

THE FIRST WORLD WAR AND TOTAL MOBILIZATION: THE INEVITABILITY OF PLANETARY RECRUITMENT

A PRIMEIRA GRANDE GUERRA E A MOBILIZAÇÃO TOTAL: A INEVITABILIDADE DO RECRUTAMENTO PLANETÁRIO

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Abstract

Technical progress in transport and communications, which translated phenomenologically into the speeds experienced during Modernity, opened the way for new orders of space such as airspace or even orbital space. Truly, in the early twentieth century, terror came from the air. In this article, we will explore this complex mutation taking place against the backdrop of Ernst Jünger's *Total Mobilization* (Jünger 1930). Since the first motorized wars, resistance and action necessarily began to encompass the machine and its extensions. Clearly, technology guides history and war, contributing to a labor that has ever since become Global. There is no longer anything, object or subject, not in the service of a mobilization that is consummated in itself.

Keywords: Aerial Warfare, Total Mobilization, Modernity, Technology, Chronopolitics.

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Resumo

O progresso técnico nos transportes e comunicações, e que fenomenologicamente se traduz nas velocidades sentidas na Modernidade, abriu caminho a novas ordens espaciais, como o espaço aéreo ou até mesmo o orbital. Com efeito, e no início do século XX, *do ar chegava o terror*. Neste artigo, procuraremos dar conta dessa complexa mutação tendo por pano de fundo uma analítica à *A Mobilização Total* de Ernst Jünger (Jünger 1930). Fora desde logo a partir das primeiras motorizações nas guerras que a resistência e a ação do coletivo passou a abarcar necessariamente a máquina e suas extensões. Muito definitivamente, a técnica conduz a história e a guerra, contribuindo para um labor que entretanto se tornou planetário. Já não há nada, objeto ou sujeito, que não esteja ao serviço de uma mobilização que se consuma nela mesma.

Palavras-Chave: Guerra Aérea, Mobilização Total, Modernidade, Técnica, Cronopolítica.

«Abraham Lincoln may have freed all men, but Sam Colt made them equal.»

Popular Post-Secession War saying

1.

In *war*¹, an absolute transcendence is intensified that can only be resolved either through conflict or into an unlikely peace. It is a higher evil, and after it there is nothing left; it is the kick-start that projects outwardly the latent violence in the human-animal, simultaneously revealing the movement of the world and the meta-stability of matter. It frees forces, creates possibilities; war always links the regimentation of energy, both man's and nature's, culminating in a complex instrumental materialization of technology. It was war that shaped the world, wrote history, enabled a we-inspiring progress, outlined countries, consolidated some boundaries while extending others, always at the expense of much bloodshed, and its influence will surely never stagnate.

There appear to be two concepts for war. A modern concept, which sees war as a terrifying thing that must be avoided at all costs², even if it means another war, and another, more archaic concept, where war and warriors are exalted. Heraclitus said that war is *«the father of all and the king of all, and some he shows as gods, others as men; some he makes slaves, others free»*(Heraclitus cit. by Kirk et. al 1983, 200)³. It is true that, as a form of collectively organized violence, war precedes the formation of social institutions and, at whatever moment we look

¹ The etymologic root of the word *war* is said to come from Old English *wyrre*, from the Frankish *werra*, or from the Proto-Germanic *wersō*, either of them referring to fighting, discord, strife and violence (Guha 2011, 17).

² The modern concept of war emerged in the late seventeenth century and was marked by specific socio-historical conditions arising from the decline of the religious model (Guha 2011, 17).

³ In the metaphysics of Heraclitus, the pre-Socratic scheme that influenced Simondon, the world is assumed to be in permanent flow. There, war is a catalyst for change and without war humanity would not progress.

at it, from the more remote episodes of pre-history to the present day, it always presents itself as an extremely complex system wherein very different orders of questions mix: from technology to language, from politics to philosophy, and from theology to art.

Technical progress in the sectors of transport and communications, which phenomenologically translated into the speeds experienced during Modernity, pioneered new orders of space. In the early twentieth century, «terror came from the air» (Sloterdijk 2002) and with the emergence of aerial warfare, conventional warfare gave way to a Total War that the «*nomos* of the land»⁴ could not contain. We will now seek to account for this complex mutation in the context of an analysis of Ernst Jünger's *Total Mobilization* (Jünger 1930).

2.

Ernst Jünger overcame the crisis of nationalisms that marked the World Wars and outlined a truly global way of thinking. In *Total Mobilization*, the military-writer realizes how modern technology had already completely exceeded the soldier's individual initiative. It is a collective body that now reports for labor and war, a body comprising much more than the organic human mass, which is no longer recruited for the proximity of close combat, but that instead integrates a complex set of networks and machines. And, in fact, *Total Mobilization* became an essential figure in tracing an outline of modernity⁵.

