan XVII, was largely based around the recapture of Alsace and Lorraine in the shortest possible time - with disastrous consequences.

## **Britain's Splendid Isolation**

Bismarck did not initially fear an alliance between France and Britain, for the latter was at that time in the midst of a self-declared 1870s policy of "splendid isolation", choosing to stay above continental European politics.

If not Britain then, how about Russia and, conceivably, beaten foe Austria-Hungary?

## **The Three Emperors League & Dual Alliance**

He began by negotiating, in 1873, the Three Emperors League, which tied Germany, Austria-Hungary and Russia to each other's aid in time of war. This however only lasted until Russia's withdrawal five years later in 1878, leaving Bismarck with a new Dual Alliance with Austria-Hungary in 1879.

This latter treaty promised aid to each other in the event of an attack by Russia, or if Russia aided another power at war with either Germany or Austria-Hungary. Should either nation be attacked by another power, e.g. France, they were to remain - at the very least - benevolently neutral.

This alliance, unlike others, endured until war in 1914. It was this clause that Austria-Hungary invoked in calling Germany to her aid against Russian support for Serbia (who in turn was protected by treaty with Russia).

## **The Triple Alliance**

Two years after Germany and Austria-Hungary concluded their agreement, Italy was brought into the fold with the signing of the Triple Alliance in 1881. Under the provisions of this treaty, Germany and Austria-Hungary promised to assist Italy if she were attacked by France, and vice versa: Italy was bound to lend aid to Germany or Austria-Hungary if France declared war against either.

Additionally, should any signatory find itself at war with two powers (or more), the other two were to provide military assistance. Finally, should any of the three determine to launch a 'preventative' war (a euphemism if ever there was one), the others would remain neutral.

One of the chief aims of the Triple Alliance was to prevent Italy from declaring war against Austria-Hungary, towards whom the Italians were in dispute over territorial matters.

## **A Secret Franco-Italian Alliance**

In the event the Triple Alliance was essentially meaningless, for Italy subsequently negotiated a secret treaty with France, under which Italy would remain neutral should Germany attack France - which in the event transpired.

In 1914 Italy declared that Germany's war against France was an 'aggressive' one and so entitled Italy to claim neutrality. A year later, in 1915, Italy did enter the First World War, as an ally of Britain, France and Russia.

Austria-Hungary signed an alliance with Romania in 1883, negotiated by Germany, although in the event Romania - after starting World War One as a neutral - eventually joined in with the Allies; as such Austria-Hungary's treaty with Romania was of no actual significance.

## **The Reinsurance Treaty**

Potentially of greater importance - although it was allowed to lapse three years after its signature - Bismarck, in 1887, agreed to a so-called Reinsurance Treaty with Russia.

This document stated that both powers would remain neutral if either were involved in a war with a third (be it offensive or defensive).

However, should that third power transpire to be France, Russia would not be obliged to provide assistance to Germany (as was the case of Germany if Russia found itself at war with Austria-Hungary).

Bismarck's intention was to avoid the possibility of a two-front war against both France and Russia.

A decidedly tangled mesh of alliances; but the Russian Tsar, Nicholas II, allowed the Reinsurance Treaty to lapse in 1890 (the same year the new German Kaiser, Wilhelm II, brought about the dismissal of his veteran Chancellor, Bismarck).

## **Franco-Russian Agreements**

The year after the Reinsurance Treaty lapsed Russia allied itself with France. Both powers agreed to consult with the other should either find itself at war with any other nation, or if indeed the stability of Europe was threatened.

This rather loosely worded agreement was solidified in 1892 with the Franco-Russian Military Convention, aimed specifically at counteracting the potential threat posed by the Triple Alliance of Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy.

In short, should France or Russia be attacked by one of the Triple Alliance signatories - or even should a Triple Alliance power mobilise against either (where to mobilise meant simply placing a nation on a war footing preparatory to the declaration of hostilities), the other power would provide military assistance.

## **British Emergence from Splendid Isolation**

Meanwhile, Britain was awaking to the emergence of Germany as a great European power - and a colonial power at that. Kaiser Wilhelm's successor, Wilhelm II, proved far more ambitious in establishing "a place in the sun" for Germany. With the effective dismissal of Bismarck the new Kaiser was determined to establish Germany as a great colonial power in the Pacific and, most notably, in Africa. Wilhelm, encouraged by naval minister Tirpitz, embarked upon a massive shipbuilding exercise intended to produce a naval fleet the equal of Britain's, unarguably by far and away the world's largest.

Britain, at that time the greatest power of all, took note. In the early years of the twentieth century, in 1902, she agreed a military alliance with Japan, aimed squarely at limiting German colonial gains in the East.

She also responded by commissioning a build-up in her own naval strength, determined to outstrip Germany. In this she succeeded, building in just 14 months - a record - the enormous Dreadnought battleship, completed in December 1906. By the time war was declared in 1914 Germany could muster 29 battleships, Britain 49.

Despite her success in the naval race, Germany's ambitions succeeded at the very least in pulling Britain into the European alliance system - and, it has been argued, brought war that much closer.

## **Cordial Agreements: Britain, France - and Russia**

Two years later Britain signed the Entente Cordiale with France. This 1904 agreement finally resolved numerous leftover colonial squabbles. More significantly, although it did not commit either to the other's military aid in time of war, it did offer closer diplomatic co-operation generally.

Three years on, in 1907, Russia formed what became known as the Triple Entente (which lasted until World War One) by signing an agreement with Britain, the Anglo-Russian Entente.

Together the two agreements formed the three-fold alliance that lasted and effectively bound each to the other right up till the outbreak of World War just seven years later.

Again, although the two Entente agreements were not militarily binding in any way, they did place a "moral obligation" upon the signatories to aid each other in time of war.

It was chiefly this moral obligation that drew Britain into the war in defence of France, although the British pretext was actually the terms of the largely forgotten 1839 Treaty of London that committed the British to defend Belgian neutrality (discarded by the Germans as "a scrap of paper" in 1914, when they asked Britain to ignore it).

In 1912 Britain and France did however conclude a military agreement, the Anglo-French Naval Convention, which promised British protection of France's coastline from German naval attack, and French defence of the Suez Canal.

## **Agreements Set, The Occasional Minor War...**

Such were the alliances between the major continental players. There were other, smaller alliances too - such as Russia's pledge to protect Serbia, and Britain's agreement to defend Belgian neutrality - and each served its part in drawing each nation into the coming great war.

In the interim however, there were a number of 'minor' conflicts that helped to stir emotions in the years immediately preceding 1914, and which gave certain nations more stake than others in entering the world war.

## **Russian War with Japan: Shock Japanese Victory**

Ever since Russia declined Japan's offer in 1903 for each to recognise the other's interests in Manchuria and Korea, trouble was looming.

The Japanese launched a successful attack upon Russian warships in Korea, at Inchon, and in Port Arthur, China. This was followed by a land invasion of both disputed territories of Korea and Manchuria in 1904.

