




Why War



Capitalism and the Nation-State



Simon Stander

B L O O M S B U R Y

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Preface

In September 2012, an article in *The Guardian* newspaper carried the strapline: ‘The Libyan revolution fanned and fuelled by the west is in danger of degenerating into chaos.’¹ In a way, this book tests this comment in relation to all the major, and many of the minor, wars fought over the past three centuries.

The argument does not explain all the causes of war nor does it occupy space with a lengthy attempt to define war. It concentrates on *modern* war and avoids lengthy definitions of war. War is a situation when nation-states are involved, one way or the other, in killing large numbers of people, servicemen and women, as well as civilians. Wars may occur as international wars or may be intra-national wars or what used to be called civil wars; overwhelmingly, these wars, even when labelled ‘civil wars’, involve issues related to capitalism and the nation-state.

A checklist of causes is avoided; in its place is offered an explanation for the *major* cause of wars in the modern era in terms of the dialectical relationship between capitalism and the nation-state in its various contradictory manifestations. By ‘modern’, the book looks largely at the last 300 years; this is the period when special historical circumstances have given rise to the simultaneous rise of capitalism and of the nation-state; it is during this historical moment that modern war has defined itself.

We are accustomed to hearing the word ‘war’ used metaphorically in many contexts when the word has come to mean something quite different from the more precise definition or description. ‘War on drugs’, ‘war’ on crime, ‘cyber’ wars and so on, but we know that this is loose usage of the term and has a completely different meaning when used of the Second World War or such civil wars as the American (*sic*) Civil War or the Spanish Civil War. On the other hand, the misnomer ‘war on terror’ does have some significance since it appears to legitimate such activities as crossing borders with deadly armed forces and disregarding sovereignties with drones, the perpetration of extra-judicial killings across borders or ‘extraordinary renditions’ or, more accurately, the kidnapping of those suspected of being, in effect, enemies of the ‘state’, leading to their torture and imprisonment without trial. (Whatever happened to that wonderful legal principle ‘habeas corpus’, which is one of the better English inventions, dating back to 1640, and improved in 1679 in the reign of Charles II?) It is odd

that laws and legal principles extant and fully operational within the borders of a nation-state should be so transgressed across their frontiers and that we in the advanced democracies should tolerate such acts of violence.²

Another significant point is that this is not a work of psychology; there is no significant attempt to deal with the role of individual human beings. How human beings react to each other on the level of individual psychology is of great importance in everyday life to each one of us, but what we learn being part of this process cannot be directly translated to how the state, the nation-state, or the capitalist system behaves. The nature of these systems is of overwhelming importance, making human nature or motivation of the individual a matter of limited importance in answering the question ‘why (modern) war?’ Explaining war by tracking the history of men and women in society or pre-civilization back several thousands of years is rejected. Human beings have been as intelligent for many, many thousands of years, and no less intelligent, than they are now. But society, science, technology, polity, population size, urban dwelling and economic formations have changed massively. It is not possible to explain modern war by attempting to recreate what human beings were like in the age of hunters or gatherers or on Easter Island or in the Amazon rainforest or in Ancient Ethiopia or in the caves of Southern France. Explaining war by trying to assert that violence is natural or that war has been and continues to be inevitable because of something inherent in human beings is simply scientifically erroneous, but, worse, such views help to allow ideological domination of the majority by a minority bent on exercising violence in their narrow interests. I do offer an addendum to the final chapter on the capacity of men and women as individuals to wage war.

In order to provide a clear view of the causes of modern war, this book concentrates on the central features that matter in order to explain how modern war has developed and continues. Some writers, earnestly and honestly, like to throw into the mix as much ‘stuff’ as they can muster from as many disciplines as they can: these include such writers as Jared Diamond, Elias Canetti and Steven Pinker.³ Throwing as much stuff in does not necessarily help to make the point (whatever they think the point is). Such an approach means that ultimately we end up ‘being sunk in an ocean of facts’ as E.H. Carr has put it. Casting ‘stuff’ aside is part of the process of attempting to drive home central truths. Of course, this has to be balanced against avoiding simple explanations for complex problems and issues in this age of the sound bite and of the dumbing down of the general education of the reading public in the more advanced countries. Complex

problems require, normally, complex discussion, but simply presenting an ocean of facts is not going to help in the process of enlightenment. This means, in methodological terms, developing the dialectical relationship between theory and empirical facts which requires a degree of sensitivity. Hopefully, this book has achieved this. It is deliberately not a long book; it is not an encyclopaedia of war; except for the purposes of illustration, it is not concerned with the details of killing, weaponry or generalship or military strategy and tactics; it does not deal with heroes or heroics; it does not contain much in the way of comprehensive quantitative material though a few statistics are included, buried painlessly in the text for illustrative purposes.

As this is a work of political economy, it has been important to develop at some length the bed-rock areas upon which the central argument depends: one chapter explains what is meant by the nation-state, another what is meant by the 'state' and by democracy and another discusses what is meant by capitalism. In other words, several chapters do not directly discuss war but discuss the overall political-economic circumstances that lead to modern wars and the way they are constructed and continue.

As there is considerable confusion over the meaning and usage of the terms nation-state, state and government, I put the word 'state' in inverted commas when using it as a concept to distinguish it from both government and nation-state. Explanations for this emerge in the text, especially in Chapter 6.

As far as methodology is concerned, there is regular reference to the dialectic or dialectical relationship in the text. It is not uncommon for this terminology to be used without explanation. For instance, in Louise Willmot's introduction to *On War* by von Clausewitz, we read: 'In particular, Clausewitz makes effective use of the dialectic method which allows him to compare and contrast various key elements of war.'⁴ While Willmot refers to the influence of Kant on Clausewitz, she does not develop what is meant by the dialectical method. This is not uncommon among a number of commentators. However, I include a section on the dialectical method and dialectical materialism in Chapter 1 and explain how my version of it is helpful in this study of *Why War*.

Finally, I make no attempt at either prediction or prescription. Prediction has a continued bad name since the almost universal failure to predict the fall of soviet regimes or the onset or intensity of the economic crises in 2007.⁵ Few at the beginning of this millennium would have predicted either the Afghan War or Iraq War of 2003, both followed by many years of occupation. On the other hand, generally speaking, economic crises will always be part and parcel

of the capitalist system and war always remains an option for nation-states. As to prescription, I make no offers, despite the increasing number of mediators who offer an expanded role for all manner of negotiation and methods of conflict resolution. So far not a great deal has been achieved in these areas; I describe some of these in Chapter 2 but remain a pessimist: of course, there is always hope no matter the depth of the tragedy of war. Unpredictable things happen, good and bad.⁶

Introduction

This book asks the question why war in our time, and, by implication, why not peace? It takes the question from the classic text by Freud, *Warum Krieg*, which was written as a public answer to Einstein's public question to Freud as war threatened Europe early in 1933. Freud responded to Einstein by saying that he did not hold up much hope that war would be eradicated. Einstein took the position that intellectuals would have some scope for achieving pacifist ends through moral arguments. He fully realized that political leaders or governments owed their power to the use of force or to the election by the masses. He argued that in both cases there was an absence of the best intellectual minds from decision making at the highest levels. This was not an uncommon position. George Orwell, writing a few years later in his essay *The Lion and the Unicorn*, expressed absolute horror at the poor political leadership in the world, especially in Britain, whose senior politicians and civil servants he vehemently attacked. Einstein, born in Germany, educated in Switzerland and a resident of the USA, placed himself outside nationalist loyalties. 'As one immune from nationalist bias, I see a simple way of dealing with the superficial aspect of the problem.' It was easy enough, he said, to set up an international body to settle conflict. He also realized that international conflict was only part of the problem. He referred to civil wars, religious wars and the persecution of minorities. He concluded that Freud might have some understanding of the problem and that he might like to convey this to the rest of the world in the hope of blazing a trail for 'new and fruitful modes of action'.

However, at the end of his statement to Einstein, Freud put his trust in civilization and in the hope of *eros* defeating *thanatos*. Freud's view is not the same as one that sees a simple Manichean struggle between good and evil as a common feature of the human condition. While *eros* may appear as a mass 'love'

for mankind and self, *thanatos* may appear as a mass 'death wish' for mankind as a whole as well as for one's self – the struggle between the two appears within each individual, within each group and within each clan; this struggle is regarded as a permanent, more or less immutable, feature of the life of the individual and of society in general. Only civilization, therefore, can channel *eros* into constructive directions and minimize *thanatos* in society and within the individual.¹ In some ways the individual may be taken as a Hobbesian, in the sense that society needs to be constructed on a largely authoritarian basis in order to control the drive to destruction, though he should also be seen as an individualist, in that he must, through psychoanalytic guidance, learn to control his or her instincts aimed at personal or wider destruction.

Freud's views on civilization are not explained in *Why War* but are argued in his much earlier work, *Civilization and Its Discontents*, originally published in 1908 (Freud, 2002).² Here he does recognize the advances made by modern industrial processes, but he accepts that the dominant civilization is capitalist based, and we must expect greed, private property and the drive for profit to underpin it. Freud does not suggest that this can be reformed or changed. He accepts the world as it is. It is up to the individual, generally speaking, to find ways of adapting, sublimation being one route to the avoidance of the inevitable neurosis that accompanies living in an imperfect world. He is concerned with the nature of the discontent of the individual despite the advances that have been made as a result of economic growth and development. He was no optimist.³ When Einstein asked him his views on what might be done to avoid war, he concluded more or less pessimistically that war was probably inevitable, though he did suggest that civilization might save the human race from another war on a massive scale.⁴ In other words, Freud shirked outright pessimism, though it is clear he held out no real hope that a peaceful world might become the norm. *Eros* would be in constant dialectical struggle with *thanatos*, even though dialectics was not a term he used, nor, on the other hand, did he seem to believe that love would conquer all.

When Freud wrote this, the downside of so-called (Western) civilization had been the cause for serious pessimistic comment for nearly 200 years. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, despite his location within the supposedly optimistic Enlightenment, probably started the trend towards serious long-lasting negative comment in respect of the society that had wrought the civilization of eighteenth-century Western Europe. While answering the question has the progress of sciences and arts done more to corrupt morals or improve man, he

was driven to the conclusion that ‘all the various branches of natural science were motivated by vice: astronomy by superstition, mathematics by greed, mechanics by ambition, physics by idle curiosity’ (Blanning, 2008, p. 515). Since then Western civilization has been the subject of regular critical scrutiny in general terms and as many of the specific elements that are supposed to constitute civilization come under regular attack: medicine, pharmacy, science, farming methods, urbanization, forms of energy, political systems, economic theory, market economics, globalization, arms manufacture. Simply putting one’s faith in modern civilization which has seen the twentieth century as probably the most violent in the history of mankind is certainly problematic unless one puts faith in the potential power of reformism; currently civilization means, in effect, what is wrought by the dominance of capitalism and the nation-state; the system is not yet at its apogee as the world hopes for China, India, Russia and Brazil to keep the system in a state of expansion for the next century or more.

In the literature on the causes of war it is possible to find a whole range of factors that exist in the explanation for wars and violent conflict: megalomania, ambition, glory, dynastic interest, greed, markets, raw materials, energy sources, *lebensraum*, racial domination, ethnic cleansing, strategic acquisition of land or ports or rivers or labour, territorial or oceanic buffers against invasion, irredentism, identity, religious differences, culture clashes and so on. Each one sounds convincing in itself, and lumped together we appear to have an explanation when applied to specific circumstances. However, the most central explanation for modern war arises directly from the historical experiences spreading from Europe from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries onwards.

Europe is the seat of the modern nation-state and is simultaneously the seat of capitalism as it has progressed through its various formations. In short, it is in the exploration of the dialectical relationship between capital and nation-state that we find the answer to *why modern war*. The nation-states of Europe with its extension, the USA, having invented modern wars and exported them to the rest of the world, seek now to tame the forces of the nation-states it has created across the whole globe while appearing to want to export peace through spreading the so-called democracy and capitalism to the turbulent world it has created, often in the name of development and human rights. Unfortunately, contrary to ideologically driven opinion, democracy and capitalism are in a permanent state of conflict, as we shall see in Chapter 6, and, also, despite what some commentators may claim, the nation-state is far from dead.

Starting around the end of the fifteenth century (as most history Textbooks would have the modern world begin) the main force behind war stems from the formation and working of nation-states in Europe. Nation-building and the conflicts and alliances between nation-states are the stuff of history textbooks, and whatever might be thought in terms of the neglect of social history or gender history or whatever, the fact remains that from the point of war and domination and state-organized violence across borders, the nation-state is at the core as is capitalism. The modern nation-state, which we explore in more depth in Chapter 3, organizes violence in the interests of the capitalist 'state' and the process results in the export of violence to the rest of world and in modern wars; violent conflicts, wherever they are found, have been and are the most terrifying of all the exports from Europe in the last few centuries.

At this stage, brief conceptual distinctions need to be made in relation to nation, 'state', nation-state, people and country. Nation, nation-state, capitalist 'state', 'state', country, people, nationalism all need careful definition, but all are elusive. The nation-state is the country with defined boundaries inside of which are the people which have a majority that considers itself, or is led to believe, bound together by language, religion, blood and history to a greater or lesser extent and possibly tolerant of 'minorities' in some circumstances and historical moments. In Chapter 4 we see in more detail why the concept of nationalism is more ideology than reality. The 'state' is the ruling formation that holds power via an elite or a class and so controls virtually all aspects of the economy, polity and society to a greater or lesser extent.⁵ The capitalist 'state' is that form of power which is dominated overwhelmingly by capitalist forces such as concern for private property, economic expansion within and beyond political frontiers, dependence on market forces in the interest of distribution of resources but ensuring that surpluses produced under this system are allocated in the interests, very generally, of the capitalist class and capitalist system. Nationalism is the popular expression of the interest of the nation-state as fostered by the 'state' which means, in effect, in the interest of those elements, elites, castes or classes that wield power; this power includes the diversion of expenditure to protect labour power as well as ensuring the maintenance of a reserve army of labour. The term 'country', for example France, Britain, USA or Germany, incorporates all the above in a mish-mash of the individual's uncritical appreciation (or antagonism or indifference) to the place of one's citizenship. However, the danger of anthropomorphizing a nation or 'country' leads to obscuring the real motives for the pursuit of war and associated action on the part of the forces

that drive action.⁶ For instance, we use misleadingly such expressions as Britain believed such and such, the USA intended such and such, France did such and such. When in 2011 Cameron, the then prime minister, used the UK veto in the proposals made by the European Union to save the Euro, Britain (as such) was not doing anything. Cameron was using the power of the 'state' to protect the short-term financial interests of the City of London to protect those that gave his political party 50 per cent of its income in order to stay in power and to continue to wield power in favour of a finance capitalism based in the UK but with global reach.

Closely associated with nation-building based on territory, frontiers and a range of artificial or genuine unifying factors is the contradictory economic process of capitalism. Capitalism, too, though supra-territorial in essence, is the main contributory factor that has led inexorably to the export of war and, though within capitalism there are countervailing forces, we shall see in Chapter 4 how capitalism continues to promote modern war outside Europe, through arms exports, the establishment and hardening of nation-statehood worldwide, furthering capitalist-imperialist interests, settling capitalist-imperialist interest, resource wars and the spread of cultural and ideological 'norms' set by the capitalist-imperialist nations and their imitators and late-comers.

In order to understand capitalism and the capitalist system it is important to consider its highly fractionalized nature and the way in which these fractions struggle for dominance.⁷ This is developed to some extent in Chapter 4, but for the moment it is important to simply label some of the fractions – rapine-capitalists, primitive capitalists, commercial, banking, financial, national, international, petit-bourgeois, haute-bourgeois – all with varying alliances, strengths and associations with dynastic and aristocratic and freedom movements. These struggles are most clearly seen in historical context and have been widely explored by theorists from the disciplines of philosophy, economics, sociology, political science, economic history and history.⁸ Over the last five centuries the relationship between capitalism and nation-building has changed as capitalism itself has changed in form and density and older nations have hardened while newer ones have been continuously formed. For instance, capitalism once flourished well enough in the form of commercial capitalism outside what we now conceive as a nation-state: commercial capitalism grew well enough out of city states in the Baltic Sea and in the Mediterranean. Nation was then perceived, as its etymology indicates, as simply a place where one was born.⁹ Other forms of capitalism have developed more in association with the

nation-state: banking capital, industrial capital, finance capital. Yet these forms of capital, protected and fostered by the nation-state, have always transcended the nation-state, leading the nation to overseas settlements, conquests and/or economic domination with greater or lesser degrees of effectiveness, but when necessary accompanied by armed intervention.

An instructive sermon

As an example of this relationship between capitalism and nationalism (aided by the dominant religious ideologies of the time in the European world), I am drawn to the sermon delivered by John Donne, Dean of St. Paul's Cathedral in the City of London at the heart of commercial and embryonic industrial capitalism, early in the seventeenth century. This is the very same John Donne of 'for whom the bell tolls fame' and probably one of the greatest poets of all time.¹⁰ He was, as Dean of St. Paul's, known with equal regard as one of the greatest sermon writers and sermon deliverers in England. On a day prior to the departure of an expedition to Virginia, he took as his text for a sermon Acts 1.8: 'But yee shall receive power, after that the holy ghost is come upon you, and yee shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.' In the audience were the personnel and sailors, along with their families, about to embark on a voyage to the Virginia Plantation, backed by both financial and religious interests.

Early on in the sermon there is a telling passage that almost sums up the relationship between industrial and commercial capitalism, on the one hand, and nation-statism, on the other hand, almost but not quite. Donne riveted the attention of the audience about to embark on a risky voyage to the New World when half the personnel could be expected to be dead as a result of starvation, disease or violence in the 12 months to come:

... you are Actors ... the uttermost part of the Earth is your scene ... be you a light to the Gentiles, that sit in darknesse; be you content to carry him over these Seas, who dryed up one Red Sea for his first people, and hath powered out another red Sea, for his own bloud ... When man was fallen, God clothed him; made him a Leather Garment ... then God became a Carpenters Sonne ... [then] in preserving man from perishing, in the Flood, God descended to a third occupation, to be his Shipwright, to give him ... an Ark ... which man himself would never have thought of, a means to pass from nation to nation.

Man, he argues, learning from God takes God abroad in his ocean-going ship to the New World. However, Donne then reminds his audience that the most powerful word of all in the text of Acts 1.8 is the word 'but', because while the purpose of the voyage may well be to take God with them and to seek riches and commodities of this world, it may well be, says Donne, that riches may not spring forth in the way that the adventurers imagine. They may have to wait. This is the 'but', the deferred gratification which has become the watchwords of the petty bourgeoisie ever since. In this case at this time, they must be sure that the God is with them as they work hard for their riches and their spiritual and temporal salvation. He insists, however, that they would not be seeking a literal new kingdom: 'Libertie and Abundance, are characters of kingdome, and a kingdome is excluded in the Texte ... the Apostles were not to looke for it, in their employment, nor you in this your Plantation.'

The adventurers are required to spread the word of God, wait for his spiritual support, not give up if riches are hard to come by because God will come to them in due course and whatever happens their nation is England and they should not consider any diversion from the power of the nation-state and its government that have blessed their departure and on whom their defence is dependent. The colonists cannot expect 'to sow the corn one day, have it above ground tomorrow and in my Barne next week'. Nor should they expect necessarily to survive this earthly existence in large numbers. The death rate among the colonists was considerable; they are reminded by Donne that after the flood only eight people emerged from the Ark and it was these few who restarted the human race. Clearly, if eight people could people the earth after the flood, a few score would suffice for the plantation of Virginia, to which place many in the audience were due to embark. Donne tells them that the colony has progressed, and one day it will be a place of riches, but for the moment they should simply dwell on what has been achieved so far and be patient:

... already the employment breeds Marriners; already the place gives essayes, nay Fraytes of Marchantable commodities; already it is a marke for the Envy, and for the ambition of our Enemies ... They would gladly have it, and therefore let is bee glad to hold it.

Importantly, Donne reminds his audience that keeping the land from doctrinal enemies, that is Catholic interest in the New World, is important of course, but also the adventurers should feel assured that taking the land from the present inhabitants, the native Indians, is not only right in Natural Law but in accord

with the Law of Nations since the present inhabitants have neglected the land or have sparsely populated it. He goes on:

... a land never inhabited, by any, or utterly derelicted and immemorially abandoned by the former Inhabitants, becomes theirs that wil possesse it. So also is it, if the inhabitants doe not in some measure fill the Land ... a man does not become Lord of a maine Continent, because he hath two or three Cottages in the Skirts thereof.

The audience are told that the inhabitants, apart from neglecting the land or leaving it to lie wastefully idle, are not unlike the Samaritans who were possessed of the devil. The words begin to scream from the page and we can almost hear Donne boom from the pulpit: 'Daemonium habent, ... they have the Devill... Devill, quia homicida ab initio ... as they tosse, and tumble, and dispose kingdoms, Daemonium habent, they have the devill.'

The complement of men and women were hardly likely to arrive well disposed to the native populations, even though, in fact, they were to be heavily dependent upon them.

From the early moments of modern colonization, the nation-state sought to mesh religious belief, commercial investment, nation-state and 'state' interest in the enterprise. Subsequently, the so-called mercantilist system was progressively dismantled during the nineteenth century, and capitalism began to win the battle between free-roaming search for profit and nationalist interest. Finally, in the form of globalization, more properly, global capitalism appears to have won the day, but the powerful forces of the nation-state are never far away.

For those about to depart from London there must have been a feeling of either desperation or of a huge drive for potential and substantial profit. The sermon was delivered on 13 November 1622. During the month of March previously over 300 colonists had been massacred in the colony by an Indian attack. As one source has summarized it:

In 1607, the first permanent English settlement in the New World was established at Jamestown by members of the Virginia Company of London. In the years that followed the fledgling colony suffered terrible hardship and a horrifying death rate, brought on by disease, hunger, a startling degree of incompetence, and intermittent warfare with the Powhatan Indians. Cultivation of tobacco began in 1612, and in 1622 the colony was granted a monopoly on the sale of tobacco in England, ensuring its future prosperity. In the same year, however, more than three hundred and fifty colonists, a third of the colony, were killed in

conflict with the Powhatans. Partly as a result of this devastating loss, and partly because of simmering tensions over the government of the colony, the Virginia Company was dissolved in 1624, and Virginia became a Crown Colony under royal control.¹¹

Thus, allowing commercial and religious interest alone to hold sway was at this stage not sufficient. The nation-state had to intervene and turn the capitalist enterprise into a national land and commercial grab. Soon after the massacre, Edward Waterhouse sent a report to London almost with a sigh of relief. The massacre was good for the colony in the sense that the colonists did not have to pussyfoot around anymore; they could kill Indians at will, which was a lot easier than ‘civilizing’ them (converting them to Christianity), and seize their lands, take the cleared and fertile lands, and breed livestock more effectively. Waterhouse writes graphically, already relishing the prospect of a bloody tooth-and-claw response to the natives of that land:

Because the way of conquering them is much more easie then of ciuilizing them by faire meanes, for they are a rude, barbarous, and naked people, scattered in small companies, which are helps to Victorie, but hinderances to Ciuilitie: Besides that, a conquest may be of many, and at once; but ciuility is in particular, and slow, the effect of long time, and great industry. Moreouer, victorie of them may bee gained many waies; by force, by surprize, by famine in burning their Corne, by destroying and burning their Boats, Canoes, and Houses . . . By these and sundry other wayes, as by driuing them (when they flye) vpon their enemies, who are round about them, and by aimating and abetting their enemies against them, may their ruine and subiection be soone effected.¹²

The advance of the capitalist/nation-state dialectic

The way in which the Nation-state in the case of England and later Britain worked with emergent capitalism is the stuff of a great deal of literature in the economic history and political economy of the first industrial nation. A major contribution to the analysis was made by the historian and politician Eric Williams in 1944 in relation to the early real ‘jewel in the crown’, the West Indies and especially Jamaica, and the sugar and slave trade.¹³ As Williams wrote:

These economic changes are gradual, imperceptible, but they have an irresistible cumulative effect. Men, pursuing their interests, are rarely aware of the ultimate

results of their activity. The commercial capitalism of the eighteenth century developed the wealth of Europe by means of slavery and monopoly. But in so doing it helped create the industrial capitalism of the nineteenth century, which turned round and destroyed the power of commercial capitalism, slavery and all its works. Without a grasp of these changes the history of the period is meaningless. (Williams, 1944, p. 210)

Williams simultaneously argues strongly for the primacy of economics but also for the strong role played by the state in first insisting on monopoly and later the very same state removing the monopoly conditions and freeing the slaves that it first instituted and kept within the so-called mercantile system. Williams further argued that the capital that founded industrial capitalism came from the commercial capitalism of the triangular trade, and this view is now soundly entrenched in the textbooks.