In his writings on the imperative implementation and use of modern technology, Jünger brought together German Romanticism and the heroic spirit of military aristocracy it inherited from. In between the bloody World Wars, in the midst of the existential crisis of the bourgeois political model and after the fracturing rise of the communist model, both circumstances which profoundly threatened the European environment, Jünger takes on the role of an incontrovertible historical, but also poetic testimony of the changing reality of the first half of the twentieth century.

Since the motorization of wars, resistance and collective action came to necessarily encompass the machine and its extensions. Still, timeless as it is, warfare should be a reward in itself because, as Jünger urges, there is no *heroic spirit* that does not come out sublimated in the collective ecstasy. However, and although it proves essential, the technical side of the mobilization was not, for the writer, its most decisive aspect. As he states in the fourth paragraph of *Total Mobilization*, *readiness* to be mobilized is what would prove truly decisive. The rising motorization of the State, fueled by the acceleration of technical progress, uninterruptedly rallied everything and everyone in its path. In fact, «*the spirit of war was penetrated by the spirit of progress*»:

⁴ Greek word to define all measures and dispositions (Schmitt 1950, 70). It is to Carl Schmitt that we owe the recovery of that first movement that founded legal institutions and unleashed wars. In a disturbing postwar book, *The Nomos of the Earth* (Schmitt 1950), the primitive «*taking of land*» releases the *nomos* and supports every regime of ownership and division of space.

⁵ As Peter Sloterdijk acknowledges in *Infinite Mobilization, for a critique of political kinetics* (1989) in the chapter «*The Modern Age as mobilization*», specifically for its emphasis of the «*kinetic reality of modernity as mobilization*» (Sloterdijk 1989, 27).

Perhaps we can best identify the special nature of this great catastrophe by the assertion that in it, the genius of war was penetrated by the spirit of progress. This was not only the case for the fighting among the different countries; it was also true for the civil war that gathered a rich second harvest in many of them. These two phenomena, world war and world revolution, are much more closely interrelated than a first glance would indicate. They are two sides of an event of cosmic significance, whose outbreak and origins are interdependent in numerous respects. (Jünger 1930, 123; our emphasis)

War and revolution erupt. Entwined as they are in his romantic idealism, for the writer these are absolutely dependent events, identical in the way they hatch into the world, precisely because they are vested in a timeless transcendence that is only achievable in spirit. But still to come, says the writer, is the full understanding of that which underlies the idea of progress, that is, the «mask of reason» that stretches the «fine threads that produce their movements» (Jünger 1930, 124) is yet to be understood. But in order to deploy these energies, «fitting one's sword-arm no longer suffices» because mobilization must come from within, from an «extension to the deepest marrow, life's finest nerve,» so that it can be articulated into an elaborate «power supply of modern life» channeling energy into the «great current of martial energy» (Jünger 1930, 127-128). It will, therefore, become the «new morality of progress», that is, the fervor felt in a world liberated by the experience of technology, which stretches the threads that Jünger witnesses, specifically, in the individuations it triggers.

Most definitely, technology acts on history and on war, contributing to a labor that has meanwhile become planetary in scale. There is no longer anything, object or subject, that is not in the service of a mobilization that is consummated in itself, «*much more than by us*»:

With a war breaking out in such an atmosphere, the relation of each individual contestant to progress was bound to play a decisive role. And precisely therein lies the authentic, moral factor of our age. (Jünger 1930, 124)

Through mobilization, the image of war takes on the look of a *gigantic labor process*⁶. There is no *movement*, from trade to transport or even to work performed at home, out of sight, which is not already connected to the battlefield⁷. It rallies even those who have no ties to a military career, retaining all wealth, to the last penny, to the last reserves⁸.

⁶ In the words of Jünger: «In the same way, the image of war as armed combat merges into the more extended image of a gigantic labour process [Arbeitsprozesses]. In addition to the armies that meet on the battlefields, originate the modern armies of commerce and transport, foodstuffs, the manufacture of armaments the army of labour in general.» (Jünger 1930, 126)

⁷ This time, submitting all to the era of the masses and technology: «Total Mobilization is far less consummated than it consummates itself; in war and peace, it expresses the secret and inexorable claim to which our life in the age of masses and machines subjects us. It thus turns out that each individual life becomes, ever more unambiguously, the life of a worker; and that, following the wars of knights, kings, and citizens, we now have wars of workers. The first great twentieth century conflict has offered us a presentiment of both their rational structure and their mercilessness.» (Jünger 1930, 128)

⁸ Observable in the restrictions to exports, one of the examples cited by Jünger in *Total Mobilization* (1930).

The pressing need and the collective effort for a general mobilization is self-emphasized in a completely new way, marked by modern technology. All will be recruited, even remotely, because technology *reaches everything remotely*. There is no longer any element that does not constitute a logistics component.

Thus, Total Mobilization truly guides a universal recruitment.

