

LENIN AND WAR:
AN HISTORIOGRAPHICAL ANALYSIS OF HIS EVOLVING PERCEPTION

by

Janice W. Simone

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Major Professors

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Lenin and War: An Historiographical Analysis
of His Evolving Perception

Introduction

Envisioning Europe in its last year of peace prior to the onset of World War I is an exercise in peeling back layers of rapidly accumulated change. So, too, is the process of examining the ideas of one of the most influential political thinkers of the time, V.I. Lenin. This study will be an analysis, both historical and historiographical in focus, of Lenin's voluminous writing on war. His writings reveal his evolving understanding of the role of social crisis brought by war.

The thesis of this paper is that Lenin, after long observation and study, came to the conclusion that a total war like World War I could accelerate the development of revolutionary class consciousness among the working classes. The true meaning of that war -- of the underlying assumptions and motivations of the Great Powers and and thus of the war's essentially class nature -- would be evident, and thereby would create the conditions for civil war and revolutionary social transformation. But because of the different "objective conditions" of development in societies throughout the world, i.e., "uneven development", progress toward socialism would follow patterns unique to each particular society and in each, such a war would be the

catalyst of a transformation of class consciousness.

One must examine Lenin's work over a long period, from the late nineteenth century through the First World War, to gain a fuller perspective on its metamorphosis. Isolated quotes do not adequately explain how he came to his understanding of war as it was in 1914, nor of his future expectations. To see how his ideas evolved, one must trace them from his earliest references to war and related concepts. Discovering more about Lenin's reflections on theory aids in assessing how theory guided action and praxis reformed theory.

The method used here relied heavily on the index to the English version of Lenin's Collected Works to locate from within those forty-six volumes his speeches, articles and pamphlets related to war. To provide historiographical and philosophical context, this analysis gives considerable attention to Marx and Engels as Lenin's intellectual "fathers"; the post World War I French historical school called Annales which echoed much of Lenin's paradigm of war; and comparison with other contemporaneous and contemporary views of World War I.

One can argue that the term "Leninism" implies a static body of thought, thus making its use a misnomer, but socialist writer Marcel Leibman places it in the proper diachronic context:

An analysis of Leninism must be a history of Leninism in its living evolution and no history of Leninism can be separated from the history of the Russian Revolution.... It is ... not possible to understand Leninism without a close study of its involvement in the political and social setting of Lenin's lifetime.(1)

In this examination of Lenin's conception of war, World War I rather than the Russian Revolution will be a focal point of study. The First World War was arguably the main catalyst of the Revolution so it is basic to set the scene of this first "total" war. But the Great War was also the crucible for a process of historiographical transformation which is perhaps even more relevant today in an age of nuclear weapons than it was in the "broken world" that followed the war.² The dilemma -- unrecognized until those millions of men faced it directly on the battlefields of France: what does "modern" war mean and what is its place in our perception of our world? The message of that war translates differently for Lenin and his followers than it does for most of the West. It has become something of a vogue for some Western scholars to recall the lessons of World War I. Their common analytical focus is on the Great Power political elites' "cult of the offensive," a glorification of offensive strategy which resulted in the illusion that "attackers would hold the advantage on the battlefield, and that wars would be short and decisive...." The strategists of 1914 were, of course, tragically wrong, and some current scholars see disconcerting parallels in

current Western nuclear counterforce strategy.³

But Lenin looked at World War I from a different historical perspective, and it is that which this paper seeks to explain.

Setting the Scene

Illusions About War in 1914: Sources of Explanation

In the waning years of the nineteenth century when, as historian Barbara Tuchman writes, "the sun of the old world was setting in a dying blaze of splendor never to be seen again,"⁴ Europe was still innocent of the horrors of "world war". But there was no lack of predictions -- for a very few, foreboding; for most, dreams of valor, drama and quick victory. One of the latter, published in 1893 in a British journal called Black and White and titled The Great War of 189: A Forecast, went so far as to justify a preference for a prediction of "a war which lent itself to literary and dramatic treatment, instead of a war which might be more natural but less picturesque."⁵

Former British officer Lieutenant Colonel Charles A Court Repington, military correspondent for The Times of London prior to and during World War I, referring to the:

first "decisive" battles, predicted that "friends on either side who are late at this rendezvous will be late for the fair." On the eve of the battle of Mons, Repington wrote in glowing terms of "glorious country for fighting in, glorious weather, and a glorious cause. What soldier," he asked exuberantly, "could ask for more?"⁽⁶⁾

French socialist Jean Jaurès, writing in 1898,

disturbed by the Dreyfus Affair and the Fashoda Incident, saw further down the road than the optimistic Repington and the many others like him:

Peace has been left to the whim of chance. But if war breaks out it will be vast and terrible. For the first time it will be universal, sucking in all the continents. Capitalism has widened the field of battle and the entire planet will turn red with the blood of countless men. No more terrible accusation can be made against this social system. (7)

Ivan (Jean de) Bloch, a leading Russian entrepreneur and wealthy railroad tycoon who had studied economics and political science abroad, also wrote a prescient book in 1898. In it he answers the question posed in its title: Is War Now Impossible? The Future of War in its Technical, Economic and Political Relations. Because of conscription, technological advances, and the interdependence of nations, wars would absorb "the total energies and resources of the combatant states, who, unable to achieve a decisive victory on the battlefield, would fight to exhaustion until they had brought each other down in total ruin." He foresaw the long months of entrenchment of armies, the involvement of civilian populations, and the waste inherent in an arms race which he believed would consume and enervate the belligerents' resources. No nation, whether or not the "victor", could expect to escape the horrors of total war; Bloch believed that this realization among the masses would result in anti-militarism and revolution, and, in

consequence, national suicide.⁸

But most of the political and military leaders in Great Powers operated from a vastly different perspective, seeing enumerable advantages to fighting what they assumed would be another of Europe's "small wars." The British generals and military journalists' hypothetical "picturesque" war pitted France with Russia against Britain and Germany. They saw themselves as victors and did not expect prolonged military action. Their outright defense of the prospects and potential profits from imperialist ventures contrasted with later exhortations prior to and during the actual war which tended to gloss over the diplomatic, strategic and financial profits to be made in favor of talk of freedom and national honor. But in 1893 they insisted that statesmen must comprehend:

...the splendid potentialities that lie within an energetic and resolute imperialism; the knitting and welding together of the mother country and her colonies and dependencies; the accurate knowledge and estimation of the means of attack and defense that belong respectively to our country and to the great Continental Powers. (9)

These men numbered among what Arno Mayer calls the "parties -or forces - of order." Their political orientation was predominantly that of the Right, identified by Mayer with the "Old Diplomacy", expansionism, the status quo.

It was not the secret diplomatic method qua method which the forces of order advocated, but rather annexations, protectorates and spheres of influence which, in view of an awakening public opinion, they could not openly claim. (10)

Contemporary historian Quincy Wright, in his study of modern war as a social phenomenon, lists a number of rationalizations for supporting colonialism. Some, like the need for "cannon fodder", would not be disseminated in the popular press. Other reasons were the need for outside sources of raw materials; the desire to control strategic frontiers and establish naval bases; colonial jobs and concessions for the profit of the relatively few; "expansiveness brought to the average person in identifying with the larger part of the world"; public diversion during depression; and the fear that without colonies, national culture will die out or diminish. Also, colonialism helped prevent revolution - not by those colonized, but by youthful colonizers who might otherwise rebel at home. As Wright notes, "...centralization of political and industrial responsibility steadily diminishes the number of leadership jobs while higher education increases the number of those who think themselves qualified to lead."¹¹

Not until the forces of order, now the belligerents, suffered economic and military exhaustion after four long years of total war did what Mayer calls the "parties or forces of movement" find success. Non-annexationist advocates of a "New Diplomacy", they sought open diplomacy and popular control over foreign policy-making.¹² Lenin's views both drew from and helped foster this change of outlook.

Ironically, though they could not envision the scope, duration or true meaning of the war, the authors of The Great War of 189 began their hypothetical war with an assassination attempt in the Balkans: "Prince Ferdinand of Bulgaria." This minor fact well illustrates the preoccupation of the "forces of order" with events of war as if they were moves in a game rather than deadly serious in nature.

The British forecasters did not have the lineup of allies correct, but it is understandable, in light of Fashoda, for them to see France as an enemy. By 1914, however, Britain, Russia and France had allied against Germany and Austria. It was an age of intense nationalism, of colonial competition, of heightened and widespread propaganda portraying the evils of rival countries, saturating entire societies with martial spirit. Where once there had been kinship, both literal and figurative, now there was hatred. Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany and George V of Great Britain were first cousins whose falling out had international consequences - a quaint idea in retrospect.

The enmity among the heads of state is, of course, a minor part of the picture. In the past, many historians and philosophers tended to explain war by looking at governments and their behind-the-scenes maneuvering. Eighteenth century Enlightenment philosophes like Emmanuel Kant, Baron de

Montesquieu, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and Thomas Paine shared a belief that societies freed of "the willful machinations of statesmen and soldiers, princes and diplomats..." would cease fighting wars.¹³ Unencumbered by the artificial diplomacies of the old monarchical and aristocratic systems, people, by nature peace-loving, would form cooperative, democratic republics. Reason, grounded in self-interest, impels people thus liberated to refrain from the barbarism of the past. The philosophes saw war as inherent in the structure of absolute monarchy and aristocracy; peace in that of democracy. War was the concern of kings, fought by professionals for royal objectives. But it was also a "survivor of a bygone epoch...from which one day, soon, man would escape altogether." "The role of the good citizen was to pay his taxes....He was required neither to participate in making the decision out of which wars arose nor to take part in them once they broke out."¹⁴ The philosophes did not expect this situation to change. Paine wrote that "Man will not be brought up with the savage idea of considering his species his enemy."¹⁵ Thinkers like Paine and Adam Smith believed a "hidden hand" of rationality governed the universe, promoting an equitable and international division of wealth based upon free trade. War, because it made no economic sense, would be irrational in this context. Men of good will could settle their differences by reasoned discussion.

The philosophes' ideas, a cornerstone of what would become nineteenth century Liberal ideology, raised false hopes in the power of democratic self-interest and proved equally false predictors of the demise of war. And it was not long before the scale of plunder and conquest in the campaigns of the Napoleonic Wars following the French Revolution underscored the irony of their miscalculation. War did not cease as society and technology changed. In tactics and strategy as well as in meaning, war, too, was transformed.

In seeking to explain war, it is not enough, as Enlightenment thinkers did, to look at the dominant form of government. Narrow explorations of the surface of society do not have adequate explanatory power. One must entwine studies of government and foreign policy with a perception of domestic reality. What is required is an historiographical approach that tries to explain societies as a whole. Historian Barbara Tuchman is exemplary:

The diplomatic origins of the so-called Great War are only the fever chart of the patient; they do not tell us what caused the fever. To probe for underlying causes and deeper forces one must operate within the framework of a whole society and try to discover what moved the people in it. (16)

Lenin drew from this "total" historical perspective in his work on war. "World War I, involving India, China, Japan and the U.S., precipitated one-world as against the Europe-centered view of international politics, which Lenin sought

to incorporate into Bolshevik revolutionary doctrine and strategy."¹⁷ This new internationalism was significant, as will be shown, in the development of an approach to history which looked at, first, social phenomena of entire cultures and second, at the ways in which they change.

Notes to Introduction

¹Marcel Liebman, Leninism Under Lenin, trans. by Brian Pearce (London: Jonathan Cape, 1975), p. 21.

²Raymond J. Sontag, A Broken World: 1919-1939 in William L. Langer, ed. The Rise of Modern Europe (New York: Harper and Row: 1971).

³L.L. Farrar, Jr. "The Short War Illusion: The Syndrome of German Strategy, August-December 1914," Militaergeschichtliche Mitteilungen, No. 2 (1972), p. 40 quoted in Stephen Van Evera, "The Cult of the Offensive and the Origins of the First World War," International Security, Vol. 9, Number 1 (Summer 1984), p. 58. I am indebted to Major David Petraeus, Department of Social Sciences, United States Military Academy, for his comments on the similarities of arguments in the recent scholarship comparing World War I "cult of the offensive" with current nuclear counterforce strategies. In addition to Van Evera, cited here, see also Jack Snyder, "Civil-Military Relations and the Cult of the Offensive, 1914 and 1984," and Richard Ned Lebow, "Windows of Opportunity: Do States Jump Through Them?" International Security, Vol. 9, No. 1 (Summer 1984), pp. 108-146 and pp.147-186.

⁴Barbara Tuchman, The Guns of August (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1962), p. 1.

⁵Rear-Admiral P. Colomb; Col. J.F. Maurice, R.A.; Cpt. F.N. Maude; Archibald Forbes; Charles Lowe; D. Christie Murray and F. Scudamore, The Great War of 189-: A Forecast (London: William Heinemann, 1893), p. 305.

⁶Jay Luvaas, The Education of An Army: British Military Thought, 1815-1940 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964), p. 319.

7Tuchman, The Proud Tower: A Portrait of the World Before the War, 1890-1914 (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1962), p. 215.

8Ibid., pp. 237-238, and especially Michael Howard, "Men Against Fire: Expectations of War in 1914," International Security, Vol. 9 (Summer 1984), p. 41.

9Colomb, et al., appendix, Raymond Blaithwait, "An Interview with the Right Honorable Sir Charles Dilke", pp. 303-304.

10Arno Mayer, Wilson vs. Lenin: Political Origins of the New Diplomacy (Cleveland and New York: The World Publishing Co., 1959), pp. vii, 7.

11Quincy Wright, A Study of War, Vol. II (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1942), p. 1145.

12Mayer, pp. vii, 7-8.

13Michael Howard, War and the Liberal Conscience: The George Macaulay Trevelyan Lectures in the University of Cambridge, 1977 (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1978), p. 23.

14Michael Howard, War in European History (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976), pp. 73-74.

15Ibid., War and the Liberal Conscience, p. 30.

16Tuchman, The Proud Tower, p. xiv.

17Mayer, p. 300.

Chapter 1 -- Historiographical Comparisons: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels

The Genesis of Marxism

In the nineteenth century, most historians as well as those in government and educated society were Eurocentric in their assessment of the world. Their narrow West European

Weltanschauungen gave an exaggerated or otherwise distorted historical role to their particular group or nation. They drew social and economic perspective and philosophical tradition from their own European past, often with an elitist bias, not taking into account the differences and divergences of non-European peoples. Like the raw materials extracted from their countries, these peoples, often portrayed as uneducated, uncivilized savages, became resources to be cultivated and used for the benefit of the "mother country."

Lenin's intellectual fathers, Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, sensitized more than a generation of socialists to the concept of class struggle. Having watched, lamented and finally fought the oppression of the poor and working classes in their own European countries, these socialists saw the exploitation of man's labor become internationalized. They decried the spread of what would be called imperialism by those who stood to profit from these far-flung colonial ventures as well as by those who, through ignorance or avoidance, supported such exploitation. A great many of these enterprises became caught up in or subsumed under a violent reaction or war and papered over with patriotic zeal. Tuchman writes of the atmosphere during the annexation of the Transvaal in South Africa by the British Empire:

But although patriotic fervor was dominant, there was a current of antipathy to the war which came ... from an uneasy sense of ignoble motive, a glitter of the gold mines of the Rand, an aura of predatory capitalism, commercialism and profit.(1)

Filthy living conditions, endured by the cheap Chinese labor under contract to Transvaal mine owners, troubled groups such as the Fabian socialists, who wanted to correct these ills in a gradual, practical manner. "...The Chinese labor issue carried the smell of money which had hung about the Boer War from the start. It devalued the moral content which the imperialists liked to attach to the cause of Empire."2

A New Social Order: Marx and Engels' Vision

Marx and Engels emerged in the 1840s when imperialism, as Lenin and others later discussed it, was only beginning to spread. The power of Marx and Engels' analysis came from an assessment of the ills of their own European society caused by the Industrial Revolution, and their reversal of the notion that man had no control over his material world. Their ideas swept across Europe in the second half of the nineteenth century attracting an array of followers who brought to Marxism their own particular modifications and biases. Historian David Hackett Fischer writes that Marx and Engels' erred due to "the fallacy of ethnomorphism," i.e. by generalizing from "certain group characteristics... of nineteenth century England, France and Germany into universal phenomena for all groups everywhere."3 But this

did not undermine the persuasive effect of their views on those who sought remedies to the plight of the working class, especially in the countries they knew best. While the bourgeois establishment's Eurocentrism thrived with the status quo, Marx and Engels and their followers, with a very different brand of Eurocentrism, saw Europe as the center stage for a coming revolution.⁴ For they believed that capitalism was dying, that a new world order, established in Europe and led by a liberated proletariat, was on the near horizon. Their views fit an historical paradigm of progress. "History works out tidily, creating no problems it cannot solve."⁵ The problem of imperialism was one which others, including Lenin, sought to fit into the Marxian schema.

Marx connected the idealist philosophies of men like Kant and Hegel with down-to-earth materialism in a marriage of theory and praxis. In dialectic action of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis, the conflict of opposites leading to a higher entity, both theory and praxis evolved, changed, interacted.

The dialectic is the 'dialectic of negativity'. Every fact is more than a mere fact; it is a negation and restriction of real possibilities.... Man's social practice embodies the negativity as well as its overcoming. The negativity of capitalist society lies in its alienation of labor; the negation of this negativity will come with the abolition of alienated labor. (6)

The capitalistic system of private property is

essentially an abstraction unconnected to the needs and essence of the individual. Thus men must become the masters of the means of production in order to liberate themselves from the uniformity and enslavement imposed by the capitalist system. They can and must take action. The conflict and contradiction of the dialectic lies not in ideas, as in Hegel's version, but within social forces, between classes. Men, rather than passively waiting for some abstract idea to change society, can themselves effect significant changes. Marx and Engels believed that conscious action, a move out of the ideal realm of theory, could bring the emancipation attainable in classless society. The problem for Marx and Engels, as for future Marxists, was to find a way to accelerate change.

Marx and Engels spoke and worked in behalf of the working class, or proletariat, against its oppressors, the bourgeoisie. As in previous epochs of history, one class, now the bourgeoisie, dominated the means of production and thus exploited those who labored for them. There was an element of ambivalence in their assessment. Marx and Engels did not unconditionally view as evil the bourgeoisie and the capitalist system of economic life upon which it had risen to power. One need only read the Communist Manifesto to recognize that capitalism's ability to develop nations seemed indeed to awe its authors. Industrial development created both potential plenty and perpetual poverty,

exploiter and exploited. But they assumed it to be a precondition before nations could turn to collective ownership and socialism, ridding the world of private ownership of people, land and capital, and with it, the enslavement of the proletariat. And that is why, as alluded to above, Marx wrote that each country had to pass through historically determined stages of economic life: from the simple structures of primitive societies, through slave, then feudal periods, to the complex, intense growth of the capitalistic, and finally, with the defeat of the bourgeoisie, to socialism. Separating each era must necessarily be intermittent periods of war and revolution, with resocialization and reinstitutionalization being gradual as it spread through all layers of society. Marx and Engels claimed that there could be no "shortcuts" to socialism. Only late in his life did Marx recognize that Russia may not follow this pattern, but bypass bourgeois revolution, thus anticipating the concept of "uneven development" which became one of the cornerstones of Lenin's theory.