The analysis of the Spanish Empire gives us a contrasting view; here the nation/capitalist dialectic differs markedly from the English/British experience. The conquest of the so-called New World by Spain took place largely as part and parcel of the growth of the dynastic-dominated state in Castile and Aragon allowing an assorted conglomerate of interested parties seeking personal advantage in a high-risk enterprise of a cherry-picking nature, though admittedly picking cherries was a perilous exercise for its participants. Kamen summarizes thus:

When the Spaniards extended their energies to the lands beyond the ocean, they did not – despite the proud claims of their chroniclers – conquer them ... Not a single Spanish army was expended on ‘conquest’. When Spaniards established control, they did so through the sporadic efforts of small groups of adventurers whom the crown later attempted to bring under its control. These men ... were often not even soldiers [being] made up of artisans, traders, seamen, gentry, peasantry ... a small cross section of peninsular society itself. (Kamen, 2002, pp. 95–96)

In this way a monarchy often strapped for cash for its European wars was able to accrue to itself the benefits of New World precious metals with limited direct expenditure on domestic or colonial economic development.

At this point we can begin to develop what is meant by the capitalist/nation-state dialectic and how that has played out, giving rise in particular to war and violent conflict, emanating from the European phase of colonialism and imperialism of the nineteenth-century variety.

Anthony Giddens, nation-states and violence

Giddens, publishing *The Nation-State and Violence: Volume Two of a Contemporary Critique of Historical Materialism* in 1987 on the eve of the disintegration of the Soviet Union, commented that 'the twentieth century world is a bloody and frightening one', foreseen by neither Marx nor Weber. The possibilities for war were maximized, he claimed, perfectly convincingly, and he continued that 'the merging of industry, technology and the means of waging war has been one of the most momentous features of processes of industrialization as a whole'. Historically, tool-making and technology have always been linked to the conduct of warfare, whether against other humans or against animal life. The satisfaction of needs gave way, he argues, to the satisfaction of greed as a result of the exercise of power and tools and technology, and the control of them became crucial to this process. In these modern times, let us say in the last 300 years or so, the crucial process is that of capitalism. It is possible to consider that industrialization may have taken place, has taken place or could take place outside the capitalist system. However, to all intents and purposes the modern advanced economies are essentially capitalist, and economic expansion takes place as a result of essentially capitalist processes.¹⁴ Those national economies apparently outside the capitalist system are increasingly drawn into the capitalist mode. The totalitarianism of the Soviet Union and of China has clearly given way to systems of capitalism. Thus all the major economies of Europe, North America, the Far East, South East Asia, Australasia and elsewhere are all part of a worldwide capitalist system, even if the details of their laws and modes of operation show differences. Property rights, profit seeking, manipulation of their place within global capitalism have sufficient similarities for us to say that we have a worldwide capitalist system and no *major* national economy stands apart.

Giddens confirms that he is concerned with the nation-state in its Western and especially European form. He makes a ten-point intellectual and theoretical position of which three are of concern for the postulations in this book. First, Giddens' point VIII, which concerns *the spread of capitalism* as being of

fundamental importance to the consolidation of a novel world system from the sixteenth century onwards. Both capitalism and industrialism have decisively influenced the rise of nation-states, but the nation-state system cannot be reductively explained in terms of their existence. The modern world has been

shaped through the intersection of capitalism, industrialism and the nation-state system.

There is no doubt that the modern world is overwhelmingly influenced by the capitalist system which dominates the system of production of enormous quantities of commodities to satisfy wants rather than needs and a system that is based on the private ownership of property (Stander, 2009). Giddens wrote *The Nation-State and Violence* in 1987 as we have seen and, therefore, accepts the existence of a category outside capitalism which he refers to as industrialism. This concept of industrialism had to take account of the Soviet system of production based on planning the production and distribution of commodities where ownership of the means of production was largely in the hands of the State apparatus. China, too, appeared to be generating much the same process, though, at the time, it offered a much more agrarian picture than is now the case. Thus some form of totalitarian 'state' based on public ownership of the means of production was seen as a possible way to produce a commodity-oriented economy and society. Industrial production was seen as being at the heart of the advanced economies or those countries seeking to achieve economic growth, even though, as we now see, the manufacture of things forms a much smaller proportional part of economic activity than it did in the nineteenth century or in the earlier part of the twentieth century; in the meantime services of all kinds have been commodified. The collapse of the Soviet system and the recent shift of the Chinese economy towards the so-called liberalization, that is capitalism, have meant that this particular conceptualization of industrialism has become obsolete. Nowhere in the world is there a system of production in the advanced industrial nations (say, the G20 countries or OECD countries) which is not essentially capitalist in nature. The Soviet system was at times categorized as state capitalism, at others a degenerate worker's state, at others merely totalitarian. The outcome of the collapse of the Soviet system seems to indicate that it was indeed a Russian Imperium and as much a part of a historical continuity with centralized Tsardom and East European serfdom as a revolutionary break, with the past supposedly led by communist ideals. While the view that industrialism can occur outside the capitalist system is currently obsolete, the meshing with the nation-state system asserted by Giddens is of crucial importance to my arguments as they develop in answering the question '*why war* in its modern form?'

Second, Giddens's proposition IX relating to what is now known as globalization is also, without dispute, of central importance. He writes: 'The

development in the twentieth century of an ever increasing abundance of global connections stretching across the borders of states should not be regarded as intrinsically diminishing their sovereignty' (Giddens, 1987, p. 5). Again, time has moved on and the question of how much sovereignty has been surrendered is a matter of considerable dispute. We can see that the most dominant economies can subjugate less dominant ones through economic power (more correctly, capitalist power), or effect the direction and pace of their economic change or the development of their foreign policies. For instance, Britain's tendency to support the military engagements of the USA is intimately connected with the relationship of its arms industry, its oil industry and its 'intelligence industry' with the interests of the USA.

Giddens does support the view that 'the expansion of capitalism and the increasing power of the nation-state march in tandem.'¹⁵ However, Giddens rejects the core Weberian ideology that violence and war are inescapable. He argues as does Benedict Anderson, as we shall see, that the pace of economic and social change over the past 300 years is 'something new' in world history. Later, however, when Giddens defines capitalism, we have an important point of departure. For Giddens the core of capitalism as seen by Marx is the commodity and the commodification of labour. Certainly the concept of commodification of labour power is the vital element in Marx's theoretical position along with the concepts of surplus value and exploitation. However, strangely, even unexpectedly, Giddens rejects the profit motive as being a prime mover in the capitalist process. This part of his analysis makes little sense without full reference to the drive for profit, and in particular, to the tendency of the rate of profit to fall (TRPF) (Stander, 2009, Chapter 6). This is the key theory that explains the force that drives capitalism beyond national boundaries. Giddens makes no mention of it. He argues on the contrary that the 'sustained pursuit of profit rarely emerges untrammelled by other, divergent considerations.' But these three other judgements hold firm:

1. The relationship between the market and capitalism is properly formed under the system of production of goods that satisfy day-to-day needs of the population. It is therefore possible to make a distinction between the market and capitalism.
2. The ownership of private property (and its protection by the 'state') is vital to the capitalist system and hence determines policy to a significant extent.
3. Further advances in capitalism are always marked by technological change.

My main point of departure, however, is to disagree with the argument that the economic is insulated from the political.¹⁶ And I would add an additional point that the TRPF is central to the critical analysis of capitalism. To these views we need to add those of two commentators who have been regarded as authorities in the field of analysing nationalism and nation-states: Benedict Anderson and Ernest Gellner.

Benedict Anderson and images of the modern nation-state

Benedict Anderson begins his revisionary work with a perceptive quote from the pen of poet, paid hack and spy Daniel Defoe. (One of Defoe's espionage tasks was to test out the ground for the union of Scotland and England in 1707. There are those who have never forgiven him.) In the *True Born Englishman*, Defoe wrote in 1701: 'Thus from a Mixture of all kinds began, That Hetro'geneous Thing, An Englishman.' He further describes the English as a 'Mongrel half bred Race' and a 'Nauseous Brood'. This sets the picture for Anderson's concern in exploring the meaning of nation, nation-state, nationality and nationalism, 'all of which have proved notoriously difficult to define, let alone analyze ... plausible theory ... is conspicuously meagre ...'

Anderson notes that while the nation and nationalism undoubtedly exists, no 'scientific definition' has been devised. This is true especially of Marx and the Marxist left generally. He further quotes Tom Nairn to support this: 'the theory of nationalism represents Marxism's great historical failure'. Anderson attempts what he calls a Copernican shift by providing a 'cultural historical' departure. His own summary, based on the observation that the late eighteenth century represented the key moment in history when the modern nation began to find its existing formation, is thus: nationalism at this crucial point in time was the 'spontaneous distillation of a complex crossing of discrete historical forces; but that, once created, they became "modular", capable of being transplanted, with varying degrees of self-consciousness, to a great variety of social terrains, to merge and be merged with a correspondingly wide variety of political and ideological constellations' (Anderson, 1991, p. 3). He then goes on to indicate three paradoxes.

1. Nations are modern when seen by historians but ancient when seen through the eyes of nationalists.

2. Everyone has a nation even though each nation is special unto itself (*sui generis*).
3. While the political power of a nation is strong, the underpinning philosophy is weak.

However, Anderson, while referring from time to time to capitalism, takes a narrow view of the driving force behind the foundations of modern nationalism, and of the modern nation-state. In the absence of any other way forward, Anderson offers his culturally based concept of 'imagined' communities. This very concept creates a feeling of unease since he appears to start as an idealist rather than as a materialist which would put him beyond the Marxist pale, though, later, as we know, he corrects himself by insisting on what he calls print capitalism as the main driving force of the kind of nationalism that emerges by the end of the eighteenth century.

He refers to print-as-commodity with the expectation that he has a theme that places the commodity and commodification at the centre of his theoretical argument as he goes on to argue that 'a strong argument can be made for the primacy of capitalism'. He rightly links print capitalism with capitalism in a wider context in the sixteenth century when it was clear that capitalism was showing signs of becoming vast and complex by previous standards of economic development, especially because of the increasing capitalist drive that had led to the colonization of increasingly large parts of the New World. More encouragement comes from his comment 'what in a positive sense, made the new communities imaginable was a half-fortuitous, but explosive, interaction between a system of production and productive relations (capitalism), a technology of communications (print) and the fatality of human linguistic diversity' (Anderson, 1991, pp. 42–43).

He pays limited attention to the crucial importance of the English (British) Industrial Revolution and its influence on the USA. The export of capitalist-nationalist quasi democratic nation-states on the European model as have emerged in the twentieth century did not happen as he suggests. European nations, once formed, exported war along with whatever benefits accompanied their civilizing project. Anderson writes, 'The close of the era of successful national liberation movements in the Americas coincided rather closely with the onset of the age of nationalism in Europe.' However, it is a mistake to lump the Americas together. Canada and the USA have had an entirely different experience, as we shall see from that of Mexico's, whose experience is markedly

different from other Latin American countries; this is so among all the Central and South American countries. True (i.e. most successful in terms of capitalist development) nation-states and nationalism emerge as PART AND PARCEL of and simultaneously in CONTRADICTION to capitalism. While this process happened in North America (Canada and the USA), it did not occur in Spanish or Portuguese America because neither Spain nor Portugal were able to provide what the British provided for their American colonies (later the USA) before and after the War of American Independence. Neither Spain nor Portugal were industrialized at the right moment in time; they were, therefore, unable to do what the British had accomplished in North America or Australasia for instance. The British have contributed to the creation of modern nation-states around the world as exporters of war, as we shall see in greater depth later. The USA should be seen as heirs to the British capitalist and nation-state mode of political and economic development.¹⁷

Anderson to some extent follows much the same line of argument. For instance, he sees the relationship with industrial capitalism thus: ‘the last wave of nationalisms, most of them in colonial territories of Asia and Africa, was in its origin a response to the new style of global imperialism made possible by the achievements of industrial capitalism’ (Anderson, 1991, p. 139). At this point, too, he is back to the formal Marxist position as expressed by Marx: ‘The need of a constantly expanding market for its products chases the bourgeoisie over the whole face of the globe’ (Anderson, 1991, p. 139). In relation to Russia, Anderson says quite baldly: ‘in tandem with capitalism the state was rapidly multiplying its functions, in both metropolis and the colonies’. However, Anderson does not then develop these themes in any depth as he is concerned more deeply with the theme of language.

I depart from Anderson, for the purposes of the central argument for this book, on the following grounds:

1. The modern turning point in history at the end of the eighteenth century relates to the process of industrialization associated with a special form of nation-state building.
2. Print capitalism is over-stressed and is not fully integrated into the wider system of capitalism.
3. The USA should be seen as an extension of the European capitalist system and a country also dedicated to maintaining the system of nation-states.

Ernest Gellner and ‘modernity’

Gellner’s theoretical/ideological position on nations (and nationalism) is tightly connected with what he conceptualizes as modernity. Modernity is not to be regarded as a synonym for capitalism or industrialism *a la* Giddens.¹⁸ Gellner, from his ahistorical, pro-philosophical and anthropological position, approaches modernity as being essentially non-capitalist. John Breuilly sums the position up this way: ‘Gellner rejected the Marxist views that the central feature of modernity was capitalism, that class was the principal source of identity and conflict, and that conflict would drive capitalism toward socialism.’ (To the extent that capitalism has become driven more by reformism than conflict I would agree as I have been at pains to establish elsewhere in my discussion of the absorptive class.)¹⁹ In addition, according to John Breuilly, ‘Gellner rejected the Marxist notion that nationalism was a class ideology formed within capitalism’ (Breuilly, 1993, p. xxi). However, my main points of departure from Gellner are his complete rejection of class forces, his attitude to civil society and his rejection of historical analysis. Though there are areas of agreement, they are not, in the current context, of great importance. Gellner, I would argue, has done more to obscure the real meaning of nations and nationalism than almost any other thinker on the subject. His biographers would point to subjective reasons for this. The origins of his thinking, however, do not concern us. It is enough to say that his approach based on idealism and cultural considerations obscure rather than show light on the issue of nationalism and capitalism. The weakest point of Gellner’s edifice is his conceptualization of modernity and his rejection of the importance of capitalism as the motor force of modernity, industrialization and economic expansion; this is of crucial importance and is explored in more depth in Chapter 4. At this point, we turn briefly to the ‘uses of history’, largely ignored by Gellner.

Niall Ferguson and historical analysis

On the eve of the Second World War, E.H. Carr wrote, outlining his threefold division of political power (military, economic, power over opinion), the following relating to economic power (only conceptually distinct from the other forms of power): ‘the whole progress of civilization has been closely bound up with economic development that we are not surprised to trace, throughout

modern history, an increasingly intimate association between military and economic power' (Carr, 1938, pp. 81, 113). Niall Ferguson in his *The Cash Nexus* devotes over 500 pages to this same issue, with the intention of explaining the relationship between finance and the military needs of governments, though strangely, considering the seminal nature of Carr's *Twenty Years' Crisis*, Ferguson does not give him a mention in footnote or bibliography or index. Nevertheless, as Ferguson states early on, 'This book's central conclusion is that money does not make the world go round' (Ferguson, 2001, p. 3). This is something of a disappointment as many a poet and others who have offered wise sayings would have us believe otherwise, not the least among them being Shakespeare whose view of gold, the yellow slave, goes as follows:

Thus much of this will make black white, foul fair,
 Wrong right, base noble, old young, base valiant,
 This Yellow Slave
 Will knit and break religions: bless the accurs'd;
 Make the hoar leprosy ador'd: place thieves,
 And give them title, knee and approbation,
 With senators on the bench: this is it
 That makes the wappend widow wed again;
 She, whom the spital-house and ulcerous sores
 Would cast the gorge at, this embalms and spices
 To the April day again
 That is it, the yellow slave, it will do your bidding.²⁰

Despite Shakespeare's poetic expression of the importance of gold in *Timon of Athens*, for Ferguson money does not make the world go round:

rather it has been political events – above all wars – that have shaped the institutions of modern economic life . . . Moreover, it has been domestic political conflicts – not only over expenditure, taxation and borrowing, but also over non-economic issues like religion and national identity – that have driven the evolution of modern political institutions, above all parties and parliaments. (Ferguson, 2001, p. 16)

He rejects any serious suggestion that class forces play any part in historical processes. Though he does admit the existence of social classes, at least in the nineteenth century, as he quotes Zola and Marx, he quickly turns against the importance of class conflict as being of any analytical usefulness. His eventual line of argument could not possibly admit of the existence of class forces or

anything like them. He seems to have no real idea even of what the middle class might resemble. Without a class analysis or a theory of the state, his analysis, despite a considerable amount of raw data and a range of interesting observations, is more or less of value only as providing ideological cover for his views. He does see (and you cannot miss seeing) that there is some trade-off between the warfare state and the welfare state. However, he does not explain this trade-off or develop a theoretical position. He knows nothing about the contradiction between small state and big state and why there is a permanent struggle between the two. He seems to think, quite erroneously, that modern states are the products of war rather than wars being the product of producer capitalism (Stander, 2009, Chapter 4). He shifts from economy to capitalism without noting that the term 'economy' is a way of diverting attention away from the existence and importance of the capitalist system. Also, strangely for a historian, he seems not to have reform or reformism in his vocabulary, let alone among his theories of nineteenth-century development. Without an acceptance of class forces, with no theory of the state, and no consideration given to the process of reformism, his book fails to offer much other than lots of 'stuff' which E.H. Carr, for instance, advises us to avoid. Even his discussion of welfare is thin, descriptive and lacks explanation. If we did not know otherwise, we would be left wondering why the so-called democracies bothered at all with welfare except as some vague moral concern that came out of a representative parliamentary political constitution.

Liah Greenfeld on Britain as the first nation-state

Greenfeld has, in two books, made a strong case for England/Britain as both a first comer as a nation-state and as first industrial nation-state and that the USA is, in effect, an extension of Britain. She writes succinctly and baldly to this effect.

The original modern idea of the nation emerged in sixteenth century England, which was the first nation in the world (and the only one, with the possible exception of Holland, for about two hundred years).²¹

As we saw in the text of Donne's sermon, the principles of the English nation-state were being forcibly imparted to the minds of the Merchant Adventurers: thrift, seizure of land, extension of the nation and so on. She describes the economic and political development of England as the first nation-state and it is in the history

of England that we first see the nation-state/capital dialectic in its full range of contradictions being played out and spilling over to the United Provinces, France, Russia and eventually Spain, Belgium, Italy, Germany and so on.

Greenfeld makes the following clear statement: ‘The individualistic civic nationalism which developed there [England] was inherited by its colonies in America, and later became characteristic of the United States [of America].’

This is a crucial comment as it establishes how the USA was indeed an extension of England’s industrial development. There is a terminological problem here because of her use of the geographical expression ‘America.’ Britain transferred its capital/nation-state mode to the USA (and Canada) but not to the rest of the Americas or the Caribbean territories which have had an entirely different history precisely because England/Britain did not transfer its capital/state mode into those territories. Nevertheless, the general point is correct: the USA began as an extension of England. It has been important for Greenfeld to argue this out since no historian of the USA would be able to make this statement as baldly –so encrusted has subsequent history become. Apart from the English language the USA has built its nationalism and nation-state in the twentieth century and after by rejecting its origins. Irish immigration and dominance in New York and Boston have influenced an anti-English tendency. Jewish, Italian, German and many other immigrants have reinforced the melting-pot ideology as well as the emergent voices of the oppressed Afro-American, Asian or Hispanic peoples in the USA. But, in essence, the USA remains, despite the passage of time and events, historically an heir to English capitalism and nation-statehood.

There is substantial general support for her central argument relating to Britain as a first-comer. For instance, though Edward Said is dealing with issues of culture in relation to imperialism, his view accords both with Greenfeld on England/Britain as the first true modern capitalist and nation-state which overflows into systematic Empire building, even if the nature of the system escapes him. He writes:

I am temperamentally and philosophically opposed to vast system-building or to totalistic theories of human history. But I must say that having studied and lived within the modern empires, I am struck by how constantly expanding, how inexorably integrative they were. Whether in Marx, or in conservative works like those by J.R. Seeley, or in modern analyses like those by D.K. Fieldhouse, and C.C. Eldridge ... one is made to see that the British empire integrated and fused things within it, and taken together it and other empires made the world one. Yet no individual, and certainly not I, can see or fully grasp why. (Said, 1994, p. 6)²²

The answer eluding Edward Said lies in unravelling the nature of the nation-state/capital dialectic. This means turning for a moment to the Marxist tradition which more than any other analysis has promoted the need for a holistic approach to socio-economic analysis.

Dialectic

In terms of method and methodology, important consideration should be given to the method referred to as the dialectic or dialectical materialism. While I make no claims to be a Marxist, I do adopt an approach which is indebted to a number of elements informed by dialectical materialism. This is a good place in the text to make one or two points in this regard as the word 'dialectic' or 'a derivative' appears from time to time and at crucial junctures in this book.

There are many interpretations of this term, often in the form of 'dialectical materialism' and frequently as 'Marxist dialectical materialism'. In the arguments presented here, the term is heavily indebted to the form and style of the methodologies of Marx/Engels/Lenin, all of whom were indebted to Hegel. Whereas Hegel was an 'idealist', his Marxist successors were 'materialists'. By materialist is meant that man is a result of economic forces; economic forces are not the result of men's ideas. However, in order to reject accusations of economic determinism, Marx and Engels developed the methodology known as dialectical materialism. This method has been subject to many criticisms, not the least of which came from Edmund Wilson: 'From the moment Marx and Engels admitted the dialectic into, they admitted an element of mysticism.' And even those with a commitment to the Marxist and Marxian dialectical method such as Bertell Ollman find a rejection of any kind of rigidity in its use. He writes: 'With all the misinformation conveyed about dialectics ... it is not a rock-ribbed triad of thesis-antithesis-synthesis that serves an all purpose explanation, nor does it provide a formula that enables us to prove or predict anything; nor is it the motor force of history.'