Among other set-pieces, the Japanese astonished the western powers by destroying the entire Russian fleet at the Battle of Tsushima (27-28 May 1905) for the loss of two torpedo boats - a humiliating Russian defeat.

The U.S. President, Theodore Roosevelt, mediated a peace agreement between Japan and Russia, one that resulted in material gains for Japan and with note being taken in Berlin of the fallacy of the myth of Russian "invincibility".

The scale of Russia's defeat in part contributed to the attempted Russian Revolution of 1905, and the battered and shaken Tsar, Nicholas II, was determined to restore Russian prestige (not least in the Romanov dynasty itself): and what better way to achieve this than through military conquest?

## **The Balkans, 1912: Italy versus Turkey**

Strife in the Balkans was nothing new. In 1912 it continued with war between Italy and Turkey, over the latter's African possessions. Turkey lost and was forced to hand over Libya, Rhodes and the Dodecanese Islands to the Italians.

## **The Balkans, 1912 (Part II): The First Balkan War**

Turkey's troubles were not yet over. Having concluded peace with the Italians it found itself engulfed in war with no fewer than four small nations over the possession of Balkan territories: Greece, Serbia and Bulgaria - and later Montenegro.

The intervention of the larger European powers brought about an end to this the First Balkan War of 1912-13. Again Turkey lost out, shedding Crete and all of its European possessions.

## **The Balkans, 1913: The Second Balkan War**

Later in the 1913, conflict erupted again in the Balkans, as Bulgaria, unsatisfied with its earlier spoils, fought with its recent allies in an attempt to control a greater part of Macedonia; and when the so-named “Young Turks” - Turkish army officers - denounced the earlier peace as unfair.

Between May and July 1913 Bulgaria's former allies beat back the new aggressor, Bulgaria, and Romania captured the Bulgarian capital Sofia in August. Beaten and having surrendered on 10 August 1913, Bulgaria also lost Adrianople back to Turkey.

## **Troubled Peace in the Balkans**

Despite the re-establishment of peace in the Balkans, nothing had really been settled and tensions remained high. The numerous small nations that had found themselves under Turkish or Austro-Hungarian rule for many years stirred themselves in nationalistic fervour.

Yet while these Balkan nations sought their own individual voice and self-determination, they were nevertheless united in identifying themselves as pan-Slavic peoples, with Russia as their chief ally.

The latter was keen to encourage this belief in the Russian people as the Slav's natural protectors, for aside from a genuine emotional attachment, it was a means by which Russia could regain a degree of lost prestige.

## **Unsettled Empires**

Come 1914, trouble was not restricted to the smaller nations outlined above. The Austro-Hungarian empire was directly impacted by troubles in the Balkans and, under the ageing Emperor Franz Josef, was patently struggling to maintain coherence of the various diametrically opposed ethnic groups which fell under the Austro-Hungarian umbrella.

As such, the assassination of Franz Ferdinand by the Serbian nationalist secret society, the Black Hand, provided the Austro-Hungarian government with a golden opportunity to stamp its authority over the region.

Russia, ally of the Slavs - and therefore of Serbia - had been struggling to hold back full-scale revolution ever since the Japanese military disaster of 1905. In 1914, while the Tsar himself was reluctant, his government saw war with Austria-Hungary as an opportunity to restore social order - which indeed it did, at least until the continuation of repeated Russian military setbacks, Rasputin's intrigue at court and food shortages combined to bring about the long-threatened total revolution (which, encouraged by Germany, brought about Russia's withdrawal from the war in 1917).

Then there is France. Almost immediately following her defeat by Prussia in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71, together with the humiliating annexation by the newly unified Germany of the coal-rich territories of Alsace and Lorraine, the French government and military alike were united in thirsting for revenge.

To this end the French devised a strategy for a vengeful war upon Germany, Plan XVII, whose chief aim was the defeat of Germany and the restoration of Alsace and Lorraine. The plan was fatally flawed, and relied to an untenable extent upon the “*élan*” which was believed to form an integral part of the French army - an irresistible force that would sweep over its enemies.

## **Germany's Path to War**

As for Germany, she was unsettled socially and militarily. The 1912 Reichstag elections had resulted in the election of no fewer than 110 socialist deputies, making Chancellor Bethmann-Hollweg's task in liaising between the Reichstag and the autocratic Wilhelm, not to mention the rigidly right-wing military high command, next to impossible.

Bethmann Hollweg, who became most despondent, came to believe that Germany's only hope of avoiding civil unrest sooner rather than later lay in war: preferably a short, sharp war, although he did not rule out a European-wide conflict if it resolved Germany's social and political woes.

This outlook on life fuelled his decision of 6 July 1914 - whilst the Austro-Hungarian government was weighing its options with regard to Serbia - to offer the former what has been commonly referred to as “a blank cheque”; that is, an unconditional guarantee of support for Austria-Hungary no matter what she decided.

Germany's military unsettlement arose in the sense that Kaiser Wilhelm II was finding himself largely frustrated in his desire to carve out a grand imperial role for Germany. Whilst he desired “a place in the sun”, he found that all of the bright areas had been already snapped up by the other colonial powers, leaving him only with a place in the shade.

Not that Wilhelm II was keen upon a grand war. Rather, he failed to foresee the consequences of his military posturing, his determination to construct both land and naval forces the equivalent - and better - than those of Britain and France (with varying success).

However his government and his military commanders assuredly did anticipate what was to come. A plan to take on both Russia and France, a war on two fronts, had long been expected and taken into account.

The so-called Schlieffen Plan, devised by former Army Chief of Staff Alfred von Schlieffen, had been carefully crafted to deal with a two-front war scenario. The plan, which very nearly succeeded, outlined a plan to conquer France, to knock her out of the war, on a ‘Western Front’, within five weeks - before, the Germans calculated, Russia could effectively mobilise for war on the ‘Eastern Front’ (which they estimated would take six weeks).

It is often speculated - and argued - that the plan would have succeeded but for the decision of the then-German Chief of Staff in 1914, Helmuth von Moltke, to authorise a critical deviation from the plan that, it is believed, stemmed from a lack of nerve, and crucially slowed the path towards Paris - with fatal consequences (and which ended in static trench warfare).

Still, the German plan took no real account of Britain's entry into the war. The German government gave no credence to the possibility that Britain would ignore her own commercial interests (which were presumably best served by staying aloof from the conflict and maintaining her all-important commercial trading routes), and would instead uphold her ancient treaty of obligation to recover violated Belgian neutrality.

### **British Dithering**

It is also suggested that Germany would have backed away from war had Britain declared her intentions sooner. Believing that Britain would stay out of the coming conflict, and would limit herself to diplomatic protests - after all, Britain was under no strict military obligation to France - Germany, and Austria-Hungary, proceeded under the belief that war would be fought solely with France and Russia.