Through the unlimited labor that the spirit of mobilization instilled in the world, and which now includes men and machines assembled into sets, we now live at a planetary level, engaged in a complex entanglement of inclusive movements. This is true because nothing escapes mobilization, not a single, solitary “atom”:

With a pleasure-tinged horror, we sense that here, not a single atom is not in motion – that we are profoundly inscribed in this raging process. (Jünger 1930, 128)

Once labor had become unlimited and implemented on all vessels, recruitment was absolute and transformed entire industrial countries, even continents, into powerful «volcanic workshops» (Jünger 1930, 127). Thus, amidst the post-war industrial acceleration, a unique *figure* appeared: that of the *worker*. After the destruction of the world through war, here lies its reconstruction⁹.

The figure of the worker represents, in *The Worker* (1932), a new commitment to a world from a construction that is expected to be both organic and technological. However, Jünger rules out from the start the «*dictatorship of economic thought in itself*»¹⁰, revealing evidences of his military aristocratism. Nessora, on the masses and the figure of the worker, states that there is evidence of a general departure from Marxism because, in his view, the worker is not a sacrifice, but a mythical figure, and it should be noted, one of planetary power¹¹. From the metaphysical worker to a modern phenomenology, herein lie the technological possibilities that Jünger found in war, which form history and nations. This because «[...] it is history that depends on the figure, rather than the figure depending on history» (Lamb 1994, 57).

Jünger reads the world and its progress in this manner. From armed conflict had emerged a method and a form of government (*Herrschaft*) of transformation of life and

⁹ On *The Worker*, we consulted Edmundo Cordeiro's Masters Dissertation, mentored by José Bragança de Miranda. On the subject of war, Lamb summarizes the transition from *Total Mobilization* (1930) to *The Worker* (1932): «*To destruction would then follow construction: the second phase predicted by Jünger. Clearly Der Arbeiter describes the beginning of the first process, but from the perspective of the whole, of the totality that is the figure of the worker: this figure, as a metaphysical power, is simultaneously destructive and constructive, its domain <Herrschaft>, and consequent possibility of construction implies the destruction of obstacles*» (Cordeiro 1994 52).

¹⁰ «[...] the worker is not a phenomenon or a type subsumed under an abstract freedom, is not a new class fighting against the domination of another in society, and therefore does not emerge within an economic reality as a claimant for new conditions or a new economic order. Seeing the worker through these lenses, therein lies the trace of the domination of the Enlightenment's assessment of values, present both in those who, by that assessment, are not workers, they are not the workers of whom they are speaking, as in the so-called movements of workers'» (Cordeiro 1994 29)

¹¹ As he states in his interview with Julien Hervier: «*Je vois dans le Travailleur une figure mythique qui fait son entrée dans notre monde; et les questions du XIX^{ème} siècle, qui portent pour l'essentiel sur l'économie, n'interviennent chez moi qu'en seconde ligne.(...) Ce qui importe, dans Le Travailleur, c'est la vision.*» (Jünger cit. by Cordeiro 1994, 25)

history, led by a particular shape - the «*shape in the making*» that is *Gestalt*. From labor emerged «*a new consciousness of freedom and responsibility*» of world-building:

The following should be recognized: dominion and service are one and the same. [...] Hence all the points that the Germans managed to reach in this era, had *nevertheless* been reached: movement found itself, in all areas, in a strange and unnatural element. The real bottom that could only be walked in a diving suit; decisive labor took place in a deadly space. Honor these fallen whom the tremendous loneliness of love or knowledge tore to pieces, or that steel destroyed on the burning hills of combat! (Jünger, 1932, 51)

From *Der Arbeiter*, and its vast depths, we will underline only how Jünger points to the emergence of a new Germany after the devastation of war. A new nation-world (or world) will rise, therefore, through the figure of the worker - and not without violence, as could be seen with the Second World War and the infamous Third Reich project.

And war will be total while mobilization is total - and infinite. That is, while all resources are engaged, down to the reserves.

For Carl Schmitt, one of the most incontrovertible references in international law, the State is mandated to enforce Total War on an opponent without restriction of means when it has the legislative power to perform any maneuver capable of militarily, politically and economically annihilating the enemy. From neutralization to complete destruction, Total War as a means of warfare surpasses all the differences between combatants and noncombatants, incorporating everything in a totalization that covers extra-military areas such as the mental and moral energies of noncombatants. In what went down in history as the «*Total War Speech*», delivered on the historic day of 18 February, 1943, Goebbels asked the entire German people:

The English claim that the German people do not want total war but capitulation. I ask you, do you want total war? Do you want it to be still more total, more radical than we can imagine it today? (Virilio 1984, 72)

It is then with the tragic approval of an enthusiastic people in arms that Goebbels declares: «*let the storm begin!*» - From here on, war will supplant the spatial dimensions, encompassing the entire planet, without limits or end.