The dialectic method as expounded by Marx and Marxists and many later Marxists with varying amounts of adherence to the central perception of the method such as Kautsky, the practising German politician, and Plekhanov, the popularizer, can be identified by a number of features; it should be made

absolutely clear, however, that in spelling out these features we are in danger of losing the holistic nature of the dialectic itself.²³

1. The central feature of the dialectic is the 'contradiction'. In other words, by looking at the contradictions or what some may call paradoxes inherent in capitalism, the 'state', the nation-state, class formation and so on we may begin to understand the nature of these economic, political, social and historical processes. A number of helpful contradictions are discussed later in this chapter, as argued by David Harvey.
2. Closely associated with contradiction is the importance of both latent and overt 'conflict'.
3. Importantly, in looking at contradictions and conflicts we may be able to separate reality or 'truth' from ideology, myth and outdated orthodoxies in the form of the 'weight' of the past. This may also mean moving away from common-sense or superficiality to a deeper analysis which may well be labelled 'scientific'.
4. As a result it is possible, given enough attention to empirical data and theoretical developments, that prediction becomes successful; this is actually unlikely but remains possible. The predictions of Marx and Engels were not good. On the other hand, both prediction and prescription have not been improved upon by orthodox practitioners whose predictive qualities have been poor. A well-known novel begins with the observation that the past is a foreign country; in fact the past is far more knowable than the future. It is the future that is a foreign country.
5. The dialectic method is most valuable in understanding the process of change and development. One way is through the process referred to as thesis-antithesis-synthesis and at times the negation of the negation which leads to a higher level of understanding of change and development. Conflicts and contradictions may, in moving from quantitative change to qualitative change in the material world, inform us of the actual point of development in time and space. Here we might identify reality as opposed to an obscurantist version of reality.
6. As far as this study of *Why War* is concerned we should be in a position to assess the contradictions that are inherent in the conflicts and contradictions as between capitalism and the nation-state, or, more precisely, assess the conflicts and contradictions that exist among the whole range of conflicts and contradictions, being aware of the nature

- of the 'state' as well as the nation-state, class forces, class domination, capitalism as a whole, fractions of capitalism and fractions of class.
7. Dialectical materialism also tells us that though the material world changes, there are parts that resist change and stay much the same. This is an important point and sometimes missed in some important respects. The focus of Marx and Engels was the development of capitalism into industrial capitalism from earlier forms of capital and that industrial capital, based on the primacy of production and the centrality of the commodity, was becoming hegemonic; it emanated from Britain, and progressed towards the concentration of capital, finance capitalism and international monopoly capital. However, earlier forms of capital remained important and still do. In fact, the co-existence of rapine capital, primitive capital and commercial capital based on exchange remains important in the present day. This view is developed in Chapter 4.
 8. The dialectical method as used by Marx identified new class formation and the potential for conflict (despite the fact that he never actually defined or described class). Marx was heavily influenced by David Ricardo's discussion of rent as a surplus, his threefold division of land, capital and labour, and the conflict of the 'industrial classes', capital and labour, with land; Marx significantly adjusted the Ricardian analysis to show that the real conflict was between land and capital, on the one hand, and labour, on the other hand, and he used the concept of surplus to develop his theory of labour power and exploitation. What has been neglected by more modern Marxians has been new class formation in the West; dialectic method can be used to uncover this (Stander, 2009, *passim*).
 9. Considerable concern was paid by Engels in particular to find ways of using the method to move from theory to praxis. If there is an essence to Marxism it is this effort which some have chosen to remember and the sentiment is inscribed on Marx's monument in Highgate Cemetery in North London. This relationship was also important to the key players who attempted to establish the communist revolution. As Trotsky wrote of Lenin, 'for him theory is in actual fact a guide to action.'²⁴
 10. There is also a case made for the dialectic as being a form of interdisciplinary study. Interdisciplinarity is an enormously difficult art to practise. There is also a case to be made for the dialectic as being a form of interdisciplinarity. Political economy provides the disciplinary structure for integrating economics, politics, history and sociology. This current

work is informed by classical political economics and its methodologies and that, too, enables the claim to be made that we are pursuing the dialectical modes of thought.

Hopefully, the reader will see these comments on the dialectical method less as an apologia and more as a display that it is not dependent on mere hagiographic references to the work of Hegel, Marx and Engels or their successors of various hues.

Marxism

Commentators on the left are generally consistent about the confusion that appears in texts of many Marxists in relation to nationalism. Harvey has written as follows: ‘The role of imperialism and colonialism, of geographical expansion and territorial domination, in the overall stabilization of capitalism is unresolved in Marxian theory. Indeed, it continues to be the focus of intense controversy and often bitter debate’ (Harvey, 2007, p. 415).

Marx, Engels and Lenin saw capitalism as international and the workers’ struggle as international, too, which made struggles for nationalism difficult to support except as part of a pragmatic longer term struggle for gaining worldwide socialist victory. From time to time Marx and early Marxians would support national movements on an instrumental and short-term basis depending on where the commentator believed that specific circumstances would benefit revolutionary outcomes. Tony Cliff, a Marxist popularizer, summarizes the position clearly in this way:

Marx and Engels lived during the rise of capitalism in Europe, a period of bourgeois democratic revolutions. The framework of a bourgeois democracy was the national state, and the duty of socialists, according to them, was to fight in alliance with the bourgeoisie against absolute monarchy, against feudal land ownership and the petty bourgeoisie. The greatest enemy of all democratic revolutions, they stated in 1848, was Tsarist Russia, and, second only to it, Hapsburg Austria. Russia, the enslaver of Poland, was the chief butcher of the Kossuth democratic revolution in Hungary (1849); Russia and Austria together, through direct and indirect intervention in the internal affairs of the Germans and Italians, prevented the complete unification of these nations. Marx and Engels consequently supported all national movements which were directed against the Tsars and Hapsburgs. At the same time, using the same criterion,

they opposed national movements which objectively played into the hands of the Tsars or the Hapsburgs.²⁵

We see this nicely in a quite different and geographical and temporal context in Nadine Gordimer's South African novel of teenage coming of age, for instance.

The Party called upon communists, then, to work with the Congress Alliance. They'd find a way to get round the national versus socialist wrangle. For whites, South Africa is an advanced capitalist state in the last stages of imperialism, but for blacks, it is still a colony. So a traditional national movement like the ANC has a 'progressive function' that a workers' party can support.²⁶

In general there was, of course, for Marx and Engels, the obvious connection between nation-building and the ascendancy of a bourgeois class and it was the nature of this connection that determined the support or otherwise of leftist writers and ideologues. It was the case, in other words, that the Marxist left always saw nation-building, promoted by myth-based nationalism, as the construction of a capitalist 'state' working in the interests of the bourgeoisie rather than the people *en masse*. Thus the building of the Spanish nation, Dutch nation, the English/British, the French, the German and Italian and that of the USA was intimately connected with the drive towards capitalism, first largely based on exchange and later based on production. In the age of nineteenth-century nationalism and during the Bolshevik Revolution it was the Polish-born Rosa Luxemburg who spoke out with the firmest and loudest voice in order to state her position on the contradiction of the Marxist-Leninist position. She wrote in the context of the Bolshevik policy of self-determination of nationalities:

The contradiction that is so obvious here is all the harder to understand since the democratic forms of political life in each land, as we shall see, actually involve the most valuable and even indispensable foundations of socialist policy, whereas the famous 'right of self-determination of nations' is nothing but hollow, bourgeois phraseology and humbug ... Indeed, what is this right supposed to signify? It belongs to the ABC of socialist policy that socialism opposes every form of oppression, including also that of one nation by another.²⁷

She goes on to clearly put the case for a class analysis to explain the misguided Bolshevik policies and the role of the bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie in counter-revolutionary actions that utilize nationalities and the 'people' for their own ends. She continued clarifying the importance of using class and capitalism as informing elements in the analysis.

To be sure, in all these cases, it was really not the ‘people’ who engaged in these reactionary policies, but only the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois classes, who – in sharpest opposition to their own proletarian masses – perverted the ‘national right of self-determination’ into an instrument of their counter-revolutionary class policies. But – and here we come to the very heart of the question – it is in this that the utopian, petty-bourgeois character of this nationalistic slogan resides: that in the midst of the crude realities of class society, especially when class antagonisms are sharpened to the uttermost, it is simply converted into a means of bourgeois class rule. The Bolsheviks were to be taught, to their own great hurt and that of the revolution, that under the rule of capitalism there is no self-determination of peoples, that in a class society each class of the nation strives to ‘determine itself’ in a different fashion; and that, for the bourgeois classes, the standpoint of national freedom is fully subordinated to that of class rule.²⁸

Frantz Fanon was an equally outspoken commentator who, like Luxemburg, saw the inherent problems and contradictions of nation-building for those intimately involved in the process in the post-colonial world. He exclaimed loudly and with great effect the way in which the post-imperial nations in Africa could never be genuine nations.²⁹ We return to this in Chapter 9, but for the time being we look at the theorization of the Russian revolutionaries as to the causes of war and the contradictions that emerge and then subsequently at some useful contradictions suggested in the work of David Harvey.

War and revolution

The strongest leftist position, that held by Marx, Engels, Lenin, Luxemburg, Kautsky and many others towards the end of the nineteenth century and until after the Great War, held that war on the grand scale as well as small colonial wars stemmed from a combination of nationalism, capitalism and imperialism. To this extent war could be judged as morally wrong and the blame could be laid squarely at the feet of the imperialists driven by the urge for profit and capital accumulation engendered by the system of capital itself. Such a view justified pacifism, the opposition to nationalism on the part of workers of all nations and a rejection of violence and killing.

Paradoxically, some might say, the struggle to pursue the proletarian revolution on an international scale in order to establish worldwide socialism

involved war on a grand scale, both as civil war and international war in a situation that justified the ruthless exercise of violence and the export of war.

These views set the scene for killing on a vast scale in the twentieth century, motivated by both the voracious appetite for profit by the capitalist system and the dedication of revolutionaries to establish a New World where exploitation would be absent. It was often argued that the means justified the ends and that the sacrifices of life and well-being would be rewarded by the ultimate birth and growth of socialist societies worldwide. There are many implications and contradictions in this position that relate to violence, terror, the role of the state as dictatorship of the proletariat, social democracy and nationalities.

There have been many events in modern history (since, say, the seventeenth century) that may be described as revolutions, though other labels such as civil war, rebellion, insurrection, peasant revolt and so on may be applied to the self-same event. There are those who would regard the English Civil Wars (1642–1649) plus the interregnum plus the restoration of the monarchy plus the replacement of James II with William and Mary as, taken together, a bourgeois revolution. A bloody civil war, followed by military dictatorship followed by the establishment of a constitutional monarchy, can be said to have changed the character of the ‘state’ as well as the government and governance of England. This revolution, if that is what it was, helped lay the groundwork for the thoroughgoing rise of industrial capitalism based on production and the commodity, otherwise known as the Industrial Revolution. Some similarities may be found with the analysis of the Civil War among the USA. The northern states insisted by use of arms that industrial capital should triumph over the slave-based capitalism of the southern states and keep in being and extend the continental vision that has so dominated the history of the ‘state’ of the USA. Whether revolution or civil war, the events on the North American continent in the years 1861–1865 were among the bloodiest of all time. But these events, to some, were pale into insignificance in the face of the violence that took place in the name of revolution in both the Russian Empire and in the Chinese Empire.

There have been three revolutions that can be regarded unequivocally as major revolutions: one towards the end of the eighteenth century and two in the twentieth century. These are the French Revolution, the Russian Revolution that led to the establishment of the USSR and the Maoist revolution in China which has led to the growing economic and political importance of the nation-state of modern-day China. The French Revolution left an enormous impact on not only France but also on the whole of Europe and North America. Marx

labelled it a tragedy. The French Revolution began as a combination of a ferment of ideas associated with freedom and justice, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, a dramatic reaction of the masses to deprivation and exploitation by an aristocracy that supported an increasing incompetent despotism; it developed into a triumph of the bourgeoisie over the aristocracy; it generated a defensive war by the French new order against the repressive and conservative forces in Europe and deteriorated into an imitation of the dynastic wars of Louis XIV. With the defensive war won and with the rise to power of Napoleon 'all was ready for a great general to concentrate the newly released forces [manpower and productive capacity] into a centralised despotism and direct them into a bid for a world empire.'³⁰

But, most relevant for this current book and for issues around capital and the nation-state are the contradictions associated with the events leading to the Russian Revolution and the immediate aftermath. We can in this regard look at the initial theorizing on the causes of war at the end of the nineteenth century, the prospects of revolution and, importantly, the relationship between theory and praxis in a 'real' situation. The main players in this are the Marxists of various shades: Lenin, Bukharin, Luxemburg, Hilferding, Trotsky and Kautsky, all of whom are indebted to the liberal economist J.A. Hobson. The Marxists for the most part were Bolsheviks; that is, they believed in short that a people's revolution leading to socialism could occur in Russia despite its backwardness. Trotsky began as a Menshevik, believing that the first revolutionary stage on the road to socialism had to be the bourgeois revolution. He later argued that the bourgeois stage could be leapfrogged, pointing especially to the populous nature of Moscow and St. Petersburg as serving as a groundswell for a people's revolution.³¹

Revolution and the export of war

It was Luxemburg who developed the analysis that showed that war, the colonial conflicts of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as well as the Great War were a result of the imperialist drive for profit and capital accumulation. Similarly, Lenin attacked Kautsky for backing the Great War at the Second International (which collapsed in 1916 because of the impossibility of maintaining a united front against the war).³² As far as Lenin was concerned in 1917, when the Great War was in progress and as Kerensky held power in Russia, he wrote that the bourgeois state could not wither away but 'as a general

rule' could only be disposed of through 'violent revolution.'³³ Lenin and Trotsky were both convinced that as capitalism had become international so would the struggle for socialism, both being acutely aware of the internationalization of the French Revolution, as well as convinced by their own theorizing on the nature of capitalism and imperialism and militarism.

Lenin, Trotsky, Bukharin, Kautsky and Luxemburg were all involved in interpreting Marx, developing theory purist or otherwise, were predicting, prescribing and translating all this into praxis. Nothing was certain, none trusted in the inevitability of events. All wished to act by pen and, when the occasion arose, unhesitatingly by sword.

Luxemburg tried (reasonably effectively) to show that the Great War and the imperialism associated with it arose because the economic analysis of Marx allowed for a proletarian struggle that was 'proved' with the presentation in Volume II of *Das Kapital* of Department I and Department II. Luxemburg introduced a Department III. As Desai has written:

The other theme Luxemburg introduced was the addition of a 'Third Department' to Marx's scheme. The Department's role was to absorb the surplus output, and produce output for which the demand came not from the workers, or from any other consumers, but from governments. This was the armaments industry. Thus the armaments industry could absorb surplus machinery from Department I and make armaments which governments could buy. (Desai, 2002, p. 95; Stander, 2009, p. 144)

Ultimately, these arms would be used by the producing countries and exported to others, contributing in one way or another to worldwide conflagrations.

Theoretically, Luxemburg's analysis, like J.A Hobson's, could be criticized (as it was by Bukharin) as being under-consumptionist, whereas a more correct position would be to develop a theory of over-production.³⁴ This is not the place to debate this in any depth. The point is that links were established, however shaky the theory, between the instability of the capitalist system, imperialism, the production of armaments and the export of war.³⁵

Luxemburg was almost hysterical at the thought of the breakdown of capitalism which she saw as inevitable. Once the process of imperialism, which was prolonging capitalism, was exhausted, the world would sink into chaos: only socialism would rescue the world. What she warned against was barbarism; given the view expressed in this current work that the West does not understand its own barbarism, the point carries some weight. She saw the Great War as a 'reversion to barbarism' (Geras, 1976).³⁶ She was convinced that as the capitalist

system became closer to collapse, a phenomenon she believed she was actually watching, it would become evermore horrifically barbaric, and she wrote with no holds barred:

Shamed dishonoured, wading in blood and dripping with filth, thus capitalism stands. Not as we usually see it, playing the roles of peace and righteousness, of order, of philosophy, of ethics – as a roaring beast, as an orgy of anarchy, as a pestilential breath, devastating culture and humanity – so it appears in its hideous nakedness ... The world war has faced society with this alternative: either continuation of capitalism, new wars and an early decline into chaos and anarchy, or the abolition of capitalist exploitation. (Geras, 1976, p. 33)

Incarcerated in a prison in Germany, her chosen country of residence, she was remarkably perceptive: there was indeed chaos in Germany after the armistice, the collapse of the currency, increasing levels of unemployment and a new industrially driven war. She suffered horrifically at the hands of barbarians; she was beaten, shot and tossed into Berlin's Landwehr Canal. There may still be some who would claim that her prophecy continues to work itself out where the illegal invasion of Iraq has taken place, when human rights issues are at times used for the domination of the weak by the strong, when extraordinary rendition ending in torture has become commonplace, when allies spy on each other, when ordinary citizens are subject to evermore comprehensive forms of surveillance on the grounds that they are being protected from terrorism, when laws are passed eroding basic human rights, when many come close to starvation as many economies are forced to cut public expenditure in the interest of maintaining the rate of profit in the capitalist system as a whole and so on. While, clearly, these early socialists underestimated the power of reformism and, indeed, opposed Kautsky and Bernstein who were prepared for parliamentary compromise rather than revolution, the necessity of socialism appears to have passed despite what is, in effect, the hidden barbarism of capitalism, a barbarism, ironically, which is recognized by extremist Islam and actually feeds this extremism.

However, when we look at the cost of the violent downfall of capitalism by the socialist revolutionaries, we find that, for those that participated, the likes of Lenin, Trotsky and Stalin, and later Mao Tse Tung, millions of deaths, many unrecorded, were of no consequence. As Stalin once said, one death is a tragedy, a million is a statistic. And, of course, he was right in a sense. When a soldier-musician is slaughtered in cold blood, we feel it; when we are told 20 millions or more died defending the Russian-Soviet Empire from Nazi invaders seeking *lebensraum*, the number is beyond comprehension to ordinary people.

David Harvey: Some helpful contradictions

David Harvey in his *Limits to Capital* has a number of helpful comments that link capital, imperialism, bursting boundaries, class and war, all of which are expressed in Marxist terms and associated with a close study of *Das Kapital*. To this extent his comments are of considerable help in this analysis even though he does not direct his analysis full-frontally at the national-capital dialectic. For instance, he poses the following questions in the context of Leninism:

Class war has taken its toll on life and limb ... but the vast losses incurred in two world wars were provoked by inter-imperialist rivalries. How can this be explained on the basis of a theory that appeals to class relation between capital and labour ...? This was, of course, the problem with which Lenin wrestled in his essay on imperialism. But his argument ... is plagued by ambiguity. Is finance capital national or international? What is the relation, then, between the military and political deployment of state power and the undoubted trend within capitalism to create multinational forms and to forge global spatial integration? What is it, then, that makes inter-imperialist wars necessary to the survival of capitalism? (Harvey, 2007, pp. 442–443)

Harvey has some answers, of course. For instance, he writes: ‘The unconstrained growth of capitalism within new regions is therefore the absolute necessity for capitalism’ (Harvey, 2007, p. 435). When Harvey writes this he is referring to the USA and Japan during the latter stages of British imperial domination. It is still true, of course, with the expansion of the so-called BRICS countries enter more fully into the capitalist world system. In this context Nixon’s breakthrough over China has to be seen as a success for capitalist processes. The fall of the Soviet Union and its entry into the capitalist system is another success for how the system works. The interplay of peace as well as war has been an outcome of the national-capital dialectic.

He also discusses the issue of the absorption of productive capacity in the capitalist system and especially within national economies of some capitalist-based countries. It was thought among some Marxists that one outcome of the absorption of capital was the function of the arms industry (Baran and Sweezy, Kidron, and Harvey himself). It is still true, as we shall see in the chapter on military–industrial complexes in Chapter 7. Arms and armaments are consumed at home, in cross-border wars and also exported for war purposes among non-arms producing countries – Middle East, Africa, South and Central America and so on. Arms absorption does not however do the trick, in the sense that

despite increasing absolute expenditure on arms, relative expenditure drops because of the huge efficiency in the production of arms and the pursuit of war has to be increasingly extended to countries that might otherwise find peaceful means to solve whatever developmental dilemmas they face. Thus the absorptive class, otherwise perceived sloppily as the middle class, has had to take over much of the job formerly done by the arms industry by absorbing surpluses. Nevertheless, the outcome of a long history of arms production has been the export not merely of arms but war itself, exacerbated by the system of nation-states, also a European invention.

A key element in the process of absorption is the need for capitalism not only to expand production but do so by increasing the *rate* of profit. Sending capital abroad, through colonization or economic imperialism or possibly through high earning direct investment, may actually increase the rate of profit as it is lent abroad at higher rates. In the longer run, however, it hastens the fall in the rate of profit, necessitating more of the same: more economic imperialism, greater competitiveness (maybe resulting in armed conflict) or more colonization. Thus, sending capital abroad stimulates further accumulation of capital abroad and constantly extending the areas abroad of capitalist production. When the planet Earth is not enough there is also the colonization or command of space as an option (Caldicott, 2002).

In the end we can see the process of the export of capitalism as a means of promoting a worldwide system of capitalism (along with what one might call the culture of capitalism) lock, stock and barrel; this has led to the production of the nightmare consumer worlds of Europe, the USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and so on. Alternatively, traditional forms of production are destroyed and the regions affected turned into mere suppliers of raw materials and cheap labour. Hence we see the additional nightmare of most African countries that have lost their traditional ways and have yet to find a new way forward.³⁷ As Harvey notes:

The 'outer transformation' can supply new markets and new fields for industry only at the price of re-creating capitalist relations of private property and a capacity to appropriate the surplus labour of others. The conditions that give rise to the problems in the first place are simply replicated anew. Marx draws the same conclusion with respect to the expansion of foreign trade. Its increase merely 'transfers the contradictions to a wider sphere and gives them greater latitude.' There is, in the long run, no outer resolution to the internal contradictions of capitalism. (Harvey, 2007, p. 415)

Capital, however, has had historically an ever-increasing tendency to push across boundaries set by the nation-states until the 1980s when boundaries were more or less turned into a mesh which has allowed the establishment, not so much as globalization but as global capitalism, to emerge in its present form. On the other hand, labour has been kept in its geographical locations (except within the European Union). Again we note Harvey's comments thus:

If the geographical mobility of labour power is to meet capital's needs, then the absolute freedom of labour to move must be strictly circumscribed ... Regional boundaries are invariably fuzzy and subject to perpetual modification because relative distances alter with improvement in transportation and communication. Regional economies are never closed. The temptation for capitalists to engage in interregional trade, to lever profits out of unequal exchange and to place surplus capitals wherever the rate of profit is highest ... is irresistible. And workers will surely be tempted to move wherever the material standards are highest. Besides, the tendency towards over-accumulation and the threat of devaluation will force capitalists within a region to extend its frontiers or simply move their capital to greener pastures. (Harvey, 2007, p. 380)

Harvey also sees the problem of the contradiction between nation-state and capitalism. Capital will always move in due course seeking new prospects for profit and accumulation. However, nations are concerned to protect their labour power, yet maintain a reserve army of unemployed. This involves the setting in place and maintenance of what he calls social infrastructures. These vary a great deal from national economy to national economy. The social structure of Sweden is quite different in detail and extent from that of the USA. Nevertheless all advanced economic nations have developed social infrastructures out of the surpluses produced under the capitalist system as a whole. It is important, therefore, to make a distinction between the 'state' and the nation-state. This is pursued in Chapter 3.