The British Government, and its Foreign Minister, Sir Edward Grey, attempted to mediate throughout July, reserving at all times its right to remain aloof from the dispute. It was only as the war began that the British position solidified into support for, ostensibly, Belgium.

Hence the oft-levelled criticism that had Britain come out clearly on the side of Belgium and France earlier in July, war would have been avoided: Germany would have effectively instructed Austria-Hungary to settle with Serbia, especially given the latter's willingness to co-operate with Austria-Hungary.

Whether this would have transpired given the German war machine's determination for war is of course unknown.

### **A Family Affair**

The First World War has sometimes been labelled, with reason, "a family affair". This is derived from the reality that many of the European monarchies - many of which fell during the war (including those of Russia, Germany and Austria-Hungary) - were inter-related.

The British monarch George V's predecessor, Edward VII, was the German Kaiser's uncle and, via his wife's sister, uncle of the Russian Tsar as well. His niece, Alexandra, was the Tsar's wife. Edward's daughter, Maud, was the Norwegian Queen, and his niece, Ena, Queen of Spain; Marie, a further niece, was to become Queen of Romania.

Despite these familial relations - nine Kings attended Edward's funeral - European politics was all about power and influence, of protection and encirclement. Thus the tangled web of alliances which sprung up in the wake of the rise of the newly united German Empire in 1871.

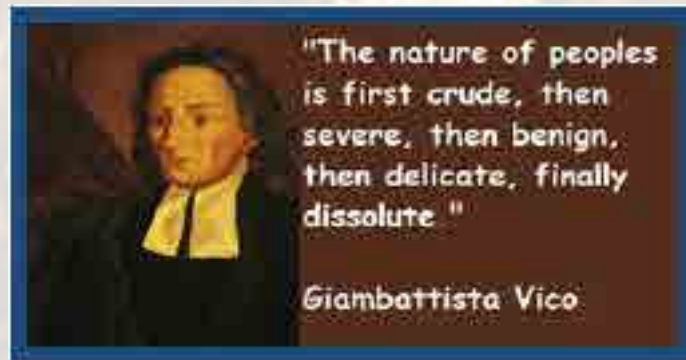
Prof. Emanuel L. Paparella

A Disastrous Era: 1914-2014: **Will the Gods Return?**

A Bold Nova-Antiqua Proposal for a New Renaissance



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"If humanity is to have a recognizable future, it cannot be by prolonging the past or the present."

--Eric Hobsbaum

**T**he philosopher of history Giambattista Vico postulates that history is constituted by three recurring cyclical eras: the era of the gods, the era of the heroes, the era of men. He calls the phenomenon *corso* and *ricorso*. The first era he designates as poetical, the second as imaginative-philosophical, the third as that of extreme rationality or scientism. In as much as his philosophy was scientific and rational it belonged to the third era, in as much as it is imaginative and poetical, deviating from the usual Western linear deterministic approach to history, it belonged in the first and second era; it is a *novantiqua*; hence he titled it *The New Science*.

Were we to apply this philosophy to the our ongoing modern era, Vico would most probably locate it in his third era of extreme rationality, but please remember that the three eras are cyclical, hence 2014, the year we are presently in, could be the very end of the third cycle but at the same time it could be the very beginning of the recurring first cycle when the gods return; that is to say, it could be an age of disastrous extremes and decadence coming to an end and one of great promise, a renaissance of Humanism. For the moment the two are not clearly distinguishable. But, in as much as man remains free to choose his destiny, he remains free to choose to continue on the disastrous course on which he has embarked since Descartes, that is to say, the path of extreme rationalism and scientific positivism parading as philosophy, (as already thoroughly explained in my articles on Vico and also explained by Ernesto Paolozzi in his Crocean elucidations on modern Positivism), or recover his origins rooted in the poetical and begin a new era. That is to say, he may decide to continue on the path of absurdity and dissolution or he may welcome the return of the gods: a return to the poetical (hence the importance of Vico and Croce's aesthetics based on poetry and the intuitive) and begin a novel Humanism and Renaissance. History will of course render the final verdict on this crucial question but meanwhile we can read the tea-leaves so to speak, in an attempt to get a glimpse of the cross-roads we are on.

A renowned scholar who thinks along the same Vichian lines is the British Marxist historian Eric Hobsbawm, who in 1994 wrote a book with the intriguing title of *The Age of Extremes: The Short 20<sup>th</sup> Century, 1914-1991*, which he contrasted to the long 19<sup>th</sup> century, from 1789 to 1914. In the US the book was published with the subtitle: *A History of the World: 1914-1989*. He had previously written *The Age of Revolution: Europe, 1789-1848*; *The Age of Capital, 1848-1875*; *The Age of Empire: 1875-1914*. In other words, Hobsbaum thought that centuries are not to be measure and judged in strictly chronological term via neat dates of one hundred years apart, a rather arbitrary operation, but rather they are to be located in certain eras or cycles rationally and even poetically conceived. This, in my opinion, is Vichian cyclical thinking at its best.



Eric Hobsbawm (1917-2012)

But let's look at the book a bit more closely. In it Hobsbawm talks at length on the disastrous failures of state communism in Russia, which he sees as a betrayal of Marxian socialistic ideals. Socialism, as per Marx, socialism which was supposed to come about

in the most advanced capitalistic countries, not a nation of paupers and farmers which ends up decapitating its own intelligentsia, to replace it with political bureaucratic hacks. He considers equally disastrous the phenomena of capitalism and nationalism in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Nationalism (which I have treated in other Ovi contributions: see <http://www.ovimagazine.com/art/1944>) begins with World War I in 1914, a war largely provoked by extreme nationalism, to continue only twenty years later as War World II. Most people would consider those two conflagrations as nothing short than an unmitigated disaster for civilization as a whole but especially for Europe, ushering in the disaster of the Cold War, now being resurrected almost nostalgically by Mr. Putin.

What is interesting in the book's analysis is that Hobsbaum does not stop with the merely political and economic, but as the thorough historian that he is, he goes on to examine the progress of the arts and societal changes in the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and finds those too a real disaster too in just about all its aesthetic forms. Hobsbaum writes this on Post-war modernist art practice: "...consisted largely in a series of increasingly desperate gimmicks by which artists sought to give their work an immediately recognizable individual trademark, a succession of manifestos of despair... or of gestures reducing the sort of art which was primarily bought for investment and its collectors ad absurdum, as by adding an individual's name to piles of brick or soil (minimal art) or by preventing it from becoming such a commodity through making it too short-lived to be permanent (performance art). The smell of impending death rose from these avant-gardes. The future was no longer theirs, though nobody knew whose it was. More than ever, they knew themselves to be on the margin." So, here again Hobsbaum echoes Vico: the decadence is historically not just political or economic but primarily cultural pertaining to the whole of Western civilization. After all, lest we forget, this is the era of two World Wars, the lagers and the gulags, not to count the innumerable genocides.