The French Revolution brought the end of feudalism for most of Europe. Although the Directorate, Consulate and Empire stages eliminated some of the social and political radicalism of 1792-1793, the basic patterns of social, political, and economic relations were profoundly changed. A new era dominated by a new class had begun, as Marx

interpreted it, and within this era all wars fought against feudalism and for the bourgeoisie were just. But bourgeois society was already creating its rival, a working class that possessed none of the property which the bourgeois class sought to enshrine. Before 1848, Marx thought proletarian revolution would immediately follow that of the bourgeoisie, but the violent suppression of the revolutions of that year, resulting from the bourgeoisie's fear of radicalism, caused him to change his mind. He saw that to build socialism required a viable, fully developed capitalist industrial base. And eventually the bourgeoisie, Marx thought, would collapse of its own dynamic, helped along when necessary by an armed and ideologically informed (conscious) proletariat. Economic crises within capitalist enterprises would lead to increased clashes between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. After the failure of the Paris Commune in 1871 in which thirty thousand Communards died, victims of savage suppression by the French bourgeoisie, Marx saw more clearly that the proletariat must not just take over state machinery, but bring about its collapse, an interpretation of paroxysm to which Lenin returned in 1917. Wars could be both catalysts toward and results of this collapsing process, which could last many years. And war fought for the bourgeoisie in this latter era would no longer be just. Marx wrote in 1871 during the Franco-Prussian War that because treaties "can never be fixed finally and fairly, because

they always must be imposed by the conqueror upon the conquered, [they] consequently carry within them the seed of fresh wars."7 Prussia, having won the war, had demanded cession of Alsace-Lorraine by France. Marx and Engels' prediction that such a treaty would only lead to more war proved accurate in 1914 and again in 1941, just over twenty years after the signing of the Treaty of Versailles in 1919 and the ending of the "war to end all wars".

In Marx and Engels' conception, society went through a constant process of progressive transformation - of building, destroying, rebuilding (thesis, antithesis, synthesis). They assumed certain European nations, as well as the United States, to be more advanced toward the full flowering of capitalism and therefore closer to socialism. As noted, Marx's nineteenth century world view conditioned his vision for the future. He believed, as Hegel did, in a logic of history leading to human freedom. Thus he saw the stages of development he and Engels had hypothesized as evolving "progressively further removed from the primitive stages of man"8 and closer to "the triumph of the free development of all men,"9 and to an end of human alienation of man from man and man from nature. Human society was destined to be communist.10 How this future society would be laid out Marx nor Engels never specified. They made the diagnosis but did not write a prescription. They did, however, put a premium on acting to change the world.

Marxism began with its founders' desire to humanize society, to eliminate the alienation of man caused by industrialization. When the working class saw that its misery was not inevitable, it would rise up as one and restructure society on the basis of cooperation.

Marx and Engels believed that the concept of nationalism would become meaningless as national divisions faded and the proletariat grew in consciousness and strength.¹¹ They foresaw that it might require total war to usher in the new order, a war to end class conflict, eliminate national divisions, and thus make war obsolete. Later in his life, Engels wrote that militarism was an extension of capitalism, doomed by the consequences of its own development, in the process of its own negation.¹² He believed that the social and technological conditions of a period determined the possible mode of conflict. He could not imagine soldiers continuing to fight under battle conditions of rising destructive capacity and assumed armies would thus "disappear" by refusing to participate. Engels thought the resulting end to opposing armies would have to precede successful revolution.¹³

The Communist Manifesto proclaimed that the workingmen had no country. World War I became the litmus test of this idea, a test which many socialist parties failed. It was V.I. Lenin who forcefully exposed and disparaged those who espoused international socialism but succumbed to "defense

of the fatherland." He sought an explanation for the failure of Marxism to predict the rise of what he called "chauvinism" among many of the leaders of the working class, and this led him toward a new paradigm of war.

When so many socialists failed to oppose the war, which proved so massive, so nightmarish, that it changed forever that entire generation, socialist faith in a future unfettered international community broke down.

In every country, as the air thickened with talk of war, the instinct of patriotism swelled. Older, deeper, more instinctive than any class solidarity, it was not something easily eradicated on the say-so of the Communist Manifesto. Unhappily for world brotherhood, the worker felt he had a fatherland like anybody else.(14)

The hope for a better world died with the millions of men on the battlefields of 1914.

Having examined some of the important elements of Marx's system, there is still a need to place Marx in the historiographical continuum. For Karl Marx and V.I. Lenin share ideological perspectives with a relatively recent and profoundly new way of writing and thinking about the past and forces of change, a school of historiography called the Annales emerging from France in the years following World War I.

Notes to Chapter One

1Tuchman, The Proud Tower, pp. 57-58.

2Ibid., pp. 354-358.

3David Hackett Fischer, Historians' Fallacies: Toward a Logic of Historical Thought New York: Harper and Row, 1970, p.226.

4David McLellan, Marxism After Marx: An Introduction (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1979), p. 2.

5Adam Ulam, The Unfinished Revolution: Marxism and Communism in the Modern World (Revised ed.: Boulder, Col.: Westview Press, 1979), p. 49.

6Herbert Marcuse, Reason and Revolution: Hegel and the Rise of Social Theory (2nd. ed.: New York: Humanities Press, 1954), p. 282.

7Peter Vigor, The Soviet View of War, Peace and Neutrality (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, Ltd., 1975), p. 22.

8Karl Marx, Pre-Capitalist Economic Formations, ed. and with intro. by E.J. Hobsbawm, trans. by Jack Cohen (New York: International Publishers, 1975), pp. 36,38.

9Ibid., p. 12.

10Vigor, The Soviet View of War..., p. 17.

11Edmund Wilson, To The Finland Station: A Study in the Writing and Acting of History (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Co., 1940), p. 228.

12Bernard Semmel, ed., Marxism and the Science of War, with intro. by the editor (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981), p. 13.

13Martin Berger, Engels, Armies and Revolution: The Revolutionary Tactics of Classical Marxism (Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1977), pp. 142, 157-158.

14Tuchman, The Proud Tower, p. 445.

Chapter 2 -- Historiographical Comparisons: The Annales

A Beginning Forged by War

A more "total" approach to historical analysis has today become commonplace. It was not always so. What has become the "new history" is a phenomenon of the post-war period. Beginning in France with the Annales, a radically different paradigm of historical development and the process of change spread throughout the world, its influence obvious in an international array of historical journals originating in the 1950s and 1960s, as well as in the works of many scholars.

Historian Barbara Tuchman's account of the initial period of the "Great War", written more than forty years later, brings it to life because she tries to convey its complexity. She is among the best of the "new" historians.

The old agonized discussions of the relationship between history and the social sciences are increasingly irrelevant, as disciplinary lines are not merely being crossed but trampled under foot.... Social history is becoming a sophisticated study of the lineaments of society itself, as they have changed through time. The new economic historians, the new historians of education, the demographic historians, the new diplomatic historians, and the new historians of science are moving on parallel lines. (1)

The inspiration for and impetus toward this approach to history, proclaimed by two now revered historians, was the First World War itself.

From the end of the Enlightenment in the eighteenth

century until the Second World War, about 1790 until 1930,2 German historicism, which reified the state, held the position of honor and leadership in Western historical study. But even before its final tarnishing during the Third Reich, a new "school" of historiography now known as Annales began to take shape. In 1919, at the end of the Great War and in the midst of a social crisis which would decimate their world, two Frenchmen, newly appointed to the University of Strasbourg, met for the first time. Marc Bloch, the younger at thirty-two, and Lucien Febvre, his senior at forty, were part of a growing group of scholars who agonized over their discipline and its crisis.

[Indeed], in the decade before the First World War [a] hostility toward historical consciousness and the historian gained wide currency among intellectuals in every country of Western Europe.... [Certain] philosophers...argued that the conception of historical time itself, which bound men to antiquated institutions, ideas, and values, was the cause of the sickness.(3)

Traditional history was then, in the German historicist framework, a "celebration of state purpose and state values."4 It attempted, as for example in the works of German historian G.W.F. Hegel, to superimpose a system of ethics on history, suggesting that whatever was becoming was right. "...Each time and place create[d] standards valid only for itself....The source of such radical relativism was an explicit rejection of the Enlightened belief in the existence of universally valid natural laws."5 It eschewed

the "universals" for uniqueness, the rational for the romantic. Eurocentric in the sense of an overriding concern with European diplomatic relations, it focused on the elite, using government documents as the major source of historical explanation. "State conflict was the principal agency of historical change; social conflict, because it was destructive of state purpose, was relegated to a remote background."⁶ Indeed, the state existed to regulate such conflict among groups and classes.

German historicism, following Hegel and others, ascribed a mystic or metaphysical quality to the state as the manifestation of an unfolding, preordained plan seen as quasi-divine. It suggested that man could do little to alter this historical process.

A crisis in the historical discipline developed for several important interconnected reasons. First, the neo-Kantian epistemological revolution of the late nineteenth century disturbed many of those who had clung to a notion of progress. They could no longer accept a priori assumptions about God's will as the prime mover or meaning of history. Kant's works contained the precept that "when one transgresses the boundaries of experience, illusions result."⁷ Thence "disharmony and injustice ceased being mere appearance to be transcended in a later stage or a different realm. They had to be viewed as unredeemed tragedy."⁸

Second, the growing strength and recognition of certain

social concerns and the concept of class struggle eroded the objectivity of the traditional German elitist historical Weltanschauung. Just as the historicists' value system centered on the state, values rooted in social concerns lay at the base of the changing approach to historiography espoused by Annales.

Third, absolute war and its awful reality caused reappraisal of self and society. "History, which was supposed to provide some sort of training for life...had done little to prepare men for the coming of the war...."9 The changes in political structure begun by the war led to change in historical emphasis.

So we return to Marc Bloch and Lucien Febvre, impelled by the atmosphere of critique and introspection, the search for new meaning in history after its rendering by the war. Thomas S. Kuhn, in his oft-quoted The Structure of Scientific Revolutions, explains that when members of a group operating under a particular mode of perception or paradigm encounter anomaly, the ensuing crisis can be the prelude to discovery of a radically different mode of perception. The road to this so-called paradigm shift is usually a long process of puzzle-solving. Though Kuhn's focus was primarily scientific discovery, his concepts are applicable to history.¹⁰

For Bloch and Febvre the anomaly was a history which drew its evidence from the usually unchallenged actions and

words of governments which had brought not progress but destruction to society in the form of total war. Tragically, Marc Bloch, a veteran of the First World War, died in a German concentration camp during the Second Great War of this century to tear Europe apart. Four years before he was shot by the Nazis for his active part in the French Resistance and undoubtedly also because he was a Jew, Bloch wrote a slim volume called Strange Defeat. With the passion of a deeply patriotic Frenchman witness to the conquest of his country, he searched for reasons. He, with his profession, shouldered some of the blame for preferring "to lock ourselves into the fear-haunted tranquillity of our studies" rather than trying to voice what they believed were the causes of the disaster they could see coming.¹¹ But the tools of history itself did not seem to him adequate to the task:

Because our system of historical teaching deliberately cuts itself off from a wide field of vision and comparison, it can no longer impart to those minds it claims to form anything like a true sense of difference and change.⁽¹²⁾

Thus the history which Bloch and Febvre taught was a history which tried to fill that gap - a history of social change, and not just a history of the past.

History is a dialectic of the time span; through it and thanks to it, history is a study of society, of the whole of society, and thus of the past, and thus equally of the present, past and present being inseparable. ⁽¹³⁾

Fernand Braudel, their successor, explained that "what

[Bloch and Febvre] mainly turned against was the purely political...and narrative history of the Sorbonne, while their attack against the German [historicist] school was at best indirect."¹⁴ But whatever the source of their greatest disagreement, they would become the founding fathers of a radically new French historical school known as Annales. In 1929, with their publication of Annales d'histoire économique et sociale, currently Annales: Economies, Sociétés, Civilisations, they launched what would be the most influential -- some say seminal -- journal since the establishment of the historicist paradigm. Indeed, one of the Annales' advocates, Yugoslavia-born Traian Stoianovich, former student of Braudel and Professor of History at Rutgers University, wrote a book proclaiming its treatment of history as a true superceding paradigm¹⁵ after the example of Kuhn's study.

Stoianovich identified three distinct historical paradigms which have guided methodology:

- 1) Exemplar history was a conception of the past expressed in narrative, chronicle or critical-explanatory modes, usually emphasizing politics. Braudel called it "a gleam but no illumination; facts but no humanity."¹⁶ Cataloguing events or attempting to explain by examples made no allowance for societal differences or change over time.

- 2) A new revolution in historical thought came in linear form, stressing general progress and development.¹⁷

Through inductive reasoning it sought universal laws of human development. The Hegelian historicist approach and those of both Marx and Lenin fit this category, the former stressing the progressive, rational development of the state and the latter, progressive, rational development of material life in the form of class struggle. Gradually these opposite and yet similar views of history fell prey to "an awareness of the absurdity of the notion of progress."¹⁸

3) Stoianovich put what he called the third historical paradigm to work in his own study of Balkan civilization.¹⁹ Historians, he explained, had "to develop a mode of historical inquiry that [could] cope with the complexities and transformations of their own simultaneously highly rigid and highly plastic societies."²⁰ Thus he proclaimed the significance of a functional-structural model developed under the leadership of Fernand Braudel and the influence of the Annales school. Braudel defined structure as "a coherent and fairly fixed series of relationships between realities and social masses." Structural restraints are imposed on man by geography, for example, determining trade routes, the outcome of a battle, the kinds of crops grown. A way of thinking or understanding the world, a belief system, a mental habit, can also be structural. "...All [structures] provide both support and hindrance [to change]."²¹

Braudel, the Annales journal's second editor and acknowledged master, rejected French historian Henri Berr's

"too theoretical" journal, Révue de synthèse historique, explaining that the Annales was, in contrast, "firmly on the ground. In its pages, men of times present and past appear with their concrete problems, 'alive'...". 22 Braudel acknowledged and admired Berr's preoccupation with a synthesis of the diverse branches of history: social, political, economic, science, art, et al., calling him "a bit of the Annales before the journal was created." 23 But Berr did not go far enough. He merely paid "polite visits" to the other disciplines.

What the Annales proclaimed, [Braudel explained,] . . . was a history whose scope would extend to embrace all the sciences of man -- to the "globality" of all the human sciences, and which would seize upon them all in some fashion or other to construct its own proper methods and true domain. (24)

The third paradigm is a view of history as "pluri-dimensional". 25 History's complexity calls for a total, interdisciplinary inquiry, examining all the functions of an entire system, or "how a whole collectively functions in terms of its multiple temporal, spatial, human, social, economic, [and] cultural dimensions."

The Annales cautions the historian to look at the "concealed or symbolic" sub-text of communications, 26 or what Braudel called "unconscious history". Histories based on the face value of the communications of various media, governments, etc., are faulty. In his study of the Balkans, Stoianovich followed Braudel's example in seeking beneath

the "surface phenomena", first to geology, then biology, technology, the social and economic strata, and finally, personality. To do this, he required tools from not just the historical discipline, but geological, archaeological and psychological principles as well.

The Annales' Approach

One of the notable aspects of the Annales' growth is the extraordinary continuity in its leadership and management. It had only three editorial directors, the founders and Braudel, in half a century.²⁷ This certainly played a role in establishing and reinforcing a cohesive paradigm. Concomitant in growth with the Annales was the Sixième Section of the Ecole pratique des hautes études: Science économiques et sociales. It germinated seventy-five years before it officially took root as a non-degree granting teaching and research facility. Febvre was its first president, a position he held from 1946 till his death in 1956, and Fernand Braudel succeeded, retiring in 1969. He was, however, associated with the Annales up until his death 16 years later. The Sixième Section's significance is in its importance as a laboratory for team research, usually interdisciplinary, and for collecting massive amounts of statistical data, one of the hallmarks of the Annales.

Stoianovich indentifies three basic elements in its historiographic schema: I. histoire globale; II. a unique

conception of time and space; III. communication analysis

I. Histoire globale is an attempt to grasp the whole of a civilization, historical period, or a unit of human action. Braudel defines civilization as "a system of realities that exceeds the life span of a specific society."²⁸ Like Gestalt psychology, the Annales historians seek a total configuration rather than a collection of events, drawing together all human sciences. Called "ecumenical", they take care to be aware of every point of view. They continue to draw inspiration from non-historians, building upon the achievements of Bloch, Febvre and Braudel who brought concepts and insights from geology, geography, biology, sociology, economics, linguistics, law, demography, folklore, psychoanalysis and collective psychology to the study of history.²⁹ They decry artificial divisions of traditional history into ancient, medieval, modern or of primitive and civilized society. Stoianovich writes, "...The part can be comprehended only within the framework of the whole, and the whole only through the mediation of the parts."³⁰ The Annales historians attempt to reconstruct the past in all its complexity. Seeing small groups as the microcosm of society or events as a mirror of the past leads necessarily to a superficial and inaccurate account. One of the Annales' disciples, Emmanuel LeRoy Ladurie, writes: "What was achieved by the elite must be set apart, on a different, higher level; it really matters only in the

history of a conspicuous minority -- one that did indeed foreshadow the future, but which was not as yet able to lever out of its groove the solid rural mass...."31 What concerns the Annales is what became of that mass. One of their differences in approach from Marx is their emphasis on civilization rather than nation.