Summary and conclusions

The modern nation-state helps to organize violence in the interests of the capitalist nation-state and the process results in the export of violence to the rest of world; modern wars and violent conflict, wherever it is found, are the most terrifying of all the exports from Europe in the last three centuries or so. The satisfaction of needs gave way to the satisfaction of greed as a result of the

exercise of power and tools and technology and the control of them became crucial to this process. This argument that modern war is a European export includes the USA being, in this important respect, included as an extension of the European capitalist/nation-state international complex.

We have argued for an approach that pays regard to the dialectical method.

So far, hopefully, we have helped set the scene. In the next chapter we discuss further theoretical and empirical positions in relation to our central argument. In Chapter 3 we discuss nations, the nation-state and nationalism in more detail. In Chapter 4 we discuss capitalism, including the concepts needed to understand its complex nature whereby we can see that modern war began in Europe which continues to feed violent conflict.

This analysis will help us understand those parts of the world, including that part which is currently influenced by Islam, that regard the Westerners as barbarians at their gates rather than the general Western view that the barbarians are at the gates of the Western nation-states.

Why War: Approaching a Method

Anna Pavlovna Scherer early on in Tolstoy's *War and Peace* bursts out:

Whom ... can we rely on? England with her commercial spirit will and cannot understand the Emperor Alexander's loftiness of soul. The English have not understood and cannot understand the self-abnegation of our Emperor who wants nothing for himself, but only desires the good of mankind ... Prussia has always declared that Buonaparte is invincible and that all Europe is powerless before him ... I have faith only in God and the lofty destiny of our adored monarch.¹

Anna Pavlovna has put into a few words a whole swathe of opinions about war and the motives behind war and introduces such concepts as nation-states and nationalism. England, by which she means Britain, has been labelled as a commercial nation and presumably driven by their bourgeois class interests, that is, by less than noble interests. Oddly to us now, Prussia does not have the military prowess to stand up to Napoleon who, as we know, honed and developed a professional, people's army. Equally oddly the Russian Emperor has no dynastic claims and is a man of honour who in any case heads a nation with a 'destiny', perhaps not unlike the manifest destiny we have heard so much about in the context not only of Napoleon Bonaparte but also of the role of the USA to this very day. Of course, Tolstoy meant all this to be a muddle, if not an actual satire. After all, he created Anna Pavlovna as a favourite of the Dowager Tsarina of Russia, and he was writing as a keen observer of the motivations and culture of the Russian aristocracy in the context of the autocratic Tsarist regimes of the nineteenth century.

How muddled are we generally about war and why it persists in the modern era? Are we right to start the present discussion in the context of the French

revolutionary and Napoleonic wars at the turn of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries? Are these concepts introduced by Anna Pavlovna at a small but glittering soirée in St. Petersburg at all useful? After all she has mentioned the commercial or capitalist drive inherent in British foreign policy? She has mentioned national characteristics. She has alluded to the power of Napoleon and the problems of assembling a counter to it, assuming there is some alliance between Prussia, Britain and Russia. Whole academic disciplines, schools of historical thought and theories in the social sciences have tackled Anna Pavlovna's muddle before and since Tolstoy invented her. We can look briefly at some of them, including those deriving from International Relations and Peace Studies.

'International Relations'

The discipline of International Relations has focussed largely on the concepts of realism and power, starting with E.H. Carr in *The Twenty Years' Crisis* (1939) and extending to Hans Morgenthau, who established power, plus the underlying concept of realism, as the bedrock of the discipline in 1960 in his *Politics Among Nations*. The discipline has not stood entirely still; added to the informing concept of realism we have the concepts of neo-realism, fear and security (Buzan, 1991). Power in its various forms and fear are both of great value as starting points in analysing violent conflict among nations. Historians, too, use the informing 'theory' of the balance of power to provide a key to the analysis of modern European history and we see that Anna Pavlovna is aware of the need to effect alliances against the overweening power of Napoleon.

Realism and power, of course, as informing concepts have a long history and traceable back, as practitioners of International Relations remind us, to the earliest analysis of war in the Peloponnese. In the fifth century BC, ancient Greece consisted of a number of city-states. Sparta, which was regarded as the foremost military land power, was increasingly opposed by the growth of Athens whose wealth depended more on their navy than their army. Thucydides, a disgraced Athenian general and admiral, wrote a systematic account of the wars that began in 431 BC and continued until 404 BC with a sporadically kept peace that was in place for seven years. In his attempted dispassionate account, Thucydides sees the Peloponnesian wars as being an outcome of both the rise of Athens as a rich and powerful city-state which interacted with the fears of the Spartans who felt increasingly threatened. In other words, Thucydides paints a

picture of a typically bi-polar world that subsequent commentators have seen as an early example of an international situation not unlike the US/Soviet bi-polarization in the period 1945–1989.

Moreover, Thucydides, some would say, provides a timeless picture of internal politics whereby the existence of the state allows for, or arises from, a degree of internal cohesion, a political constitution, social order, the rule of law, a common purpose, a unified value system and ethical behaviour within the borders of a defined geographical area. This is contrasted with external (international) relations marked by the lack of an ethical structure but characterized by anarchy (in the sense of the absence of a central authority or a legitimizing government).

At the end of the day the ‘strong do what they have the power to do and the weak accept what they have to accept’, as Thucydides observed. So it was, for instance, that the Melians, allies of the Spartans, resisted the Athenians until, having lost, suffered the slaughter of all the men while, tragically and terribly, their women and children were sold into slavery. The idea of the ‘final solution’ is, therefore, as old as written history itself.²

Thucydides set out in his long exile to record the war between Athens and Sparta, to observe it and to explain it. In doing so he demonstrated his detachment in order to provide us with what is, in effect, a realist’s explanation. War and peace occur as a result of the interplay of power. However, the realist conception of international politics changes markedly as we travel through the work of Hugo Grotius (1583–1645) to Niccolo Machiavelli (1469–1527) to Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679) to Georg W. Hegel (1770–1831) to E.H. Carr to Hans Morgenthau to Kenneth Waltz to Hedley Bull,³ some of whom we shall mention further in due course. Realism has a long, strong tradition that tells us something about how international politics has been viewed.

Thucydides also believed that in the ‘accurate’ telling of history it would be possible to identify a dispassionate truth (Carr, 1987, p. 87). We can look in more detail at the founding father of International Relations as an academic study, E.H. Carr, so curiously neglected in some of the more modern writing.

Edmund Hallet Carr

We can all dream, as did Sir Thomas More in fifteenth-century England, by creating a Utopia⁴ as did also Samuel Butler, the nineteenth-century anarchist and artist, who created his Erewhon as did Saint-Simon and Fourier and Robert

Owen and the like, blueprints for how they would like the world to be; such an approach was anathema to Marx and Engels, who were determined to argue that the world should be seen as it really is, in the Communist Manifesto. We can all conjecture and talk of what 'should' or 'must' happen. We can express hope through the creation of utopias or Erewhons, and, by the same token, we are free to warn through the creation of dystopias. In doing so, however, we express only our hopes, fears, wants and prejudices; we do not properly consider cause and effect in a world dominated by the exercise of power by the strong over the weak. Morality is the outcome of power. What is more, power is indivisible so that military, economic, political and the power of ideology all work in conjunction and *as one* to establish dominance. And in the modern exercise of power, property rights generally take precedence over human rights. Representative democracy is fragile and less than a 100 years or so old, making reference to the mitigating effects of democracy less convincing that it might be, and at times, almost utopian rather than real. Mankind has become the victim of the history it has made. Dreams and hopes will not change it; yet, violence threatens to destroy it. Carr argued firmly that his version of realism and power, generally speaking, trumped utopianism, though it was possible to temper realism with utopianism. In this way, Carr invented the academic discipline of International Relations.⁵ He was well qualified to do so. During this long life (1892–1982), he was a civil servant in the British Foreign Office during the First World War, served as Assistant Adviser on League of Nations Affairs and at one stage was Director of Foreign Publicity at the Ministry of Information. Later he worked as a journalist on *The Times* and was a professor of history at both Oxford and at Cambridge. He wrote what some might describe as an exhaustive and definitive history of the Russian Revolution in 14 volumes. As we shall see, when he writes of the differing positions of academics and bureaucrats, of the antithesis of theory and practice, of facts in history, of morality in politics, of the nature of power, of the nature of propaganda, he knows only too well what he is talking about.

In 1939, he wrote, 'the science of international politics is in its infancy ... There was no general desire to take the conduct of international affairs out of the hands of the professional (soldiers, diplomats, politicians) or even to pay serious attention to what they are doing' (Carr, 1987).

A major contribution of Carr to academic life was to lay the basis for the study of International Relations in universities in the Western world. At the same time he laid the basis for a particular way of looking at history. In a later

work (1961) *What Is History?* he succeeded in dealing effectively with the 'fact'/'interpretation' dichotomy in the presentation of history. In other words, he developed a crucial point made in *The Twenty Years' Crisis*: 'In the process of analysing the facts, Marx altered them.' He also wisely tells us that 'there is no reality outside the historical process'.

We can, therefore, typify Carr as the creator, in effect, of the modern Western academic study of International Relations who, in doing so, gave it a distinct realist edge but with anti-empiricist overtones. The realism came from the recognition of the force of political power and of economics and of self-interest; the anti-empiricism relates to the interactive nature of facts and interpretation, to the interaction of theory and practice.

Carr sets out firstly to establish key differences between utopianism and realism and to discuss their antithetic relationship. He is clear at the outset that pure utopianism is naïve in its rejection of causality and a concern with unknown futures. Equally the complete realist accepting the causal sequence of historical events deprives himself of the possibility of ever-changing reality. He argues that the antithesis of utopianism and realism is matched by the antithesis of theory and practice. One example which he uses is the phrase in the American Declaration of Independence,⁶ 'all men are born equal'. This, he argues, is manifestly not the case and to believe so is to live in a dream world of bogus facts, 'remote from the world of reality where contrary facts may be observed'.⁷ The utopian is more likely to have aspirations than facts at his disposal. Thus for the realist the 'equality of man' is the ideology of the underprivileged seeking to raise themselves to higher ranks. Realists, however, also run the risk of sterility born of a belief in the determinism of 'facts' beyond their control. Political science, then, should be based on the recognition of the interdependence of theory and practice. Carr goes further and uses the example of the conflicts among the intellectuals and the bureaucrats. The formation of the League of Nations was developed as an idea in both the USA and Britain which, if fully implemented, would save the world from such major wars as the First World War of 1914–1918. The pragmatism of the civil servants saw fit to reject the effective working of the League. Politics, for the bureaucrat, becomes an end in itself. To the bureaucrat there are no general cases, only specific ones and when he wants to sink a proposal he calls it 'academic'. Much the same can be said of, say, the trade union leader who is so preoccupied with the day-to-day politics of his organization that little is achieved for the working-class movement as a whole. Most importantly, the

antithesis of utopia and reality was rooted in the differing conception of the relationships of politics and ethics. The utopian will set up a standard which claims to be independent of politics, whereas the realist can only see relative morality. Therefore, ethics can only be interpreted in terms of politics 'and the search for an ethical norm outside politics is doomed to frustration' (Carr, 1939/1981, p. 21).

Carr, after drawing on a wide range of examples of utopianism associated with the world crisis of the inter-war years, concludes: 'the simplicity of these explanations seemed almost ludicrously disproportionate to the intensity and complexity of the international crisis' (Carr, 1939/1981, p. 40).

After this outcry against the utopians generally, he turns his attention to specific theoretical positions: those of Adam Smith, advocates of *laissez-faire*, John Stuart Mill, and of Darwinism and looks especially at the doctrine that unified these positions – the doctrine of the harmony of interests. This doctrine of the harmony of interests still holds true in the USA today; yet, according to Carr, '[b]iologically and economically, the doctrine of the harmony of interests was tenable only if you left out of account the interests of the weak who must be driven to the wall' by the strong (Carr, 1939/1981, p. 50). To some nations this meant that there was an interest in peace; for Britain this arose because the doctrine seemed to lead in the direction of peace and prosperity as being natural partners. Not so for some of the German states: war and prosperity seemed to go together somewhat more effectively. Carr notes on the very eve of the Second World War that the collapse of the international system lay in the complete bankruptcy of the conception of morality which had dominated political and economic theory for over a hundred years. The theory of harmony of interests had completely broken down among many theorists, though it is still strong in the USA.

Carr draws upon the work of Machiavelli, Hobbes, Hegel and others to make the following points:

- It is practice that makes theory, and that imagination on its own does not direct the world. (In keeping with Marx's dictum, philosophers have lagged behind the world, they do not change it.)
- History is a sequence of cause and effect, which can be understood through hard intellectual effort.
- Morality is the product of power.⁸
- A vital element in the realist world is the economy and economic processes.

For instance, if we take the US policy on tariffs we find in the nineteenth century that pragmatic economic policy dictated, despite the theory of free trade, high tariff barriers, only to be changed when it suited the purpose of the 'economy' to lower them here and there. 'What matters', argued Carr in reference to all policy, 'is that these supposedly absolute and universal principles were not principles at all, but the unconscious reflexions of national interest at a particular time' (Carr, 1939/1981, p. 86).

However, Carr does not allow us to take refuge in total realism: to do so would exclude a finite goal, an emotional appeal, a right of moral judgement and a ground for action. Thus, even in the most realist of writings, that of Marx and Engels, who specifically throw out utopianism in the *Communist Manifesto* and elsewhere, we find that the hopeful promise that at some time in the future socialism will make possible the deep personal fulfilment of every single human being may be regarded as in itself utopian.

With this warning that realism with just a dash of utopianism is the stuff of politics, Carr turns to examine the nature of politics more closely. Politics are always power politics and thus far in history it has been impossible to remove power, and the key concept in the peace negotiations after the First World War and in subsequent politics was the so-called security for nation-states. And here we have the hard realist truth: 'Power is an indispensable instrument of government. To internationalise government in any real sense means to internationalise power' (Carr, 1939/1981, p. 107). To make sense of this we need to know what the sources of power are. To Carr there are three key sources: military, economic and power over opinion. Also to Carr power is indivisible and to this extent there is hardly any point in trying to separate politics, say, from economics, and he laments the separation of economics from politics as disciplines for study, calling for a return to political economy.⁹ A close corollary is the concept of autarky, that is of self-sufficiency in all respects of the nation-state. Thus autarky is an important source of power. For instance, as only one example of very many is the concern of all industrial nations to control the supply of oil and other relevant raw materials.

The power over public opinion is vital but generally follows other forms of power and is achieved in a number of ways: the use of justificatory philosophy, universal state-controlled education, state organized national and international propaganda. Currently, we are more familiar with these processes than ever.

Finally, for our purpose, we need to dwell on morality in international politics, an issue so far touched upon and developed by Carr in *The Twenty*

Years' Crisis. He quotes Professor Dewey: 'men's morals are paralysed when it comes to international conduct'. Carr gives these reasons:

- Nation-states do not have emotions such as love, hate, jealousy or compassion and, as a matter of observation, they (and other groups such as business corporations) behave less altruistically than do individuals; altruism is clearly circumscribed by the national interest.
- The individual actually expects behaviour from the nation-state to be more ruthless than that of the individual.¹⁰
- The nation-state is at the pinnacle of power and behaviour cannot be further delegated.
- There is an absence of a genuine society of states.¹¹

We might add that when the interests of the nation-state are combined with that of a business corporation, the standard of morality is doubly likely to be low indeed.¹²

While Carr might be said to have laid the seeds of a new discipline, International Relations developed at some remove as it became largely an Anglo-American discipline based on realism in its various forms which appealed especially to academics on university campuses after the Second World War in the context of the Cold War. Among those who gained most currency were Hans J. Morgenthau and Kenneth Waltz.

Morgenthau argued that a key element in the process of understanding International Relations lay in the balancing of interests against the ever-precarious settlement of conflicts, and in this process nation-states would accept lesser evils rather than absolute good; this was true for all pluralist societies, by which he meant the so-called democracies as existed in the twentieth century, and he put forward a number of principles on which he wanted to base his theory of International Relations with the intention seemingly of advancing the discipline to a science much in the same way that economists had done from the time of Marshall to Keynes. He argued that objective laws plus human nature govern politics. It is possible to separate truth from opinion through reason. 'It is the testing of this rational hypothesis against the actual facts and their consequences that gives meaning to the facts of international politics and makes a theory of politics possible.' What sets politics apart, he asserts, is the concept of 'interest'. Here we have a major departure from E.H. Carr, and as far as this work is concerned an unacceptable principle. He specifically mentions a

separation from the discipline of economics, though he also wants to separate the 'science' of politics from ethics, aesthetics and religion. He does accept that other standards exist apart from the political, but they are all subordinated to the political. However, he is absolutely right in seeing that 'universal moral principles cannot be applied to the actions of states in their abstract universal formulations but must be filtered through the concrete circumstances of time and place'. In addition, he is equally correct when he says

political realism refuses to identify the moral aspirations of a particular nation with the moral laws that govern the universe . . . all nations are tempted – and few have been able to resist the temptation for long – to clothe their own particular aspirations and actions in the moral purpose of the universe. (Morgenthau, 1948)

Kenneth Waltz takes some of the theorizing of Morgenthau and constructs a form of neo-realism.

Kenneth Waltz

Waltz at the end of the 1950s and squarely in the face of the 'terrorism' of nuclear war during the Cold War wrote what is often considered to be one of the most significant, measured essays analysing man's behaviour, *Man, the State and War*, in an attempt to explain the causes of war. In this, he conceives the state as being the internal state and the nation-state. It is the connecting of the internal state with the actions of the nation-state that he provides as an explanation in his theoretical analysis of war; in doing so he appears to be in a school that might be considered as pessimistic-realist.

One of Waltz's starting points is a discussion of Morgenthau's arguments in relation to power, scarce resources and the use of force where there is an absence of (legitimate) authority. Quite rightly, Waltz rejects that it is man's nature that leads to war, though if it were the case, the obvious solution in seeking peace would be to change man's nature. However, Waltz is convinced that war cannot be in man's nature because there is as much peace in the world as there is war (Waltz, 2001, pp. 29 ff). He, almost kindly, runs through suggestions by behavioural scientists to show that, despite their best efforts, changing men's nature was not a realistic option. But, in any case, as far as his reading of anthropology was concerned, changing men (or women) was not necessary:

‘war . . . is not in man’s nature. Comparative anthropology proves this.’ Therefore, according to Waltz, the solution to outlawing war and maintaining peace must lie elsewhere than changing man’s nature. If behavioural scientists were to take account of politics, he claims, they might do a bit better: ‘The more fully behavioural scientists take account of politics, the more sensible and the more modest their efforts to contribute to peace become.’ That is fair comment, but if they were to take account of economics as well, that would be even better. Waltz’s own attempt to incorporate economics into his own analysis has limited success and his reference to the socialist/Marxist-Leninist analysis, though given sufficient paper and ink, strays in the direction that the totalitarian world of communism has proved its impracticality.

Waltz goes on to explore the nature of the internal structure of the state in its relation to international conflict. One approach to this is to consider the relationship between the state, a potentially rebellious or revolutionary populace and the value of seeking out an external enemy not only to secure solidarity against a common enemy but also to make material gains for its main participants. Historically this might account for some dynastic wars. As we shall see later in Marcuse’s analysis, and in Bush’s ‘war on terror’, the external enemy becomes a means of unifying the mass of the people in favour of the capitalist system based on production of commodities for profit. In both cases external war may unite a disaffected population; on the other hand, there is enough evidence to suggest that external war may in other circumstances do the opposite, as with the Russian revolutions of 1905 and 1917. Or, earlier, the dynastic wars of France led by the French Kings and their supporting aristocracy in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries helped create the circumstances that led to the French Revolution. On the other hand, what is misleading is that democracy leads to peace on the grounds that the people never want war and, therefore, genuine democracy will lead to peace.¹³ However, as we know, genuine democracy has not been available, the ‘state’ itself may be in the hands of narrow interests not representing the people and, in any case, there is the dual ideological possibility that wars may be fought as a defence of democratic principles or of wider justice. As Waltz has said, ‘faith in public opinion or, more generally, faith in the uniformly peaceful proclivities of democracies has proved utopian.’¹⁴ This means, at this stage of his argument, that force is necessary to keep the peace, but the existence of force and the power to use it (as we shall see in more detail) is a cause of war. One stream of thought (dubbed that of the ‘liberals’) might suppose that reason could replace force.¹⁵ However, again as we shall see later, this is no better than

more modern labelling of cosmopolitanism and the prospect of reason replacing force is not something that Waltz can accept as a practical proposition. He gives space to two propositions: (a) capitalist democracies 'actively promote war' and (b) socialist democracies are peaceful. He seems to be inclined to accept the former more easily than the latter, arguing simply that there have never been any true socialist states and, today, some 50 or more years later it would be hard to argue against that. He even begins the chapter in which he deals most fully with his comments on Marx and the state and nationalism with this quote from Anatole France: 'As soon as one of our industries fails to find a market for produce a war is necessary to open new outlets ... In Third-Zealand we have killed two-thirds of the inhabitants in order to compel the remainder to buy our umbrellas and braces ...' (Waltz, 1959/2001, p. 124).

However, Waltz's outline of the theory of the state in the work of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Luxemburg does not do full justice to the complexity inherent in the work of Marx and Engels and many of their adherents. His main weakness is to concentrate on the failure of socialist movements of all kinds to develop a form of international socialism that guarantees a unity of purpose among proletarians of all nations. In this way, he does not concentrate on the way in which capitalist nation-states cause war not only among themselves but in what was then called the Third World. While he explores the failure of socialism to spread in the way many activists had hoped for, he spends little time on the implications of his opening quotation from Anatole France. Waltz, oddly, does accept what Hobson has to say about imperialism but fails to pursue Hobson's logic and see that the international drive of capitalism in the context of nation-states and nationalism in the interests of the common interests of the 'bourgeois' classes is precisely what causes war. Waltz is so eager to discuss peace simultaneously with war that he neglects what actually causes war, then and now. What the theory of the state tells us in the context of the drive of capitalism beyond the borders of the nation-state is what causes wars; what causes peace is not simply the absence of capitalism and its replacement with ill-defined forms of socialism.¹⁶ In the end Waltz concludes that while world government based on well-ordered nations is the only answer to ending wars, in the real world the situation in International Relations for the foreseeable future will require military action. Hence he has become classified as a neo-realist in that milieu of Anglo-American academic International Relations. There is, needless to say, a tendency for other commentators to see the world differently, not least the French.