Moreover, Hobsbaum clearly points out the abysmal record of recent attempts to predict the world's future. "The record of forecasters in the past thirty or forty years, whatever their professional qualification as prophets, has been so spectacularly bad that only governments and economic research institutes still have, or pretend to have, much confidence in it." He quotes President Coolidge who, in a message to Congress on December 4, 1928, on the eve of the Great Depression said this: "The country can regard the present with satisfaction and anticipate the future with optimism." Sounds like George Bush just before the great recession of 2008.

Hobsbaum in fact, following the present historical trajectory predicts continued turmoil: "The world of the third millennium will therefore almost certainly continue to be one of violent politics and violent political changes. The only thing uncertain about them is where they will lead," and he then expresses this bold view: "If humanity is to have a recognizable future, it cannot be by prolonging the past or the present." This too is Vichian: the future lies in a return to origins: in the beginning there is the end, and in the end there is the beginning. Then he makes a startling prediction: "Social distribution and not growth

would dominate the politics of the new millennium.” [emphasis mine]. I suppose today we’d call it “distributive justice,” a theme repeatedly broached by the present Pope and the more enlightened political leaders of our times.

It is also a central thesis of Hobsbaum’s book that, from the start, State Socialism betrayed the socialist and internationalist ideals and vision it claimed to uphold. In particular, State Socialism always dispensed with the democratic element of the socialist vision: “Lenin... concluded from the start that the liberal horse was not a runner in the Russian revolutionary race.” To be sure, this anti-liberalism is ingrained in all authoritarian totalitarian regimes, on the right or on the left. In 1933, with Mussolini in firm control of Italy, Moscow insisted that the Italian communist leader P. Togliatti withdraw the suggestion that, perhaps, social-democracy was not the primary danger, at least in Italy. The case can be made that the failures of communism vis a vis democracy is a systemic problem of socialism per se, but that such is not the case was argued by Ignazio Silone in his famous essay “Emergency Exit.”

As for support for international revolutions Hobsbaum writes that “The communist revolutions actually made (Yugoslavia, Albania, later China) were made against Stalin’s advice. The Soviet view was that, both internationally and within each country, post-war politics should continue within the framework of the all-embracing anti-fascist alliance.... There is no doubt that Stalin meant all this seriously, and tried to prove it by dissolving the Comintern in 1943, and the Communist Party of the United States in 1944. The Chinese Communist regime, though it criticized the USSR for betraying revolutionary movements after the break between the two countries, has no comparable record of practical support for Third World liberation movements.” So much for love of democracy. The question arises: how can a revolution be “from the bottom up” unless it be democratic?

The Maoist doctrine of perpetual revolution is also a canard according to Hobsbaum: “Mao was fundamentally convinced of the importance of struggle, conflict and high tension as something that was not only essential to life but prevented the relapse into the weaknesses of the old Chinese society, whose very insistence on unchanging permanence and harmony had been its weakness.” Hobsbaum here draws a straight line from this belief to the disastrous Great Leap Forward to the subsequent Chinese famine of 1959-1961. I suppose this ability to tell it straight is what makes him such a notable historian. He is convinced that socialism as such was betrayed because “...hardly anyone believed in the system or felt any loyalty to it, not even those who governed it.”

To be sure, this thesis of the betrayal of Socialism is also apparent in *The God that Failed*, a book of essays by famous dissenters from Communism among which Ignazio Silone’s above referenced essay which claims that while State Communism has proven to be a failure, socialism as such, as an aspiration of the human heart for justice and fairness, can be found in the acts of the Apostles and in Plato’s Republic and in More’s Utopia, and will long survive the repressive ideological Communism of a Lenin, a Stalin or a Mao.

Hobsbaum has very mixed feelings about the end of the nineteenth-century imperial

order, largely because he is no happier with the nation-states that replaced the empires. He writes that “World War I... had made the habitual and sensible process of international negotiation suspect as ‘secret diplomacy’. This was largely a reaction against the secret treaties arranged among the Allies during the war... The Bolsheviks, discovering these sensitive documents in the Tsarist archives, had promptly published them for the world to read.”

Despite these failures of Communism Hobsbaum remains adamant in his critic of free-market capitalism: “Those of us who lived through the years of the Great Slump still find it almost impossible to understand how the orthodoxies of the pure free market, then so obviously discredited, once again came to preside over a global period of depression in the late 1980s and 1990s, which once again, they were equally unable to understand or to deal with. As it happened, the regimes most deeply committed to laissez-faire economics were also sometimes, and notably in the case of Reagan’s United States and Thatcher’s Britain, profoundly and viscerally nationalist and distrustful of the outside world. The historian cannot but note that the two attitudes are contradictory. It is ironic that the most dynamic and rapidly growing economy of the globe after the fall of Soviet socialism was that of Communist China, leading Western business-school lectures and the authors of management manuals, a flourishing genre of literature, to scan the teachings of Confucius for the secrets of entrepreneurial success.” [emphasis mine]. We have seen this irony time and again in the pages of Ovi where entrepreneurs of various stripes have glibly sung the praises of Chinese capitalistic free-market enterprise without ever explaining the blatant contradiction of a central command center which remains totalitarian and Communistic.

But ultimately, in world terms, Hobsbaum sees capitalism being just as much of a failure as state socialism: “The belief, following neoclassical economics, that unrestricted international trade would allow the poorer countries to come closer to the rich, runs counter to historical experience as well as common sense. The examples of successful export-led Third World industrialization usually quoted -- Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan and South Korea — represent less than two percent of the Third World population.” Food for thought here for the entrepreneur, selling his tacos for profits and unconcerned with justice, to chew and muse upon.

Denying fascism’s claim to philosophical respectability, Hobsbaum writes: “Theory was not the strong point of movements devoted to the inadequacies of reason and rationalism and the superiority of instinct and will... Mussolini could have readily dispensed with his house philosopher, Giovanni Gentile, and Hitler probably neither knew nor cared about the support of the philosopher Heidegger. The popular appeal of fascism lay with its claims to technocratic achievement. Was not the proverbial argument in favor of fascist Italy that Mussolini made the trains run on time?” He concludes with this powerful statement: “Would the horror of the holocaust be any less if historians concluded that it exterminated not six millions but five or even four?”

Hobsbaum goes on to write that “The cultural revolution of the latest twentieth century can thus best be understood as the triumph of the individual over society, or rather, the breaking of the threads which in the past had woven human beings into social textures”. This for him parallels Margaret Thatcher’s claim that “There is no society, only

individuals.” Indeed, science deals with beings and particulars, philosophy deals with Being and the universal. The universal may be an abstraction but does it follow that it is no less real than the particular, at least in the human world of the intelligible? To deny the reality of the world of the intelligible is to deny the whole Platonic Western tradition.