II. A second basic element of the Annales' view of history is that of the context of time and space. Regarding the former, of greatest significance is Braudel's concept of durée (duration) -- continuance or persistence over time. History, with its diachronic perspective, becomes a unifier of the social sciences. Braudel wrote of a three-level image of the past:

A-1. His interests and emphasis lay in the metaphorical oceanic depths -- the longue durée of trends or structures taking hundreds of years, remaining virtually intact for long periods, though the functions they serve may change.³² It is a "history that stands still".³³ Analysis of these static societies is what Annales does best: Bloch's Feudal Society, Ladurie on rural France circa 1300-1720, and Braudel's The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II, a book labelled classic by many for its methodological ground-breaking. Not without flaws in documentation and organization, and subjected to the sort of sustained critique any radical new approach would draw, The Mediterranean was an attempt to locate sixteenth century

Mediterranean material life "on the requisite world scale", and to simplify "a succession of landscapes which historians only rarely depict."³⁴ What Braudel did was present in great detail a nearly visual presentation of the "last great age of the historic Mediterranean."³⁵ Constants over time put together with thousands of facts are of the longue durée.³⁶

A-2. Level two in the Braudelian construct is akin to the oceanic tides. The moyenne or middle range durée consists of conjonctures (conjunctures): half- to full-century cycles recurring only a few times, sometimes only once within a person's lifespan. "...[For example], technology, price gyrations, cumulative population changes, and even mental or cultural shifts... undermine the 'structure', [usually in a gradual way, sometimes, as happened during the first world war, telescoped into a shorter time] and eventually form a new equilibrium."³⁷

A-3. Finally, one reaches histoire événementielle - history of events. These are merely "surface disturbances, crests of foam that the tides of history carry on their strong backs."³⁸ At this level of courte durée, "every action is boom, flash, gnash, news and noise, and often exerts only a temporary impact."³⁹ With yet a third metaphor for events, Braudel suggested that our daily life, illusions, and immediate awareness are but "deceptive

vapors."40 Braudel also had a separate category of "signifying" events, that is, events which: 1) Have an explanatory function; 2) Have spatial or temporal consequences; 3) Have served as "signs" for contemporaries; 4) Serve as signs for the historian's craft or other disciplines; 5) Contribute to the formation of an economic or political series, to which Stoianovich adds social or cultural.41

All three strata of historical time superimpose upon and interpenetrate one another. But "it is ... the substrata ... whose substance or whose course must be understood if we [as historians] are to find meaning in these fugitive, iridescent, but otherwise haphazard surface movements."42 History takes on new depth and solidity. We begin to see its multiple meanings, at the same time reinforcing and contradictory.43

B. As noted, history, that is, human action, is a function of space as well as time. This explains the Annales' historians' focus on geology, geography, climate and those areas more specifically socially defined, i.e. territoriality. 44

The space of human collectivities, in Annales thought as in Greek tradition, has a dual aspect -- Hermaean and Hestian. It is at once fixed and mobile, autarkic and interdependent. No one can stress sufficiently the constant presence of these two aspects in general human experience. In a state of perpetual tension with each other, they are also necessary complements. (45)

This is, in a sense, like a description of traditional male and female roles. Hermes was the "messenger god, wearer of the winged cap of liberty and bearer of the magic rod, instrument of transformation." Hestia, by contrast, represents "enclosed, domestic, feminine space." She was the goddess of the hearth -- the fixed center of the home. Braudel used these images to describe the stability of a Hestian physical milieu which interacts with the forces of transformation on a scale as small as a herdsman or merchant, as large as an expanding state.⁴⁶

Traian Stoianovich uses another example of a Hermaean/Hestian concept in his Balkan Civilization. He explains that tradition endowed the prehistoric and early historic community or collective with an inner hallowed space and outer boundaries defined by taboo markers. In the early neolithic (earth culture) period, according to the author, these markers acquired "proto-economic significance", meaning they excluded strangers and their herds from certain areas.⁴⁷ These were the crude beginnings of the practice of holding private property.

A Hermaean/Hestian personification is rich in meaning and explanatory power. Traditional history neglected Hestian elements: women and children; cradle and grave; sexuality; the layout of village or valley; the most basic, static traditions of domestic and early neolithic agricultural life; the power of climate or terrain to impede or augment

-- all that which is symbolically and actually tied to space and soil. What is required, in its most generic sense, is what Annales historian Jacques Le Goff called a "demasculinization of history."⁴⁸

There are Hestian elements in war as well. During World War I, the tragedies and ironies of fighting and passing time in the trenches; the dangerous attempts to traverse the barbed wire-entangled no man's land and fierce battles to capture a few more yards of territory; the absurdity of the nearness of home yet its tremendous distance in understanding are obvious examples. Away from the battlefield, whether a distance of a few miles or an ocean, civilians, too, undergo profound changes in mentalité as well as material life. War-induced famine brings the war to the hearthside of the peasant or working class family.

III. Communications analysis, the third basic in the Annales paradigm, has qualities both Hestian, the inner meaning, and Hermaean, the outer appearance. Stoianovich discusses the importance to historians of the Freudian concept of the unconscious. We now recognize that irrationality or hidden motive are less obvious but major factors in human communication and thought.

Psychoanalysis has made possible a probing of the document behind the document, of the unsaid behind the said, of the secret behind the secret, of the relationship [among] words, works, and other signs (external, public) and their significations (internal, hidden, Hestian). (49)

Only over the longue durée can one envision a society's mentalité. It encompasses its mindsets or points of view deeply imbedded in institutions, its controlling thoughts "scarcely subjected to critical examination."⁵⁰ Not merely the written word but "material and figurative objects", "signs and symbols" are important historical data. "Music and dance, posters and billboards, conventional art, the multiple languages of science, theater, cinema"⁵¹ add insights. Fashion, childrearing practices, mythology and other oral traditions, printed communications and books which can be analyzed for what is unwritten as well as written -- all reflect the social milieu and underlying Weltanschauungen.

An outstanding example of an analysis of the written word of World War I is Paul Fussell's The Great War and Modern Memory, a book which compares and contrasts the literature of the wartime and post-war eras. He suggests that "at the same time the war was relying on inherited myth, it was generating new myth..."⁵² "...Even if those at home had wanted to know the realities of war," Fussell writes, "they couldn't have without experiencing them; its conditions were too novel, its industrialized ghastliness too unprecedented."⁵³ But this shift in consciousness, though it could not mentally scar civilians in the same way it did those who fought, nevertheless permeated all of society. World War I uprooted entrenched attitudes toward

the meaning of war, till then unquestioned.

Heretofore described was the basic Annales schema. Many historians and other social scientists have criticized it for its clumsiness, its need to know everything about everything. David Hackett Fischer decries the "holistic fallacy" in history.

The whole truth, at any stage of an inquiry, is an ideal that ought to be abolished from historiography, for it cannot ever be attained....[It is a road that can only end in the intellectual suicide of relativism or...methodological anomie....(54)

Fischer also debunks the "fallacies of presumptive continuity and presumptive change" by historians. "What is clearly needed," he suggests, "is a set of mediating terms and concepts which might help to neutralize these opposite biases."55

Fischer's "holistic" critique is certainly a valid one for Annales. Indeed, as the Annales historians seek the whole, they cannot help but be selective in their subjects chosen and evidence gathered based on their own particular biases and Weltanschauungen, as much as they attempt to portray totality. And Annales is certainly subject to its own set of values affecting analysis. In their attempt, however, to take global issues into account they stimulate awareness of areas and subjects long neglected by historians.

Regarding Fischer's fallacies of continuity and change,

Annales' heuristic tools of time-space and communications analysis go far toward more completely and evenhandedly describing the relationship between the two concepts, which is essentially dialectical.

Capitalist Transformation

It is significant that the views of Annales and Lenin were forged for the most part by World War I and that both looked to economic factors for an explanation. Marc Bloch wrote during World War II that "old resentments drew fresh vigor from an exacerbated sense of inequality." The lower classes, burdened more than usual under the duress of total war, "began to make their voices heard."⁵⁶ A discussion of an Annales' conception of capitalist transformation illustrates where they saw one of the origins of the social unrest which would lead to conflict.

The static societies well described in the context of longue durée break down when capitalism arises. In Western Europe, the new capitalist mentalité, though it involved revolutionary changes, rose "organically". Capitalist mechanisms in Western Europe drew the masses further into new modes of production and thereby transformed the structures of a material life that had remained relatively stable for hundreds of years. Fernand Braudel returned to his permeable layer device in his analysis of capitalism. At bottom is material life, the structures and "repeated

actions...handed down from time immemorial," 57 routine daily existence.

Slowly a market economy develops above this level through an increasingly differentiated but still ordinary economic life. It is the "link between production and consumption", but only "a fragment of [the] vast whole" constituting material life at bottom and capitalist hierarchical power at top.⁵⁸

Once capitalism has become truly entrenched in a specific area, urban society dominates rural, a new hierarchy is in place, and the changes wrought are revolutionary. Capitalism is the economic activity at the summit, the high profit zone.⁵⁹ More sophisticated than the middle level economic life of trade, transport, and differentiated markets, it "encroaches on all forms of life."⁶⁰ Changes in values precede or converge with the spread of capitalism. Older traditional value conceptions must give way to or assimilate a concept of economic value, that is, of desire for money and material goods. There must be a new attitude toward work as a virtue, a move away from relatively closed rural subsistence society, and the development of a bourgeoisie and a working class. Community (Gemeinschaft) gradually gives way to society (Gesellschaft) as capitalism spreads. Sociologist Ferdinand Toennies popularized this distinction between the two kinds of social structural organization in a developmental model within

which the first is a web of relationships predicated on personal recognition, the second, characterized by more impersonal, contractual relations.

. . . A 'family', 'clan', 'village' 'friendship' may serve as approximate examples of 'Gemeinschaft', but they are 'Gemeinschaft' only to the extent to which they coincide with the ideal conceptual image of 'Gemeinschaft'. 'City', 'state', 'industry', 'public opinion' may serve as examples of 'Gesellschaft' in the same way. In other words, viewed in the light of normal concepts, actual societies, especially of the 'Gesellschaft' type, are always mixed. (61)

It is essential to note that these changes do not occur at the same pace or in the same fashion everywhere in the world. Capitalist transformation varies in intensity and scope. The economies of the world lie in "a succession of different altitudes, as in a relief map."⁶² What evolved, according to Braudel, was an "essentially unequal world of man."⁶³

It is easy to imagine, [Braudel wrote], the upheavals which the sudden introduction of technology and all of the accelerations it entails must create within each civilization, within its own spiritual and material frontiers. But these upheavals are not a straightforward affair. They vary with each civilization and each one, without wishing it, finds itself placed in a unique position, because of realities which have existed for a long time and which are highly resistant, being part of its structure. It is from the conflict -- or the harmony -- between ancient attitudes and new necessities, that each people daily forges its destiny, its "actuality."⁽⁶⁴⁾

As Stoianovich aptly describes, capitalism in late-developing societies, such as those of the Balkans or Russia at the end of the nineteenth century, became an external,

peripheral, disruptive force because it clashed with traditional attitudes. It created a dissonance which was different from the more organic absorption which had taken place in the now advanced industrialized West European societies. The later developing societies which had not yet let go of prevailing early market (pre-capitalist) structures and values were dominated externally by imperialist enterprise. Achievement of the internal social transformation required for economic "takeoff" had to await a change in mentalité and the emergence of a proletariat.⁶⁵ If there was not a convergence of outside capitalist stimuli with internal demand, conscious or unconscious, ⁶⁶ capitalism could be a disorganizing influence creating conditions of potentially violent unrest. Lenin characterized this process as one of "uneven development" and saw profound consequences in it.

Notes to Chapter Two

¹David Hackett Fischer, Historians' Fallacies: Toward a Logic of Historical Thought, p. 218n.

²Fischer, Historians' Fallacies, p. 156.

³Hayden V. White, University of Rochester, The Burden of History (1966), p. 119. (no publication information available) I am indebted to Dr. George Kren, Dept. of History, Kansas State University, for introducing this reading as a course requirement in historiography.

⁴George Entee, "History and the Social Sciences: Emerging Patterns," History of European Ideas, I, 4, (1981), p. 352.

⁵George M. Kren, "Political Implications of German Historicism," The Rocky Mountain Social Science Journal, VI, 1, (April 1969), p. 98.

⁶Entee, "History...", p. 352.

⁷Raymond B. Blakney, ed. An Emmanuel Kant Reader (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1960), p. xv.

⁸Entee, "History...", p. 352.

⁹White, The Burden of History, p. 120.

¹⁰Thomas S. Kuhn, The Structure of Scientific Revolutions, (2nd ed., enlarged: Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), pp. 52-91.

¹¹Marc Bloch, Strange Defeat: A Statement of Evidence Written in 1940, with an introduction by Sir Maurice Powicke and a foreword by Georges Altman, trans. from the French by Gerard Hopkins (New York: Octagon Books, Inc., 1968), p. 172.

¹²Ibid., p. 155.

¹³Fernand Braudel, On History, trans. by Sarah Matthews (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), p. 69.

¹⁴Fernand Braudel, "Forward", in Traian Stoianovich, French Historical Method: The Annales Paradigm (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1976), p. 11.

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶Braudel, On History, p. 11.

¹⁷Braudel, "Forward" in Stoianovich, French Historical Method, p. 236.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 33.

¹⁹Stoianovich, A Study in Balkan Civilization (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1967), p. 214.

²⁰Stoianovich, French Historical Method, p. 35.

- 21Braudel, On History, p. 31.
- 22Braudel, "Personal Testimony," Journal of Modern History, XLIV, 4, (December 1972), p. 461.
- 23Ibid., p. 455.
- 24Ibid., p.457.
- 25Stoianovich, French Historical Method, p. 232.
- 26French Historical Method, pp. 236-237.
- 27J.H. Hexter, "Fernand Braudel and the Monde Braudellien...", Journal of Modern History, XLIV, 4, (December 1972), p. 468.
- 28Stoianovich, French Historical Method, p. 148.
- 29H.R. Trevor-Roper, "Fernand Braudel, the Annales and the Mediterranean," Journal of Modern History, XLIV, 4, (December 1972), p. 468.
- 30Stoianovich, French Historical Method, p. 129.
- 31Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, "History That Stands Still," chapt. in The Mind and Method of the Historian, trans. from the French by Sian and Ben Reynolds (Brighton, England: The Harvester Press, 1981), p. 24.
- 32Hexter, p. 502.
- 33Ladurie, pp. 1-27.
- 34Braudel, Capitalism and Material Life: 1400-1800, trans. from the French by Miriam Kochan (New York: Harper and Row, 1967), p. 442.
- 35Trevor-Roper, "Fernand Braudel. . .", p. 478.
- 36Braudel, Capitalism and Material Life. . ., p. 442.
- 37Enteen, "History and the Social Sciences. . .", p. 358.
- 38Trevor-Roper, "Fernand Braudel. . .", p. 475.
- 39Stoianovich, French Historical Method, p. 109.
- 40Hexter, p. 503.

- 41Stoianovich, French Historical Method, p. 230.
- 42Trevor-Roper, p. 476.
- 43Stoianovich, French Historical Method, p. 66.
- 44Ibid., p. 76.
- 45Ibid., p. 62.
- 46Ibid., pp. 62, 77.
- 47Stoianovich, A Study in Balkan Civilization (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1967), pp. 39-43.
- 48Stoianovich, French Historical Method, pp. 158-159.
- 49Ibid., p. 110.
- 50Hexter, p. 483.
- 51Stoianovich, French Historical Method, p. 90.
- 52Paul Fussell, The Great War and Modern Memory (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975), pp. ix.
- 53Ibid., p. 87.
- 54D.F. Fischer, Historians' Fallacies..., pp. 65-66.
- 55Ibid., pp. 154-155.
- 56Bloch, Strange Defeat, p. 164.
- 57Braudel, Capitalism and Material Life. . . , p. xiii.
- 58Braudel, Afterthoughts on Material Civilization and Capitalism, trans. by Patricia M. Ranum (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977), P. 41.
- 59Braudel, Afterthoughts..., pp. 112-113.
- 60Braudel, Capitalism and Material Life. . . , pp. xii-xiii.
- 61Ferdinand Toennies, On Sociology: Pure Applied, and Empirical: Selected Writings, ed. and with intro. by Werner J. Cahnman and Rudolf Heberle (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1971), pp. viii - ix; pp. x-xiv; pp. 62-72.
- 62Braudel, Afterthoughts..., p. 35.

63Braudel, The Structures of Everyday Life: The Limits of the Possible, Vol. I in Civilization and Capitalism, 15th-18th Century, trans. from the French and revised by Siân Reynolds (London: William Collins Sons and Co., Ltd., 1981), p. 562.

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Chapter 3 -- The "Objective Circumstances"

War in Industrial Society

By the end of the nineteenth century in Europe, those capitalist mechanisms which Braudel described had irreversibly changed the nature of war. Mass-produced advancements of weapons technology, such as the new steel breech-loading cannon, which succeeded the more awkward and less powerful muzzle-loading rifled cannon; recoilless carriages in heavy artillery, eliminating the need for constant re-sighting; poisoned gas; torpedoes; naval mines; magazine-loading, small-bore rifles, which were easier and faster to load and, significantly, could be fired lying down; smokeless powder, which opened the field of battle and increased firing capability; and extensive use of the improved Maxim machine guns, which could fire several hundred rounds a minute, added tremendous military

strength.¹ These developments transformed, to borrow from the title of John Keegan's book, "the face of battle".²

In medieval times, battles had a close relation to everyday life. They "could be comprehended on a human timescale and in a human way." But one of the most salient factors about modern battle as it had evolved by the early twentieth century was its impersonalization. Soldiers described a "sense of littleness, almost of nothingness". One reason was the change in the physical characteristics of the battlefield itself, too large for one person to see even a majority of the whole, defoliated, depopulated of civilians and animals, and scarred so deeply that even today the craters, trenches, and abandoned or unearthed materiel may be seen. Soldiers on opposing sides rarely saw each other face to face, therefore they had virtually no means to communicate, including that of a desire to surrender.³ The accuracy, rapidity and range of firepower multiplied five times. For example, from June 24-30, 1916, just before the monumental battle of the Somme, Entente forces expended a then incredible 1,500,000 shells. With the rise in volume and killing power of munitions came the corresponding rise in objective dangers encountered by the soldier.⁴ A strategy of intense indirect artillery fire was thought to overcome the advantage of heavily entrenched defensive positions.

With the increase in population, widespread use of conscription, and improvements in rail and road networks,

both manpower for huge standing and reserve armies as well as the means to get them to battle changed strategy and tactics. War was no longer limited to the distant battlefield and professional military elite. It became far more difficult to control and direct, leading to the creation and expansion of military staffs. And its horrors permeated both military and civilian populations, involving all classes but hitting hardest those nearest the bottom. The number of casualties in the First World War was staggering. Twenty thousand men died in the first hour of the Somme. Two hundred fifty thousand British fell in the first five months.⁵ In planning mobilization, in determining strategy, and especially when overwhelming casualties threatened defeat, "General Staffs vied with one another in demanding ever larger forces as the solution to their problems."⁶

Within the same general period of the advent of total war, developments in industrial capitalist societies like the internal combustion engine, the wireless and other improvements in communication, and the spread of electric power spurred industrial growth. With the growing complexity of society and the need for greater efficiency, governmental bureaucracies expanded, education and training increased, and the role of the "expert" both in government and military became a trend.⁷ The advent of mass industrial production and the profit incentive affected the development of raw

material, mines, foundries, and transportation.⁸

Empire-building and the search for markets was at a high in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in the Near and Far East, Africa -- anywhere the capitalists found fertile ground for colonization or exploitation of far-flung resources. One can cite, in addition to the Great Power involvement in the Balkans which triggered the outbreak of World War I, such examples as the 1898 Open Door in China, the Spanish-American War, the 1899 Boer War, the British in India and the Dutch in the East Indies, Russian penetration into Central Asia and Manchuria, the French in Indochina, and the Japanese incursion into Formosa and Korea. These were some of the objective circumstances behind Lenin's formulations.