A view from France

Power, as a starting point, is embedded in journalistic, philosophical and social science debate. Typical are the views of the French philosopher Alain Badiou. Writing, in a mood that opposes the actions of the US government and its 'British poodle', in the immediate aftermath of 9/11, both as a philosopher and in journalistic style we read:

Thus forged from the barbarity of war ... the USA quite naturally considers that the only reprisal worthy of itself is a spectacular staging of power. The particular adversary chosen matters little ... and may be entirely disconnected from the initial crime. The sheer power of destruction will do the job ... Any war will do ... as long as the appearance of victory is overwhelming. (Badiou, 2006, pp. 28, 43 ff)

Badiou goes on to analyse the growth and nature of the power of the USA. He argues that successive governments insist on maintaining absolute power over the military capabilities of all other nations that includes an 'impressive autonomy' of the military factor which aims at a huge disproportionate capability. He also argues that for the people of the USA there is really only 'America', the 'American' way of life and 'American' interests. The complete narcissistic screening out of all else is, in a way, normal for a superpower. It was true of the Soviets and especially true of the British Empire and of the Roman Empire, but it is also true of any form of nationalism where it is possible to secure a strong degree of isolation as in North Korea, Iran and Myanmar. Badiou is therefore not observing anything especially new about the USA, but really points out an important universal, that of the danger of combining nationalistic fervour with an overweening military. However, he goes on to say that the USA is an imperialist power without an empire unlike the Roman, Ottoman, French or British mode. In fact, he argues, the USA is a hegemonic power without frontiers or a specific territoriality. The USA has no responsibility for the people who are subject to its domination abroad because the USA lays no claims to the actual territories over which it has power. Badiou is correct in seeing that this power enables the USA (and what he describes as its poodles, including Britain) to exploit any part of the world it wishes without necessarily giving a great deal back in terms of genuine untied development aid. Indeed, it is part of the way the foreign policy of the USA operates. In order to work in its favour, the USA must appear, according to Badiou, to be 'capable of anything, and especially of things that are neither rational nor foreseeable'. The seemingly irrational nature of the capacity of the

USA to wage war, often without declaring it, is an echo of Marcuse. Insanity and irrationality is how war appears to its participants who can never explain it any other way or more coherently. In one of the most powerful war films, *Apocalypse Now*, war is portrayed as irrational and insane with key characters driven to insanity in an insane war. Much the same picture is painted in the novel *Catch 22* and echoes Rousseau when he wrote: 'to be sane in a world of madmen is in itself a kind of madness'.¹⁷ A combination of a hugely powerful adversary who is insane is shocking and horrific. Badiou adds to this indictment of the USA as having overwhelming power with the view that policy in the USA is driven also by a notion of vengeance. Its policy towards criminals, its response to 9/11 in the pseudo-Texan language of George W. Bush, its policies of torture, imprisonment without trial, its culture of vengeance in the cinema, especially Westerns and so on all point to a deep-seated drive emanating from an unmediated Judaeo-Protestant fundamentalist Bible.

The Christian God was supposed to be a break-through with the Jewish God of vengeance being replaced by a God of Love. In a world of permanent war where religion has become a dominant ideology replacing that of Marxism, there is nothing to choose between the fundamentalist forms of Islam and the God of vengeance. On the other hand, as I have tried to explain elsewhere, the sacred and profane have been reversed under the capitalist process (Stander, 2009, pp. 81 ff). The capitalist system is based on the production of the commodity for profit in the interest of capital accumulation; this produces the narcissistic society that is required to consume the vast quantities of goods and services; it has produced a society in which the commodity itself has become sacred while the human beings both within capitalist societies and beyond have become profane making it possible to degrade human beings almost at will.

Violence and Marcuse

In the discipline of peace studies there is much discussion of violence as being an inherent feature of the make-up of mankind ... or not, as the case may be. Arguments are mounted for both sides. Some may suggest that the root of violence can be sought in conditions of scarcity. For instance, Terry Eagleton, in his polemical defence of Marxism, writes without mincing his words: 'Human beings are not at their best in conditions of scarcity ... Such scarcity breeds violence, fear, greed, anxiety, possessiveness, domination and deadly antagonism.'¹⁸

The use of violence is a means of exercising power. Violence has always demanded respect. Non-violence is viewed as the exercise of weakness and invokes contempt.¹⁹ Until we view non-violence as strength there will always be violence. Were we to accept the position of Max Weber, that the nation-state ('state') has the right to the legitimate use of violence, then violence (latent or manifest) must be regarded as endemic in modern society. In the USA the acceptance by the state of capital punishment, long prison sentences out of all proportion to the crime and the tolerance of the private ownership of weapons of death and acceptance of the killing of animals for pleasure is the acceptance of the equation violence=strength (and nonviolence=weakness.) Freud gave society the unfortunate belief that there was something innate in the nature of mankind that led to violence, particularly in the form of sublimation. The concept of the death-wish has not been abandoned and is widely used in debate. However, Herbert Marcuse, particularly in the 1960s and 1970s, developed arguments to modify both Freud and Marx in the interest of finding ways of liberating the individual in the affluent society. A central argument developed by Marcuse argued that the way society was organized led to the manufacture of 'surplus repression' by imposing socially unnecessary labour, unnecessary restrictions on sexuality and a social system dominated by profit and exploitation. In the light of the diminution of scarcity and prospects for increased abundance, Marcuse called for the end of repression. And of course his *One Dimensional Man* (1964) observed the withering away of serious oppositional behaviour. Though in the West, there are protests, marches and civil unrest, the rule of law and the dominant ideology exercised through the educational system and the media ensures that protests are more apparent than real.

In addition, he points out that foremost in the feeding of aggressiveness are:

1. The dehumanizing of the process of production and consumption and
2. The conditions of crowding and noise: mass society thus achieves over-socialization to which the individual reacts 'with all sorts of frustrations, repressions, aggressions, and fears' becomes converted to neurosis afflicting individuals rather than leading to mass genuine movements.

He turns, for example, also to the media: 'the brutalisation of language and image, the presentation of killing, burning, and poisoning and torture inflicted upon the victims of neo-colonial slaughter is made in a commonsensible, factual, sometimes humorous style which integrates these horrors with the pranks of juvenile delinquents, football contests, accidents, stock market reports and the weatherman.'

Marcuse is thus able to talk about the fact that the suicidal tendency of human beings is replicated on a truly social scale so that the national and international play with total destruction may well have found a firm basis in the instinctual structure of individuals.

Herbert Marcuse's *One Dimensional Man* set out to be an indictment of modern technological society, both of the capitalist mode and of the Soviet mode, and an indictment of modern man in his inability to protest his lot. Douglas Kellner in a concise assessment writes that the book 'provides a model analysis of the synthesis of business, the state, the media and other cultural institutions under the hegemony of corporate capital which characterises' the contemporary economy and polity of the USA. Moreover, Marcuse points out that 'aggressive behaviour ... provides a social bond, unifying those who gain in power and self-esteem through identifying with forms of aggression against shared objects of hate' (Marcuse, 1991, pp. xxxviii–xxxix).

He set out to show that hidden by growing prosperity, modern technological society was heading for a disaster in a number of ways. Human beings were becoming the very commodities they purchase; environmental and military catastrophe was around the corner, but false consciousness prevented anyone from seeing this and other threats to their existence.

Does not the threat of an economic catastrophe which could wipe out the whole of the human race also serve to protect the very forces which perpetuate this danger? The efforts to prevent such a catastrophe overshadow the search for its potential causes in contemporary society. These causes remain unidentified, unexposed, unattacked by the public because they recede before the all too obvious threat from without. Equally obvious is the need for being prepared, for living on the brink, for facing the challenge. We submit to the peaceful production of the means of destruction, to the perfection of waste, to being educated for a defence, which deforms the defenders and that which they defend. (Marcuse, 1991, p. xli)

This was written at the time of the threat to the USA from the Soviets and vice-versa during the Cold War, but its relevance to the world 60 years later is obvious. Talebans, Bin Laden, Saddam Hussein are all creatures and creations of the economic imperialism of the USA and her allies and we have seen the limited relevance of tanks, smart weapons, aircraft carriers, stealth bombers, 20,000 nuclear warheads and a fleet of nuclear submarines in the violent conflicts that have emerged.

Moreover, he warned that big business, government, the economy and academic institutions were linked worldwide in a consistent relationship to bring about this process; moreover, there was nothing 'new' about this tendency.

The main trends are familiar: concentration of the national economy on the needs of the big corporations, with the government as a stimulating, supporting, and sometimes even controlling force; hitching of this economy to a worldwide system of military alliances. Monetary arrangements, technical assistance and development schemes: ... fostering of a pre-established harmony between scholarship and the national purpose; invasion of the private household by the togetherness of public opinion. (Marcuse, 1991, p. 20)

Marcuse was also concerned with the nature of technology, the convergence of the Soviet system with the USA, the effect of the Cold War arms race, internal repression and the lack of awareness by the mass of the people of the processes that were taking place. Within the political process in the USA he noted how bipartisanship in foreign policy overrides competitive group interests. In the arena of the USA's national interest, national security and the perceived need for a strong military presence, there were no significant differences within the political system. Marcuse argued that the real threat to and within the society of the USA was the prospect of freedom for the individual. But this held true, according to Marcuse, for any technological society, including the Soviet Union. The most significant way in which repression is maintained is through the threat of some imagined or specially created external enemy and this much has not changed as we have seen from the events before and since 9/11. Marcuse, in the quote that follows, uses the word *spectre* deliberately, no doubt, conjuring up much the same imagery as Marx in the opening sentence of *The Communist Manifesto* ('there is a spectre haunting Europe, the spectre of Communism'). 'The Enemy is the common denominator of all doing and undoing. And the Enemy is not identical with actual communism or actual capitalism – he is in both cases the real spectre of liberation' (Marcuse, 1991, p. 52).

In this way Marcuse replaced the desired feature *communism* with *liberation* and he also observed that in this same process the *insane becomes the rational*:

[T]he insanity of the whole absolves the particular insanities and turns the crimes against humanity into a rational enterprise. When the people, aptly stimulated by the public and private authorities, prepare for lives of total mobilization, they are sensible not only because of the present Enemy, but also because of the investment and employment possibilities in industry and

entertainment. Even the most insane calculations are rational: the annihilation of five million people is preferable to that of ten million . . . It is hopeless to argue that a civilization which justifies its defense by such calculus proclaims its own ends. (Marcuse, 1991, p. 52)

To Marcuse, then, we owe a perspective which gives us a conception of rationality, technology, commodities, the 'state', government and bipartisanship and the human condition and what the 'state' fears most, *which is not an external enemy but the liberation of its own people*. In one way this calls to mind the work of Rousseau in that it is the 'state' that makes war, but not just with nation-states, but with its own people. It is hard to accept, however, that a nation-state such as that of the USA with such a huge level of overall prosperity is at war with its own people who accept placidly, more or less, their own lost liberties. On the other hand, consider some of these features:

1. The existence of the death penalty
2. The gun laws
3. The high murder rates
4. A prison population five times higher than that of the next highest advanced industrial nation
5. The entrenched nature of narcissism in every day and commercial life
6. Aggression, violence and harsh language in the cinema and on television
7. Scant respect for knowledge of the past in a postmodern age
8. The difficulty of generating respect for the environment
9. Foreign policies based on narrow national interest
10. Respect for and high status of the entrepreneurial drive and of the wealthy.

We can link some of the Marcusean discussion with the phrase 'affluent society' coined by JK Galbraith in 1956 and which soon became a useful shorthand for the kind of normal society in which people of Western economies were experiencing (Galbraith, 1956). However critical Galbraith was, Marcuse was considerably more alarmed. He characterized the same society as having the following characteristics:

1. A vast industrial and technical capacity which is dedicated to the production and distribution of luxury goods, gadgets, waste, planned obsolescence, military or semi-military equipment;
2. A high degree of concentration of economic and political power, combined with government intervention in the economy and other areas of life;

3. A philosophy of social engineering involving ‘scientific and pseudoscientific investigation, control, and manipulation of private and group behaviour, both at work and at leisure (including the behaviour of the psyche, the soul, the unconscious and the subconscious) for commercial and political purposes’.

As a result of the interaction and interconnections of these features, ‘the strains and stresses suffered by the individual in the affluent society are grounded in the normal functioning of this society’.

Marcuse sees this as the real contradiction that

translates itself from the social structure into the mental structure of individuals. There, it activates and aggravates destructive tendencies which, in a hardly sublimated mode, are made socially useful in the behaviour of the individuals, on the private as well as political level – in the behaviour of the nation as a whole. Destructive energy becomes socially useful aggressive energy, and the aggressive behaviour impels growth – growth of economic, political, and technical power. Just as in the contemporary scientific enterprise, so in the economic enterprise and in that of the nation as a whole, constructive and destructive achievements, work for life and work for death, procreating and killing are inextricably united. (Marcuse, 1991)

Marcuse further applies Freudian theories to explain the nature and sources of violence by going on to say

aggression activates destruction which ‘aims’ at death, while libido seeks the preservation, protection, and amelioration of life. Therefore, it is only as long as destruction works in the service of eros that it serves civilisation and the individual; if aggression becomes stronger than its erotic counterpart, the trend is reversed. (Marcuse, 1991)

Thus, Marcuse accuses Western society of being just as totalitarian as its counterparts and sees aggression and destruction as an endemic feature of the affluent society. The more recent events in Afghanistan and Iraq, the use of rendition, torture, drone attacks and the like indicate that little has changed for the better since Marcuse made his stand in the 1960s, as we are well into our second decade of the twenty-first century 50 years later.

One of his conclusions, depending on the acceptance of Freud’s theorizing, is somewhat terrifying: if the

destructive impulse strives for the annihilation of the individual’s own life no matter how long the ‘detour’ via other lives and targets, then we may indeed

speak of a suicidal tendency on a truly social scale, and the national and international play with total destruction may well have found a firm basis in the instinctual nature of individuals.

In other words, the whole of the *affluent society* is on the road to self-destruction.

Civilization had arisen, Freud suggested, when the life instincts that drove men to seek pleasure were 'repressed' and the instinctual energy behind them were diverted to labour and work. This repression was imposed by external necessity – men had to submit to unpleasant toil because, in the prevailing conditions of scarcity, this was the only way they could obtain the things they needed to stay alive. Thus, civilization was based on the repression of men's life instincts and, Freud added, had to be. The position of the al Qaeda and other opponents to Westernization led by the USA have demonstrated what may happen when *thanatos* dominates *eros* and how the willingness to commit suicide or martyr oneself has thrown the West, where *eros* has had some triumphs, into confusion.

Marcuse agreed that, in conditions of scarcity, civilization had to be based on repression, but adds that not even then was all repression a result of the scarcity imposed by nature. Some repression was, he argued, social or, in other words, brought about the way society was organized in conditions of scarcity. This extra he dubbed 'surplus-repression', which was imposed on the producers by the ruling classes of history. Marcuse argued that much unpleasant toil could be abolished in the modern world, or at least reduced, so that men and women's repressed life instincts could be liberated. Existing repression, in other words, is no longer imposed by nature but by man-made society, which, in the interests of whatever ruling class, *artificially preserves scarcity and forces most people to be mere instruments of production.*

Violence and repression, whether one delves too deeply into Freud or not, do characterize the modern world, even though Western societies do not experience trench warfare or carpet bombing on the scale of the two world wars any longer; violence and the exercise of the death instinct is all too common.²⁰ While one does not have to accept Marcuse's arguments or underlying theorizations *in toto*, at least many of his observations of 50 years ago still ring true. What the 'state' may well fear most is the liberation of its own people and not an external enemy. For many of us it is hard to accept that it is repression that *maintains the internal peace through affluence rather than arms. For many of us it is hard to accept that our purchases at the local Mall or High Street or on the internet are the bars to our cell.*

Hannah Arendt and power to the people

In the heat of the protests against the Vietnam War, it was sometimes supposed that real power rested with the 'people'. Arendt attempted to theorize this view in her short treatise *On Violence* (Arendt, 1970). In order to do so she had to reject the Marxist position that power rested with the dominant class, though she was, in some ways, close to the Luxemburg position that change could only come through mass protest and the general strike would bring down the capitalist class in favour of the mass proletariat at a time when the proletariat might be thought to represent the 'people' in the West. By Arendt's time, the proletariat did not seem capable of mass revolutionary movement. This meant power rested with a mass but not a class. Arendt was somewhat taken with d'Entreves who quotes Cicero and thus makes a distinction between authority and power: *potestas in populo, auctoritas in senatu*. Thus, in a situation where full direct democracy does not exist, the people hold true power while authority (or legitimacy) is held by the ruling (governing) body. When it comes to violence, which may be exercised on the authority of the state, she says: 'The extreme form of power is All against One, the extreme form of violence is One against All.' She goes on to reflect, partially on linguistic grounds but not entirely, on the usage of the following words and asks for greater clarity: power, strength, force, authority and violence. Her musings are as follows:

Power, she argues, is the human capacity to act in concert. An individual has no power, and power exists only as long as the group stays together. Though she does not refer to the trade union principle 'united we stand, divided we fall', she might well have done. If the word 'power' or 'powerful' is attached to an individual, she claims, we should really be referring to the strength of an individual, not to his or her actual power which cannot exist.

Strength: no one person can have sufficient strength to overcome the many as long as the many, presumably, recognize their power over the individual.

Force: she rejects as having any significant meaning in practice and should never be used unless referring to such forces of nature as storms, volcanic eruptions or earthquakes.

Authority: she regards the meaning of authority as being elusive. Authority, however, always demands respect as the respect for a father or accepting the wisdom of any form of government. Without the respect and acceptance of the many there can be no true authority. The greatest enemy of authority is contempt

and the best way of expressing contempt is through humour. She was no doubt thinking of the underground or disguised satire prevalent in the totalitarian communist regimes of the time.

Violence, she argues, is close to strength as violence is used to augment strength.

Thus, because these terms are often substituted for each other, and in fact, in reality do merge into one or other, it has been possible to maintain obedience in society, even of the most advanced kind. She concludes that power and violence are not the same, but, more importantly, where the one rules absolutely, the other is absent, because when violence appears power is in jeopardy. Violence can destroy power but it cannot create it (Arendt, 1970).

While few, if any, social or political-scientists, follow her distinctions at all closely, her final comment is interesting in the context of the Vietnam War and the everyday exposure of the use of violence in Indo-China and within the USA:

[T]he allegedly greatest power on earth is helpless to end a war, clearly disastrous for all concerned, in one of the earth's smallest countries ... our power has become impotent ... every decrease in power is an open invitation to violence. (Arendt, 1970, p. 87)

The USA were defeated and in that sense Arendt was correct; the people of Vietnam, collectively, and with great sacrifice, had the power, but, ironically, the power did not exist without the extensive use of violence; even if the technological violence was less, their relative violence was much greater, measured by the loss of Vietnamese lives which far out-numbered those of the USA and the French before them. What is more, the USA and her allies have been unable to end war in such a way as to guarantee peace in either Iraq or Afghanistan.

While more recent authors such as Steven Pinker (Pinker, 2012 *passim*) have suggested that the world is less violent than it was in previous centuries (as a result of the process of civilization), we still live in a world where much violence might be avoided; where the pacifying influence of civilization is more apparent than real and where the Marcusian and Arendt views provide a strong conviction that *eros* is having a rough time conquering *thanatos*. (This would not surprise the ancient Greeks who had their God of War, Ares, mating with their Goddess of Love, Aphrodite, to produce Eros. Love was born of the union of war and beauty.)²¹

The study of history and political economy

At this point I want to return to E.H. Carr to discuss briefly the importance of historical method. In doing so, there is no better informant than E.H. Carr. His *What Is History?* has set the pattern for the writing of the more intelligent histories ever since (Carr, 1987).

This current work is one of political economy: that is, it is not merely a work of politics with the economics put in or a work of economics with the politics put in, but it is in the traditions set by Adam Smith, David Ricardo, John Stuart Mill and Karl Marx and is dependent on historical method. It is as much about the *Wealth of Nations* as it is a critique of modern political economy of nations and their dealings with each other in the spheres of politics, production, exchange, finance, co-operation and conflict. At the same time, it hopes to walk with history.

The following conceptually distinct but overlapping and connected issues arise to do with facts, the role of the individual in relation to 'society', historical inevitability or historical determinism or the tide of history itself, laying blame or the motivations of the historian himself, historical causation and ideology with underlying purposes such as the nature of progress, the righting of wrongs and the predictive quality of historical analysis.

As to facts, the reader, hopefully, will not find himself or herself 'sunk without trace in an ocean of facts' (Carr, 1987).²² There is in this volume a deliberate resistance to piling in huge quantities of factual material. And, as with Carr and one of his major influences, Benedetto Croce, this current history is informed by the present and responds to the loosely put dictum: 'all history is contemporary history'. It is not, however, a comprehensive history of either the growth of nation-states or of capitalism, nor does it offer every possible explanation for war and wars generally; it is a study of how the dialectical relationship between the nation-state and capitalism have contributed to war, and as a result provides an explanation that accounts not only for the origins of modern war but for the continuance of modern war. On the other hand, as Carr argued, history does not provide a way of predicting the future. In the case of this work, we cannot predict where the next war will break out exactly, but we can say that as long as nation-state and capitalism exist more or less in their present forms there will be from time to time and place to place war, and war based on ever-changing forms of technology with weaponry becoming obsolescent, then obsolete and then replaced by further weaponry developed by a system of capitalism that works in various ways with the nation-state which, as yet, is not obsolete. As Carr says, 'The function of the

historian is neither to love the past nor to emancipate himself from the past, but to master and understand it as the key to understanding the present' (Carr, 1987, p. 26). Moreover, this overall approach to history tends to understate heavily the role of the individual actor. Bismarck did this, Chamberlain did that, Phillip II wanted to conquer England, George Dubya was a pawn of Dick Cheney and so on. To this extent we are again on the side of Carr: the actors 'owe their role in history to the mass of their followers, and are significant as social phenomena, or not at all. To some this may be extreme. Dick Cheney, Paul Wolfowitz and the rest of those involved in the *Project for the New American Century* are picked out for negative comment in a later chapter, but when I do so these men and their associates, including Bush the younger, represent a social phenomenon, to a mass of complicit, tacit or vocal followers, that is in our mention of Bismarck or Bush we provide a mere personification of the dialectic between nation-state and the system of capitalism. To this extent, again, I am with both Carr and Hegel when they see the key actors as those who actualize the age in which they live.

History thrives on generalization even though at many levels it appears to be about the particular. Moreover, in doing so, the book provides a moral judgement: when it comes to assessing the nation-state and capitalism in pursuing many of their aims which result in war, such outcomes are morally wrong.

Along with Carr, we should regard the issue of *why* as being of the utmost importance because the *why* is in fact the understanding of the processes we seek to uncover, and hence the title of this work, *Why War*, as an echo of Einstein and Freud's pamphlet of 1933. And in asking the question *why* we admit that there is a possibility of an answer and that answer cannot be that history is simply a procession of accidents. Of course, accidents happen, but accident is not the motor force of history. History is a struggle, a largely effective struggle, against accident. While the world may have come to an end because of an 'accidental' incident that set off a nuclear holocaust, the very existence of the circumstances that created the possibility was no accident. Nor was the British Empire built in 'a fit of absence of mind'. And so on. There are causes and they can be uncovered and understood even though history is a matter of interpretation; it is possible to unravel causes; not all facts are equal; generalization is possible; moral judgements are allowable; actors are of their time. This is why history is an integral part of the study of political economy and Hobsbawm advises us of the correctness of this approach:

My argument implies that, divorced from history economics is a rudderless ship and economists without history have not much idea of where it is sailing to ...