And so, we are back to the world of the two cultures: scientism and positivism vs. Liberal Arts and Humanism. A Leonardo Da Vinci conceived no such dichotomy and could be a scientist and an artist at the same time. The positivists tell us that religion and philosophy, the liberal arts and the humanities are superseded and only science counts nowadays. To the contrary, Vico, and probably Marx and Hobsbaum also, would suggest to the brave entrepreneurs of our brave new world, the new barbarians of the intellect, that far for being a stand for progress, their stand is a stand for regress and decadence.


So the question is this: Is it not high time for a new science, a new renaissance and a new civilization? Without it the present crisis can only worsen. In 2014, one hundred years after World War I, at the very end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century we’ll have to finally decide whether or not to continue with the fallacies of the 20<sup>th</sup> century as outlined in this essay or charter a new paradigm for a new Renaissance. Time is running out, the arctic ice-cup is melting as we speak, and not to decide will be a decision in itself. We cannot run away from our destiny buttressed by free will. As Alessandro Manzoni put it: “Ai posteri l’ardua sentenza” [the answer belongs to posterity]; that is certainly true, however, we as a civilization, Western so called, will in some way, directly or indirectly influence the future answer to the question; in fact the right question cannot even be asked unless one is knowledgeable of one’s past. The past, the present and the future are inextricably intertwined and history, far from being dead, is part of the human condition and will remain with us till the end of time.





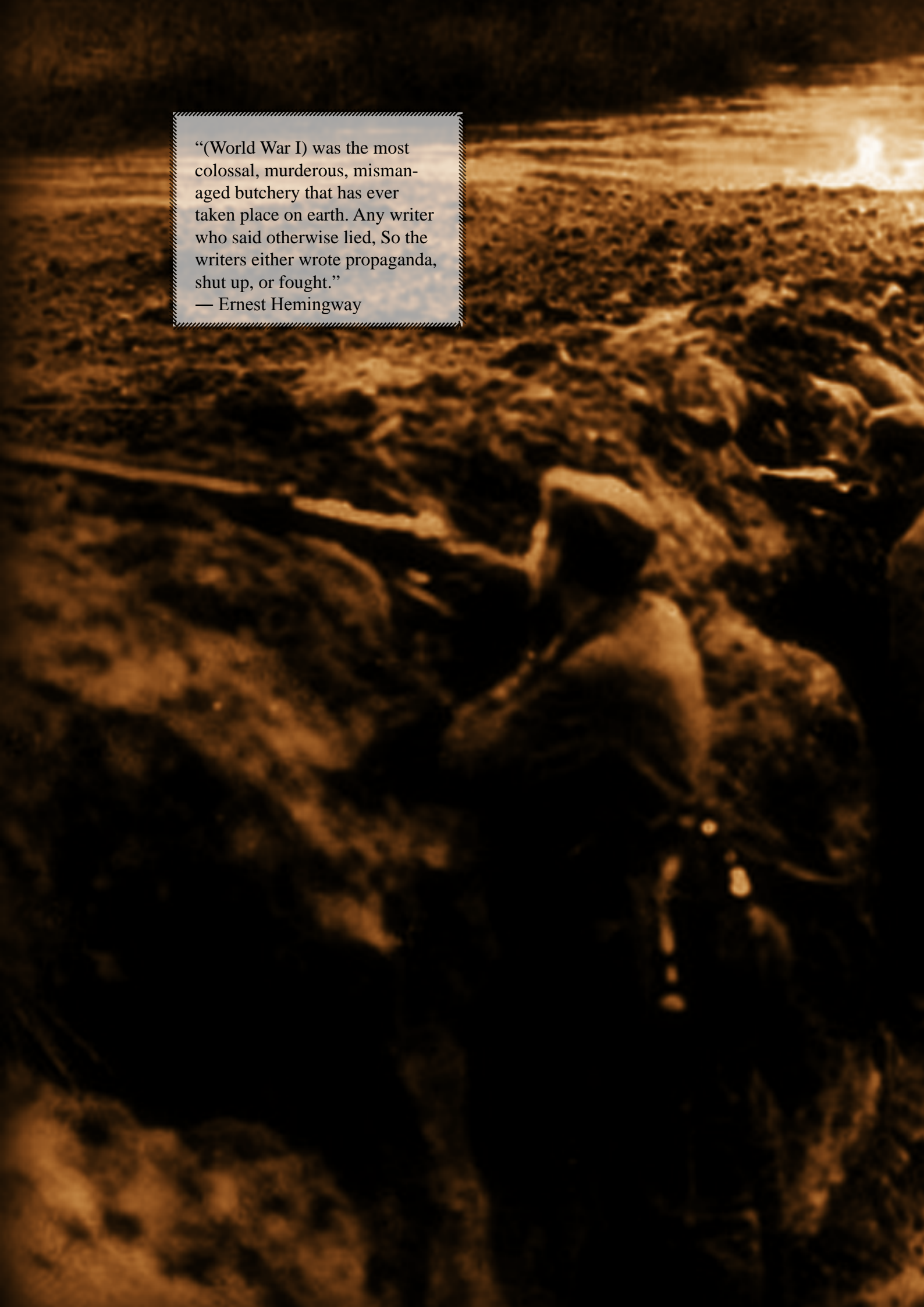
EVERY YEAR WE FIGHT TO  
**END RACISM**





'It takes 15,000 casualties to  
train a major general.'  
- Ferdinand Foch





“(World War I) was the most colossal, murderous, mismanaged butchery that has ever taken place on earth. Any writer who said otherwise lied, So the writers either wrote propaganda, shut up, or fought.”  
— Ernest Hemingway





Rene Wadlow

# Could the Dogs of War Have Been **Kept Chained?**

**T**he possibility of war was in the air since 1890 when Otto von Bismarck had been replaced as Chancellor of Prussia. He had kept a fairly steady hand on the complex of alliances being formed among the European Powers and tried to keep Prussia out of colonial adventures in Africa which would have increased rivalries with France and Britain. But the young Kaiser, William II dismissed Bismarck in March 1890. The Kaiser quickly alienated Russia and alarmed Britain by encouraging colonial and naval ambitions so that by 1914 the political map of the world had largely become the map of the colonial possessions, protectorates, and spheres of economic influence of the Great Powers which dominated the international scene.

The Balkan wars of 1912 and 1913 indicated that wars were still possible, but most leaders of the Great Powers felt that they could adjust the status quo by diplomacy and conferences. Norman Angell in *The Great Illusion* (1908) had pointed out the futility of war from an economic point of view. Nevertheless, the storm clouds kept gathering.

If the leaders of the European Powers were to move from crisis to crisis leading to war, was there anything that people could do to halt the irreconcilable aspirations of governments? One hope was that the socialist-led labour movement would refuse to fight against the working class of other states. The growth of industry since 1900 had led to the creation of a labour movement in the most heavily-industrialized countries: Germany, England, France. Could a link among such movements prevent war?