In the development of Lenin's perception of war, the year 1905 was a turning point. Lenin wrote of the "deeper implications" of the Russo-Japanese War.

Wars today are fought by peoples;...[the war] opens the eyes of millions to the disparity between the people and the government which heretofore was apparent only to a small class-conscious minority.⁽⁹⁾

Lenin saw that the debacle of this war had the potential to radicalize not just the Russian proletariat but also the peasantry to a degree no previous amount of propagandizing had been able to do.

[He] came to the conclusion, in fact, that a revolution [in Russia] could not be carried out by the working class in its own name, without the support of other mass movements such as the

nationalities or the peasants; in other words, a socialist revolution in the traditional Marxist sense was an impossibility.(10)

But with the additional interests of these groups, imperialist war could become or, with agitation, be used to encourage, civil war. The Russo-Japanese War was a significant milestone in the evolution of Lenin's views. Here he first began to see a relationship between imperialist war and revolution.

Two years after the outbreak of World War I, Lenin observed that "war does not alter the direction of pre-war policies, but only accelerates their development."¹¹ This idea may sound familiar to the student of the works of military strategist Karl von Clausewitz, published close to eighty years earlier. His famous dictum, "War is the continuation of politics by other, i.e. violent means," is well known. Lenin, too, as Frederick Engels did, read Clausewitz. Despite the fact that Clausewitz was a politically conservative Prussian general writing in a different era, Lenin searched On War for military analyses related to his own Marxist perspective. Indeed, if the volume of his note-taking and exclamatory comments is an indication, he seemed elated by the connections made.¹² References to Clausewitz and variations on his dictum abound in Lenin's works after 1915. In a lecture of May 1917 he wrote:

[Clausewitz]...challenged the ignorant man-in-the-street conception of war as being a thing apart from the policies of the governments and classes concerned, as being a simple attack that disturbs the peace, and is then followed by a restoration of the peace thus disturbed, as much as to say, "They had a fight, then they made up." (13)

Though Lenin borrowed from the "bourgeois" military strategist, he gave a "new Marxian twist"¹⁴ to the Clausewitzian dictum. While Clausewitz understood politics as the external relations of a state power, Lenin saw its socioeconomic underpinnings. Donald E. Davis and Walter S.G. Kohn, who translated and edited Lenin's "Notebook on Clausewitz", offer an interpretation:

War was the result of an imbalance in which one empire encroached on another, or where colonials themselves revolted....Lenin's system transformed Marxism itself by explaining the means of production in terms of cartels and describing the operation of the dialectic through the opposition of the imperialists and exploited colonials.¹⁵

Thus perhaps one may say Lenin militarized Marx and "materialized" Clausewitz!¹⁶ He realized that both economic and political context were necessary to explain war.

What may be called Lenin's "discovery" of Clausewitz came only after more than two decades of voluminous writing, thinking and discussing, as well as equal years spent engaged in and observing revolts, strikes or outbreaks of war.

Uneven Development

Marx had analyzed the profound technological and social changes made by international industrial capitalism. He

believed that exploitation of the working class and the destructive element inherent in capitalism would lead to a final international crisis and war. But Lenin, in seeking to connect war with capitalism, recognized that each individual country must be analyzed by its own specific nature as it evolved within a distinct, concrete historical setting.¹⁷ He began to see the difference in the eastern part of the world, writing in 1915:

In China, Persia, India and other dependent countries...we have seen during the past decade a policy of rousing tens and hundreds of millions of people to a national life, of their liberation from the reactionary "Great" Powers' oppression. A war waged on such a historical basis can even today be a bourgeois- progressive war of national liberation.⁽¹⁸⁾

Because of uneven development, Lenin thought, the end of all war was not on the horizon as Marx and Engels had thought. Industrialized nations, in their search for new sources of capital and influence, would prolong the phenomena of war indefinitely. The countries of the Balkans, Russia and Austria, which Lenin placed in a second geographic category in respect to the process of self-determination and the progress toward revolution, were still involved in intensely national struggles. Hence, as socialism was a long way off, so, too, was any prospect of an end to conflict there. Semi-colonial, developing nations, too, would not accomplish overthrow of feudal vestiges at the same time and the same pace, thus violence would

continue indefinitely in those areas of the world.

At the turn of the century, the Boxer Rebellion in China was a striking example of the clash often caused by developed nations seeking worldwide "spheres of influence". To Lenin, the "mad policy" in China was a good illustration of his view of violence, revolt and war as the necessary products of a changing form of capitalism. The benefits of Russian and West European policy went, Lenin said, to only a "handful" of "capitalist aces", manufacturers, military contractors, and "nobles occupying high civil and military positions." He wished his readers to note whose interests were being met by the war, the "real" nature of government policy.

What good will the working class and all the laboring people get from the conquests in China? Ruined families and increased government indebtedness.... The tsarist government holds not only our people in slavery -- it sends our people to pacify other peoples who rise up against their slavery. (19)

The Chinese people suffer from the same evils as those from which the Russian people suffer -- they suffer from an Asiatic government that squeezes taxes from the starving peasantry and that suppresses every aspiration towards liberty by military force; they suffer from the oppression of capital, which has penetrated into the Middle Kingdom. (20)

In 1903, Lenin, frustrated with the working class's lack of power, saw national liberation as benefitting primarily the bourgeoisie. Thus he wrote of subordinating the fight for national liberation in Poland to proletarian

class struggle.²¹ "The day is gone when a bourgeois revolution could ignite an independent Poland...."²² He put all his faith in the "class conscious and organized proletariat"; only it could "win real, not sham, freedom for the people."²³ But he also said that "in isolated and exceptional cases...we can advance and actively support demands conducive to the establishment of a new class [i.e. bourgeois] state or to the substitution of a looser or [weaker] federal unity, etc. for the complete political unity of a state."²⁴ The uneven development of the Balkan states was what he had in mind here, and as the situation in that part of the world became more volatile, Eastern Europe continued to influence Lenin's thinking.

By 1905, after experiencing war and an abortive attempt at revolution in Russia, he turned again to the concept of uneven development:

The class-conscious proletariat, an implacable enemy of war -- this inevitable and inseverable concomitant of all class rule in general - cannot shut its eyes to the revolutionary task which the Japanese bourgeoisie, by its crushing defeat of Russian autocracy, is carrying out.... We must recognize the great revolutionary role of the historic war in which the Russian worker is an involuntary participant. (25)

Even though backward and despite the small size of its working class of one million compared with seventy-five million peasants, Russia was, Lenin wrote in 1905, becoming more capitalistic. Though the spread of large-scale factory industry would bring more benefits for the few and more

struggle for the rest of society, he accepted this change as a necessary and progressive prerequisite to socialism. Capitalism must come and expand before finally succumbing to the class-conscious, radicalized proletariat.²⁶ Meanwhile Lenin insisted that the Russian proletariat must support the constitutional movement of the bourgeoisie. He "regarded Parliament as an instrument to be used for revolutionary purposes, not to be worked for democratic purposes",²⁷ seeking the industrial growth that capitalism meant, not the bourgeois concept of democracy. Indeed, he constantly warned the proletariat not to be seduced by the lofty phrases the bourgeois military and press attached to its wars.²⁸

Not until 1917 did Lenin, to the surprise of many of his followers, reject his previous insistence on waiting for successful bourgeois revolution in Russia. Though he had considered such an eventuality possible, he did not plan to bypass that stage of development and was, in fact, astonished at the suddenness of his ascendancy to power, having been in exile for so many years.²⁹ The terrible strain and trauma of the war strengthened and radicalized the working class while at the same time broke the tentative hold of the already weak liberal bourgeois provisional government. There was a power vacuum in Russia in 1917, so Lenin and his party simply filled it.

In 1908 Lenin wrote: "The struggle for colonies and the conflict of commercial interests have in capitalist society

become one of the main causes of war."30 This was a significant alteration in his portrayal of capitalism from a constructive system to one which was basically destructive of society.

At the International Socialist Congress in Stuttgart the previous year, he had discoursed on the theme of war as a necessary product of capitalism but cautioned socialists to examine the nature of the preceding crisis and its economic or political "objective conditions."31

The working class, which is the principle supplier of soldiers, and which bears the brunt of the material sacrifice, is in particular the natural enemy of wars, because wars contradict the aim it pursues, namely, the creation of an economic system founded on socialist principles.... But it does not follow ...that it is of no concern to the proletariat in what country it lives -- in monarchical Germany, republican France, or despotic Turkey. The fatherland, ie. the given political, cultural and social environment, is a most powerful factor in the class struggle of the proletariat. (32)

Lenin recognized that socialists must see each individual society's own specific nature. He pragmatically adapted Marxian concepts to conform with his appraisal of the Balkans, where he supported the demand for national liberation made by the Balkan bourgeois-democratic nationalist movements and among those peasants influenced by nationalist sentiment."33 But by 1908, as noted, war and capitalism were linked closely in his analysis as he examined the tension and potential for crisis in that

region. Therefore, he did not support the Balkan Wars of 1912 and 1913. He viewed the aims of the majority of the belligerents as overridingly expansionist. "Capitalist machinations" for influence and profit overshadowed what little the Balkan nationalists gained -- all at tremendous cost to those under fire. The justness of a war turned on the question of which class was at the helm.

Lenin thought, like Braudel, that change which touched upon the everyday life of the working classes was of great significance. But in order to last, the people must be conditioned to accept it. Total war with its all-encompassing capacity to shake the very roots of society, could speed up changes in structure and function. Wars could set off revolutions, create new social patterns. In the Balkans, where many of the structures were still feudal, Lenin expected the revolution to be bourgeois.

In 1916 during World War I, Lenin continued to see war as an "unequaled accelerator of history [which would] give a decisive impetus not only to the ripening of the revolutionary crisis in Europe but also to the development of non-European power centers and to the colonial awakening...."³⁴ And peace, Lenin grew to see during World War I, "could be nothing but the accounting and registration of the actual changes in the realities of forces brought about in the course of and in consequence of war."³⁵

Concept of Imperialism

"Classical" Marxist theory had placed wars of "national liberation" into an earlier era of European history, ending with the 1871 Paris Commune. But that model applied to Western Europe. The overwhelmingly agrarian societies of the Balkan peninsula had virtually no proletariat and an insignificant bourgeoisie. Multi-national, feudal and tribal relations prevailed. Industry and commerce, dominated by foreign powers, had only a weak foothold prior to World War I. Nationalist ideals stirred the peasantry as socialism could not do. In scrutinizing Lenin's articles on the Balkan Wars, with which Lenin intended to instruct fellow socialists, there is one message denouncing the imperialists and another encouraging the masses aroused by nationalist fervor.

The aggrandizement of the Great Powers, greed for territorial annexations and spheres of influence, was the most significant element provoking the wars. Italy, Austro-Hungary, the Young Turks, Russia -- all sought to further or sustain their interests. The Balkan nations themselves were no less interested in booty. In the years prior to World War I, certain socialists advanced "the theory of imperialism as 'the highest stage of capitalism', [a phenomenon] brought on by a last desperate quest for diminishing profits and leading inevitably to clashes between competing capitalisms." Historian Roland Stromberg adds that "Lenin

borrowed this idea, loosely formulated by others who had built upon the theory of Karl Marx."³⁶ Not until 1915, in his search to explain the socialists' desertion from their internationalist ideals in the face of world war, did Lenin write his tract on this subject. 1905 provided the question which 1917 would answer: if a short imperialist war led to significant social revolt, could a longer, more widespread war lead to successful revolution? The Balkan Wars provided evidence to support a maturing theme.

Notes to Chapter Three

¹Howard, War in European History, pp. 102-104.

² John Keegan, The Face of Battle (London: Jonathan Cape, 1976).

³Ibid., pp. 320-322.

⁴Ibid., pp. 231, 305.

⁵Alan Hamilton, "Last Farewell to Somme 70 Years On", The Times (London), July 2, 1986, p. 20, col. 2.

⁶Howard, War in European History, p. 105.

⁷Paul Kennedy, ed., The War Plans of the Great Powers, 1880-1914 (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1979), p. 2.

⁸The Proud Tower, p. 235.

⁹Lenin, "The Fall of Port Arthur", XIII, Collected Works, p. 50.

¹⁰Leszek Kolakowski, Main Currents of Marxism: Its Rise, Growth and Dissolution, Vol. II: The Golden Age, trans. from the Polish by P.S. Falla (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), p. 472.

¹¹Lenin, "The Peace Programme," XXII, Collected Works, (March 25, 1916), p. 163.

12Donald E. Davis and Walter S.G. Kohn, "Lenin as Disciple of Clausewitz", Military Review, (September 1971), pp. 49-55.

13Lenin, "War and Revolution: A Lecture Delivered May 14, 1917", XXIV, Collected Works, (May 1917), p. 899.

14Davis and Kohn, p. 191.

15Ibid.

16Jacob W. Kipp, "Lenin and Clausewitz: The Militarization of Marxism, 1914-1921," Military Affairs, (October 1985), pp.184-191.

17Lenin, National Liberation in the East, preface and compilation by C. Leiteisen (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1969), p. 182.

18Ibid., p. 117.

19Lenin, IV, (1900), Collected Works, pp. 347-352, quoted in Louis Fischer, The Life of Lenin (New York: Harper and Row, 1964), pp. 35-36.

20Lenin, "The War in China", IV, (Dec. 1900), Collected Works, p. 372.

21Lenin, "The National Question in Our Programme", VI, Collected Works, (July 15, 1903), pp. 461-462.

22Fischer, Life of Lenin, p. 38 quoting Lenin in Iskra, July 15, 1900.

23Lenin, "May Day", VII, Collected Works, (April 1904), p. 202.

24Lenin, "The National Question in Our Programme," VI, Collected Works, pp. 454-455.

25Lenin, "The Fall of Port Arthur", VIII, Collected Works, (Jan. 14, 1905), p. 52.

26Lenin, "The Autocracy and the Proletariat", VIII, Collected Works (Jan. 4, 1905), pp. 26-27.

27Fischer, Life of Lenin, p. 52.

28Lenin, "Events in the Balkans and in Persia", XV, Collected Works (Oct. 16, 1908), p. 221.

29Barrington Moore, Jr., Soviet Politics-The Dilemma of Power: The Role of Ideas in Social Change (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, Inc., 1950), p.19.

30Lenin, "On Proletarian Revolution", XV, Collected Works, (September 1908), p. 44.

31Lenin, "The International Socialist Congress in Stuttgart", XIII, Collected Works, (Oct. 1907), pp. 75-93.

32Lenin, "Bellicose Militarism", XV, Collected Works, (July 23, 1908), pp. 193-194.

33Lenin, The National Liberation Movement in the East, preface and compilation by C. Leiteisen (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1969) p. 89.

34Mayer, Wilson vs. Lenin, p. 300.

35Ibid., p. 6.

36 Roland V. Stromberg, Redemption by War: the Intellectuals and 1914 (Lawrence: The Regents Press of Kansas, 1982), pp. 121-122.

Chapter 4 -- The Balkan Wars

In an International Context

The backdrop to the 1912-1913 wars was a complex world of shifting alliances and West European abuse of its growing political and economic power. Italy wanted and obtained Tripoli and the Dodecanese Islands from Turkey, fearing the consolidation of French control in Morocco; Russia wanted control of Constantinople and naval rights through the Straits of Bosphorus and the Dardanelles; Austria formally

annexed Bosnia-Herzegovina, which Serbia wanted; and Russia attempted to organize a Balkan pact against the Austro-Hungarian Dual Monarchy because the Bosnia annexation was a humiliating preemption of a secret plan for mutually supported Balkan spheres of influence. In addition, Serbia, with Russian backing, and Greece, sought control of what would become Albania; Austro-Hungary desired and orchestrated Albanian independence; Serbia and Bulgaria settled conflicting claims on Macedonia in a second Balkan War, and those peoples still subject to the Ottoman Empire and Austria-Hungary sought self-determination.²

A Personal Frame of Reference

To place the Balkan Wars in a more personal context, a well known autobiographical work is illustrative. The dramatic words of a writer born and raised in Montenegro skillfully draw the reader deeply into the realities of Balkan life. Milovan Djilas was a leader in the post-World War II international communist movement. His Land Without Justice is a lyric portrait of his kinsmen and his land. Because he was born in 1911, he based his account of the wars on stories passed down to him. But even at that tender age he was not unaware. "Cannon thundered through my first real remembrance."³

Djilas' father, a first-generation Montenegrin officer, and men like him "bore the brunt of the wars of 1912 and 1914." They, unlike the preceding and following generations,

were devoted to the Montenegrin prince.⁴ Those who came before had been fiercely independent. Clan feeling -- and feuding -- predominated. Those who followed were "colorless and impersonable servants of the new Yugoslav regime" which replaced Djilas' father's generation while the latter were still in their prime. Djilas calls his homeland a "society which disappeared as its members devoured one another."⁵

In Montenegro, "war was survival, a way of life, and death in battle the loveliest dream and highest glory." Even "children of fourteen [ran] to battle while their elders watched."⁶ In Djilas's book, the "symbolic functions of communication" of the Annales model are especially noteworthy. He weaves a bloody metaphor throughout his work: "It seems to me that I was born with blood on my eyes. My first sight was of blood. My first words were blood and bathed in blood." He writes of "bloody and chilling scenes which memory cannot banish,"⁷ of the "blood enmity" between Montenegrins and Moslems and the "bloody activity" that began between them every spring;⁸ of blood revenge, personal, racial and political. To the Balkan mountaineers, the word "blood" had two-edged significance: "Blood ties" bound the generations of clans and families just as "blood feuds" tore them apart.

Once the Great War of 1875-1877 ended, migrant tribes and clans mixed, and by the time of the Balkan Wars national consciousness had flowered. Guerrillas took to the woods

during World War I. Their cause became more confused as their homeland suffered defeats, and they were often indistinguishable from brigands.