It is as much an error to abstract classical political economy from the historical sociology to which Smith devoted the third book of his *Wealth of Nations* as it is to separate it from his moral philosophy. Similarly history and analysis remained integrated in Marx, the last of the great classical political economists ... in fact the separation between history and economics did not make itself felt until the marginalist transformation of economics ... history and economics grew up together. (Hobsbawm, 1997, pp. 129–130, 139)

Fred Halliday and putting in political economy

One of the laments of those from within and outside the discipline of International Relations has been the way in which both Marx and economics have been largely left out. Carr's position has always been ambiguous and suspect to some, not the least because of his fascination with the Soviet Union as well as the Russian anarchists centred on Bakunin. Carr's sympathies have not always been made as clear as with others such as Eric Hobsbawm (who, though a lifelong Marxist, has been claimed to be the greatest historian of his age in obituaries at his death in 2012). One of the loudest objectors to the Anglo-American and orthodox hold on the discipline of International Relations came from Fred Halliday in a forthright and authoritative 'rethink'.²³

His main aim was to inject the Marxist manner of thought into the academic discipline of International Relations that retained central themes relating largely to the role of nation-states, though he did admit that international political economy was beginning to play a part in the thinking of the practitioners of the discipline. For Halliday, the important thing was to consider the importance of Marxist thought in the areas of war, the role of classes and the character of ideology, matters which, for this current work, are also of central importance. He accounts for this by pointing out that most writing on International Relations was dominated by the 'Americans'. But by the 1980s international political economy began to insert itself into the discipline; history also played a bigger part in enlarging the scope of the profession of International Relations; in this context he quotes the work of Hobsbawm, Wallerstein and Krippendorff. Halliday, in his dissatisfaction with Waltz, for instance, and realism, argues that a central weakness in Waltz and realism is his separation of foreign or international affairs from the domestic. Importantly, claims Halliday, the study of capitalism is entirely or almost entirely missing. Halliday writes: 'Since Waltz

aspires to a strictly “political” analysis of international relations ... there is no room in his view for the concept of capitalism and for a study of the relationship of the rise of distinct states to the international spread of capitalism’ (Halliday, p. 1984, p. 34).

And it is this crucially missing element which is central to our present concerns. Halliday points out that the literature on International Relations almost entirely ignores the term ‘capitalism’. This has led to misleading interpretations of crucial international situations, not the least being the analysis of the nature of the Cold War, for instance. It has involved minimizing the work of Wallerstein, for instance, who argues that it has been capitalistic relations that constitute the world-system, not political realism. Moreover, drawing on Marxist historical materialism, security, a feature of concern among academics professing International Relations, is removed from the distinct theoretical sphere and becomes the interest of specific social groups and for specific socio-economic reasons. The spread of capitalism across the globe has led to most forms of subjugation experienced by peoples in virtually every territory. Thus, introducing historical materialism, according to Halliday, allows us to see the nature of this subjugation, the manner of the subjugation and the role of classes in this process. In our later discussion of democracy and the ‘state’ we can only concur with Halliday when he writes:

The primacy of classes therefore serves in a dual sense to place in question the concept of the nation-state: it shows, first, that the state itself is, to a considerable extent, a function of wider social forces, and secondly that the impermeability of domestic politics is an appearance which conceals a permanent, underlying internationalization of political and economic factors. (Halliday, 1984, p. 64)

Halliday tends to echo much of what is said by Hobsbawm in relation to putting Marx into historical studies when he refers to such elements as ‘the economic interpretation of history’, ‘base and superstructure’, ‘class interests and the class struggle’, the ideological nature of history, historical materialism and so on. Similarly, Hobsbawm points out that Marx’s study of capitalism contains an enormous amount of historical material, historical illustration and other matter relevant to the historian. In all this, Hobsbawm reminds us – Marx and history, Marx and political economy, Marx on capitalism and historical materialism ... ‘Marx did not say the last word, far from it but he did say the first word, and we are still obliged to continue the discourse’ (Hobsbawm, 1994, p. 221).

Peace

While International Relations is a study that, in a way, explains war as the most common outcome of power relations, more recently there has been some growth in a new discipline that has as its main focus war and violent conflict but begins with a concept of peace or concepts of peace. This is Peace Studies and, though trailing behind 'International Relations' in academic popularity, has, nevertheless, attracted academics, activists, think-tanks and policy makers from a variety of other disciplines and traditions of thought which include engineers, systems analysts, medical practitioners, physicists and so on as well as the usual range of social scientists, and, like International Relations, most of it is professed in the USA. In some ways discussing peace rather than war in the first instance does provide a new perspective. Apart from anything else this perspective opens up the possibility of peace among nations rather than war. Starting with peace in itself is optimistic, whereas starting with 'war' is potentially pessimistic as if war were inevitable. If the question is: is peace inevitable? Simply by asking the question in this way we get a very different answer from asking 'is war inevitable?'

Definitions of peace vary as one might expect. The first-century Roman historian Tacitus described the Roman Peace as a 'solitudinum', a solitude, a wasteland, a desert. The great metropolitan and cosmopolitan City of Rome oozed wealth and incorporated slums in the way Rio and Mexico does now and London and New York did in the nineteenth century (and still do) and Constantinople did in the fifteenth century. The Empire was truly global in its own terms, though it did not cover the whole planet. Roman manners, architecture, money and sculpture were to be found from Romania to Britain, from Alexandria to Paris, from Jerusalem to Rome. To the Romans, peace was repression and, where they could not extract surplus value, they burned and wasted. The key feature of the Roman Peace was the search for stability and for borders and for wealth and power for the elite commanders and governors, not for Peace as such. To the Romans, then, peace was the absence of war. Is it the case that we, in this modern age, still see peace as merely the (temporary) absence of war?

The major transnational agency established to bring peace at the international level is the United Nations, formed in 1945 by what is now seen as a small group of 40 or so nations. From its earliest idealistic inception it was dominated by the victorious powers who conducted the Second World War. The combination of idealism and military and economic strength, however, has not brought a

peaceful world. Indeed, as the number of nations has proliferated so that there are now four times as many as there were in 1945, a peaceful world is still a dream. It is not possible to say that universal peace is even an aim of nations and international organizations, notwithstanding the words of the UN Charter. Nor has modern globalization since the 1980s brought universal peace any closer. For, if we translate globalization to mean global capitalism (see Chapter 4), it is hard to imagine that a world based on greed and with a built-in tendency towards the concentration of economic and political power can possibly augur well for the future. Ideals are all very well, but as Freud wrote, 'any effort to replace brute force by the might of an ideal, is under present conditions, doomed to fail' (Einstein and Freud, 1933, p. 39). Freud's 'present conditions' were those of 1933, on the eve of the seizure of power by Hitler but after the rise of fascist totalitarianism in Portugal, Italy and Japan and Stalinism in the Soviet Empire. Freud may still be proved correct as the might of an ideal has to overcome the might of greed and the search for profit by modern global capitalism and the inheritance of the wherewithal for war provided by the so-called advanced nation-states. There are some well-meaning writers who argue that capitalism is not essentially the cause of war. For instance, Robert Hinde and Joseph Rotblat write 'the view that capitalism needs war should not be taken too seriously'.²⁴ The main thrust of this book utterly rejects that view.

The prospect of being able to secure a permanent worldwide peace is usually traced back to Kant who considered that the changes in the eighteenth century with the accompaniment of the surge of optimistic ideas of the Enlightenment as offering the prospect of 'perpetual peace'.²⁵ In more recent years, academics of various shades of position have noted that democracies do not fight each other though as we shall see this is a misleading observation. Associated with the present failed hopes for democracy in many parts of the world, there is also the problem of the way in which democracies use the imposition of human rights as a cover for the pursuit of national interest which is explored also in Chapter 6.²⁶

Kant's view that permanent peace was not only possible but likely has not been realized and peace has been notable by its absence. It has long been suggested that peace is not merely the absence of war. It is not necessarily peace at all if that peace is simply a temporary respite while warring parties prepare for the next war or the circumstances are such that a period without actual fighting is marked by instability. Napoleon's peace treaty at Tilsit with the Russian Tsar did not guarantee peace any more than the infamous Munich agreement between Chamberlain and Hitler. The treaties and their punitive terms and carve up of territories, new

frontiers and creation of an unstable economic future that followed the First World War meant there was a high likelihood of future conflict.²⁷ The immediate creation of a Cold War from 1945 that lasted until 1989 meant that war simply continued as a series of proxy wars. When those wars ended they were replaced by intra-state wars of the 1990s and thereafter as new nations formed or were opposed or new instabilities replaced the Cold War, war and violent conflict have continued. Thus war not peace has, in effect, been more or less permanent in the twentieth century and that has continued through to the present day.

Oddly, there has been a philosophy, emanating from the strangest source that powerful weapons in the hands of all potential combatants might actually produce peace. This was certainly the argument that justified the existence of nuclear weaponry in the hands of the two superpowers from 1950 onward. Originally, this idea was widely promulgated in one form or another by the Swedish explosives manufacturer Alfred Nobel (1833–1896) long before the development of nuclear weapons. This view was also supported by the Scottish-American steel manufacturer Andrew Carnegie in the nineteenth century, the former having established the Nobel Peace awards and the latter the lesser known Carnegie Endowment for Peace.

Nobel was not essentially an arms manufacturer, though late in life he did buy the Bofors gun factory but he did invent the explosives, nitro-glycerine and later dynamite, that made an enormous contribution to the mining, construction and railway building industries that were so crucial to the rapid growth of industrial capitalism round the globe. He believed, possibly genuinely, that ‘my factories may end war’, seemingly convinced that the more terrible the weapon the less likely it would be that war would take place. Most authors argue that he was genuinely distressed by the destructive power of his innovations; on one occasion his experiments led to the death of one of his brothers. But he persisted in the view that disarmament would not bring peace and he was fiercely protective of his patents and that he was his own best salesman for his explosives. Expansion of his commercial empire was a result of the massive demand for dynamite in the new industrial age spreading over the globe as well as for military purposes. The idea now that dynamite would be used only for peaceful purposes seems to be preposterous, and, even worse, so many Nobel Peace laureates have not, in any sense, been men of peace or have contributed seriously or lastingly to the eradication of violent conflict.

One of Nobel’s contemporaries was the immensely wealthy Andrew Carnegie (1835–1919). After making a fortune in his middle years, mainly from steel

(some of which was used for building warships for the expanding United States Navy), he sold his share in United States Steel and spent his later years setting up charitable, educational and peace foundations; one of the latter survives to this day and is devoted to exploring the possibilities for world peace. Laudable as the aims were and are, the Carnegie Endowment has probably made an even smaller contribution than Nobel's Foundation.

One of the problems is that individual capitalists are only men of their time. Their main function has been to serve the combined interests of capital and the search for profit. Turning to philanthropy and pursuing intellectual ideas (how to spread peace) takes them outside their milieu of profit-takers into quite another world; they move from the reality of capitalism to a utopian world that is removed from reality where prescriptions for peace are likely to be doomed to failure.

Pacifism in general has had some small successes in highly specific instances usually related to internal reforms; in the context of international conflict on any scale pacifist movements do not generally succeed. All nation-states, more or less, keep a military force, supposedly for protection rather than aggression. It is possible to look around and find a few island states or anachronistic city-states without a formal military. However, on closer examination virtually all have the protection of one big brother or other. The islands of the Caribbean without a military (Grenada, Santa Lucia, St. Vincent) contribute to a regional security arrangement. Islands in the Pacific such as Samoa, Palau, Marshall Islands are protected by Australia or New Zealand or the USA. Monaco is protected by France and Andorra by Spain while the tiny state of Liechtenstein (population 36,713) allows itself an army in war-time but Liechtenstein has yet to mobilize its army. None of these small countries are typical of the major countries in the world. The one exception is the small country of Costa Rica (population four million) in Central America, sandwiched between Panama (which, though it abolished its army in 1980, remains under the protection of the USA) and Nicaragua. Under the Presidency and inspiration of Pepe Figueres, the Costa Rica constitution of December 1948 banned the military which was disbanded in 1949. The central barracks in San Jose, Costa Rica, is now a cultural centre and the national budget is not burdened by the need for armed forces; the police are armed, ineptly for the most part, and the personnel are underpaid. While the intention of allocating budget expenditure to education and a national health service is excellent in principle, the free health service is heavily overcrowded and state schools could be more adequately funded. Nevertheless, Costa Rica has

been free of internal insurrection or coups d'état since 1949 and there have been no attempts to invade the country, though in the 1980s there were some failed attempts to militarize the country by the CIA during the Contra-Sandinista conflict in neighbouring Nicaragua and there were covert operations supported by the CIA (hidden from the Costa Rican administration) from the Costa Rican jungle on the Nicaragua border. In addition Nicaragua claims both banks of the San Juan River which is the border between the two countries and charges tolls for river traffic operated by Costa Rican enterprise. Disputes, therefore, have to be resolved by the Organisation of American States or by the United Nations, both of which have their special difficulties and can be easily obstructed.

Most forms of pacifism have had their successes as non-violence, passive resistance, civil disobedience or the more obscure truthforce, or *satyagraha*, developed, practised and intellectualized by Mahatma Gandhi. Some have more success than others in such areas are opposing imperial domination (India), securing civil rights (USA), contributing to the implementation of democratic forms (as with the disappointing Arab Spring of 2011) and so on. For the most part these movements do not seriously impinge on the direct capacity of a nation-state to wage war. It might be said that the civil disobedience opposing military involvement by the USA in Vietnam did meet with some success while the CND movement did not achieve unilateral nuclear disarmament in the UK. However, as we shall see in Chapter 6, democracies fall short of actually being the rule by the people for the people and we shall argue in due course that the 'state' maintains its ability to act in ways in which it sees fit through a variety of means.

Peace-keeping, peace-building, conflict resolution

Putting peace first rather than war has made Peace Studies an applied area of academic study. However, taking the United Nations as a main focus, is it possible to say that the actions and techniques employed by the United Nations in the area of peace-keeping and conflict resolution have had success in producing peace of a substantial kind? By peace we can include to some extent the absence of war, at least, as a short-term aim, but have there been any successes where it can be said that United Nations intervention has been crucial to solving long-term violent conflict? A number of authors have tried assessing these issues with a general conclusion that seems to indicate that despite scores of actual interventions, the

overall record appears to indicate that success at any level has been limited and in many cases counter-productive.²⁸

Defining success or failure in the area of peace-keeping is difficult because of the conflation of such terms as peace-keeping, peace-building, conflict resolution, peacemaking and so on. The terms of reference or rules of engagement differ from situation to situation, the changing aims and intentions of the various and diverse parties and their supporters in the international 'community', the very meaning of international 'community' (as something other than allies of the USA), the economic and political conditions and many other factors combine to make evaluation virtually impossible. One person who has attempted to provide a rational and balanced view by pulling together a range of research with that of his own is Paul F Diehl (Diehl, 2008).

While it is possible to point to a number of events where the United Nations has intervened that can be labelled successful up to a point, there are many cases where intervention not only has not helped but has made resolution of the violent conflict more difficult. In one study conducted by Diehl and Greig, it was found that 'the presence of peacekeepers actually made direct negotiation and third party mediation less likely ... the parties to the conflict were less likely to make efforts at resolving the underlying conflict'. In addition, the protagonists were less likely to reach agreement when they get to the negotiating table.

Basically where there is a warring situation, the only real peace solution is when one side wins conclusively and the other loses. While outsiders may seek a compromise of some sort the actual disputants simply want to win and compromise is not part of their vision. This may account for the tendencies towards genocidal-type solutions that seemingly would 'solve' the problems, whatever they may be, forever. So, for instance, according to Turkish Cypriots who were in the minority, the Greek Cypriots wanted to rid the island of Turkish Cypriots completely, first by bribery, then by exile and finally by more drastic means. The United Nations sent a force in to observe and keep the peace in 1964; the Turkish intervention of 1974 took place despite their presence, but since 1974 the United Nations force (UNFICYP) has taken some credit for 'successfully' keeping the peace, though the fact that the two sides have not resorted to violence is much more to do with the presence of possibly as many as 30,000 Turkish troops, tanks and artillery on the island. It is hard to say then whether this is a success or not for UN peacekeeping intervention. Much the same ambiguity can be said for most of the rest of the 100 or so UN operations.

Another way of achieving peace, or an end to hostilities short of the obliteration of the other 'side', is to engage in dialogue or 'talking'. Hence, for instance, it has been suggested that the more serious hostilities in Afghanistan can be brought to an end by talking to the 'moderate' Taleban. It has been suggested that the violence in the Philippines can be brought to a conclusion through 'talks'. Talks, as I write, have been taking place with the FARC in Colombia. Some active in peace negotiations have developed a 'ripeness' theory to suggest that there is a moment in time when talks can bring violent conflict to a conclusion.²⁹

At times, the Good Friday agreement in the UK has been cited as an example of successful talks. However, the talks involved were slow tortuous and many sided. Rarely do serious conflicts once they have developed amount to simply two sides fighting who need to be brought together. In Northern Ireland, as Mari Fitzduff has shown, negotiations are long, complex and involve a whole range of parties who must be willing to give up whatever is in their interest to achieve a cessation of fighting (Fitzduff, 2002, *passim*). In Northern Ireland, the peace process involved diplomatic efforts with the Republic of Ireland and other nation-states; it involved talks with business interests; it involved politicians, with 'glory' awaiting many that sought to heighten their reputations from achieving an end to violence (Michael Mates, Margaret Thatcher, Mo Mowlem, John Major, Tony Blair); other clandestine talks among and between the para-militaries and with the army were conducted; donated funds were cut off from the USA; weapons were intercepted from Libya and so on. All this was accompanied by demographic changes in prospect that would affect the popular vote; there was war weariness, a desire for some para-militaries to settle for political power; there was a need to dismantle the 'criminal' structures of smuggling and protection rackets; arms had to be decommissioned and a huge input of forgiveness had to be injected where before there was bitterness and revenge and suspicion and hate. The peace process took a lot more than just 'talking' to the other side and it required a massive amount of 'ripeness'. Yet, still, it is not fully over and done with.

Conclusions

- Conflict and violent conflict amounting to war is an indivisible part of the capitalist system.
- The production of commodities for profit is the main purpose of capitalism and this has a tendency to promote the commodity as sacred and reduces the individual to the profane.

- The profit-motive is at the very root of the capitalist process and is based on competition.³⁰ This occasions a range of contradictions in the foreign policies of the advanced nation-states.
- Production for profit will always tend to put pressure on the availability of non-renewable resources but will also lead to continuous and unstoppable technological change.
- The accumulation of capital is vital in order to promote technological innovation to compensate for the pressure on specific resources.
- Capitalists constantly have to struggle to maintain their *rate* of profit. This, one way or another, tends also to lead to the export of violent conflict.
- Legal systems in capitalist countries put private property laws before many of the rights of the individual.
- The political concepts of realism, power, fear and security should not be considered without integrating key concepts and analysis drawn from the discipline of political economy (rather than separating out the disciplines and elevating politics to an undeserved prime position as with the theorization of Morgenthau, Waltz, Giddens and others).
- Capitalist growth is anarchic and continues as a series of crises, the outcomes of which are uncertain.
- All of the above leads to confusions about the meaning and use of 'human rights'.

A world in which capitalists seek to maintain profits, accumulate and concentrate capital while workers struggle to maintain their wage levels for their very survival is not a world which, on the face of it, is conducive to peace because it is a world that is dependent on greed, jealousy, power and fear. We saw Badiou's view on this: 'Any war will do ... as long as the appearance of victory is overwhelming' (Badiou, 2006, pp. 28, 43 et seq.). And associated with this, it is also worth recalling Marcuse's comment: 'The Enemy is the common denominator of all doing and undoing. And the Enemy is not identical with actual communism or actual capitalism – he is in both cases the real spectre of liberation' (Marcuse, 1964, p. 52).

These, greed, jealousy, power and fear, are also the key motivations for the warmonger, where it is the warmonger who tends to make the moral judgements, as we noted in Carr's comments in respect of the peace settlement at Versailles in 1919: 'What matters is that these supposedly absolute and universal principles were not principles at all, but the unconscious reflexions of national interest at a particular time' (Carr, 1939/1981, p. 86).

Nationalism and Nation-States

Introduction

Virtually the whole of the earth's land surface is divided up into nation-states with more or less fixed boundaries. Each frontier has approximately the same arrangements whereby some people can cross with ease, others with difficulty and others still not at all. Historically this has not always been the case. Indeed, it is only a few centuries since the system began and only recently that it has been completed as a result of decolonization after 1945 and the disintegration of the Soviet system of totalitarianism after 1989, and now fully legitimated by the existence, title, operations and role of the United Nations.

These frontiers are entirely man-made or, more correctly, system-made. They have been created by a political and economic system that began in Western Europe and have been aided by forms of capitalism with its paradoxical tendency to transcend frontiers, creating supra-territorial space for its special manner of exploitation and the creation of surpluses. Indeed, most barriers to movement in the world were a matter of agreed custom among countless tribes and clans. For frontiers to exist there needs to be a phenomenon known as the nation-state. Once it is possible to connect nation-state with capitalism, we arrive at the modern world. The journey since then as the whole planet has been divided into hard and fast nation-states has continued as a bloody and tragic story.

Nationalism, it is claimed, assumes that the people of one's nation are superior to the people of all other nations. This means that nationalism is always poised for domination of other nations, or that nations are permanently poised to defend themselves from domination. Fear is a permanent feature of all nations.¹ Or as Buzan suggests, it is the 'state' that is central to the existence of the nation as we

now understand it; thus, it is the 'state' that plays on the fear of its people and exists, as Hobbes argued, first and foremost as a security giver. While the 'state' would have its people fear other nations, it is the 'state' that *ought* to be the feared object (cf Marcuse, 1991). In addition, the nation-state is at the core of, indeed merged with, the national economy (Stander, 2009; Buzan, 1991, Chapter 2). To work effectively the nation-state requires cohesion and seeks as many forms of glue as possible. It may seek to establish a common language and religion and culture and history, inventing whatever is missing or producing ideologies to suit the circumstances and reinforcing them through educational institutions, mass media, pulpits or mosques.²

As to the forms of political constitution they can be of any kind. There are no rules on this bar one. It is quite possible to have absolutism, totalitarianism, constitutional monarchy, oligarchy or representative democracy dominated by the ruling class(es) or whatever as long as it is centralized and is not (and this is the exception) an open and free democracy. Full access to power of the masses would be counter-productive to the operation of the nation-state and the 'state', especially where it works in conjunction with effective capitalist systems.

A centralized administration, with control of fiscal policies and tax collection, needs to work hand in glove with the legislative process, the armed services and internal forms of policing and administration of justice. The armed forces ideally are officered by elements emanating from the ruling class. And the whole of society should respond to both bellicosity (based on fear) and class-based militarism promoted by the nation-state in the interests of the owners of property. (As the term 'property' is ambiguous and has various meanings, a discussion of property is presented in Chapter 6.)

One of the more succinct descriptions of what makes a nation comes from one of the main actors on the stage of twentieth-century history, and also one of the most feared which ironically supports the view that while seemingly the 'state' exists for the protection of its people, in reality the 'state' is to be most feared by the people it is supposed to protect. The following description comes from Stalin.³

The nation is a historically constituted, stable community of people, formed on the basis of a common language, territory, economic life and psychological make-up in a common culture ... It goes without saying that a nation, like every historical phenomenon, is subject to the law of change, has its history, its beginning and end ... it is only when all these characteristics are present together that we have a nation.⁴

One might argue that this is a convenient way of looking at nations because it gave Stalin scope for making or breaking any nation he wanted by eradicating regional languages, ordering the mass movement of people from one place to another or refusing to recognize any form of nationhood to marginal groups. However, these are the common factors that make up what we regard as a nation. The inclusion of an economic dimension is important and one which is sometimes denied. For instance, one of the great theorists of economic development, Max Weber, argued, preferring to rely on the explicatory concept of power:

The fervour of ... emotional influence does not, in the main, have an economic origin ... It goes without saying that all those groups who hold power to steer common conduct within a polity will most strongly instil themselves with this ideal fervour of power prestige. They remain the specific and most reliable bearers of the idea of the state as an imperialist power structure demanding unqualified devotion ... The causal components that led to the emergence of a national sentiment ... may vary greatly.⁵

While Stalin appears to be adamant about the features required for a nation, Weber is less certain, no doubt because of a quite different ideological position with Germany requiring a need to consolidate its position as a nation-state but correspondingly with the need to undermine the claims of others for nationhood.