It is well known how war affects not only the materiality of nations but also their spirit. Hence Jünger clearly exhorted German mysticism¹², as we have said. Walter Benjamin would

¹² We call attention to the heroic formula: «*It goes against the grain of the heroic spirit to seek out the image of war in a source that can be determined by human action. Still, the multitudinous transformations and disguises which the pure form [Gestalt] of war endures amid the vicissitudes of human time and space offers this spirit a gripping spectacle to behold.*»(Jünger 1930, 122-123)

lay bare their ideological formula¹³ in *Theories of German Fascism* (Benjamin, 1930). For Benjamin, Jünger's text is merely a translation of the *art for art* thesis into warfare, and that is precisely why it is a dangerous project: not so much due to the unavoidable issue of the aims and purposes of making war, but because of war as an end in itself –even because in that provision for the aesthetics of war, says Benjamin, reality is threatened with unlimited war (Benjamin 1930, 121).

If for Jünger, it was the readiness for mobilization and regimentation of the entire human and technological arsenal that was absolutely decisive in the War of 1914-1918, for Benjamin, it is at once the desire for such a mobilization that emphasizes the human unpreparedness to assume technology «*as part of its own body*»¹⁴. And the philosopher would go on to demonstrate how technological objects were also unprepared to curb man's natural destructive zeal.

In other words, the obsession with control and the illusion of man's command over nature is proof of his insufficient maturity to deal with the new possibilities intensified by technology. Therein lies the threat. As Benjamin summarizes once more, now in the pages of *Obra de Arte na Era da sua Reprodutibilidade Técnica (Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction)* (Benjamin 1939):

This is the case of war that, with its destruction, demonstrates that society was not mature enough to incorporate technology as part of its body, and that technology was not sufficiently developed to master its fundamental social forces. (Benjamin, 1939, 113)

Because, instead of being mobilized for war and *dropping bombs*, the plane should be mobilized for humanity, for *casting seeds*. So says the German philosopher. Moreover, stated Benjamin, the fascist formula will lead to a kind of collective suicide, because it emphasizes the alienation of being self-centered, in the pure *hubris* of those who «hope that war provides the artistic satisfaction of the perception of senses altered by technology» (Benjamin, 1939, 113). It should be noted that Germany, whether in the First or in the Second World War, had always imputed all liabilities¹⁵ to technology, and that is also what can be read in *Theories of German Fascism* (Benjamin 1930).

In aerial warfare, chemical weapons were a heinous procedure - gas is a *lasting* horror that affects not only the deployed contingents but also the surrounding environment. In *Terror*

¹³ Consult the essay «Teorias do Fascismo Alemão» (“Theories of German Fascism”) (1930) by Walter Benjamin. Observe the passage: «*War – the “eternal” war they talk about so much here, as well as the most recent one – is said to be the highest manifestation of the German nation. It should be clear that these authors have had little success in perceiving these relationships.*» (Benjamin 1930, 122)

¹⁴ Let us complement with the following quote: «*the power of war provides evidence that social reality was not prepared to make technology into its own body and that technology was not strong enough to dominate the elemental forces of nature.* » (Benjamin 1930, 120. Our translation).

¹⁵ To this end, see the allegations of Albert Speer during the Nuremberg trials: «*Hitler's dictatorship was the first in an industrialized state, a dictatorship which, in order to dominate its own people, used all technical means to perfection... thus, the criminal events of recent years were not due to Hitler's personality. The enormity of these crimes may also be explained by the fact that Hitler was the first who used the means offered by technology to commit them.*» (Consulted in Virilio 1984, 67)

vindo do Ar (Terror from the Air) (Sloterdijk 2002), Peter Sloterdijk matched the beginning of the twentieth century with the Battle of Ypres on 22 April, 1915, when Germany launched the first bombs of chlorine gas on the French-Canadian troops. And this was not only because the innovation of chemical warfare tears up conventional warfare, but also because the air absorbed the earth and the sea as battlefronts. As Carl Schmitt noted, in 1954, in his book, *Terra e Mar (Land and Sea)* (Schmitt 1954), it is significant that it was a continental nation, and not a maritime power, to reveal that new medium¹⁶.

3.

The *collision between the war on the sea and the war on land* unfolded on the same plane. The opponents are co-present on a relatively homogeneous theater of operations, one that expands horizontally. However, with the conquest of airspace, a new element is unlocked, the air, producing a new image of the world, more comprehensive and flattened: a kind of real time cartography unveiled aboard reconnaissance aircraft.

For Carl Schmitt, the conquest of airspace radically changed the *horizontal face-to-face*, finally defeating the ground because *air warfare has no stage or audience*¹⁷. The confrontation between opponents ceases to have a battlefront, it has only a *horizon*. It is with this abolition of the flatness of the territory that the *nomos* of the earth ends.