Djilas recalls but one lone and misunderstood socialist in these early years, whose words "cut like sabers."⁹ Only a few towns and merchants appeared after 1878 in Djilas's peasant-populated Montenegro. The townsfolk and peasants "differed more in what they wanted than in what they were."¹⁰

He writes: "The roots from which a human creature arises are many and entangled....Man's world is one of becoming."¹¹ The Balkan peasants' complex past, "stormy, shifting" present and uncertain future give the wars temporal and spacial perspective. Torn away from the frame of Balkan civilization, the incredible violence was and remains incomprehensible. Djilas saw but could not accept a "centuries-old inborn hatred against the Turks," which his father, not without shame, viewed as culminating in "an inevitable war of annihilation, begun long ago between two faiths."¹²

An Elite Perspective

Proceeding from personal to impersonal observations, The Times of London serves as an excellent source for the historian to gain a European perspective on the wars for it reports what educated West Europeans thought of these events. Their views take on a special import as a backdrop

to Lenin's reaction to the same events. A few sample passages reveal latent concerns. Unless there was territory or influence to be gained, the Great Powers' interest was in maintaining the status quo. In January 1912, The Times reported a "total absence of security of life and property; ...lawlessness prevails on every side" in the Macedonian interior.¹³

Though one article mentioned the "deplorable condition of the subject races of Turkey", they were a concern more because of being "a menace to the general peace." The Powers' "indulgent forbearance" toward Turkey, the paper admonished, had gone too far.¹⁴ European "Oriental" prejudice, pervasive in these reports, had a self-serving purpose. "The Turk, always an alien and a taskmaster in the European lands he had dominated for five centuries, had at last been expelled from Europe."¹⁵ What the European capitalists did not want was to have to face a reinvigorated Ottoman Empire.

Lenin's Assessment

Lenin responded with contempt to articles such as these. He believed that the European press used "ringing phrases", "designed to distract" and cover up "capitalist machinations" when reporting on the Balkans because they had the same financial interests as the Great Powers.

Instead of exposing the policy of the Great Powers, the newspapers - both conservative and liberal, [the latter being more subtle] - are engaged in

discussing how best to help the sharks have their fill through this policy.... The man in the street does not suspect that he is being led by the nose.(16)

Lenin's conception of the Balkan Wars was based on his paradigm of war as a process of social structuring and restructuring, as a phenomenon carried on by a specific class for its own set of economic goals. He castigated the European diplomats and press for weaving a "dense web of intrigue...in an effort to obscure the meaning of the process as a whole" [my emphasis].¹⁷ The meaning was, for him, the class nature of war.

The rush of "Pan-Slavic" sympathy for the Balkan Slavs apparent in the Russian liberal press, the Cadet Rech, was in Lenin's eyes a front for purely bourgeois Russian interests. "[True] democrats will never stand for the Slav as such being contrasted with the Turk, whereas one should contrast the Slav and Turkish peasant, together, with the Slav and Turkish landlords and bashi-bazouks."¹⁸ Although Lenin was not then opposed to national liberation, he viewed it as incomplete -- a partial measure of freedom. On Nov. 7, 1912, he wrote:

Bourgeois newspapers from Novoye Vremya to Rech are talking of national liberation in the Balkans, leaving out economic liberation. Yet in reality it is the latter that is the chief thing. Given complete liberation from the landlords and from absolutism, national liberation and complete self-determinism of the peoples would be an inevitable result. [Such liberation, if achieved instead by resolution would have cost] a hundred times less in human lives than the present war.(19)

Lenin often spoke in this way of liberation of the "peoples". Their lot was basically the same no matter under what flag or religion they lived and fought for. He argued that liberation must be won from the vestiges of feudalism and monarchic absolutism, but economic liberation achieved under socialism was Lenin's ultimate goal for the Balkans. His sardonic response to a defense of Balkan war aims by the St. Petersburg City Council in the name of "liberty":

Never and nowhere has "liberty" been won through one people waging war against one another. Wars between peoples merely ensure the enslavement of peoples. Real liberty for the Slav peasant in the Balkans, as well as for the Turkish peasant, can be ensured only by complete liberty inside every country and by a federation of completely and thoroughly democratic states.(20)

Lenin several times suggested that formation of a united Balkan federal republic "would have meant truly rapid, extensive and free development." But since it was the Balkan bourgeoisie, "afraid of real freedom", which locally guided the wars, nationalistic aims "overcame any feeling of affinity the downtrodden populace might have had for one another."²¹ While recognizing that, in the absence of a well-developed proletariat, his program was the only achievable policy in the Balkans at the time, still Lenin's desire for socialist revolution and genuine freedom remained. But the Balkan proletariat had only marginal class consciousness with weak party leadership "ill-equipped to challenge the liberal patronage of self-determination."²²

Reports of massacres of Turkish peasants in the face of Bulgarian machine guns and similar atrocities underline the relevance of Lenin's appraisal. Trotsky reported such incidents in his war correspondent memoirs, The Balkan Wars. Once free of Bulgarian censorship, he castigated the Bulgarian "democratic" intelligentsia for at minimum collaborating with the censors, but he reserved special disdain for the Russian press "for its conspiracy of silence about the atrocities by the Slavs...and for trumpeting sensationalist accounts of Turkish atrocities against the Christians."²³ Lenin, too, accused the Balkan belligerents of trying to deceive correspondents like Trotsky, and of not allowing them to witness battles.²⁴

The Times of London printed at least one painfully explicit letter-to-the-editor decrying charges and counter-charges of atrocities when the real issue was urgently needed relief for the suffering -- "Bulgars, Serbs, Turks [alike]..."²⁵ For Lenin the suffering was not the issue but merely a symptom.

Economic Development in the Balkans

Historical accounts reinforce Lenin's charge that the bourgeois wars did not bring "economic liberation", though the definition of the latter is of course debatable. Living conditions urban and rural were miserable both before and after the wars. Even the original wars of "national liberation" in the 1870s, from which emerged independent and

autonomous Serbia, Romania, Montenegro, and Bulgaria, and formed the foundation for the modern Balkan state system, brought only superficial changes.²⁶ In 1912-13, the "national liberation" war cry again included no substantial social or economic improvements. The Balkans were still agrarian economies, but in flux -- disturbed by constant uncertainties and violence. A small percentage of the few men of property dominated; corruption was rife; the young governments, inexperienced in finance, were heavily indebted over foreign loans. For the few workers, working conditions were bad with long hours and low wages. Food and housing were deplorable, though town dwellers lived somewhat better than rural peasants. Agriculture was backward, available land scarce due to excessive sub-dividing, and industrialization weak and inadequate.²⁷

In this agrarian part of the world, capitalism brought in by the Great Powers did not have the cultural, economic and psychological base in which to take root easily. So initially it was essentially a force for disruption, more readily revealing class difference, foreign, domineering, augmenting the social chaos in a land where chaos was endemic. Because of communism's links with the social and economic values of the past, of the long durée, the communist parties were able to carry out development in a society torn between modern and premodern eras.

Workers' movements in the few scattered pockets of

industry began to organize in the Balkans just before the turn of the century, but serious theoretical differences splintered the party cells, a problem which plagued socialism all over Europe, not just in the Eastern part. Workers did, however, play an important role in the intellectual-led Social-Democrat parties. Historians Dimitrye Djordjevic and Stephan Fischer-Galați, who have studied Balkan revolutionary movements, write:

The aspiration of the workers' movements were closely related to the national liberation movements in the Balkans, as the socialists advocated self-determination and sought to connect social revolution with national emancipation.(28)

In this, the Balkan socialists would have been following Lenin's precept. In view, however, of the essential weakness of the proletarians as a class in predominantly agrarian Eastern Europe, Arno Mayer's appraisal may be closer to reality:

...Many East European Socialists were only half-hearted in their commitment to national regeneration. These Socialists kept warning that the class struggle was in danger of being completely subordinated to the nationalist struggle; accordingly they accused the bourgeoisie of exploiting the emotional appeal of the patriotic slogans in order to check the forces of progress. (29)

Lenin and Self-Determination

Lenin knew that the politically conscious portion of the proletariat was too small to have much impact and emphasized the "weakness, disunity, immaturity and ignorance of the peasant masses".³⁰ Therefore, he lauded the

quadruple alliance of Serbia, Bulgaria, Montenegro and Greece, which, although built of monarchies and borne of war, not revolution, was nonetheless "a great step" toward the elimination of feudalism.³¹ Arno Mayer suggests that Lenin's "all-out sponsorship of self-determination" had repercussions in two directions. First, by positing "the right of national self-determination as a universal principle",³² Lenin led President Woodrow Wilson to embrace the concept, the latter linking it with disarmament, in his effort to forge a new kind of peace as embodied in the League of Nations. Lenin did not, of course, agree with Wilson's ideas, which he viewed as a more subtle form of imperialism, "pacification of the masses, nice phrases, semi-reforms, semi-concessions."

Second, Lenin "established the inextricable connection between the national movements and the class struggle".³³ Thus, he brought about the accusation from socialist Rosa Luxemburg, with "considerable justification", Mayer adds, that Bolshevik support for self-determination in effect "strangled" the Russian Revolution as well as providing "the plans for settling the entire crisis arising out of the World War."³⁴ Indeed, "Lenin soon discovered that Wilson's daring proposal for orderly change became the most decisive challenge to his own revolutionary ideology." But he continued his unqualified support for national self-determination "primarily", writes Mayer, "because he was

convinced that the war would compel both the Dual Monarchy and the Russian Empire to surrender to the force of nationalism."³⁵ He also looked beyond Europe to see truly radical implications of self-determination that Wilson ignored or gave little attention.

Notes to Chapter Four

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³Milovan Djilas, Land Without Justice, intro. and notes by William Jovanovich (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Jovanovich, Inc., 1958), pp. 41-42.

⁴Ibid., p. 35.

⁵Ibid., p. 168.

⁶Ibid., pp. 37-39.

⁷Ibid., p. 8.

⁸Ibid., p. 24.

⁹Ibid., pp. 229-230.

¹⁰Ibid., pp. 156, 160.

¹¹Ibid., pp. 28-29.

¹²Ibid., pp. 205, 207.

¹³"The Balkan Danger," The Times (London), Jan. 18, 1912, p. 5.

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15"The Second Balkan War," The Times (London), Oct. 23, 1913, p. 7.

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28Dimitrye Djordjevic and Stephen Fischer-Galati, The Balkan Revolutionary Tradition (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981), p. 205.

29Mayer, Wilson vs. Lenin, p. 381.

30Lenin, "Social Significance of the Serbo-Bulgarian Victories," XVIII, Collected Works, p. 398.

31Lenin, "A New Chapter in World History," XVIII, Collected Works, pp. 368-369.

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Chapter 5 -- War as "The Spark"

The Centrality of World War I in Lenin's Theory

Lenin developed his analysis of war in the midst of a growing social crisis in Europe. His vision of the roots of war in the class system sharpened as the years progressed and the crisis deepened. In 1915 he explained how witnessing these events affected his own perception:

The experience of the war, like the experience of any crisis in history, of any great calamity and any sudden turn in human life, stuns and breaks some people, but enlightens and tempers others. Taken by and large, and considering the history of the world as a whole, the number and strength of the second kind of people have -- with the exception of individual cases of the decline and fall of one state or another -- proved greater than those of the former kind. (1)

Lenin was one of the "second kind of people." His personal "enlightenment" about war evolved from 1905 and intensified in 1915 when he had to find answers which "classical Marxism" had not provided. He wrote a year after the outbreak of the war that to make the deceptions of the Great Powers clear to the petty bourgeois, "it is sometimes

necessary to go with them to the battleground, and be able to wait until they have been sobered by the experience of war."² Certainly this is what happened to the war poets. It is vividly evident, for example, in the memoirs of Robert Graves and Siegfried Sassoon. Though they were not radicalized as Lenin expected the oppressed classes in all the belligerent nations would be, even these members of the more privileged classes, and increasing numbers like them, gradually lost their belief in the war and questioned its meaning.

The majority of the socialists abandoned the revolution for nationalism and the majority of the masses long continued to fight the war for the imperialists. Sassoon wrote, for example, that "it was queer how the men seemed to take their victimization for granted."³ Lenin countered his miscalculation of the level of revolutionary consciousness among the socialists and the masses in two typical ways: philosophical study and unceasing polemic against the socialists who decided to support the war effort. He had long, by virtue of his exile, had an armchair perspective on the prospects of social revolution. The significance of World War I as part of his own personal history, a period through which he lived, is key to understanding the changes in his central analytical concepts. Though Lenin never fought in the trenches, seeing the exhausted, wounded and beaten men, the long lines for dwindling food supplies, the

angry strikes and mutinies made him realize that conditions were ripe for radical social change.

In 1905, when the socialist revolution he expected failed to materialize, Lenin studied the Paris Commune of March 18 to May 29, 1871. Its fatal mistake, he wrote in 1908, was in "combining contradictory tasks -- patriotism and socialism."⁴ Following the Franco-Prussian War, the bourgeoisie "launched an attack to wrest the arms that terrified it from the hands of the Paris proletariat." The proletariat, while replying to this with the Commune and civil war, did not carry that war far enough because of a "naive belief" in "common national aims" with the bourgeoisie.⁵ They were "blinded by patriotic illusions...", listening to the bourgeois lament, 'The Fatherland is in danger.'" Lenin then admonished fellow socialists that they should not make the same mistake of confusing fighting for a republic for fighting for socialism.⁶

But in 1915, Lenin wrote that the "objective conditions" for socialism had not yet materialized in nineteenth century France, thus the downfall of the Commune could be attributed to an immature proletariat. There was "no modern imperialism;...[there were] no mass socialist parties in any of the belligerent countries..."⁷

His study of Marx in July 1914 gave him a better perspective on Marx's view of the epochs of history. In an article written in 1915 he discussed Marx's diagnosis of a

conflict, an example of "defense of the fatherland" such as his opponents often invoked. One must notice, Lenin wrote, that "Marx was working on the problem when there existed indubitably progressive bourgeois movements...." Each conflict, he insisted, has to be evaluated in its unique concrete circumstances, studying the "nexus between events" to determine which class's interests were being sought or met.⁸ Though the observer could not know the strength or pattern of development of a given social movement, he could know "which class stands at the hub of one epoch or another, determining its main content."⁹ One must look at European policy as a whole rather than wrenching an example, e.g. of war, out of its social, political and economic context.¹⁰ This also shows the influence of Clausewitz, whom he studied at this juncture.

No longer was Lenin critical of the Communards:

The war of 1870-71 was a continuation of the progressive bourgeois policy (which had been pursued for decades) of liberating and uniting Germany. The debacle and overthrow of Napoleon III hastened that liberation. The peace programme of the socialists of that epoch took this result into account and advocated support for the democratic bourgeoisie, urging no plunder of France and an honorable peace with the republic.... At that time, the programme of a democratic (bourgeois) peace had an objective historical basis. Now there is no such basis....(11)

Instead of the Communards, Lenin directed vehement criticism toward the socialists of the Second International who had abandoned international socialism for nationalism.

He aimed his attack in particular at Karl Kautsky, a respected German Marxist and a leader of the large groups of socialists who sought reform, rather than revolution, through their own set of progressive war aims. Tuchman explains that "on paper revolution had a lovely glow; the reality in the streets was less welcome."¹² The collapse of the Second International formally meant the end of communication among the socialists of the belligerents. Lenin said this revealed their true sentiment: social chauvinism.¹³ He reminded them that in the 1912 Basle Manifesto, put together by many of these same socialists, the conclusion was that in a war fought for profit and ambition rather than "in the interests of the people, ...it would be a crime to fire at one another."¹⁴ The socialists' task, as Lenin saw it, was to turn imperialist war into civil war, i.e. fuel the revolutionizing spark which the former kind of war would inevitably ignite. He emphasized, however, that it was "impossible to make a revolution -- it grows out of a multiplicity of diverse phenomena, phases, traits, characteristics, consequences of the imperialist war."¹⁵ But he roundly criticized Kautsky's reasoning about the need for national defense as, he pointed out, Clausewitz had ridiculed a similar idea long ago. And that idea, as Lenin paraphrased it, was "that when war breaks out all historically created political relations between nations and classes cease, and that a totally new situation arises!"¹⁶

Polish Marxist Leszek Kolakowski avers that "Lenin was the first and only important leader of social democracy in Europe to proclaim the slogan of revolutionary defeatism: the proletariat in each country should endeavor to bring about the military defeat of its own government...."17 Lenin was never against war per se in the pacifist sense. He saw the imperialist war as a necessary step toward socialism, "a meaningful part of the historical process which would lead to a 'clearer revolutionary understanding'"18 because the imperialist war was being transformed by social crisis into what he expected would be civil war. Thus he pressed for military defeat of the imperialist powers. As Lenin witnessed in Russia in 1905, military defeat tremendously weakened the oppressive social structure he sought to destroy.

The Pre-War Mentalité

Roland Stromberg contends that although public opinion did not start the war, "the incredible endurance of the soldiers [and] the cooperation of the entire community -- down to 1917, at least,...prolonged [it]..."19 The overwhelming majority of the intellectual Left in Europe -- poets, novelists, scientists, socialists, artists, etc. -- were pro-war in 1914. It is difficult to imagine the naïveté of the pre-1914 generation of youth which thought of war as "a cleansing fire."20 One of the most significant elements

of the pre-war mentalité was the "thirst for community." A sense of belonging "suddenly reappeared with the shock of the war...."21 While much serious thought in the period from 1890 to 1914 was so-called "modernist" -- "defiant of tradition, consciously iconoclastic, deeply personal", there was another facet which "worried about the decay of le sens social, the loss of Gemeinschaft," the uprootedness and alienation of urbanized industrial society.22 In Russia, it was for some the search for sobornost, that peculiarly Russian sense of spiritual solidarity connected with the common belief in achievement of salvation through suffering. In Germany the Jugendbewegung was a youth movement which took up communalism, getting back to nature, unconventional sexual morality, mistrust of the older generation, and protest against "false" education in which they saw the intellect as the enemy of culture and soul.23 For many throughout Europe, nationalism replaced religious feeling. For those who had enjoyed materialist ease, the danger, sacrifice, "even death on the battlefield" fulfilled a "search for something noble."24 There was the underlying "assumption that from the ashes something new and better would arise...."25

But the data did not fit the paradigm. The "exultation of the August days of 1914" turned to the revulsion of 1917-1918,26 a revulsion which pervaded much of society at all levels and stirred a crisis which brought forth new ideas

and images, new ways of seeing oneself and one's environment. Lenin, however, had already found the philosophical answers he required.