As far as claims to first nationhood are concerned, we have the strongest case for England. On the other hand, the Dutch and the Portuguese were well on the way more or less at the same time as the English and to some extent before. In the case of the Portuguese, they had to contend with resistance to an emerging Spain (and this resistance helped with their national identity and language), but they never developed the concomitant pre-conditions for an industrial, capitalist, administrative and financial infrastructure that was so vital to early nationhood. The Dutch were another matter. They presented a strong challenge to the English defeating them at sea at crucial moments in time. They developed their nationalism in the fight against the Spanish and the Austrians for their identity and economic and political independence. Their banking and financial infrastructure was well developed. The English learned a huge amount from the Dutch and the English language remains peppered with words taken from nautical aspects of Dutch life (anchor, avast, bow, buoy, caboose, cruise, dock, freebooter, keelhauling, schooner, skipper, sloop, smack, smuggler, yacht). However, by the end of the Anglo-Dutch War of the seventeenth century, England was in the ascendancy, taking the Dutch possessions in North America,

and demonstrating an evermore powerful command of the sea. By 1689, the English ruling class(es) were happy to welcome William of Orange, a strong man from the Holland province of the Dutch United Provinces, married to Mary, a legitimate successor to the ousted James II as a joint sovereign of England. Earlier it had been a Dutch political philosopher who produced one of the most powerful justificatory texts for keeping the oceans free from the domination of a single nation, in this case attacking the Portuguese. As the integrity and wealth of the Dutch were at stake, we can see this as the first major justificatory text of commercial capitalism, colonization of distant lands and exploitation through unequal exchange, a process that as yet has not ended.

Hugo Grotius (1583–1645) opposes the hegemon and justifies war

We owe to Grotius two important approaches that provide the ideological bases for growing international capitalist drive backed by the nation-state. One theme established in the argument is that there can be a just war and, second, that parts of the world are to be held in common among all nations. In this case, he was concerned with the vast oceans beyond immediate territorial waters. Grotius argued, in *Mare Librum*, that the Dutch had the right to trade with the East Indies to which the Portuguese were claiming sole trading rights at the time of writing in the early seventeenth century. His tract made him ‘world famous’.

There are many implications of this important treatise despite its contradictions: He argued for a right of contract between two parties without interference from others. He saw that there was the possibility of order in international affairs. He wrote, for instance, that

freedom of trade is based on a primitive right of nations which has a natural and permanent cause: and so that right cannot be destroyed, or at all events, it may not be destroyed except by the consent of all nations. For surely no one nation may justly oppose in any way two nations that desire to enter into a contract with each other.

He insisted that nations had the right to trade freely and to go to war if need be: ‘the Dutch must maintain their right of trade with the East Indies by peace, treaty, or by war’. It was also clear to him that peace came in different forms: ‘so far as peace is concerned, it is well known that there are two kinds of peace, one made on terms of

equality, the other on unequal terms'. And he perceived that genuine lasting peace was possible as a result of an effective war: quoting Cicero who argued that wars must be undertaken in order that people may live in peace unharmed, Grotius argued that 'it follows that peace ought to mean not an agreement which entails slavery, but an undisturbed liberty ... peace is a harmonious agreement based on well ordered regulations'. He also argued, as one might expect from a Dutchman accustomed to experiencing his territories being governed by a foreign empire, that rebelling against oppression justified sedition and violent conflict but also that in doing so the oppressed would always be advantaged over the oppressor: he quoted Alexander the Great, who argued that the oppressed had distinct advantages in war over the aggressors or oppressors. 'Those who repel aggressors are twice armed both with courage because of their just cause, and with the highest hope because they are not doing wrong, but are warding off a wrong.' This was close to his experience as the Dutch were long in contest against dynastic Habsburg claims. Much of this has modern-day resonance. It is in part a statement of what some may regard as universals and other elements that represent typical justificatory ideology.

While philosophers have since the earliest times turned their minds to the nature of the world, increasingly from Grotius onward, we see the development of a distinct strand of philosophy that deals with the nature of politics, the bulk of which has justificatory intentions. His text is especially important as it was developed at a turning point in world history. For centuries Christendom was led by the Pope and the Holy Roman Emperor. Unity of the diverse European peoples was an objective in the face of the threat from the Ottomans. But increasingly as the threat diminished from the early sixteenth century there had been a tendency for sovereign peoples to emerge and they had to learn to live cheek by jowl with each other and had to come to terms with the permanent use of force not only in their home territories but further abroad, across both the Atlantic and Pacific oceans and in the Far East. Out of this development, the road to the one nation-state coupled with the most advanced form of capitalism emerged a new world order led by the Dutch and the English.

Kamen's history of Spain (1500–1700)

A cursory look at history might suggest that Spain was a developed nation-state from the time of Isabella and Ferdinand who through marriage united the thrones of Aragon with the much more populous Castile. Together they

recaptured Granada from the Moors, added Navarre to their possessions and funded Columbus. So, it is superficially supposed that Spain as a nation-state aided by silver and gold from the Americas and further wealth from the Caribbean and the Manila galleon dominated European politics for two centuries. Were this the case, Spain might have set the pattern of nation-state formation and industrial capitalism rather than England/Britain. Henry Kamen has, however, modified the view of Spanish nationhood substantially by showing that Spanish dominance and imperial expansion were in fact partly a result of the dynastic connections of the rulers of Spain who also happened to be rulers of the Flanders and Naples, partly as a result of financial support from Genoese and other bankers, partly as a result of key enemies such as the Dutch, who continued to trade with Spain through war, truce and peace, partly through the Chinese in Manila and partly through the alliance of indigenous tribes in the Americas.

Both in Naples and Navarre, the operative factor was a hereditary right to the throne ... It is sometimes suggested that the secret of success [in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries] was the emergence of Spain as a nation [but] the Peninsular territories known collectively as 'Spain' did not begin to develop as a nation before the eighteenth century ... expansion was always a multiple enterprise ... In a Europe without nation-states colonial enterprise in the sixteenth century was a challenge taken up by all who had the means to do so, the product of international cooperation rather than national capacity. (Kamen, 2002, p. 36)

The Spanish Empire was built on both rapine and primitive accumulation but also through contracting out all manner of services to foreign interests, including relatively sophisticated forms of financial services, even if those services had, in the last resort, to be dependent on gold and silver bullion. Kamen summarizes the position this way:

Down to 1700, the government [of the Spanish Empire] relied principally on private contractors to supply both soldiers and ships] ... The Empire, in reality, was brought into existence by the collaboration of powerful provincial elites and enterprising traders who operated across nations rather than one nation alone ... Virtually all the important operations were, therefore, contracted out ... the crown resorted to international bankers [for the international movement of funds] ... complex international network came into existence, uniting the trading elite of all countries and attracting the investment of a broad range of social classes. (Kamen, 2002, pp. 157/287–289)

In many ways the Iberian Peninsula under the Spanish monarchs in the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries offers an early example, ironically, of the modern form of the Dutch disease. (The Dutch were to gain an enormous amount from its conflicts with Spain.) The *Financial Times* describes the phenomenon thus:

Dutch disease is the negative impact on an economy of anything that gives rise to a sharp inflow of foreign currency, such as the discovery of large oil reserves. The currency inflows lead to currency appreciation, making the country's other products less price competitive on the export market. It also leads to higher levels of cheap imports and can lead to deindustrialisation as industries apart from resource exploitation are moved to cheaper locations. The origin of the phrase is the Dutch economic crisis of the 1960s following the discovery of North Sea natural gas.⁶

While this does not fit exactly the situation as far as the Spanish Empire is concerned, it is fairly close. Spanish industry was not developed by the influx of silver which was used to pay for dynastic European ambitions, failing to find its way into Spanish banks, agriculture, industry or trade in sufficient amounts to initiate meaningful economic expansion. By the time silver arrived from the New World most belonged to foreigners in Genoa, France, London, Hamburg and Amsterdam. At least half was unloaded illicitly as the galleons rested at anchor waiting to enter the port of Cadiz. Much of the rest was used to pay off loans at usurious interest which had been raised to pay for arms and ammunition instead of providing funds for the development of a shipbuilding industry that may well have developed into the kind that the Dutch and English established so effectively; for instance, ships were imported or contracted and foodstuffs were bought from the Netherlands. By contrast the Spanish Empire in its very weakness proved to be of great value to the Dutch and the English (later, after 1707, the British) – so useful, indeed, in economic terms that other interests intervened in support of the Spanish Empire. In 1706, for instance, the Duke of Marlborough wrote, ‘as a good Englishman I must be of the opinion of my country, that both by treaty and interest we are obliged to preserve the monarchy of Spaine entire’ (Kamen, 2002, p. 433). Thus, in England, the wider merchant class saw the marauding of privateers and seadogs over the previous centuries as detrimental to the ordinary business practices in Bilbao and Seville. This observation raises two points: one is the importance of fractions of class occasioned in this instance by conflicting interests of the far-from-homogenous nature of capitalism, and, second, the problems associated with the so-called national interest.

When Captain Woodes Rogers and William Dampier sort forth in 1708 to seek out sources of sudden wealth during the War of Spanish Succession, they met a relatively easy source of huge wealth by capturing the Manila galleon bound for Spain (despite the fact that Spain was a British ally at the time). When they returned with a profit of £200,000 on an investment of £14,000, the private interest coincided with the national interest and provided a key source of funds for the East India Company and thereby assisted the effective exploitation of the Indian subcontinent. This rapine capitalism was not necessarily so fundamentally different from that, in essence, of modern-day Somali pirates,⁷ and served both private and national interests. In this way there was a range of conflicts of interests; they existed within the capitalist class itself, between the aristocracy and the capitalist fractions. It was also the case that the dynastic interest of the sovereigns emerged as a national interest of sorts which had to reconcile itself with the capitalist class fractions as time went on. Nation-state formation was simultaneously 'state' formation.⁸ In England/Britain these forces worked themselves out to produce a nation-state that could reconcile the capitalist/colonial/imperial interests; this was not achieved in Spain and less so in France or Prussia or Russia though it was almost achieved in the United Provinces.⁹

England as the first nation-state

The foundations for the first nation-state took many centuries to develop; those that adhere to the perspective of *la longue durée* of some French historians would not be surprised at the length of time it took for the combination of nation-state and capitalism to emerge. The history of England/Britain demonstrates not only the long time it took but also the way the social structure, the economy, nationalism and imperialism developed into a system that produced the biggest and most powerful nation-state/empire ever known; yet, the country itself numbered not much more than five or six million people at the time of the first Treaty of Paris in 1763, when Britain might be said to have reached clear dominance in the eighteenth century. The population of France was around 20 million and that of China probably ten times that. The story provides the material for understanding other nation-states, though the circumstances and details are not susceptible to replication. It is this analysis, however, that provides insights for the examination of the interconnectedness of state, nation-state, nationalism,

class domination, political formation, capitalism and imperial drive, in short the complexity of the nation-state/capital dialectic.

After the Norman Conquest in 1066, a largely free peasantry was replaced with the French model of feudalism which partially enslaved the common people, but established the beginnings of a centralized system of government under the rule of a king who owed, as far as England was concerned, loyalty to no higher authority except than the Pope. England had the advantages of a large island plus some smaller ones; there were a plethora of navigable inland waterways and nowhere in any case was more than 90 miles from the sea. Thus travel was relatively swift and cheap. There were plentiful supplies of oak and other trees suitable for building, shipbuilding, bow-and-arrow making and for iron smelting; iron ore was in plentiful supply and in addition there was copper, tin, lead and other raw materials. The climate was perfect for sheep, which made the country rich in export potential. The Normans colonized Ireland that offered no military threat but became a source of raw materials and foodstuffs. Wales was troublesome but subdued under Edward I; and though Scotland offered a threat from time to time, it was usually dealt with by buying off the impoverished nobility with land in England. England was never seriously threatened militarily by Scotland except from time to time in the north, but in time lowland Scotland was known in later years as Northern Briton.

The kings of England, however, rarely had the personal resources to behave as absolute despots. For a time, English kings could and did draw on resources from territories on the mainland in what is now France. They might utilize men and resources for, say, the subjugation of Wales. Edward I who was also Duke of Gascony did this with great effect, and in some ways his reign stands out as a period when it was possible to see a nation emerging. But he was never quite the total despot being dependent on calling together barons, knights and commercial interests in order to pursue his territorial and dynastic ambitions. From the reign of King John onward we see the steady establishment of control over the monarch by the feudal lords: Magna Carta was followed by Simon de Montfort's parliament. Though England was an unruly kingdom, the economy prospered as the rule of law was established unevenly over the centuries. There was a growth of towns as capitalist activity and shipbuilding grew around in the ports, every imaginable handicraft and commercial activity took place in London, economic activity expanded in the countryside as a result of the wool trade and production of woollen cloth, the iron industry expanded in the south of England and elsewhere in the dense forests and the financial system

became increasingly sophisticated. Continental ambition remained an issue with the English kings and at times military expeditions were rewarded with success (Barker, 2009). However, England was freed from significant continental entanglements after the end of what is known as the Hundred Years War and by the mid-sixteenth century had lost Calais, its last possession on the mainland.

It is usually acknowledged that England became a nation-state during the reigns of the Tudor sovereigns: Henry VII, Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary Tudor and Elizabeth I. Many (not all) rights and duties of the sovereign became established as did those of the aristocracy and the masses. While arbitrary rule appears from time to time, it was steadily circumscribed to allow the construction of a capitalist state which makes room for the entry of a new class. By 1642 when the Stuart king, Charles I, attempted to set back the clock, the English Civil Wars (1642–1649) that followed and the military dictatorship of Oliver Cromwell as Lord Protector led eventually to the establishment of a constitutional monarchy which increasingly saw the shift of political power to parliamentary interests. The instability of the Civil War period can be seen as a necessary moment after which we see a growing period of relative stability. It is true that another king had to be forced to flee (James II) and the reigns of the early Hanoverian monarchs in the eighteenth century were challenged to some extent by the descendants of James II aided by Scotland. But the outcome of these challenges was never in doubt; in 1707 England and Scotland were joined to form Great Britain; the eighteenth century saw Britain solidify its colonies in North America and then lose 13 of them, but the loss was to kith and kin (a matter of great significance as we see in Chapter 5) and other colonies replaced those lost. This was made possible by a navy which consumed most of the ‘defence’ expenditure of Britain rather than land forces as Britain was largely free of continental involvement until the Napoleonic Wars, and even then naval power was of much greater significance.

A ‘fortunate’ set of circumstances, some of which were external and all of which were historically determined,¹⁰ saw England/Britain become simultaneously the first modern nation-state and the first industrial capitalist nation. We list these to begin with in no particular order of importance or detailing what came first chronologically. But all needed to be present.

1. Ramshackle but workable banking system, which included the formation of a central bank.
2. A viable series of financial and class connections between land and capital to maximize the effectiveness of the surplus.

3. A merging, if only partially, of the older ruling class (aristocracy based on land) and the rising capitalist class, especially after the English Civil Wars (1642–1649).
4. A system of laws that supported both capitalism and the coherence of the older ruling class. An outstanding example of these was the law of entail which kept land concentrated in the hands of the aristocracy and gentry and ensured the survival of the old ruling class. At the same time this was supported by the principle of primogeniture; this ensured that there were plenty of younger sons drawn from the aristocracy and gentry available for the army, navy, church, politics, trade and imperial adventure.
5. The merging of the aristocracy with the new commercial and industrial classes.
6. Compliant, largely property-less womanhood removed for the most part from direct political or economic influence.
7. The rule of law, including law of contract, habeas corpus and so on, which included a relatively reasonable administration of the law though the landless and property-less were faced with harsh treatment.
8. A workable system of government based on bribery, corruption and privilege which was only mitigated in the second half of the nineteenth century when the dominance of the nation-state and the foundations of capitalist production were firmly laid.
9. Slow introduction of representative parliamentary government superseding dynastic interests and incorporating the older ruling class of aristocrats. This ensured a steady tendency towards reform without the ruling classes surrendering real power, though we do see a steady and irreversible shift away from aristocratic power to the industrial, commercial and financial class.
10. Forms of governmental legislation that promoted invention, innovation and trade at home and abroad. This ranged from freeing the labour market with the abolition of the slave trade and slavery, factory legislation, general limited liability, centralizing the banking system, and compulsory and free elementary education.
11. A willingness to tax the wealthier elements in society rather than the poor both in the form of land and property taxes, indirect taxation and later direct taxation.
12. Steady relaxation of orthodoxy in religion and in manners and a growing secularization that allows the development of 'rational' science.

13. Investment in the navy while avoiding excessive expenditure on, and avoidance of, a large standing army.
14. Flexible education system plus a strong system of learning by doing.
15. Emergence of strong justificatory ideologies as represented by such leading philosophers as Locke, Smith, Ricardo, Bentham and John Stuart Mill which included a tendency to promote reformism in support of a strong centralized state with effective enforceable legislation.

All of these features took centuries to develop and coalesce to form what is essentially the model for the nation-state and the governing class-based 'state'.

Britain's expansionist empire

Much of empire building was based on a capitalist drive. India progressively came under the British Raj led by the East India Company, a joint-stock (limited liability) company, with its own civil service, army and navy. By the end of the century the basis of British wealth arose from the trade in slaves, the exchange of products in Africa, sugar in the West Indies, cotton from North America and, above all, the new industrial production based on the manufacture of textiles, cotton and wool, and iron and later steel. The huge capacity to produce surpluses led to more trade, manufacturing and the development of banking capital which, in turn, led to finance capital including insurance. By the mid-nineteenth century the surpluses were so huge and the legislative introduction of general limited liability made possible the growth of large corporations as well as generally mobilizing capital more effectively. But, while Britain historically was first as a fully formed nation-state and saw the birth and rise simultaneously of modern industrial capitalism, this lead would not last long in relation to the length of time it had taken to come to fruition.

Nations and nationalism in nineteenth-century Europe

Britain could claim to be a modern nation-state by the start of the nineteenth century, and the nation-state in its modern form develops as a European phenomenon progressively in the nineteenth century. 'The most important political fact of the nineteenth century in Europe was the growth of nationalism'

(M.S. Anderson, 2003, p. 216). In 1815 there were probably only two nations in the modern sense: Britain and France, though France had still to be re-formulated after Napoleon's attempted conquest of Europe and continental empire building and France's capitalist development lagged significantly behind that of Britain. The USA was still very much a European implant in North America, lagging behind Britain in terms of economic development and dependent on European economies for its further development. This is discussed further in Chapter 5. Thus, the modern world was formed in Europe as nation-states arose in Europe, especially after 1848 and during the 25 years that followed. Of course, long histories preceded these formations, but the period of crystallization was during this period. A significant catalyst was the French Revolution, the ideology of liberty, fraternity and equality posed against the debasement of these ideas and the oppression of the Napoleonic period and the decades following. With the exception of Germany, nationalism grew up as an 'oppositional' creed and a statement that something like 'bourgeois liberalism' and self-determination of peoples had finally arrived on a continent marked by forms of imperialist autocracy and dynastic interest. To a very large extent the nationalist movement can be seen also as a contrast between 'big nations' like Germany and Italy and Poland and Russia and 'small nations' represented by Czechs, Danes, Flemings, Walloons, Hungarians, Romanians, Bulgarians, Croats, Serbs, Bosnians, Finns, the Swiss Cantons and so on. Poland was not allowed to develop as a nation because of the demands of the 'national interest' of the Austrians, Prussians and the Russians. Thus the nation-states that came to dominate Europe and export their brand of nationalism to the rest of Europe and the rest of the world were Britain, Germany, Italy and Russia. The receiving nations were the small nations, often forced into (in the end) unworkable forms of unification. Outside Europe, the USA through territorial 'annexations' and conquest (see Chapter 5), though originally eschewing a European form of nationalism that threatened the continental vision, formed a powerful nation-state driven by the continental policies of its dominant economic class. In addition, Japan also became an early imitator. 'It seemed hardly deniable that nation-making, as Walter Bagehot (1826–1876) called it, was taking place all over the world and was a dominant characteristic of the age.'¹¹ This was clearly something of an exaggeration, and the phenomenon of nation-building itself required at a later date somewhat more examination than it received at the time. John Stuart Mill, whose work underpins the main tenets of present day liberal and reformist orthodoxy relating to representative democracy and political and social reformism, claimed that it

was 'in general a necessary condition of free institutions that the boundaries of government should coincide in the main with those of nationalities' (quoted by Anderson, 2003, p. 22). There could be no freedom within oppressive Empires. (These were odd words from a man who had been a clerk in the East India Company.)

Where did the drive for nation-building come from? The drive, the formulation of nationalism as an ideology came from parties that had the strength and influence to determine the direction of history. An additional problem, therefore, is that nationalism was promoted as a progressive form of bourgeois liberal ideology (rather than a drive to democracy) even though nationalism is essentially conservative, especially when associated with 'small nation-states'. Even the major ideologues such as Mazzini envisaged a Europe of only 11 countries. Similarly, Kossuth, in his struggle for Hungarian independence from Austria, was similarly prepared to run rough-shed over other peoples with equal claims to nationhood as the Magyars: Croats, Romanians, Slovaks and so on. Nationalism appeared on the face of it to be about liberation but contained in the nineteenth century a strong conservative element and still does (Bender, 2006, p. 129). To many the issue was to form the country and then to construct the people to go with it. Massimo Azeglio summed the situation up when he said in 1860 as noted by Bender: 'We have made Italy, now we must make the Italians' (Bender, 2006, p. 89).

It can be argued that the significant underlying drive was economic which used an ideology of nationalism to construct the new Europe. We see something of this economic motivation in the context of the work of Friedrich List which we discuss later. In Germany and in Italy the underlying circumstances, then, were as much economic as they were political, though I would merge the economic with the political as two integrated and inseparable processes. Though mass nationalism by the populace might apply in certain circumstances, the overwhelming force behind the formation of nation-states came from the ruling classes.¹² The cultural, linguistic and religious foundations had, in the case of Italy and Germany, to be constructed after unification out of the disparate elements that subsequently formed the countries we now know as Germany and Italy. Thus, educational establishments, especially elementary schools, became of prime importance and the expansion of state education became an imperative. (The same occurred, as we shall see, in Japan.) School syllabuses imposed histories on the pupils that provided a sense of identity and an increasing literate population was exposed to expanding mass media. Where dialects were at first

the norm in everyday life, a language of culture and literacy united the nation and gave it a common identity. Interestingly, in Britain, government-sponsored education was treated with great suspicion because of the growing awareness of its repressive nature and English philosophers such as Herbert Spencer treated the prospect of state-sponsored education with some horror. However, the need to 'educate our masters,' as Disraeli put it, for political purposes and the need to feed the rapidly expanding and diverse capitalist system with the right amount of literate workers eventually led to the implementation of an organized array of compulsory, free elementary schools throughout Britain from 1874.

The boundaries of the nation-state were not simply determined by an imagined ethnic people called German or Italians or whatever but by considerations of defensible boundaries and by commercial and industrial considerations which we discuss further below while dealing with Friedrich List. While Italian geography offered some not inconsiderable problems with its borders with Austria and the Austrian Empire and with France, the nature of the peninsular helped define the nation's frontiers. The frontiers that defined Germany were much more problematic as any reading of modern Germany would indicate, especially in relation to the frontiers claimed by France, Denmark, Alsace-Lorraine and Poland and so on. Much of this was strategic, that is military, and much economic, that is access to resources, especially iron and steel or access to seaports.