Whereas with every technological advance on a physical medium, on a new element, brings a change in the comprehensive image we have of the entire Earth, this image simultaneously leads to the re-composition of the *nomos*. But strategy, tactics and logistics are also renewed in warfare. Thus, it is not only property regulations and the areas of territorial sovereignty that are fixed, but new capabilities of action and expediency of resources are calculated and experienced, new standards of strength and human regimentation are rehearsed, deeply altering the models of movement and information. Following Schmittian thought, every new medium that is revealed brings with it a change in the *effectiveness* of resources (Schmitt 1950, 54). And, as it happens, from the First World War onwards, aerial power¹⁸ would finally

¹⁶ «In a few years, between 1890 and 1914, one of the countries of continental Europe, Germany, caught up with England and even manages to surpass her in certain sectors such as machine-building, ship-building and steam-engines.[...] The invention of the airplane marked the conquest of the third element, after those of land and sea. Man was lifting himself high above the plains and the waves, and in the process, acquired a new means of transportation as well as a new weapon. Standards and criteria undertook further changes. Hence, man's possibilities to dominate nature and his fellow man were given the widest scope. It is easy to understand why the air force was called "space weapon".» (Schmitt 1954, 57)

¹⁷ «plus de théâtre (Schauplatz) ni de spectateurs », Szendy citing Schmitt (Szendy 2011, 36).

¹⁸ Also the invention of the *U-boat*, abbreviating *Unterseeboot*, which means submarine in German.

dissolve the sphere of influence of the *fleet in potential*¹⁹, definitively expanding the war to a planetary scale:

Aujourd'hui il est par ailleurs déjà concevable que l'air absorbe la mer et peut-être même aussi la terre, et que les hommes transforment leur planète en une combinaison de dépôts de matières premières et de porte-avions. On tracera alors de nouvelles lignes d'amitié au de-là desquelles vont tomber les bombes atomiques et les bombes à hydrogène. (Schmitt 1950, 55)

With aerial warfare, and through the terror of chemical warfare, ended the balance that Carl Schmitt had conceptualized in *War in Form [Krieg in Form]*²⁰ precisely because the force launching the attack does not direct it exclusively against the military, as we had previously noted, contaminating the environment and the population (Sloterdijk 2002: 16). Let us recall how Walter Benjamin noted it in his «*German Fascism Theories*» («*Teorias do Fascismo Alemão*») (Benjamin 1930):

Gas warfare, in which the contributors to this book show conspicuously little interest, promises to give the war of the future a face which permanently displaces soldierly qualities by those of sports; all action will lose its military character and war will assume the countenance of record setting. The most prominent strategic characteristic of such warfare consists in its being waged exclusively and most radically as offensive. And we know that there is no adequate defence against gas attacks from the air. (Benjamin 1930, 121)

A particularly cruel use of airborne chemicals distinctly marks the minds. Moreover, with the *gas war*, the target lies beyond the opponent's body: the aerial transport and the handling of substances expand the perimeter of the destruction contaminating the environment, cities

¹⁹ Introduced in the late seventeenth century by English Admiral Arthur Herbert, the fleet in potential (fleet in being) predicts the permanent presence at sea of an "invisible" navy, anchoring its strategy on the indirect application of force: without ever leaving port, it unfolds its power to influence the opponent. Without using networks and interactivity that only came much later, this fleet in potential is prototypical because it is true Telematics. In short: it operates at a distance. So it is a sketch for all deterrence strategies. Let's see how the fleet in power unfolds logistically: «*The fleet in being is logistics taking strategy to its absolute point, as the art of movement of unseen bodies –, it is the permanent presence in the sea of an invisible fleet able to strike no matter where and no matter when, annihilating the enemy's will to power by creating a global zone of insecurity in which it will no longer be able to "decide" with certainty, to want – in other words, to win. Thus, it is above all a new idea of violence that no longer comes from direct confrontation and bloodshed, but rather from the unequal properties of bodies, evaluation of the number of movements allowed them in a chosen element, permanent verification of their dynamic efficiency*» (Virilio 1977, 61-62).

²⁰ The Schmittian war in form implied a balance of powers. Terrorism highlights the inequality between powers. In the words of Sloterdijk: «*What dictates this shift is the emergence of encounters between opponents vastly unequal in strength – as we see in the current conjuncture of non-state wars and hostilities between armed forces and non-state combatants. In retrospect, the curious thing about the military history of gas warfare between 1915 1918 is the fact that through it – and on both sides of the front – state-sponsored forms of environmental terrorism became integrated into so-called regular warfare, between lawfully recruited armies. This was, it must be said, in explicit violation of the Article 23 of the 1907 Hague Convention, which expressly forbade the use of any kind of poison or suffering-enhancing weapons in operations against the enemy, and a fortiori against the non-combatant population*». (Sloterdijk 2002, 16-17)

and civil communities. From then on, the city began to share the characteristics of a bunker, as noted by Paul Virilio:

For me the bunker is a kind of metaphor for suffocation, asphyxiation, both what I fear and what fascinates me (Virilio 1975, 23).