On 29 July 1914, the International Socialist Bureau met in Brussels under a banner "War on War" with socialist leaders from England, France, Germany, and Belgium. The two best known figures were Keir Hardie from Britain and Jean Jaurès of France.

Rene Wadlow is the editor of the online journal of world politics [www.transnational-perspectives.org](http://www.transnational-perspectives.org) and the representative to the United Nations, Geneva, of the Association of World Citizens.



Jean Jaurès (1859-1914) was first a professor of philosophy having attended l'Ecole Normale Supérieure, the French elite institution which forms teachers for the last years of secondary schools and universities. Jaurès was a classmate of Henri Bergson who later became known as the leading philosopher of his day. Jaurès was elected to the French Parliament when only 26, and in 1893 defended local coal miners from his southwest area (Tarn) and gained a national reputation.

Jaurès was an outstanding speaker, fired by a humanistic, non-dogmatic drive that led to his speaking to meetings in all parts of the country. As a non-dogmatic person, he was able to bring different strands of social reformist thought together into a relatively unified socialist party. Increasingly, Jaurès represented French socialism abroad. As a student, he had written on German thinkers, in particular Fichte and Hegel and so was at ease with German socialists.

The idea of an “international general strike” were war declared was one of the ideas being discussed in socialist circles in England, France and Germany. However no definite plans were set. Many socialists accepted the narrow nationalist spirit of their countries.

Two days after the Brussels meeting, on 31 July 1914, when Jaurès was back in Paris and sitting in a café, he was shot dead by a man claiming to be a nationalist. In the violent style of writing of the time, Rightist newspapers had been calling for the death of Jaurès. Jaurès had earlier defended the Captain Dreyfus in what was a crucial division of French political life, and so he had many enemies from the Right. Jaurès had said that Dreyfus was “a living witness to military lies, to political cowardice, to the crimes of authority.”

Whatever the motivations, the killing of Jaurès silenced a voice that might have called for restraint and reason as the governments rushed to war based on the fear that the other side would change power relations decisively in its favor.

Thanos Raftopoulos

# WWI: The Day After



Thanos Raftopoulos. Born in early 1970's in south Athens, with a variety of professions in my career path and the mishap to have worked for a dozen of years for a devastated sector in Greece, the one of cars. I consider myself a modern satirical cartoonist, highly recognized by all my close friends! They also blame me on how I can deliver such sense of humour embodied in art, while I never eat sweets or sugar at any use... I also adore biking, innovative and imaginative creations.



Dr. Ernesto Paolozzi

## Some Relevant Comments on the Centenary of World War I: 1914-2014

**W**e are currently in the process of celebrating the centenary of World War I. This can be an opportunity if we can confer to this commemoration a historic value together with an ethico-political intent. That is to say, if we are able to look at such an event with an eye to the future, in order to warn Governments, leadership classes, as well as common citizens, not to venture into a new spiral of violence and destruction, as wars usually are.

This perspective must accompany the memory of that war which broke out in the very heart of Europe and soon became a global tragedy, among the worst in history. Of course this fervent wish of ours does not prevent us from thinking, from fearing that that history is not after all the *magistra vitae*, that to be conscious of our past mistakes does not prevent us from committing new ones. This is so true that only a few years after the end of World War I the world fell into a second World War which turned out to be even more terrible than the first one.

And yet we have a philosophical and moral duty to try to understand, to understand the past in order to turn toward the future. World War I had, naturally, many meanings. Despite the drama of so many human lives that were lost, perhaps even because of those bitter losses, Italy seemed to have consolidated its political and moral unity. Everybody knows that after the defeat at Caporetto, both the army and civilian population were capable of recovering their moral courage, the pride, and the spirit of sacrifice which led to the final victory on the Piave river. This victory became a symbol, like the river from which it acquired a name. This was a people's war which saw farmers and workers from Southern as well as Northern Italy fight side by side, which also saw the sincere participation of different social classes.

We have hinted here at a completion of the Unification Movement known as *Risorgimento*. From 1861, when the country was unified, Italy perceived itself as a people ready and capable to defend their freedom and the borders of their country from foreign invasions. And yet, that national movement which had seemed (and in fact was) the completion of a great epoch of struggles for freedom and democracy and the origin of a new season of national prosperity, revealed itself a little later as the last great moral and political gesture of a great people which had embarked on some dark times concluded in a great tragedy.

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The great war ultimately was a total sealing of an era..., one of those rare historical moments wherein the sudden acceleration of events provokes a radical change of the historical flow. Europe is deconstructed and then reconstructed in a totally new and unexpected way. It lost its moral, political and economic center. It produced terrible totalitarian regimes whose nefarious inheritance still weighs heavily on our present history.

Italy was hit particularly hard. This is not the forum in which to reconstruct in great detail all facts and events. Paradigmatically we can assert that the country which had came out victorious was on one hand hit by various form of irrationalism, and on the other hand by extreme social demands which were radical and mostly subversive rather than revolutionary. The arrival of Fascism annulled that moral thrust which had seemed to be the fulfillment of the movement of national unification. A nationalism ensued which was founded on the will to power, on egoism, on vulgar sentiments, and substituted democracy and freedom. All this happened even more tragically in Nazi Germany, the prologue to that enormous tragedy which provoked the Second World War and the definite crisis of European civilization.

A new Europe was forged pursuant to this tragedy which we are still in the process of constructing as an ethical and political polity. We have only partially constructed it in the economic area. A process on the whole that is difficult, elevated in its goals and always threatened by the risk of being interrupted.

In my opinion, this is the only way feasible for any European State, as long as this new European identity is built on the foundations of an ancient civilization, one that brings together in solidarity diverse people in collaboration with other great liberal and global democracies, starting with the one in the United States of America. Europe can play a great role in a global consensus based on progress, tolerance and moderation; one that mediates between different cultures and customs. It would be tragic if once again Europe were to close itself in a shell of national egoism, or were it break apart once again because of banal political calculations or petty economic interests.

The old Europe can become the young Europe only if, having learned from the tragedies represented by the two world wars, it accepts the task of promoting in the first place social freedom and justice in a novel mode or in new conditions as history always requires.

# WWI a **brief** history

**W**orld War I was an extremely bloody war that engulfed Europe from 1914 to 1919, with huge losses of life and little ground lost or won. Fought mostly by soldiers in trenches, World War I saw an estimated 10 million military deaths and another 20 million wounded. While many hoped that World War I would be “the war to end all wars,” in actuality, the concluding peace treaty set the stage for World War II.

Dates: 1914-1919

Also Known As: The Great War, WWI, the First World War

## **The Start of World War I**

The spark that started World War I was the assassination of Austria's Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife Sophie. The assassination occurred on June 28, 1914 while Ferdinand was visiting the city of Sarajevo in the Austro-Hungarian province of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Although Archduke Franz Ferdinand, the nephew of Austria's emperor and heir-apparent to the throne, was not very well liked by most, his assassination by a Serb nationalist was viewed as a great excuse to attack Austria-Hungary's troublesome neighbor, Serbia.