Lenin Returns to Hegel

Faced with the collapse of the Second International, Lenin sought philosophical answers to this crisis by studying G.W.F. Hegel as he had previously studied Marx. His Philosophical Notebooks, the majority of which date from 1914-1915, mark his fundamental reappraisal of Hegel's dialectics. "...[Having become] convinced that action must be guided by theory, that reality and its laws must be correctly reflected and understood if action is to be successful, [Lenin felt] the necessity of developing and deepening his theoretical framework."²⁷ Historian David McLellan writes that: "In his early years as a Marxist, Lenin did not believe that Marxism required a specifically philosophical component, ... [and thought of dialectics as] 'a relic of Hegelianism.'"²⁸ His revolutionary activities up till then had taken the form of tactics without theoretical substance, working for social changes without thinking through the prerequisites for change. He changed his mind about the need for philosophy during his Siberian exile when he read the works of Marxist leader Georgi H. Plekhanov, but did not yet take up such discussion himself. Indeed, in his Materialism and Empiriocriticism he sought "not to join

together the issues of philosophy and politics, but rather to separate them" in order to assert his authority against the Mensheviks.²⁹ But the advent of the war and, in particular, the demise of the Second International, caused him to "reorient his perspective."³⁰ As the reader progresses through the nearly 400 pages of Lenin's Notebooks, particularly his study of Hegel's Logic, his perception of Hegel's thought seems suddenly illumined. In the beginning sharply critical, seeing idealism as a "sterile flower that grows on the living tree of ...objective, absolute knowledge"³¹, he begins to see Hegel in a new way.

...The practice of man and of mankind is the test, the criterion of the objectivity of cognition. Is that Hegel's idea? It is necessary to return to this....Undoubtedly in Hegel practice serves as a link in the analysis of the process of cognition, and indeed as the transition to the objective...truth. Marx, consequently, clearly sides with Hegel in introducing the criterion of practice into the theory of knowledge.(32)

In other words, man's action (praxis) is the check or test of that which he perceives, i.e. the reflection of nature or the objective world in his mind.³³ However, "the mind is not merely a passively reflecting mirror but an active agent."³⁴ That is, knowledge has a dual aspect of reflection and creation of nature. These two opposites evolve in a constant struggle, as they unify, split, create and recreate, develop. "[Lenin] emphasizes the relatedness and dynamics of all things. Negation is not so much a law as

a 'moment' or stage of connection, of development, which preserves the positive element of what is created.³⁵ "The truth manifests itself only as the process of the resolution of contradictions."³⁶ This is the essence of Hegel's dialectics as Lenin interpreted it.

All of this is central to Lenin's thinking on war. What he found in Hegel was not a one-sided idealism, but a theory which incorporated both the ideal and the material, leading Lenin to the conclusion that historical change takes place both in the material world through man's action and in the mind through man's perception. "Intelligent idealism," Lenin wrote, "is closer to intelligent materialism than stupid materialism."³⁷

This concept of dialectical interaction helped Lenin satisfactorily explain why the socialists supported the bourgeois class not only in developing countries seeking national liberation but in imperialist countries as well. He saw this "social chauvinism" as a temporary result of "false consciousness." Though these socialists may temporarily unify or become "identical" with bourgeois class interests, this is "conditional, transitory."³⁸ Philosopher Richard T. DeGeorge, in his book Soviet Patterns of Thought, clarifies Lenin's notion of error in man's thinking.

...Since it is the mind which abstracts and produces the universal, ...it is possible for man to abstract incorrectly, to falsify, and to introduce freedom of thought or fancy....It is this, ultimately, which makes flights of fancy,

false ideologies and alienation possible. (39)

The social chauvinists' actions were guided not just by Marxian tactics, but by their own theoretical perceptions and misperceptions. Lenin presumed to know and correctly understand the Marxian "laws" which his fellow socialists did not.

Lenin's interpretation of Hegel's dialectic, verifying the possibility that man could change his world, gave him the philosophical underpinning to take action, as he did in 1917 in Russia, rather than wait for change to evolve. In his "Conspectus of Hegel's Science of Logic", Lenin acknowledged the ideal aspect of the dialectic in paraphrasing Hegel "that it is customary in history to quote anecdotes as the minor 'causes' of major events [when] in fact these are only occasions, only [external events], which 'the inner spirit of the event would not have required.'"40 World War I had just such an "inner spirit" which Lenin saw as enlightened class consciousness born of a crisis with dimensions previously unknown. Both the material action and the inner spirit became part of Lenin's model of social transformation.

Lenin Connects the Concepts of Imperialism and War

In 1916, Lenin wrote Imperialism, The Highest Stage of Capitalism. Imperialism as a concept was not Lenin's

original idea, nor did he claim it to be. He borrowed from and acknowledged his debt to others. One was English liberal J.A. Hobson, "who [in 1902] had claimed that colonial expansion was due to a lack of home investment opportunities." Another significant theorist in this regard was Rudolf Hilferding, an Austro-Marxist who formulated the concept of the monopoly of "finance-capital" in 1910, and described its devastating effects on the world market leading ultimately to revolutionary war by the proletariat.⁴¹ His analysis, quoted by Lenin, evokes the image of material life similarly portrayed by Braudel and the Annales: "The age-long agrarian isolation of 'nations without history' is destroyed and they are drawn into the capitalist whirlpool. Capitalism itself provides the subjugated with the means and resources for their emancipation."⁴² Dialectics gave Lenin the tool with which to elaborate his social model. As "development is the struggle of opposites", so economic and political development are the struggle of opposing classes.

Rosa Luxemburg, a prominent Polish-German socialist and leader, along with Karl Liebnicht, of the left-wing Spartacus League, connected militarism exclusively to imperialism and the colonial expansion the latter required. That expansion would eventually reach an impasse and lead to an automatic breakdown of the imperialist economy. This, of course, conflicted with Lenin's view of "extreme unevenness"

in the collapse of capitalism leading to protracted wars. Lenin thus wrote many pages criticizing Luxemburg's views. He referred, for example, to the "vain yearning for the destruction of capitalism without a desperate civil war or series of wars."⁴³ In 1916 in response to Luxemburg's "Junius Pamphlet", Lenin averred that it is a false idea that there can be no wars but reactionary ones. "[This] gives rise to the absurd idea of 'disarmament.'...It also gives rise to...the attitude of indifference to national movements." Again he emphasized the need for analysis of each specific situation, in World War I the "correct solution [being] not just class struggle but civil war."⁴⁴ And he wrote in 1917 that there can be no disarmament until there is a socialist world, not just a socialist country.⁴⁵

Luxemburg thought that any war, even if it began as a national one, would become imperialist. While "not denying the possibility of all transformations in general," Lenin stood by his advocacy of the right to national self-determination for countries not yet ready for socialism.⁴⁶

Every war is the continuation of politics by other means. The continuation of national liberation politics in the colonies will inevitably take the form of national liberation wars against imperialism....The imperialist "epoch" by no means precludes national wars on the part of...small (annexed or nationally oppressed) countries against the imperialist powers just as it does not preclude large-scale national movements in Eastern Europe.
(47)

Many different kinds of revolts, therefore, fell into

Lenin's category of "just" struggles for national self-determination. Mayer suggests that the concept of self-determination was "the political extension of Lenin's primarily economic analysis of imperialism."⁴⁸

Russian Bolshevik Nikolai Bukharin also greatly influenced Lenin through his Imperialism and the World Economy which extended Hilferding's ideas, suggesting that "imperialism was a necessary feature of contemporary capitalism and that it inevitably led to war and revolution"⁴⁹[my emphasis]. Bukharin thought the reason for this lay in the imperialist countries' inability to avoid the internal stresses within the system of production, especially in lesser developed areas of the world where they could not bribe workers with higher wages. Lenin wrote the introduction to Bukharin's work, announcing the end of the era of "peaceful" capitalism.

In addition to being inspired by Bukharin, Hobson and Hilferding and, in a critical sense, by Luxemburg, Lenin wrote his tract to refute Karl Kautsky's concept of a benificent "ultraimperialism" which suggested capitalist powers might form some kind of international cartel to divide the world peacefully as it was not in their interest to carry on the arms race or wars. Kautsky's concept came from the same sort of wishful ideal which inspired Woodrow Wilson's brand of international cooperation as espoused in the League of Nations.⁵⁰

"Lenin was scandalized by the idea of capitalism without wars, a state of affairs in which revolutions, too, would be much less likely."⁵¹ He saw the division of the world by the capitalist-turned-imperialist powers in a way diametrically opposed to Kautsky's and Wilson's views. He believed that because the world had begun an "age of scarcity",⁵² there would only be intensification of competition for raw materials and a scramble for colonies to protect the Great Powers' relative strength, and that violence was the only possible result of the division and subsequent redivisions of the world.⁵³ Any agreements would necessarily be limited and temporary. He expected bitter competition due to purported shortages in some raw materials, the end of the free market and the proliferation of industrial monopoly, and an active role played by banks.⁵⁴

Lenin defined imperialism as the domination of finance capital, both bank and industrial. It was not so much by building empires, expropriating raw materials, or controlling markets that the rich nations prevailed over the poor; it was by "the export of capital itself."⁵⁵ Britain, France, the United States and Germany issued loans in exchange for favors like trade and security agreements.⁵⁶ These were the grist of the balance of power system. Economic and political alliances connected in a striving for the twin goals of economic and territorial hegemony.⁵⁷

Lenin also assumed that the lure of high profit would prevent the imperialist powers from using surplus capital to raise the standard of living in backward, dependent countries. In his mind "uneven development and wretched conditions of the masses [were] the fundamental and inevitable conditions and premises of this mode of production."⁵⁸

The degree of capitalist development in a given nation varied throughout the world. Lesser developed nations, Russia being Lenin's model, were characterized by a weak indigenous bourgeoisie and a small proletariat. The Russian peasantry, which Lenin saw in economically stratified layers, was the largest group. Its petit bourgeois sectors, when joined with the proletariat, were more likely to become a revolutionary class than the bourgeoisie because they had a greater stake in land reform. Lenin's view of the role of the peasantry in bringing about bourgeois revolution is a significant diversion from classical Marxism. One must keep in mind that readiness for revolution required not just industrial development but an ability to accept capitalist methods and attitudes in the agrarian societies which constituted most of the colonies and Great Power spheres of influence.

In Lenin's world view, no peaceful imperialist division of the world, such as Kautsky suggested, was possible in part because uneven development created a disparity in the

relation of forces and their shares of profit and control. The influence of the dialectic is visible in his description of the "living connections" between imperialist peace and war, both of which are a "striving for domination, not for freedom."⁵⁹

"The diversion of capital [outside their borders, Lenin believed], would result in industrial stagnation within the wealthy nations and would create more tension between the working and investing classes there."⁶⁰ In lesser developed parts of the world, social change could take a very different path. Indeed, because imperialist war both enervated the foreign and indigenous bourgeoisies, while at the same time radicalizing the proletariat and peasantry, the latter groups could themselves throw off the vestiges of feudalism. Lenin saw in 1905 that the Russian bourgeoisie was incapable of carrying this out. But under the crisis conditions of war, the lower classes could do so, and then move on, depending on the strength of the socialist class consciousness, to socialist revolution.

Sociologist David Lane writes that, in Lenin's view,:

Imperialism helps to explain why the revolution of the working class is postponed in advanced countries, why the tendency of the rate of profit to fall is reversed, and why the center of the revolutionary arena has moved to the developing countries.(61)

Lane posits three conclusions of the political developments stemming from Lenin's analysis of imperialism: 1) The

economic benefits enjoyed by the masses of a rich imperialist state help ensure their loyalty to the political and economic system. 2) Working class consciousness is further corrupted by struggles between imperialist countries. They falsely see defense of the fatherland as defense of their own interests. 3) The collapse of world capitalism may begin in backward countries where there are fewer possibilities to bribe workers and the bourgeoisie is not as entrenched; i.e. "the imperialist chain might snap at its weakest link." 62

Lenin and the Deepening Crisis of 1917

During the revolutions and counterrevolutions of 1917, Lenin saw even more clearly that the social character of the war was changing. It cannot be denied that he saw a major role for himself and his Bolshevik Party to help direct the turmoil toward their socialist goal. He believed the prospects for civil war to be at a peak in Russia as well Germany. Those among the masses in Russia who expected the February Revolution's Provisional Government to end the war instead witnessed its extension. Those who expected continuation of shared power between the Soviets and the bourgeoisie, the concept of "dual power", saw it threatened during the "July Days" and again during the attempt at counterrevolution by General Kornilov. Lenin and his party were able to capitalize on the resulting rise of discontent

in their attempt to teach the masses about the class nature of war and the impossibility of achieving "a democratic, non-coercive peace without overthrowing the power of capital and transferring state power to...the proletariat."⁶³

Arno Mayer cogently points out how the issue of the belligerents' true war aims, the product of the old system of secret diplomacy, fuelled a crisis in 1917-1918 which undermined the governments not just in tsarist Russia and thereafter its Provisional Government, where revolution actually took place, but also among the rest of the warring nations.⁶⁴ As months passed and the Powers' continued to refuse to disclose what they would require in terms of peace, tensions heightened among the parties of order and movement in France, Germany, Austria-Hungary and Great Britain. As the latter grew in strength, the established governments could not afford to ignore them and still maintain the political truce with which the war had begun. Indeed, by 1917 the threat was not merely to the truce but to the very structure and function of the governments themselves. The overthrow of the Russian autocracy intensified the pressure by the parties of movement for internal reforms.

It was the Bolshevik Revolution, however, and its publication of a Decree On Peace revealing the contents of the secret Allied war aims agreements which widened the fissures in the balance of power system, presented the old

order with a vision of similar revolutions occurring throughout Europe, and reinvigorated President Wilson's advocacy of open diplomacy. Wilson believed that war fought for expansionist aims would not be possible if the permission of an electorate were a prerequisite. Thus he echoed the old Enlightenment belief, carried on by the liberal parties of movement, that only governments, not people, fight wars. Lenin's class perspective, on the other hand, led him to believe that people did fight wars, either to protect or protest class privileges.

Notes to Chapter Five

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³Siegfried Sassoon, Memoirs of an Infantry Officer (London: Faber and Faber, Ltd., 1930), p. 120.

⁴Lenin, "Lessons of the Commune," Vol. XIII, Collected Works (March 23, 1908), p. 475.

⁵Ibid., p. 476-477.

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⁷Lenin, "Socialism and War," XXI, Collected Works (1915), p. 309.

⁸Lenin, "Under a False Flag," XXI, Collected Works (February 1915), p. 140.

⁹Lenin, Ibid., p. 145.

- 10Lenin, "War and Revolution: A Lecture Delivered May 14, 1917," XXIV, Collected Works (May 1917), p. 401.
- 11Lenin, "The Peace Programme," XXII, Collected Works (March 25, 1916), p. 163.
- 12Tuchman, The Proud Tower, p. 439.
- 13Lenin, "Opportunism and the Collapse of the Second International," XXI, Collected Works (June 1915), p. 207.
- 14Ibid., p. 439.
- 15Mayer, Wilson v. Lenin, p. 51.
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- 17Kolalowski, p. 469.
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- 19Ibid., pp. 179-183.
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32Lenin, "Conspectus of Hegel's Science of Logic," in Philosophical Notebooks, XXXVIII, Collected Works, September -December 1914), pp. 211, 212.

33Ibid., p. 201.

34DeGeorge, p. 168.

35Ibid., p. 167.

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38Lenin, "On the Question of Dialectics," p. 360.

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40Lenin, "Conspectus...", p. 160.

41McLellan, p. 97.

42Lenin, "Imperialism, The Highest Stage of Capitalism," XXII, Collected Works (June 1916), p. 297.

43Lenin, "The Position and Tasks of the Socialist International," XXI, Collected Works (November 1, 1914), p. 40.

44Lenin, "The Junius Pamphlet," XXII, Collected Works (July 1916), pp. 312, 316-317.

45Lenin, "The Disarmament Slogan," XXIII, Collected Works (1917), p. 95.

46Lenin, "The Junius Pamphlet," XXII, p. 309.

47Ibid., pp. 310-311.

48Mayer, Wilson vs. Lenin, p.298.

49McLellan, p. 97.

50McLellan, p. 28.

51Kolakowski, p. 492.

52Fischer, Life of Lenin, p. 97.

53Lenin in Henry M. Christman, ed. Essential Works of Lenin (New York: Bantam Books, 1966), p. 239.

54Lenin, "Imperialism...", XXII, p.299.

55Christman, Essential Works of Lenin, p. 177.

56Ibid., p. 217-218.

57Lenin in Christman, p. 216.

58Lenin in Christman, p. 226.

59Lenin, "Imperialism...", XXII, pp. 295-297.

60Christman, Essential Works of Lenin, p. 177.

61David Lane, Leninism: A Sociological Interpretation (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), p. 39.

62Ibid., pp. 39-41.

63Lenin, "The Tasks of the Proletariat in Our Revolution: Draft Platform for the Proletarian Party.", XXIV, Collected Works (September 1917), p.67.

64Mayer, Wilson vs. Lenin, ff.

Chapter 6 --

War and Weltanschauungen --

An Historiographical Look at the Causes and Meanings of World War I

War and Peace as Tools of Policy

Lenin's ability to perceive and act in accord with the social and economic changes wrought by total war assisted his party's bid for power throughout 1917. Certainly the

Provisional Government, which was unable to break free of the old commitments to the Allies, failed to see the potency of peace as a political tool, and "failed to take account of the ideological and power realities in revolutionary Russia."¹ As Arno Mayer noted, "Lenin came to realize that the war crisis might allow Russia to play leapfrog with history...",² to telescope the bourgeois revolution into a few short months and to proceed with peacemaking and industrializing under a proletarian regime led by its vanguard, the Bolsheviks. The war served as as the most effective instrument to quicken the pace of social change and development by rousing the masses from their generally habitual acceptance of the status quo. Thus Lenin could conceive of proletarian revolution before others thought the time was right. For Lenin, the key difference in Russia was that the crisis eliminated the need to await for the full maturation of capitalism, which would much more slowly reveal the meaning of the class struggle to the workers and peasants.

Just before the October revolution, Lenin related a story which illustrated his cognizance of the importance of the simple issues of in everyday life in their nexus with class consciousness as a most effective path to social, economic and political change:

After the July Days,...I was obliged to go underground....In a small working-class house in...Petrograd, dinner is being served. The hostess

puts bread on the table. The host says: "Look what fine bread. 'They' dare not give us bad bread now. And we had almost given up thinking that we'd ever get good bread in Petrograd again." I was amazed at this class appraisal of the July Days. My thoughts had been revolving around the political significance of those events,...analyzing the situation which caused this zigzag in history...and how we ought to change our slogans and alter our Party apparatus....As for bread, I, who had not known want, did not give it a thought. I took bread for granted.... [But] this member of the oppressed class...[took] the bull by the horns with that astonishing simplicity and straightforwardness, with that firm determination and amazing clarity of outlook from which we intellectuals are as remote as the stars in the sky. (3)

Lenin's understanding of this Hestian element of history led to a new slogan used for the first time that same day, October 1, 1917: "Power to the Soviets, Land to the Peasants, Peace to the Nations, Bread to the Starving!" 4 Bad bread could not bring revolution by itself (the legendary consequences for Marie Antoinette notwithstanding!). It was a sign of the permeation of everyday material life by the devastating effects of the war. It raised the consciousness of the masses. But of greatest significance was their growing awareness that the countless lives in this war were being lost not for freedom or other ideals but for "the right to plunder other nations." The Bolshevik Party and its Decree on Peace at Brest Litovsk made this very clear.