In the suffocation and asphyxiation of enclosure in a bunker, in the contaminated atmosphere of the cities - the air was rendered un-breathable.

With the arrival of chemical weapons in the battlefield, conventional warfare gave way, it should be noted, to a total and infinite war. Nowadays we see, as Jünger said, through the cracks of the Tower of Babel, the signs of a progress as *indecipherable as hieroglyphics*. And, as the military-writer asserts, the purpose of the First World War is that «*the final war will have a meaning that no arithmetic can master*» (Jünger 1930, 139). We will summarize it thus: the First World War was the first conflict that mobilized the world through a technological proposition. However, there already were machines of planetary management in operation, such as Christianity. Agamben demonstrates in the interview “From Political Theology to Economic Theology: Interview with Giorgio Agamben” (2004), as the economic theology of salvation was already a formula for world management and, in this aspect, already a mobilization. The difference is that now it is a general and physical mobilization, not just “spiritual”, as in the Middle Ages. But there are remainders of the model everywhere, and a brief note on the matter must be made.

In short, from Christian theology came two general paradigms. And Agamben devised them, above all, from the political philosophy of Carl Schmitt. One of the models is clearly political theology, which is based on the transcendence of the sovereign power of God; the other is economic theology «[...] *that replaces this idea with an oikonomia, conceived as an immanent order - domestic and not strictly political, both of the divine life and of the human life*» (Agamben 2004, 3). He further elaborates, explaining its development and reception: that «from the first paradigm derive political philosophy and the modern theory of sovereignty; from the second, modern “bio-politics”, to the current triumph of economy over every other aspect of social life » (Agamben 2004, 3).

It can be seen that when certain conditions are fulfilled, total mobilization progressed to a chronopolitical formula, updated specifically in the present model of capitalism²¹. There, economy and mobilization triumph over social life.

²¹ Agamben states that: «To say that I try to reconstruct the essence of capitalism is undoubtedly too much. Certainly the idea of an immanent order is essential, and it is also found in ancient economics, from Aristotle to Xenophon. It is known that Greek economics was not an economics of production but one of management of the house, of the order of things. Chrematistics, or profit, was not included in ancient economics. I believe, however, that this idea of order that we are used to thinking of as secondary in modern economics, is, however, a prerequisite, and it links ancient to modern economics. The theological paradigm represents a sort of medium element between the two. » (Agamben 2004, 3).

4.

The concept of global time and the attempt to overcome national time zones for the benefit of a single planetary time leads to the world being truly mobilized in the information age. This regulation of time and speeds is what we understand as chronopolitics²².

For a totalizing movement to exist there must be absolute synchronicity. The synchronicity potentiated by live broadcasts may be thought of as mobilization - perhaps in the Babel of which Jünger spoke in *Total Mobilization* (Jünger 1930). But a Babel that is nearly bursting and always ready for war. This, we must remember, is the spirit of mobilization. Neither war nor peace, but an emphasis on *readiness* itself, denoting a military nature, is revealed in the action of *mobilizing*. From now on, the figure of the *workeris* truly at the service of an entire transnational contingent, reflected in treaties and organizations that followed the end of the Second World War.

But before that, and since the Industrial Revolution, conflicts were intensified, «*reducing the timeframe of war*» (Virilio 1975, 21): wars lasting decades were replaced by «surgical» wars that lasted for days – we need only look at the not only semantic reduction from the *Hundred Years War* (1337-1453) to the *Six Day War* (between 5 and 10 June 1967), until the «*very limited possibilities of a Nuclear War*»²³ are achieved that, for the ability to ensure mutual destruction, can spray the world in hours, or so it is suspected.

When live broadcast emerged in the 90s, inseparable from the cathode environment where it flourished, and thus inseparable from the image and its frame, the real-time immediacy between emission and reception was emphasized. In this context, according to Paul Virilio, space, time, image and finally story are compressed and *disappear* into history²⁴. But is this suppression real? Admittedly, experiments were accelerated, distances were shortened, and it is certain that the length of the offensives came out emphasized. Hence there was a need for theses that sought to regulate time.