However, instead of reacting quickly to the incident, Austria-Hungary made sure they had the backing of Germany, with whom they had a treaty, before they proceeded. This gave Serbia time to get the backing of Russia, with whom they had a treaty.

The calls for back-up didn't end there. Russia also had a treaty with France and Britain.

This meant that by the time Austria-Hungary officially declared war on Serbia on July 28, 1914, an entire month after the assassination, much of Europe had already become entangled in the dispute.

At the start of the war, these were the major players (more countries joined the war later):

Allied Forces (a.k.a. the Allies): France, the United Kingdom, Russia

Central Powers: Germany and Austria-Hungary

### **Schlieffen Plan vs. Plan XVII**

Germany didn't want to fight both Russia in the east and France in the west, so they enacted their long-standing Schlieffen Plan. The Schlieffen Plan was created by Alfred Graf von Schlieffen, who was the chief of the German general staff from 1891 to 1905.

Schlieffen believed that it would take about six weeks for Russia to mobilize their troops and supplies. So, if Germany placed a nominal number of soldiers in the east, the majority of Germany's soldiers and supplies could be used for a quick attack in the west.

Since Germany was facing this exact scenario of a two-front war at the beginning of World War I, Germany decided to enact the Schlieffen Plan. While Russia continued to mobilize, Germany decided to attack France by going through neutral Belgium. Since Britain had a treaty with Belgium, the attack on Belgium officially brought Britain into the war.

While Germany was enacting its Schlieffen Plan, the French enacted their own prepared plan, called Plan XVII. This plan was created in 1913 and called for quick mobilization in response to a German attack through Belgium.

As German troops moved south into France, French and British troops tried to stop them. At the end of the First Battle of the Marne, fought just north of Paris in September 1914, a stalemate was reached. The Germans, who had lost the battle, had made a hasty retreat and then dug in. The French, who couldn't dislodge the Germans, then also dug in. Since neither side could force the other to move, each side's trenches became increasingly elaborate. For the next four years, the troops would fight from these trenches.

## **A War of Attrition**

From 1914 to 1917, soldiers on each side of the line fought from their trenches. They fired artillery onto the enemy's position and lobbed grenades. However, each time military leaders ordered a full-fledged attack, the soldiers were forced to leave the "safety" of their trenches.

The only way to overtake the other side's trench was for the soldiers to cross "No Man's Land," the area between the trenches, on foot. Out in the open, thousands of soldiers raced across this barren land in the hopes of reaching the other side. Often, most were hewn down by machine-gun fire and artillery before they even got close.

Because of the nature of trench warfare, millions of young men were slaughtered in the battles of World War I. The war quickly became one of attrition, which meant that with so many soldiers being killed daily, eventually the side with the most men would win the war.

By 1917, the Allies were starting to run low on young men.


## **U.S. Enters the War and Russia Gets Out**

The Allies needed help and they were hoping that the United States, with its vast resources of men and materials, would join on their side. However, for years, the U.S. had clung to their idea of isolationism. Plus, the U.S. just didn't want to be involved in a war that seemed so far away and that didn't seem to affect them in any great way.

However, there were two major events that changed American public opinion about the war. The first occurred in 1915, when a German U-boat (submarine) sunk the British ocean liner RMS Lusitania. Considered by Americans to be a neutral ship that carried mostly passengers, Americans were furious when the Germans sank it, especially since 159 of the passengers were Americans.

The second was the Zimmermann Telegram. In early 1917, Germany sent Mexico a coded message promising portions of U.S. land in return for Mexico joining World War I against the United States. The message was intercepted by Britain, translated, and





shown to the United States. This brought the war to U.S. soil, giving the U.S. a real reason to enter the war on the side of the Allies.

On April 6, 1917, the United States officially declared war on Germany.

As the United States was entering World War I, Russia was getting ready to get out.

In 1917, Russia became swept up in an internal revolution that removed the czar from power. The new communist government, wanting to focus on internal troubles, sought a way to remove Russia from World War I. Negotiating separately from the rest of the Allies, Russia signed the Brest-Litovsk peace treaty with Germany on March 3, 1918.

With the war in the east ended, Germany was able to divert those troops to the west in order to face the new American soldiers.

### **Armistice and the Versailles Treaty**

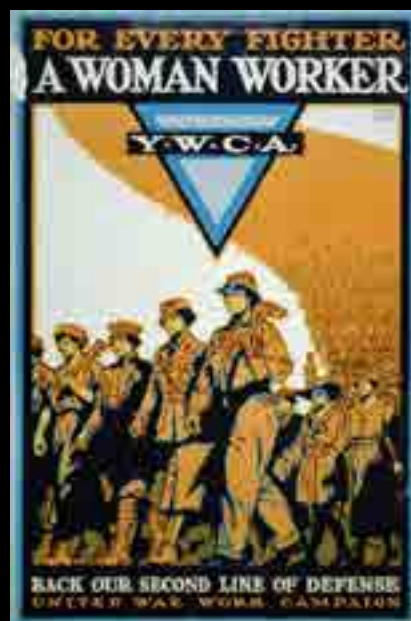
The fighting in the west continued for another year. Millions more soldiers died, while little land was gained. However, the freshness of the American troops made a huge difference. While the European troops were tired from years of war, the Americans remained enthusiastic. Soon the Germans were retreating and the Allies were advancing. The end of the war was near.

At the end of 1918, an armistice was finally agreed upon. The fighting was to end on the 11th hour of 11th day of 11th month (i.e. 11 am on Nov. 11, 1918).


For the next several months, diplomats argued and compromised together in order to come up with the Versailles Treaty. The Versailles Treaty was the peace treaty that ended World War I; however, a number of its terms were so controversial that it also set the stage for World War II.

The carnage left behind by the end of World War I was staggering. By the end of the war, an estimated 10 million soldiers were killed. That averages to about 6,500 deaths a day, every day. Plus, millions of civilians were also killed. World War I is especially remembered for its slaughter for it was one of the bloodiest wars in history.

# WWI Posters







“But the old man would not so,  
but slew his son,  
And half the seed of Europe, one  
by one.”

— Wilfred Owen,  
The War Poems




# WWI Cartoons



**UP-HILL WORK**  
John Bull: "Even though it's only half a league, it must go onward."








“Who said I was dead. Send me the mortars and a thousand hand grenades.”  
— George W. Hamilton





“In short, the war got off to a pretty good start, with the help of chaos.”