Peace was the focal point of Lenin's revolutionary strategy, an immediate peace to be concluded together with the Allies if possible, but separately if necessary. This

call for peace would, the Bolsheviks hoped, not only give the new Russian socialist state time to establish itself, but also, by publishing the belligerents' secret treaties, begin European-wide civil war. With "Peace, Bread and Land", the Bolsheviks "sought to win over the tired soldiers,... the disgruntled nationalities,...the land- and peace-hungry peasantry."⁵

Lenin's theory of war was profoundly reshaped by World War I. This paper has discussed its evolution up until the time of the inception of the first socialist state. The October Revolution marks the natural boundary between, for Lenin, theory and praxis. With characteristic pragmatism, he viewed any necessary dispensation of his earlier theories as art. He soon realized that the Soviet state was too weak to press for European revolution at the likely expense of its own. War, like peace, is, however, a tool of revolutionary art as well as theory, and Lenin's understanding of that basic social reality carried him into the task of building and controlling what was now being called "Communism". Before turning to final conclusions, once again a comparative historiographical discussion helps put Lenin's views in clearer focus.

Inter-War and Contemporary Historiographical Perspectives

In the immediate years following the war, the issue of war guilt was the topical focus of the histories and

memoirs. The Treaty of Versailles assigned this guilt and consequent reparations to Germany and her allies. But gradually emerging revelations of the secret documents of all the belligerents -- previous suppressed or partially censored memoranda, telegraph messages and other diplomatic correspondence -- provided plenty of data which the writers used, depending on their political perspective, to turn blame away from or upon their nation. The general conclusion was that though underlying causes existed, individuals actually started the hostilities. Thus analysis and assessment of blame began with examinations of their written records. The national origins of most of these early histories contrasts with the international approach of the Annales.

American historian Sidney Bradshaw Fay's The Origins of the World War, published in 1930, contains a good discussion of the war guilt controversy which followed Versailles and carried on through the inter-war years. In light of the newly disclosed documents, Fay contended that historians must fix responsibility for the war on all its participants, not just the defeated ones. Fay recognized a series of "underlying causes" of the war: the secret alliance system, militarism, nationalism, the newspaper press, and economic imperialism. The latter, Fay wrote, tended to become exaggerated as a cause "in the mind of the public because it is a subject which touches the pockets of

wide classes...."⁶ It is evident that his understanding of cause was still very much grounded in the actions of the diplomats as he went on to write:

But if one reads the diplomatic correspondence of the years before the War, one is struck by the relatively slight importance which is given to these economic rivalries.... It is not so much questions of economic rivalry as those of prestige, boundaries, armies and navies, the Balance of Power, and possible shiftings in the system of alliances which provoke reams of diplomatic correspondence and raise the temper in Foreign Offices to the danger point.⁽⁷⁾

Fay also gave primacy to the jingoistic tone of the press which enflamed enthusiasm for war among its readers, a situation within which, he notes, governments had little control whether or not they were pleased by the coverage.

After delineating the underlying causes listed above, Fay returns to the assassination of Franz Ferdinand, and through that act, the forceful cause of Serbian nationalism, as the factor which had "consolidated the elements of hostility...." Without this catalyst, Fay was "very doubtful [that] these dangerous tendencies would have actually led to war...."⁸

French historian Pierre Renouvin wrote a critical study of the war in 1928 based on lectures delivered at the Sorbonne in 1922-1923 and under the auspices of the French Society of War History. The Society, founded in 1918, sought an objective analysis of the war guilt question through available documentary evidence. Renouvin saw an underlying

war mentality which ran through the pre-war governments, but particularly Germany and Austria, and in the final analysis he absolved the Entente. To assign responsibility for war, Renouvin averred, one must look back further than the events immediately preceding its outbreak, for by then the decisions had already been made. He suggested that the combination of factors of the mentality of inevitable war, the arms race, and the rivalry of the two groups influenced the actions of the political leaders.⁹ Combined with this background, "in any diplomatic crisis", certain "feelings" and "forces" determine action: "mutual suspicion", the "entangling complications of alliances", the influence of military leadership and the exigencies of their war plans.¹⁰ The "germs of conflict already existed in Europe, [but] was there not, [Renouvin asked], someone who struck the spark?"¹¹

These two examples of inter-war historiography show how the actions of individuals, the dependence on documentary evidence, and the desire to assign guilt characterized the beginning of the search for the causes of the first total war.

Contemporary historians have had seventy years now to reconstruct the war and its meaning not only to that generation but to future ones. It is thus useful for comparison to see how the benefits of that hindsight reflect

in the historiography of the war. Both the phenomena they analyze and that which they play down or do not consider are of interest. For the purposes of this paper, only a very brief scan of some of the literature is possible.

Some of the historians of World War I, in their search for determinants, continue to focus on the government and military elite and its strategic and ideological assumptions. Historian Paul Kennedy, editor of a collection of essays on the Great Powers' war plans, points out the pervasive "dislike of compromise and desire for 'total' solutions" among the belligerents which would lead to their dismal failures in projection of the course of the war. Counting on the capacity of the railways and the industrialized state to mobilize millions, Field Marshall von Moltke (the elder) expected the war "would be decided within weeks if not days of its opening."¹²

There were no defensive strategies because they were not wanted; there were no alternatives, because inflexibility was as much in the mind as it was in the railway timetable; there were no schemes for stalemate or compromise, because a swift and absolute victory was what was demanded; and there was little civilian control over the military because very often they both had the same objective and shared a common ideology.⁽¹³⁾

Kennedy's thesis is that "only in the German plan did mobilization mean war," therefore the Russian decision to mobilize was "one of the most fateful acts in the drama;" the Schlieffen Plan pinned hopes on defeating the French before the Russians had mobilized to avoid a two-front war.

Thus, writes Kennedy, Germany opened hostilities as a result of Russia's decree.¹⁴ This lack of German strategic options Kennedy attributes to the influence of a number of prevailing assumptions of the Western world at the time:

a belief in the need to take firm action in defense of national interests; ...a mood of fatalism and determinism; the social-Darwinistic notions of struggle for survival; the hyper-patriotic feelings of the military men and the "militarized" civilians; the cultural pessimism of elites alarmed at developing threats both within and without; the disregard for the concepts of international law and morality....(15)

Jonathan Steinberg, whose essay on German war plans is included in the Kennedy volume, stresses that their plans were "automatic"; they "had to unfold without civilian interference", implying "a degree of subordination of civilian judgment to military 'necessity' which was not characteristic of any of the other Powers with the possible exception of Russia."¹⁶

L.C.F. Turner agrees with this emphasis on the Schlieffen Plan, saying that historians have failed to stress how the Schlieffen Plan's application "...would lead automatically to intense military activity...." and that "the urgent need of both France and Germany for rapid mobilization and early offensive action by their eastern allies accelerated the whole tempo of the crisis of July 1914."¹⁷ Turner also gives primacy to the position of Austria in 1914: "There was a feeling in Vienna that some drastic action was required if the Monarchy was not going to

collapse as a Great Power."¹⁸

Historian Paul Schroeder contends that "the search for a fundamental cause of World War I is futile....[It] was a normal development in international relations; events had been building toward it for a long time....In this sense the question Why not? answers the question Why?" Thus Schroeder tries to determine what it was that ended "its long postponement."¹⁹ He focuses, like Turner, on the position of Austria in the European balance of power system. Schroeder states that all nineteenth century European wars were related to "a violent reaction from some declining or threatened essential actor to a menace to its existence, essential interests, or prestige." This was true of Austria in 1914. Rather than Germany, "which had allies, controlled neutrals...and was inherently strong, the Entente encircled Austria-Hungary."²⁰ Britain, failing to see the danger in doing so, put first emphasis on an Anglo-French-Russian alliance "in order to avoid disappointing the Russians," thereby arousing Austrian and German fears for the security of its own alliance.²¹ Germany could not lose her most reliable ally and thus had to go to war to protect her.

Schroeder's thesis is not that the threat to Austria per se caused the war, though it was a catalyst which determined its timing, but that it was the balance of power system itself. He contends that the raison d'être of British policy was the Triple Entente rather than improved relations

with Germany. "For the Entente powers and Italy, alliances were primarily associations for profit." Germany, while world power was her goal, depended on her alliances for security.²² She therefore could not pursue Weltpolitik all out. Lack of restraint, as the war later proved, "was bound to isolate her and destroy the system upon which she had to rely for security as much as upon her army."²³ It was to the Entente's advantage "not to overstrain the system holding [Germany] back" but Schroeder attributes this lack of insight to their own preoccupation with the advantages the system afforded them.²⁴

Schroeder borrows the analogy first used by Annales historian J.H. Hexter to explain the systemic dysfunction which caused World War I:

"Galloping Gertie" was the popular name for the Tacoma Narrows Bridge in Washington, which collapsed in 1940 when winds induced pressures on supporting members sufficient to cause the supports to generate destructive forces within the bridge. (25)

World War I, Shroeder believes, was another "Galloping Gertie":

...The very devices built into a system to keep it stable and operative under stress, subjected to intolerable pressures, generate forces of their own which cause the system to destroy itself....Witness how statesmen and military leaders everywhere in 1914, especially in the Central Powers, felt themselves to be in the grip of uncontrollable forces. (26)

Fritz Fischer devolves another perspective to the

student of World War I. His book on German war aims, based on archival material confiscated at the end of World War II, contends that the Germans sought "to weld a continental 'Mitteleuropa' into a force that would place Germany on equal terms with the established and the potential world powers: the British Empire, Russia, and the United States."²⁷ Concomitant with ambitions on the continent was the German leadership's desire to "revise the colonial status quo" and to construct a great naval fleet to carry it out. Sea power came to be identified with world power because of the imperial conquests of the late nineteenth century.²⁸ Germany's desire to annex territory on her eastern and western borders formed, according to Fischer, the most unyielding foundation of her war aims.

But the actions of the military and governmental elites had a social base in a particular ideological Weltanschauung held by many. Pre-war German university professors discussed the "fitting share of that world power which human nature and higher Providence assign to the civilised peoples."²⁹ They expressed concern for preservation of German culture. After the war began, they attempted to infuse the war effort with emotional appeal, portraying it in terms of a Hegelian, historically determined moral struggle toward Germany's highest potential.³⁰

Economic interests, however, were of fundamental importance, as illustrated in the emergence of associations

of German industry, banking, shipping, and agriculture formed to "concentrate" Central European markets. "Germany was developing more and more into a highly industrialized exporting country, and the problem of finding markets and raw materials to support her population was growing increasingly urgent."³¹ Underlying these economic concerns, Fischer, in the tradition of Annales, identifies radical social, political, and economic structural changes which took place in the previous generation. Industrial capitalism had brought widespread prosperity, and an expanding and disproportionately young population, concentrated in a few urban centers. Thus Germany's "consciousness of being a 'young', growing and rising nation" led to "the demand for Lebensraum, markets and industrial expansion."³²

Clearly Fischer does not neglect the political and diplomatic dimensions of war aims, in particular the German fear of encirclement, consciousness of strength, insistent urge for imperial expansion and need for security, but, like Lenin and the Annales, he views them in the context of domestic reality and over a long term. The war is thus a paradigm of interactive forces: "ideological motives, religious or traditional, institutions and social structures, old and new and (not least) material factors."³³ The personalities of those in power play a minor supporting role in contrast.

Fischer cautions that his study of Germany must be

complemented with like studies of the other belligerent powers in order to understand their war aims, thus attempting to blunt the widespread criticism that he has placed too much emphasis on Germany's role in World War I. One of the most vocal of these has been Gerhard Ritter, who looks at the war as a failure of statecraft.

Whereas Fritz Fischer presents the history of the war within the paradigm shared at least in part by Lenin and the Annales, Ritter takes a historicist stance. For the most part his discussion rests on politics. His first volume of The Sword and the Sceptor on the war develops the theme of the "Prussian tradition that dominated the relation of state and army in Germany until the end of the era of Bismarck."³⁴ In Volume II he looks at effects of reversal of the "natural order" of military ("the sword") and civil ("the sceptor") control in the German government by 1914. The officer corps, the influence of German military literature, the Schlieffen Plan, and the activities of the General Staff figure largely in his analysis. Volume III focuses on very specifically on the War Chancellory of Bethmann-Hollweg. It is based on archival evidence, some of the same used by Fritz Fischer, but Ritter's conceptualization of his study, as well as his conclusions, are very different. Ritter calls for:

...insight into the countless individual interrelationships that must be known if one is to understand the course of political events and do justice to the acts of commission and omission of

leading statesmen and soldiers, their successes as well as their failures.(35)

He places strong emphasis on the inability of Bethmann-Holweg, whom he sees as "an estimable statesman of character,"³⁶ to rescue Germany from the throes of a hopeless war. The reason was not weakness of will, with which Bethmann-Holweg had been often charged, but a German militarism enflamed with nationalist passion. "In wartime, politicians have always had a hard time gaining and maintaining authority against successful generals."³⁷

Closest in approach to Lenin in his view of the aims and causes of World War I is historian Arno Mayer. Like Lenin, he writes that a discussion of World War I detached from the domestic situation, as diplomatic histories do, has "grave limitations."³⁸ There is "inextricable interplay" between the dysfunctions of the international balance of power system and the domestic dysfunctions of the belligerents.³⁹ More simply, international and domestic tensions, arising from the inability of existing social structures to adjust peacefully to change, were tandem causal factors. Following the Russo-Japanese War, Mayer contends, "Europe's statesmen, politicians, diplomatists, and editorialists began to face up to [the] relationship between external and internal war," which they viewed in very different ways. Most conservatives "inclined to view war as an antidote to revolution." Those left of center,

among whom he includes Bethmann-Holweg, "tended to be afraid of war as a precipitant of social revolution." Others, including Wilson, Lloyd George, and Jaurès "feared it as a breeding ground of reaction."⁴⁰

Mayer sees conditions creating potential civil war in all the Great Powers in pre-war years. He suggests that many of the most pro-war activists also "held reactionary, ultraconservative, or protofascist views on domestic affairs,"⁴¹ and that their interest in the war was as a counterrevolutionary deterrent to internal unrest. War preparations would satisfy three functions in this respect: 1) To guard their political positions by diverting attention to external issues; 2) To "reduce the politically unsettling capitalist fluctuations of the capitalist economies by raising armaments expenditures"; 3) To place defense of the status quo ahead of reform.⁴²

Lenin's View of the Future of War

With the exception of Arno Mayer and Fritz Fischer, all of these contemporary historical discussions of the causes of the Great War focus on diplomatic, military or political explanations of belligerent governments' actions and do not consider the changing social forces at work in each society. The underlying assumption for most was that the war was a period of hostilities confined to four years and primarily to Europe. For Lenin, however, war was a social phenomenon,

a process of social transformation, a situation which did not fundamentally change once hostilities were concluded, and which did and would continue to have international repercussions. Mayer writes:

[While] the Europe-oriented peace program of the Entente, [influenced by Wilson], eventually brought the issues of arbitration, disarmament and world organization into a focal position, ... Lenin's Eurasian perspective led him to look at Europe not only in relation to the developing equalitarian revolution, but also in relation to the shifting picture of world power and politics. Consequently, as agents and sponsors of these twin historical forces, the Bolsheviks never envisioned a diplomacy of peaceful change. (43)

The seeds of future wars lay already planted, scattered as unevenly as the developing societies which would one day fight them.

Historian Quincy Wright's A Study of War suggests answers to the time-worn enigma of why people resort to violence:

These two circumstances- that community formation tends to depend upon opinion and that the opinion which dominates at a historic moment may set the course of development for a long time -- account for many wars, because war is the most effective instrument of rapid persuasion.(44)

Wright adds further that

most of the great political blocs designated as sovereign states and most of the great changes in forms of organization have been effected through utilization of such rapid processes of persuasion as war or insurrection at the critical historical moment.(45)

In May 1917 Lenin wrote that many workers and peasants

say they're fighting for freedom. "Where they go wrong...is when they believe the war is being waged by them."⁴⁶ Lenin knew that the task of his party was in great part to raise class consciousness. Certainly symbols like the slogan "Peace, Bread, and Land" played a role. But these were symbols of a different sort from the nationalist ideals people were told they were fighting for. These were basic life issue symbols, tied to the struggle between the classes and the traditional attitudes which would have to be changed to assure a lasting new political order.

Quincy Wright was not optimistic about the end of war, though for different reasons than Lenin:

While the political importance of war has varied under different conditions, it seems probable that war will continue to be of dominant political importance so long as the process of community formation and development remain a process of persuading people to accept symbols rather than a process of enlightening people on how unwanted conditions can be dealt with. (47)

But Lenin believed that war, especially if it was the total war which he equated with imperialism, by undermining old structures and functions and by arousing the understanding of the exploited masses, would, far better than his party could do alone, radically alter the opinion of misinformed and misled workers still not conscious of the class nature of war. The tremendous famine, exhaustion, hardship and horror brought on by a war of the magnitude of World War I would facilitate the acceptance of a new set of

symbols, as long as those symbols did, indeed, show how "unwanted conditions could be dealt with." Lenin and his party sought to provide those symbols in Russia. But as he looked at the world and not just at Europe, Lenin saw what the founders of the League of Nations failed to see and which historians of the war have not adequately emphasized. Even if imperialist war leads to successful social revolution in one country or one region, wars will be inevitable for a long time to come because of the uneven progression of countries in the rest of the world through their own stages of economic development. As long as these wars are fought primarily to further the goal of freedom for the masses of the people and not in the interest of private property or nationalist expansionism, they will be, in Lenin's eyes, just wars. Lenin wrote in 1916 that "disarmament is the ideal of socialism; there will be no wars in socialist society." But until there is a socialist world and because the bourgeoisie is armed "against the proletariat" [Lenin's emphasis], "disarmament is not Marxist."48

Women and teenage children fought in the Paris Commune side by side with the men. It will be no different in the coming battles for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie. Proletarian women will not look on passively as poorly armed or unarmed workers are shot down by the well-armed forces of the bourgeoisie. They will take to arms, as they did in 1871, and from the cowed nations of today -- or more correctly, from the present-day labor movement, disorganized more by the opportunists than by the governments -- there will undoubtedly

arise, sooner or later, but with absolute certainty, an international league of the "terrible nations" of the revolutionary proletariat. (49)

In 1918, when it was becoming clear that a socialist Europe was not imminent, Lenin wrote: "Violence must inevitably accompany the collapse of capitalism in its entirety and the birth of socialist society. That violence will constitute a period of world history, a whole era of various kinds of wars...." The new epoch was, Lenin said, only beginning; there are many possible stages of transition to socialism.⁵⁰

The implications of Lenin's vision of the end of war in a socialist world will likely never be tested. As this ideal was in the distant future, Lenin gave it little thought other than to assume that if the oppressed classes held the reins of power, class antagonisms would fade. Clearly, for the immediate future, wars would be an integral part of the international scene. In Russia, his concept of "dictatorship of the proletariat" led to totalitarianism, which Lenin viewed as necessary to eliminate the vestiges of bourgeois rule and to further instill proletarian class consciousness. His ultimate goal, the warless socialist world, seems as ideal and unreal as the vision of Wilson and others that democratic-capitalist means, i.e. such reforms as arbitration and disarmament, would eliminate wars. But this valid critique cannot call into question the significance of

Lenin's vision of a world in transition. The power of Lenin's belief in the correctness of his theory translated into an intransigence which sabotaged any more than temporary accommodations with capitalist society.