²² Chronopolitics is a term coined by Paul Virilio to designate the political relevance acquired by the temporal dimension from mass acceleration: «*With visual (audiovisual) continuity progressively taking over from the territorial contiguity of nations, which has now declined in importance, the political frontiers were themselves to shift from the real space of geopolitics to the 'real time' of the chronopolitics of the transmission of images and sounds. Two complementary aspects of globalization have, then, to be taken into account today: on the one hand, the extreme reduction of distances which ensues from the temporal compression of transport and transmissions; on the other, the current general spread of tele-surveillance. A new vision of a world that is constantly 'tele-present' twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, thanks to the artifice of this 'transhorizon optics' which puts what was previously out of sight on display.*» (Virilio 1998, 13) Let us see yet another passage: «*Following the telescopic hijacking of astronomy, along with domestic television, we are thus seeing the beginnings of another hijacking, this one 'endoscopic', revealing the closing in of terrestrial globe, where the ultimate vanishing point is now to be the centre of the Earth: this kernel where the real space of geopolitical extension has just ended (or more exactly crashed), literally becoming confused with the centre of time, of this real time without localization other than the axis of gravity that still resists the chronopolitical instantaneity of the globalization under the way, in a TEMPORAL COMPRESSION with more serious consequences for human beings than those resulting from shifting tectonic plates of our tiny telluric planet.*» (Virilio 2005, 96).

²³ General André Beaufre stated: «*After three hours of nuclear conflict we go headfirst into the unknown.*» (Virilio 1975, 21)

²⁴ It is worth retaining the intermittence of the live image: «*Already lost to sight, the Gulf War is receding into the vacuum of consciousness at the speed of the meteorite that apparently came within a hair's breadth of the earth's surface twelve months ago . . . Overexposed for one hundred long days, this conflict has finally suffered the same fate as the news. The first televisual war, the war of the Persian Gulf has not escaped the law of the genre: now you see it, now you don't. It is enough to make you think the electronic process known as image compression, which allows information to be stored, has promoted the compression of history and finally the disappearance of the event!*» (Virilio 1996, 23)

Everything points, therefore, to an exhaustion of experience, whether through the immateriality of the current networks, or by the suddenness of the information spread, or still by the generalized motorization of reality, which leads many thinkers on acceleration to seek time as a regular dimension. Paul Virilio, Marc Augé, Hartmut Rosa, and even Carl Schmitt before them, point to a de-realization and subtraction of spatial experiences, rather than emphasizing the duration potentiated by new technological equipment. It is in this context that chronopolitics arises as an attempt to control space and also in response to the shortened timeframe of the experiments, mean while expanded to the planetary level.

Chronopolitics is, at heart, the recognition of the tension that is experienced in face of the urgency of duration. Here, glimpsing another *cartography* bound to a global *chronometry*, is that innovation.

Still, from there emerged speed, a new *moral force*²⁵ enshrining the *straight line*²⁶ and opposing the sinuosity of natural forms. The dangers were present at once: «one must persecute, lash, torture all those who sin against speed» (Marinetti 1916, 58). For Marinetti, speed is “naturally” *pure, hygienic, aggressive, and synthesizes courage*, while slowness, in its passivity, is *dirty, pessimistic* and leads to exhaustion²⁷. Urging speed, Marinetti calls for war.

For Sun Tzu, speed was the essence of war:

Let your rapidity be that of the wind, your compactness that of the forest. In raiding and plundering be like fire, in immovability like a mountain. Let your plans be dark and impenetrable as night, and when you move, fall like a thunderbolt. (Tzu, 4th cent. a.C., 85).

Speed emerges in Virilio as an absolute reference, but one he seeks to curb by establishing a new line of thought, *dromology*²⁸. *Dromology* is the science of acceleration whose subject matter is the nature of what Henri Bergson had called the *inevitable technological vitalism* (Virilio 1977, 90) evident in the multiple vehicles and projectiles, in the inert fortresses and bunkers, to the prosthetic bodies of the soldiers, bodies that have already been fused into technology.

Dromology was then structured from three very significant changes that emerged effectively from the First World War onwards. Namely: (1) a first change is brought about by the erosion of land space for the speeds experienced in the means of transport, and which also

²⁵ Filippo Tommaso Marinetti loudly disseminated speed and war. He too links Modernity to the disappearance of the unifying presence of Christ, and hearsal for the replacement of a new morality - the morality of speed: «[...] *the new religion-morality of speed is born this Futurist year from our great liberating war. Christian morality served to develop man's inner life. Today it has lost its reason for existing, because it has been emptied of all divinity.*» (Marinetti 1916, 57)

²⁶ Note the apology of the *divine straight line* «*Tortuous paths, roads that follow the indolence of streams and wind along the spines and uneven bellies of mountains, these are the laws of the earth. Never straight lines; always arabesques and zigzags. Speed finally gives to human life one of the characteristics of divinity: the straight line.*» (Marinetti 1916, 57)

²⁷ See the quote: «*Speed, having as its essence the intuitive synthesis of every force in movement, is naturally pure. Slowness, having as its essence the rational analysis of every exhaustion in repose, is naturally unclean. After the destruction of the antique good and the antique evil, we create a new good, speed, and a new evil, slowness.*» (Marinetti 1916, 58)

²⁸ From the Greek *dromos*, which means race.

encompasses the conquest of orbital space; (2) the second change concerns the acceleration in the message exchanges conveyed by new media, first with the telephone and the radio, then with satellites and the internet, and indicates a very abrupt revolution in broadcasting, adding to the idea of a presence in space a remote *telepresence*. This is how, in addition to a territorial planning quickly populated by heavy equipment such as roads or railways, intangible control is achieved through satellites and fiber optic cables. The dromosphere will become the globe entangled in grids, cables and roads; an extension of the world covered by a film of networks that enable both circulation and mass transfer. (3) Yet a third revolution takes place, no longer in the exterior space, but on the *interior*, precisely because it is related to the revolution of transplants and biotechnology. Although these changes do not cease to be folded into or anchored to the physical territory, when processes and experiences are accelerated, chronometry seems to be decisive in the regulation of phenomena. And modernity revealed this same effect: the urgency of time over space, and how its management had become problematic.