— Gabriel Chevallier, *Fear*:  
A Novel of World War I

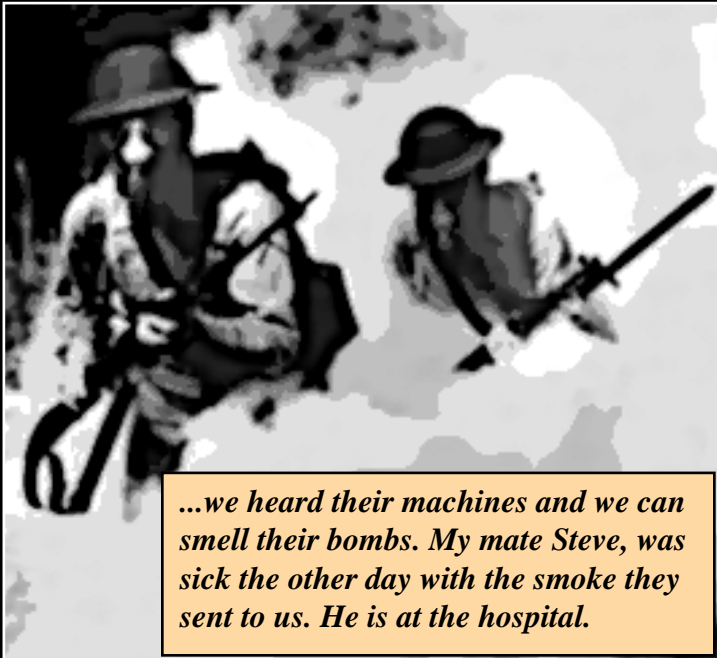
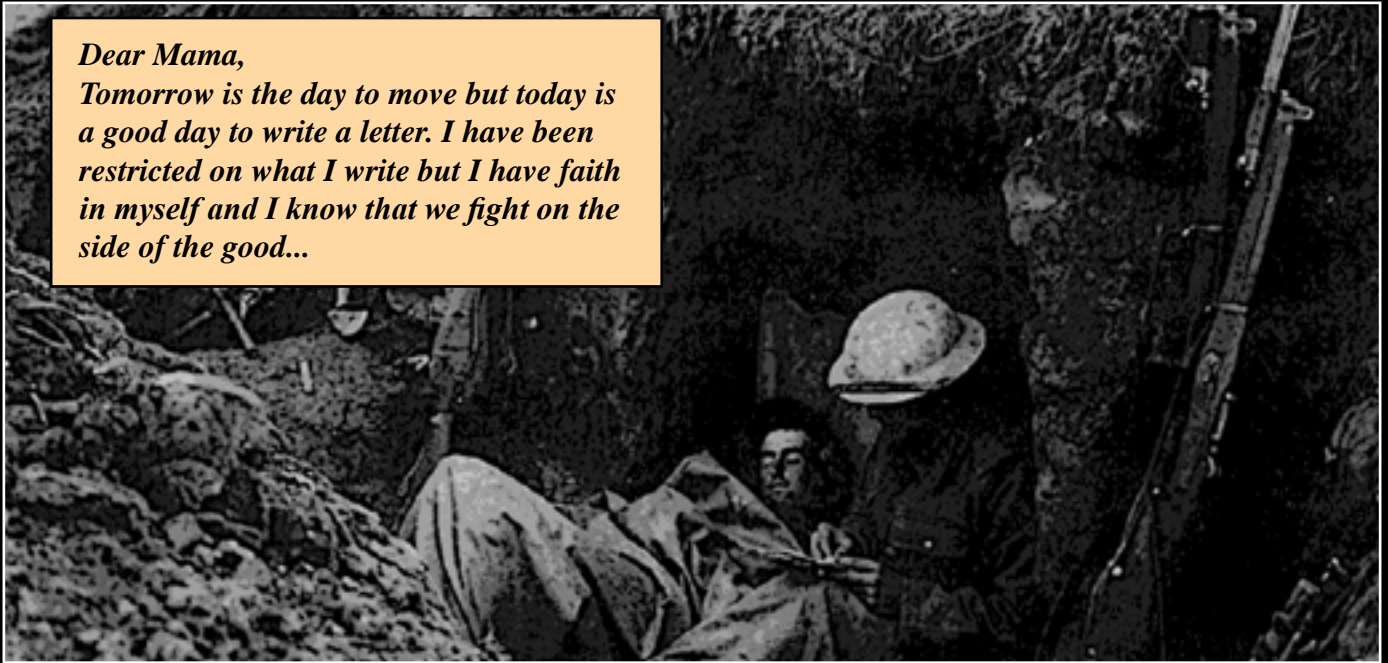


John Singer Sargent's *Gassed* presents a classical frieze of soldiers being led from the battlefield -- alive, but changed forever by individual encounters with deadly hazard in war.





*Dear Mama,  
Tomorrow is the day to move but today is  
a good day to write a letter. I have been  
restricted on what I write but I have faith  
in myself and I know that we fight on the  
side of the good...*



*...we heard their machines and we can  
smell their bombs. My mate Steve, was  
sick the other day with the smoke they  
sent to us. He is at the hospital.*

*A big evil iron tank came the other day.  
Five friends missing. That's how the cap-  
tain called them. Missing. They weren't  
mama. We know where they are.*



*And when they start again mama, I'm  
afraid. But I have faith.*

*I have faith because  
the King send us bigger  
and better iron tanks.*



*I have faith because the  
King send us better and  
stronger gas bombs.*



*And now mama, they will  
be afraid. Just like us.*



*Just like us.*



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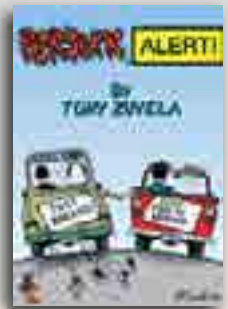
**Murray Hunter**

## Dependent Origination as a Natural Governing Law

An essay that explains the concept of dependent origination and its place in Buddhist Dharma (teaching). Dependent origination is then described as a heuristic and discussed in relation to James Lovelock's GAIA hypothesis, the solar system, the economic system, the social environment, event phenomena and entrepreneurial opportunity, consciousness and self concept, and the ethical standpoint.

**Tony Zuvela**  
**Berserk Alert**

Berserk Alert is a collection of published in Ovi magazine cartoons from Tony Zuvela; including some unpublished. Over a hundred pages of alarmingly berserk humour.



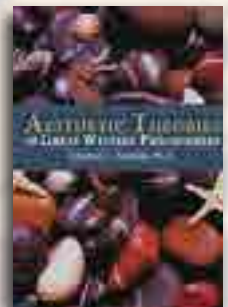
## Prof. Ernesto Paolozzi Benedetto Croce: The Philosophy of History and the Duty of Freedom

Professor Ernesto Paolozzi's book on Benedetto Croce, his ideas and his thoughts.

Translation from Italian from Dr. Massimo Verdicchio

**Dr. Emanuel Paparella**  
**Aesthetic Theories of  
Great Western Philosophers**

Professor Emanuel L. Paparella's new book. In twenty chapters, twenty philosophers and their studies on art and aesthetics.



**The Ovi Team**

## Ovi in Finnish means doors

The Book of Doors