In an article written by a Soviet historian in the 1984 issue of the Soviet periodical Kommunist are many of the same points of interpretation of the meaning of the First World War as Lenin understood it which have been discussed in this paper. But when the Soviets use this historical material to explain imperialist aggression, the need to strengthen world socialism, and the need to prevent the nuclear war, they are coming from a different set of "objective circumstances" than those of 1917. The question of who is doing what to whom, for example, in Afghanistan, is one which the Soviets often fail to acknowledge or answer.⁵¹ Nevertheless, the point here is to seek understanding of the present Soviet Weitanschauung about war. Today Soviet socialist society fears imperialist war and prepares to prevent it, while, viewing war as a process of intensifying social change, at the same time sees wars of national liberation as tools for its own politics. The study of Lenin's theory of war provides a lens through which the Soviet perspective on war half a century later can be more clearly focused.

Notes to Chapter 6

¹Aрно J. Mayer, Wilson vs. Lenin: Political Origins of the New Diplomacy, 1917-1918 (Cleveland and New York: World Publishing Co., 1959), p. 87.

²Ibid., p. 249.

³Lenin, "Can the Bolsheviks Retain State Power?" XXVI, Collected Works, (October 1, 1917), p. 120.

⁴Lenin, "Letter to the Central Committee, The Moscow and Petrograd Committees and the Bolshevik Members of the Petrograd and Moscow Soviets," XXVI, Collected Works, (October 1, 1917), p. 141.

⁵Mayer, Wilson vs. Lenin, p. 248.

⁶Sidney Bradshaw Fay, The Origins of the World War (2nd ed., revised; 2 vols. in one: New York: The Macmillan Company, 1930), p. 46.

⁷Ibid.

⁸Ibid., p. 558.

⁹Pierre Renouvin, The Immediate Origins of the War, trans. by Theodore Carswell Hume with a preface by Charles Seymour (New York: Howard Fertig, 1969), p. 11. Renouvin wrote a second book on World War I in 1957 called War and Aftermath: 1914-1929, trans. by Rémy Ingles Hall (New York: Harper and Row, 1968), in which he widened his focus beyond Europe to much of the rest of the world and discussed the need to examine war aims, public mood and domestic economic interests. See pp. 3-5.

¹⁰Ibid., pp. 353-354.

¹¹Ibid., p. 11.

¹²Kennedy, ed. The War Plans of the Great Powers, p. 12.

¹³Ibid., p. 19.

¹⁴Ibid., pp. 15-16.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 18.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 162.

17Ibid., pp. 257, 217.

18Ibid., p. 253.

19Paul Schroeder, "World War I as Galloping Gertie: A Reply to Joachim Remak, Journal of Modern History, Vol. 44, No. 3, (Sept. 1972), p. 332.

20Ibid., p. 335.

21Ibid., pp. 331-332.

22Ibid., p.334.

23Ibid., p. 333.

24Ibid.

25Ibid., p. 321. See J.H. Hexter, The History Primer (New York, 1970).

26Ibid.

27Fritz Fischer, Germany's Aims in the First World War (New York: W.W. Norton, 1961) p.xxii.

28Ibid., p. 8.

29Ibid., p. 9.

30Ibid., p. 156.

31Ibid., p. 11.

32Ibid.

33Ibid., p. xxi.

34Gerhard Ritter, The Sword and the Sceptor: The Problem of Militarism in Germany, Vol. II, trans. by Heinz Norden (Coral Gables, Florida: University of Miami Press, 1970, p 7.

35Ibid., preface to Vol. III, p.1.

36Ibid., p. 485.

37Ibid., p. 486.

38Arno J. Mayer, "Domestic Causes of the First World War," in Leonard Krieger and Fritz Stern, eds., The Responsibility of Power: Historical Essays in Honor of Hajo Holborn (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Co., 1967), p. 287.

39Ibid., p. 288.

40Ibid., p. 293.

41Ibid., pp. 291-292.

42Ibid., p. 288.

43Mayer, Wilson vs. Lenin, p. 303.

44Wright, A Study of War, p. 1040.

45Ibid., p. 1041.

46Lenin, "War and Revolution," XXIV, Collected Works (May 1917), p. 407.

47Wright, p. 1039.

48Lenin, "The Disarmament Slogan," XXIII Collected Works (October 1916), pp. 94-104.

49Ibid., p. 98.

50Lenin, "Report on the Review of the Programme and on Changing the Name of the Party: March 8," XXVII, Collected Works, (March 8, 1918), pp. 130-131.

51Krivoguz, Prof. I., "World War I: Lessons in History," Kommunist, No. 11 (July 1984), p.127.

Chapter 7 --

Comparison and Critique: Marx, Lenin, & Annales: Conclusions

Conflicting interpretations of both Marx's and Lenin's theories are ubiquitous in scholarly works. There is,

however, one approach which makes the puzzle seem to fit; that of an organic model of society. An interpretation of Marx developed by Professor Melvin Rader, University of Washington, forms an insightful basis for comparison with the Annales and for analyzing those of Lenin's perceptions founded in his "intellectual father".

Karl Marx's most complete work on pre-capitalist socioeconomies, his Formen die der Kapitalistischen Vohergehen (Pre-Capitalist Economic Formations), a part of the Grundrisse largely unknown until the twentieth century, is central to the Annales comparison. In its preface he wrote that "the economic structure of society is formed by the totality [my emphasis] of [the social] relations of production [and the material forces of production]."¹ One can posit, from observing its context in his works, that Marx used the term "economic" in a broader sense than the narrowly defined discipline of economics. The Greek roots oikos (house) and nomos (managing) imply a concept closer to the Annales portrayal of material life.

The two most important models of Marx's view of history which Rader describes are base-superstructure and organic.

There are two versions of base-superstructure, keeping in mind that base equals mode of production and the superstructure equals the political-legal state, plus science, philosophy, art, religion, morality and custom subsumed under culture.

The first version, fundamentalist, lies closest to one-way narrowly economic determinism. The second version, dialectical, implies an interaction between the two strata with the base prevailing.²

But it is the organic model which Rader believes was Marx's "mature insight."³

In his more organic formulations, there is no sharp dualism or clearcut distinction between the productive forces and productive relations, the polity and the economy, theory and practice, science and industry, culture and base. All of them not only interdepend but interpenetrate.⁽⁴⁾

A mechanical analogy of base with superstructure is inconsistent with Marx's holistic point of view. But without diverting from his organic analogy, Marx could point out an organism's hierarchical structure to explain the preeminence of mode of production. Thus the central idea of the first model -- the dominant causal role in history of mode of production -- can be incorporated into the second.⁵ As Rader notes, "...Interpreted as rival descriptions they are irreconcilable, but interpreted as heuristic tools they can be harmonized."⁶

In sum, Marx's organic model was a differentiated and dynamic construct which took account of the historical complexity of a society nearly as completely as the Annales' unifying histories. "How absurd," wrote Marx, "is the conception of history held hitherto which neglects the real relationships and confines itself to the high-sounding

dramas of princes and states."⁷ He truly led the way to Annales in this respect.

Marx was not unaware that historical development was multilinear and uneven.⁸ "He recognized the importance of organic context in producing a unique configuration of historical events," an idea intrinsic to the "very concept of a complex organic whole." When Russian ethnologist N.K. Mikhailovsky stated that Russia, too, must pass through a capitalist phase, Marx replied "that events of a striking similarity, but occurring in different contexts [my emphasis] produced quite different results."⁹

Nevertheless, Marx and Engels, unlike Lenin and the Annales, tried to apply primarily European medieval material to a skimpy understanding of primitive pre-capitalist societies. In the 1850s, modern anthropology was "in its infancy." Marx and Engels' state of knowledge in that period was limited to "oriental" (India), Greco-Roman, "Germanic", and "Slavonic" history.¹⁰ The Annales school has a wider data base and a less rigidly structured, more complex schema of world economies.

In his Pre-Capitalist Economic Formations, Marx wrote: "Man is only individualized through the process of history. He appears originally as a generic being, a tribal being, a herd animal...."¹¹ The country, not the city, was the origin of social organization.¹² The rural structures of Marx's "Asiatic" or "oriental" society were, for example,

long "untouched by the storm clouds of the political sky" because dynastic upheavals did not affect the simple organization of production, the key to these societies' unchangeableness.¹³ Man must have a sense of exploitation, become alienated, before social revolution becomes a possibility. Both consciousness of new ideas or old illusions and with that, material life, must first be altered.

Marx's organic model has synchronic and diachronic aspects. The synchronic or structural is "the whole looked at in cross-section." And the diachronic perspective of the model is process, an inner and outer dialectic as the structure develops and changes.¹⁴ Certainly this model has its counterpart in the Hestian/Hermaean elements of the Annales.

Engels' Conditions of the Working Class in England, written in 1845, supports the organic model conceptualization. The motif was rural subsistence, organized around home and family. Before the expansion of trade, industry and machines, the local market was the sole outlet for woven products made by wives and daughters. As these home markets expanded along with the population, there was full employment. Engels wrote that the weavers and other workers of pre-industrial England could arrange their own working hours, enjoying plenty of leisure time. Life was comfortable, peaceful, with opportunities for recreation.

"Children grew up in the open air of the countryside." Child labor, so appalling in the industrial era, was unknown. The people in each locality:

regarded the squire...as their natural superior...[and] showed him...the deference which naturally arose out of [this] patriarchal relationship.... They were not much troubled with intellectual, [political], and spiritual problems, and the even tenor of their lives was seldom disturbed.(15)

It is an idyllic scene, a "mythology"¹⁶. Engels' view of rural pre-industrial England is too simplistic. But when Engels discussed the transformation of this pre-industrial society, his analysis, though still idealistic and Eurocentric, was more prescient. He suggested that when the Industrial Revolution made over these men into machines, it also awakened them "from their quiet, plant-like existence" to a new consciousness of what it means to be human. Although their lives were happy, they had been "spiritually dead; they lived only for their petty private interests...and knew nothing of the mighty events that moved mankind in the world outside."¹⁷ Marx and Engels would hark back to that non-worldly rural scene, attempting to transpose its best elements -- essentially those of Gemeinschaft -- onto a modern, industrialized world in which those whom they assumed to be now conscious, unalienated men could practice a full and free communal way of life.

But the dialectic in Engels' description of English society as it changed from rural to urban was not

everywhere and always so powerful, so all-encompassing. Though, as noted, Marx was aware of the possibility of different paths to capitalism, e.g. in Russia, it was Lenin who realized that pre-industrial, traditional societies, reacting not to endogenous capitalism but to exogenous imperialism, could be very slow in accepting the perceptions, norms and methods of the modern world. He believed that although uneven, acceptance and progressive change would come, and -- the central thesis of this paper -- that in times and under the "objective conditions" of social crisis generated by war, change would be more rapid and more radical because the horrors of the war accelerate consciousness of what the war is really about: class struggle. Hegel had helped him to see this; through Hegel he realized that historical progress must take place in the mind as well as in the world. Lenin, too, could not avoid the nineteenth century romantic faith in progress brought by revolution. But it is significant that he placed war at the center of his model of social transformation -- as not a series of violent events which began with battles and ended with a treaty -- but as a process of radical change permeating down to the lowest levels of society.

The historians of the Annales put more emphasis on the reassertion of traditional patterns in times of crisis. The people of a traditional society have a world view which locks out change; they do not accommodate themselves to

modern ideas and methods. There is no dialectic, no cultural interaction or understanding. There can only be conflict, deep-seated and seemingly irreconcilable. In such a situation, if modernization is to take place and if it cannot evolve organically, then, to continue the organic metaphor, it must be transplanted. As Stoianovich points out, it required Communist state-imposed industrialization in the Balkans, "often waged and won with an obdurate nonchalance to human suffering", to bring successful "takeoff".¹⁸

Marxists have argued that Braudel's conception of structure and time is "insufficiently dialectical."¹⁹ Though Braudel is not as confident of revolutionary solutions, certainly, in his discussion of capitalist transformation, he showed that, in the advanced societies of modern era, continuous change has replaced the static societies of the past. The Annales of today has the advantage of a longer perspective on the "Industrial Revolution." Change in the consciousness of "alienated man" has been and continues to be gradual, uneven, uncertain. In the Balkans, as elsewhere in the lesser developed world, the "residual presence of the old material past [continues] to make itself felt."²⁰

Whether capitalist or socialist, the new culture of the Balkans has not totally destroyed the old, and in many respects the old [neolithic] ways are more significant because they lie deep and rise to the surface in times of crisis. But the new ways are also a factor and one day the new ways will become the old and familiar.⁽²¹⁾

Marx, Lenin, and the historians of the Annales speak a language common in many important respects. In comparing their understanding of history, several points are dominant. 1) All share a paradigm of war as a process of social transformation. 2) They distrust the conventional focus on the actions of political and economic elites for historical explanations; 3) They have similar interpretations of social change as reflections of a society's mentalite, which they see in a pattern of interpenetrating, dialectical levels; 4) They correspond in the notion that social structural change was radically accelerated by capitalism, but, as Lenin and the Annales perceived, acceptance and restructuring would be more erratic and disruptive in areas where it was an exogenous influence; 5) They share an observation that war, whether as an extension of capitalist-turned-imperialist policy, or in a different epoch or less developed country where it was an extension of feudal policy, intensified that process of change. War and preparations for war are not an aberration in otherwise peaceful social relations but rather a violent form of previous government policies and concomitant developing social crises.

Lenin was not a scholar of civilizations nor was his analysis as interdisciplinary as those of the Annales historians, but in realizing that each country and its wars must be studied within its own concrete setting, he was like

the Annales historians in recognizing historical complexity. His analysis was of global dimensions and in that sense akin to the Annales' "histoire globale."22 His method, which Marx also shared, of observing hidden meaning and its class significance in the written word, especially notable in the crisis over war aims, follows the same model as Annales' communications analysis.

As witnesses to World War I, Lenin and the founders of Annales shared a recognition that this war, (or in Marx and Engels' view, the coming total war they foresaw), generated a social crisis. But where they differ is in their perspective for the future. The historians of the Annales see that traditional ways persist despite even so significant a social crisis as world war. One need only witness the postwar growth of fascism to see how old values distort or impede change. They perpetuate or foster attitudes grounded in the past, for example, acceptance of authoritarianism.

But, as noted, Lenin, like Marx, retained the nineteenth century belief in progress. He thought the imperialist war had the profound capacity to upset a mentalité which had remained resistant to social change. By raising their consciousness of the war's class nature, the true meaning of their sacrifices, and the effects of its unprecedented scope and horror on the fabric of their lives, such a war would alienate the working classes, and by

driving them to take action, create the conditions for what Lenin as well as Marx expected would be a civil war across all of war-ravaged Europe. Lenin viewed war as a powerful vehicle capable of transforming man's environment and his view of society, creating the new social order Marx had envisioned, but at different times and a different pace throughout the world. Thus, unlike Marx, Lenin did not foresee an end to war except in the distant future of a wholly socialist world.

Notes to Chapter Seven

¹E.J. Hobsbawm, intro. in Karl Marx, Pre-Capitalist Economic Formations, ed. and with intro. by E.J. Hobsbawm, trans. by Jack Cohen (New York: International Publishers, 1975), p. 17.

²Melvin Rader, Marx's Interpretation of History (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), pp. xix-xx.

³Ibid., p. 56.

⁴Ibid., p. 10.

⁵Ibid., pp. xxi, 145.

⁶Ibid., p. 232.

⁷Karl Marx, "The German Ideology: Part I," in Robert C. Tucker, ed., The Marx-Engels Reader (2nd ed., New York: W.W. Norton, 1978), p. 163.

⁸Rader, p. 131.

⁹Ibid., pp. 131-132.

¹⁰Marx, Pre-Capitalist..., pp. 25-26.

¹¹Ibid., p. 96.

12Ibid., p. 28.

13Rader, p. 123.

14Ibid., pp. 135-136.

15Frederich Engels, The Conditions of the Working Class in England, trans. and ed. by W.O. Henderson and W.H. Chaloner (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1958), pp. 10-11.

16Steven Marcus, Engels, Manchester and the Working Class (New York: Random House, 1974), p. 136.

17Ibid.

18Stoianovich, Balkan Civilization, p. 105.

19Gregor McLennan, Marxism and the Methodologies of History (London: Verso Editions and NLB, 1981), p. 138.

20Braudel, Capitalism and Material Life, p. 442.

21Stoianovich, Balkan Civilization, p. 190.

22Stoianovich, French Historical Method..., pp. 102-104.

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LENIN AND WAR:
AN HISTORIOGRAPHICAL ANALYSIS OF HIS EVOLVING PERCEPTION

by

Janice W. Simone

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ABSTRACT

Central to an understanding of V.I. Lenin's theory of war is his personal observation and experience of World War I. Disappointed in the mass defection from international socialism to "defense of the fatherland", Lenin renewed his belief in the possibility of a proletarian revolution created by the unprecedented conditions of total war.

World War I, a protracted struggle which affected all of society, was the catalyst for revolution or serious political crises throughout Europe. Its largely unexpected horrors marked a permanent transformation in its participants' historical understanding of themselves and the meaning of war. In its wake came a new world- as opposed to Europe-oriented perspective in international relations.

This study is an historiographical analysis of Lenin's views of war as they evolved from the early twentieth century to 1917. Central to Lenin's thinking was the concept of uneven political and economic development of societies throughout the world. The essence of its meaning to Lenin was that war, rather than being a phenomenon soon to be obsolete, would continue indefinitely. He instructed fellow socialists that as class struggle is therefore not at the same stage or pace everywhere in the world, so also must the justness of each war be determined in relative terms.

For historiographical comparison, this study draws from Marx and Engels, Lenin's intellectual fathers; the French historical Annales school, seen by some as a new historical paradigm which emerged following the Great War; and the histories of the war written in the inter-war and contemporary periods.