That said, and for a «*critique of political kinetics*» inherent to the deployed and globalized forms and elements typical of capitalism, the German philosopher Peter Sloterdijk wrote in 1989 in *Infinite Mobilization, for a critique of political kinetics* (*Mobilização Infinita, para uma crítica da cinética política*) that:

Only on the horizon of a mobilization that has become ubiquitous can the idea be presented that such a reality would only be appropriate to a kind of criticism that can advance to a penetrating consciousness of movement. This is, again, an equivocal formulation, because the direction in which it laboriously seeks to achieve such awareness is not forward, but a backwards step, the disengaging of the acceleration process in order to gain distance. Only hesitantly will we name the critical side of this mobilization theory according to a classical model: critique of political kinetics. (Sloterdijk 1989, 51)

Sloterdijk himself also saw this connection to time - acceleration and duration - as essential, but he stretched mobilization out into *infinity*.

Incontrovertibly, in *Infinite Mobilization*, Sloterdijk refers to the military connotation included in the term «mobilization». It is a category of the military world, not a figure of speech, comprising the necessary capacity for a potentialability of a contingent to take action, even while on reserve:

The ominous formula of “total mobilization” prepares us for the recognition, which is still outrageous, even almost unbearable, that there is in the modern world a fundamental political-kinetic process, which tends to *de facto* neutralize the morally important difference between war and labor and increasingly negates the old distinction between reserve status and entry into action. (Sloterdijk 1989, 39-40)

As a process, mobilization pushes everything forward, says the German philosopher, truly propelling any achievement.

In an accelerated pace, mobilization becomes a fundamental expression to describe the process of modernity. For Sloterdijk, it is *infinite* and it reproduces the dynamic model of modernization by mechanical means (Sloterdijk 1989, 36). It hopelessly encompasses the world, space, but now also time and history. And it was in face of an increasingly accelerated time that warfare gradually intensified.

During the «first generation» general mobilization what essentially circulated were objects, people. With the matrix world of networks, there is no object, flow or energy that is not absorbed. However, it is thanks to the *critique of political kinetics* that the theme of movement goes beyond the physical and into the humanities, rendering it the core issue. Sloterdijk realized this, adding that the Marxists were the first to understand that this critique would only be possible *from a post-Marxist standpoint* (Sloterdijk 1989, 51).

We will conclude by mentioning that late modernity is, for the German philosopher, pure *being-for-movement* and the Modern Age is a *mobilization* that inscribes the *will to power* as a way of acting that makes the world go round. We know how Man is a maker of worlds, revealing in their creation his *kinetic utopia*. But now, to history is added a post-history surreptitiously wrapped, shroud-like, around a still living body: modernity itself. On post modernity we will say then, following Sloterdijk, that it is summarized in a «diagnosis of the age to come, in as much as it results from the disposition of formulating the passive of the modern active» (Sloterdijk 1989, 27). The open project of Modernity as a techno-political complex unbalanced the fragile «ecology of human power and powerlessness» and is therefore grounded in what Sloterdijk called *kinetic utopia*²⁹.

On kinetic policy, it is certain that Sloterdijk means to keep his distance but says nothing about the Jungerian worldview. In fact, Peter Sloterdijk only means to step away from kinetics and to slow down the process: «[...]because the direction in which we are laboriously seeking to reach such awareness is not forward, but a step backwards, the disengaging of the acceleration process to gain distance. Only hesitantly do we name the critical side of this mobilization theory according to a classical model: critique of political kinetics » (Sloterdijk 1989, 51).

We know now that the tension experienced between space and time, which we called chronopolitics, is much more the result of a “*geographical gap*” in relation to the constitution of the *nomos* than of its absorption by time. And that emerged in aerial warfare. That enormous *gap* marks «the historical singularity of the event called “Modernity”» (Miranda 1994, 131). Therein can we realize the relevance of the theses of mobilization and the inevitability of acceleration.

²⁹ As Sloterdijk acknowledges: «*The character of a project inherent to this new age results from the grand assumption that through it, we will soon be able to run the march of the world so that it only moves what we rationally want to keep moving, through our own activities.*» (Sloterdijk 1989, 24)

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