'Nationalism was by no means an irresistible force' (Anderson, 2003, p. 238). What might be described as pan-ethnic movements in the nineteenth century were largely unsuccessful. Scandinavianism made little headway and fellow Scandinavians gave Denmark minimal support against the encroachments of Prussia in the 1860s. Though it might be supposed that common language and alphabet and religion and cultural connections might have united Slavs in the pan-Slav movement, pan-Slavism in reality was more a part of the process of assisting Russian imperialism and power in Eastern Europe. However, the Slavs were too fragmented to form a genuine nationalist movement with the Poles boasting an entirely different history and religion and in historical conflict with Russia to fall under any kind of pan-Slav nationalist movement. Whilst Mazzini type ideals would impact the diverse and fragmented peoples of the Italian peninsular, pan-Slav national idealism could not hope for such an outcome.

Therefore, the achievement of national status by Germany and Italy offers lessons in the contradictory nature of the nationalist movement itself, its economic and political nature, the importance of strategic considerations and

the ideological prop of nationalist sentiment. However much it was a false consciousness of ethnic identity, can we, nevertheless, discover anything from the *failure* of 'nations' to reach nationhood? The best example here is that of Poland as a large country that failed to achieve nationhood in the modern era until assisted by the so-called peacemakers at the end of the First World War. It has only been since Poland escaped from Soviet domination at the end of the twentieth century that we can see geographically what a modern Poland looks like.

Poland-Lithuania had developed powerful military dominance over Scandinavia, Russia and Prussia in the thirteenth century. Historical processes left it in decline and resolutely under pressure on all sides. In the north it became sandwiched between Prussia and East Prussia and denied access to the Baltic. In the eighteenth century, the growing demands of Russia to the east and the Austrian Empire to the south left its borders always under encroachment and its economy truncated and its agriculture generally backward. As a Catholic country, it faced Lutherans to the west and Orthodox Slav neighbours to the east. Internally it coped unwillingly with one of the largest Jewish populations in Europe. And the Galicians in the south did not even speak Polish. Where successful nationalism existed, it was largely of a conservative and limited nature, confined largely to the more powerful Polish landowners in the rump of Poland left after the eighteenth-century partitions and was therefore a movement to shift power more definitely into what was essentially the native ruling class. But after the Napoleonic experience and by the 1830s, burgeoning romantic ideas of forming a nation had taken something of a hold. As John Breuilly writes: 'The idea of Poland as a single nation with a mission to redeem itself had become common place by the 1830s' (Breuilly, 1993, p. 117).

To a large extent the national movement in Poland was a reaction to Russian oppression after the uprisings in both the 1830s and 1860s. It failed, however, partly because the movement lacked coherence and the lack of a firm political or economic base for the movements. It failed also because of opposition: a strong, economically developed Poland with its own foreign policy was hardly going to appeal to any of its neighbours, all of whom were happier with what amounted to a destabilized, weak buffer state, deprived even of its access to Danzig with its commercial and strategic advantages. A.J.P. Taylor entitles his history of the nineteenth century *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe*, and it is this title that provides an exact summary of what was happening on the continent. In this struggle for mastery, the romantic notions of a weakened ruling class for

the construction of a nation-state was hardly likely to succeed. The military, strategic, commercial and industrial needs of powerful neighbours meant that a true, sovereign state of Poland did not come into being in the modern era until after 1990, the movement beginning, as one might expect, not in Warsaw or Krakow but in the former Danzig.

Thus in nineteenth-century Europe we see a drive to form nation-states for a range of reasons and along with these reasons accompanying ideologies. The ideologies might include any or all combination of language, literature, religion, history, culture, geography or ethnic unity. In Germany, for instance, there would be some unity in history; for instance, as with the historical boundaries of the Holy Roman Empire and with language in that the root of the diverse dialects had a linguistic commonality even if Hamburgers could not understand what a native from Munich was saying. While there were Roman Catholics and many versions of Protestantism, at least they were, for most part, Christians. The elite could read the same classic works and used the same alphabet. On the other hand, there were many who could claim to be Germans who were not under consideration as with those German speakers in Switzerland, Poland, Austria and the Austrian Empire, France and elsewhere, all of whom would be excluded. List claimed that the Dutch were essentially German speakers but then the mouth of the Rhine would add massively to the economic strength of a united German nation-state. A new nation made proper sense not simply as a political union but as a strong potential *progressive* capitalist driven economy. This kind of nation-building appealed in economic terms to the burgeoning capitalist class. By contrast, a Balkanization of Germany made no economic sense at all. Thus the key motivation for a united Germany as occurred in 1870–1871 was essentially based on a capitalist drive.

Nation-building made sense for the potentially strong nations that might well play a part not only for the mastery of Europe but for the mastery of the world. And, indeed, that is what has happened.

Friedrich List and German political economy

Perceptions of nations, the state and economy in the West owe much to Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations*, despite the fact the Adam Smith stands as a source of ideological support for a policy of non-governmental intervention. However, in Germany (and Japan) Smithian economics is considerably less influential in the

development of ideology, theory and policy. Friedrich List attempted to provide an historical analysis, a theoretical framework and an ideological base for an alternative to Smith which argued for a national system of political economy (*Das Nationale System der Politischen Oekonomie*). This was published in 1841, much to the irate disgust of the young, unknown Karl Marx who was still a Prussian subject. While Smith generally speaking argued for free trade, List attacked Smith and insisted that the way forward for nations was to form a protective wall and to encourage nation-building. His position and his ideological formation were highly influential at the time and have not gone away in certain quarters despite the persistent ideological domination of Adam Smith and 'free market economics'.

List, the son of a farmer, was born in Reutlingen in 1789 and became a civil servant and politician in his native Württemberg; he died by his own hand in 1846. After serving a prison sentence in 1824–1825 for political dissidence, he was exiled to the USA in 1825, where he became a wealthy coal-owner and a journalist. He eventually returned to Europe, and lived for a time in Paris before returning to Germany where he died.

Germany consisted at the time of a large number of sovereign states, dominated by Prussia and Bavaria with Austria seeking an Empire among Slavic and Magyar peoples; the region of the historical Holy Roman Empire was divided by a large number of regional states of hugely varying sizes and dialects and by religion. It existed as a sprawl of countries and chequered and divided histories, often marked by wars, not the least of which was the Thirty Years War in the seventeenth century.¹³

Thus Germany was not a nation. On the other hand by 1841, it could not pass unnoticed that Britain had forged a nation and had become effectively a superpower. List's experience in the USA indicated that the USA, too, was developing into a formidable economic power based on capitalist principles and was achieving this despite the fact that it was still expanding its frontiers and was not in itself a recognizable nation.

At the core of List's ideology/philosophy was that while Smith promoted the liberation of the individual to pursue his self-interest as the motor force of economic development, List insisted that the state (government) should promote the wealth and welfare of its citizens within the structure of a nation. His work was, therefore, a plea to form a nation-state, find natural borders for it that made economic and strategic sense and promote industry in order to compete with Britain and later USA and Russia. He turned not to Smith's 'ideology' but

to what he believed to be the reality of, rather than the fictional elements in, England's history: state (government) sponsored development, the very opposite of Smith's arguments. Moreover, List saw Britain's nationhood dependent not on common language or religion but on the rise of cities, increasing productivity in agriculture, the expansion of commerce, the subjection of the aristocracy to the law of the land, exploitation of internal natural resources, political power abroad, internal peace and limitation of the power of the crown. He notes:

Altogether, a higher degree of well-being, civilisation, and freedom at home, and a prepondering might abroad. But who can say how much of these happy results is attributable to the English national spirit and to the constitution; how much to England's geographical position and circumstances in the past; or again, how much to chance, destiny, or fortune? (List, 2005, p. 65)

He raises the question here both of geography and of a 'national spirit'. In fact, List places the geographical position of England as being a key factor in her development as she could dispense with a standing army and stand apart from continental wars, but he does think that the expenditure on war is justifiable in certain circumstances as the history of England proved.¹⁴ 'Strictly speaking,' he writes 'material wealth may have been consumed unproductively, but this consumption may ... stimulate manufacturers to extraordinary exertions' (List, 2005, p. 68). In attacking Adam Smith he makes the point that England did not progress without military intervention when it was necessary. And when he turns to the discussion of Germany he points out that the nation-state requires defensible boundaries. What would be necessary for a nation-state of Germany would be to extend its influence one way or another to the coast of Denmark and Holland and up to the borders of Poland. In this way nation-building would take the German nation beyond the geographical area historically occupied by peoples who regarded themselves as 'German'. List sees the German nation as expansionist, therefore, even before the formation of Germany in 1870. He argued that the Zollverein cannot be complete without the whole coast from the Rhine eastward and thus presages the annexation of Schleswig-Holstein and much more. 'A natural consequence of this union must be the admission' of Holland and Denmark into the German Bund and 'consequently into German nationality'. List did not see this expansion as a problem and, as justification, used England's union with Scotland and Ireland as an example and claimed that the Dutch and the Danes were, in effect, through descent and character, essentially German. The command of the North Sea and Baltic coasts would rectify the

missing factors to enable the development of a powerful German Bund providing fisheries, maritime commerce, naval power and global expansion.

As to the German national spirit, List is in no doubt. He insists that the German people have a common character despite the 'odd and unpractical traits' noticed by non-Germans. Somewhat contradictorily he argues that the German people managed, despite their history and the dominance of the aristocracy, poor foreign policies of the diverse governments and barbarism in agriculture and industry, they preserved an 'aboriginal culture: their love of industry, order, thrift, and moderation, their perseverance and endurance in research and in business, their honest striving after improvement, and a considerable natural measure of morality, prudence, and circumspection' (List, 2005, p. 101). It would seem therefore that List was pouring flattery over a huge range of populations in varying degrees of civilization and economic development to provide an ideology to unite them under a common flag. He seems simply to have invented a series of virtues from more or less nowhere. He further argues that after long periods of decay the national characteristics and virtues were revived by the governments themselves. Moreover, significant industrial advance was made in the German states during the Napoleonic blockade.

By the time List published his major work the Zollverein (customs union) had already been instituted and what remained was to surround this free trade area with protective tariffs to allow the German states to catch up with the superpower of Britain. Interestingly, having seen the potential power of the USA during his residence there and fearing the growing Empire of Russia, List was inclined to advocate an alliance with 'England'. In a disturbing way, this heralds many of the ideas that set the economic pattern and attempted policy implementations of the Third Reich. Very early on, Marx attempted to destroy List's analysis and policy prescriptions. He wrote, for instance, an unpublished, outspoken and vituperative article in 1845 in which he denounces the work as idealistic, theoretically impoverished and a mere ideological justification of the desires of the German philistine bourgeoisie and accuses List's work as being without a shred of originality.¹⁵

List, in brief, places the 'governments' of nations as the prime movers of economic development; in addition, he is anxious to promote the bourgeoisie above the aristocracy in the exercise of governmental power; he clearly provides the ideological base for a German political economy protected by government regulation and trade tariffs; and alliances to counteract the growing economic power of Britain and the USA (and Russia).

M.S. Anderson points out that 'the immediate effects in Germany or elsewhere of List's book were not great. From the 1840s to the 1860s free-trading attitudes were clearly gaining ground over most of Europe' (Anderson, 2003, p. 244). Smith's ideas, in the form of Cobdenism, were in the forefront of the growing economic orthodoxy, not only in Britain but elsewhere in Europe and the USA. To begin with the wide range of German states required a free trade ideology to provide the economic pre-conditions for the German nation-state that was established in 1870–1871 after which List's ideas carried much greater currency, reinforced as they were by other German-based economists led by Gustav Schmoller. The growing dominance of the German Historical School and the hugely influential *Verein fur Sozialpolitik* founded as early as 1872 provided a flurry of ideas and a counter-ideology to Adam Smith and Cobdenism. As the *Verein* attracted not only economists but also journalists, businessmen and bureaucrats, the counter-ideology fed German nationalism and even spread to the USA, where it influenced for a time an admiring and comparable historical school of economists (Bender, 2006, pp. 264–265).

Japan and the nation-state

While England/Britain served as an important example to guide and provoke German economic development, nationalism and direction for military/naval expenditure, the Japanese, even before the Meiji Restoration, were even more heavily influenced by the British experience and received considerable help and guidance from both the public and private sectors in Britain.

As Sandra Wilson states baldly: 'By whatever definition, a consciousness of nation has been widely considered to be very important' to the development and expansion of modern Japan (Wilson, 2003, p. 1). There has been considerable debate not only by Marxists, concerning what features exactly constituted Japanese feudalism, but by others, concerning the degree of economic, social, bureaucratic and technical advance that was to be found in Japan in 1853 when Commodore Perry shocked the Japanese elite with his ironclads. However, it is generally accepted that the Japanese state, which had closed its doors to the outside world in the seventeenth century, was in fact well positioned to establish a strong centralized government and employ a nationalist ideology via, *inter alia*, an expanding educational system and growth of newspapers. At that time in Japan, even unlike Germany or Italy, there was a more or less

common language; geographical boundaries were well defined despite, or perhaps because of, the spread of islands which made national boundaries easy to recognize. Importantly, too, was the existence of a well-established elite, forms of bureaucracy, tax collection, legal system and a belief among the elite that the Japanese were of divine origin, superior to other Asian peoples let alone Westerners; this gave them a sense of manifest destiny akin to that of the USA but with a deeper, mystical, historical and cultural base.

All this existed and was waiting to be tapped by the event of 1853, but the change was not a miracle over-night change as the new 'national interest' was waiting to be re-formulated. The Meiji Restoration expanded this sense of nation out of the local, regional and tribal loyalties. The new dynamic government was able to induce a rapid growth in most of the required economic, political and social directions that contributed to the establishment of a strong 'state' as well as a strong nation-state and industrial superpower.

As an island nation and serving as an obvious model, Britain's influence on Japan was considerable right from the beginning. Soon after 1853, and even before the Meiji Restoration, Japan purchased two warships, one from Britain and a smaller one from the Dutch, and by 1858 had started a shipbuilding industry, demonstrating at this earliest stage the intention of not only borrowing from the West but also ensuring that it would create its own relevant naval vessels. During the 1860s the purchase of ships of all sorts increased markedly. By 1863 Japan already had 30 ships, from Britain and some from the USA, valued at nearly \$2.5 million, though the prices were somewhat inflated as Japan was consistently overcharged not only for ships but for many other commodities by Western suppliers (Fox, 1969, pp. 250ff). By the time of the Meiji Restoration in 1868, the process of building a navy was well and truly initiated with Japan having imported 111 modern ships altogether and having built a further 27 of her own. 'A strong navy,' writes Grace Fox, 'became the goal of the makers of modern Japan, and Britain was their chosen teacher.' This policy was devised and implemented by the minister of the navy, a Japanese version of Samuel Pepys, Katsu Kaishu, from the outset of the Meiji period. He argued, having viewed the commercial, industrial and naval power of the British, that the navy was more important than the army. He insisted that the large Japanese population of 50 million be taxed to provide the resources for the establishment of a world-class navy. He developed a seven-year plan to build ironclads and steamships and establish a naval school where the students would learn English and the art of navigation from the British, and be taught directly by British naval personnel (though he

also insisted that instruction be influenced by the French, Dutch and the USA in order to devise, in the end, a unique Japanese naval tradition). Ships continued to be purchased from British shipyards, in many cases secretly to disguise any potential threat that might be posed in the Far East to British interests. Officers were also sent to be trained in Britain and the candidates were more often than not drawn from the Japanese elite, thus ensuring that the state in its widest sense, not just the government, was involved in Japanese naval expansion.

Great Britain had laid the foundations of this growing fleet. At Japan's request British shipyards had built her best warships and British teachers had trained her officers and seamen. But as in all areas where she sought for assistance, Japan had defined the naval programme and kept its direction in her own hands, ready to dispense with such help at will. Although Britain was her model, the navy in the making was to be distinctly Japanese. (Fox, 1969)

Most importantly, this navy was not for merely defence since Japan was certain to emulate Britain in other ways, most importantly as an empire builder which for Japan was especially important given its large population clinging to the coast of numerous islands with hostile and infertile interiors, poor agriculture and subject to typhoons, 'tidal waves' and earthquakes. Britain had no policy to limit this expansion, though Britain and Japan did sign the treaty of 1902 and the Allies were able to count on Japan's support during the First World War.¹⁶

Indeed, Japanese capitalism and the drive towards modernization differed considerably from that of Britain. If there were a more suitable economic theory, it was that of Friedrich List rather than that of Adam Smith. In an article in the *Atlantic Monthly* (December 1993), James Fallows recalls an incident when he spotted a copy of List in an English-language book shop in Japan. He claims that for years he had been scanning bookshops around the world for copies of the works of List. (This was shortly before the onset of the internet and the laying down of the information super-highway.) 'Why Friedrich List?' he writes. 'The more I had heard about List in the preceding five years, from economists from Seoul and Osaka and Tokyo, the more I wondered why I had never heard of him while studying economics in England and the United States.'

The answer is, of course, first, that the core of Western economics based on the market and non-interventionist views of Adam Smith are firstly historically located in the special circumstances of Britain in the second half of the eighteenth century. Second, Smith's economics is more a philosophy and a justificatory ideology than simply theory. However angry it might have made

Marx in 1845, List's criticisms of Smith and British economic policy satisfied the ideological needs of the so-called late-comers among the industrializing nations in the nineteenth century which included both Germany and Japan; government policy in the USA, too, tended towards tariff protection urged on by agrarians and populists.

Though Japanese development from 1868 is indebted directly and in a pragmatic fashion to Britain, the inculcation of anti-Confucian and a reformist Samurai culture deep in Japanese society and especially among the emerging new business elite involved the development of a unique form of economic development but one that had consequences that heightened the possibilities of war and violent conflict in the Far East and Pacific regions. What drove economic expansion was a combination of nationalism and militarism, rather than simply the profit motive. While I argue in this book that Western capitalism, greed and the profit motive have been the most deadly of all European exports and are the root cause of modern wars, there was to begin with in Japanese modernization a drive that always held the possibility of advancing militarism. Byron K. Marshall was an early proponent of this view.

In their effort to justify a position of wealth and power for the modern business class, Japanese business spokesmen explicitly rejected the major tenets of the Anglo-American capitalist creed in favour of traditional Japanese values. They denounced the Western philosophy of economic individualism for its stress on the pursuit of personal gain. (Marshall, 1967, p. 3)

The problematic here is that the Japanese elite and guardians of traditional values were the military aristocracy. Hence a merger of the values required for a drive to modernization had to accept militarism and nationalism and domination of the state (government) in order to be allowed to pursue a capitalist mode of operation based on profit and personal gain. In pre-Meiji Japan, the merchant class were not regarded with respect or affection but almost as a necessary evil. The Restoration of the Meiji was not simply a capitalist overthrow of old feudalism but initially a kind of reformulation of the old classes; this meant that new capitalism had constantly to justify itself and deny the pursuit of profit by accepting that the purpose of modernization and industrialization and expansion of trade and transport was for the glory of the nation and to prevent the humiliation of the Japanese people at the hands of Westerners. This is described by Marshall as 'reactive nationalism'. Marshall quotes one of the economic pioneers (Inoue Shozo) thus: 'To-day even the small children of Japan

talk of enriching the country and strengthening the military' (Marshall, 1967, p. 14). While the private sector steadily advanced in the nineteenth century and in the years leading up to the First World War, the government/the 'state' remained in firm control of education, armaments and transport. And the business elite, it is claimed, did not succeed in fully implanting the primacy of the profit motive over militarism and nationalism which made possible a form of totalitarian imperialism to dominate policy and action.

The 'state' as nation-state

This brings us to an analysis of the 'state'. Anthony D Smith, a major commentator on nation and nationalism, has written:

Historically, the formation of modern nations owes a profound legacy to the development of England, France and Spain. This is usually attributed to their possession of military and economic power ... It was the result of the early development of a particular kind of 'rational' bureaucratic administration, aided by the development of merchant capital, wealthy urban centres and professional military forces and technology. (Hutchinson and Smith, 1994, p. 50)

We have seen this confirmed by the historical summary we have so far provided and by such contemporary observers and actors as Friedrich List. Anthony Smith goes on to say that it is commonly supposed that the state 'created' the nation and that 'royal administration, taxation and mobilization endowed subjects within its jurisdiction with a sense of corporate loyalty and identity'.¹⁷ However, Smith thinks that this position overstates the case. For other observers the 'state' is a looming power that exercises domination over its subject populations. The late Ralph Miliband opened his book, *The State in Capitalist Society* (which we discuss further in Chapter 6), with the words: 'More than ever before men now live in the shadow of the state ... What they want to achieve, individually or in groups, now mainly depends on the state's sanction and support' (Miliband, 2009, p. 150).

It is now clear that we need to explore the relationship between nation-state and 'state' in order to understand how it is that modern nations are at the root of global war and violent conflict. What links the 'state' with the economy is the class system. Therefore, it is not possible to consider any one element without the other. 'State'–economy–class form an indissoluble unity. This is generally

recognized as the Marxist position. This does not mean that we have to fully accept that the state is in some way the executive committee of the bourgeoisie for managing its common affairs, but it is not surprising that the nation-building and nationalist policies of the 'state' would tend towards a conservative position. Miliband expresses the situation in relation to the established advanced economies thus: 'Nationalism ... has formed such an important part of conservative ideology for a number of obvious and related reasons' (Miliband, 2009, p. 150). Most importantly, he argues, is that the dominant class demand that the general population or subordinate classes are induced into acting only in the 'national interest'; education, media and political processes are directed towards this end.

Summary and conclusion

Nationalism, the ideology underpinning the nation-state, is generated overwhelmingly by the dominant class(es) within the borders of the nation-state. In other words, the nation-state, which forms and feeds nationalism, is an outcome of the internal 'state', and that 'state' reflects and imposes the interests largely of capitalist motivations. The nation-state demands that its frontiers are protected and regarded as sacrosanct and that the population forming the nation protect the frontiers from encroachment even if it means declaring war. From the seventeenth century onwards this system has come to dominate the whole of the planet. No piece of land stands exempt.

We have separated the issues and history of the emergence of the nation-state from the process of capitalism for the sake of discussion only, but we will see how the dialectical relationship with capitalism works itself out in due course. In addition we will see how such a concept as 'democracy' helps obscure the discussion of the internal state which we also discuss as being conceptually distinct only while trying to hold in our heads the way in which the state, the nation-state, class and capitalism form an indissoluble unity.

As to the forms of political constitution laid down and operating within any particular nation-state, they can be of any kind. It is quite possible to have absolutism, totalitarianism, constitutional monarchy, oligarchy, representative democracy dominated by the ruling class(es) or whatever as long as it is centralized and is *not* (and this is the exception) an open and free democracy.

Capitalism

Introduction

This chapter deals with the development of capitalism. Needless to say, there is an enormous bibliography on this subject with a range of 'schools' and a mass of adherents. In the case of the most important and central 'school', that of Marx and Marxism, there is a range of sub-divisions, purists, absolutists and revisionists. It is impossible to weave one's way through all of them. The world is dominated by the power of capitalism; capitalism in its many forms and fractions is intimately linked to the nation-state and the operating class-based 'state' that dominates nation-states, and this, as a dialectic process, is what has caused, in large part, modern war and continues to do so.

Perhaps one of the most important statements relevant to the central argument in this book comes from Wallerstein: 'in the real world of historical capitalism, almost all commodity chains of any importance have traversed' state frontiers (Wallerstein, 2000, p. 31). A second important point made by Wallerstein is that British hegemony in the eighteenth century did not reflect military victories in the frequent wars but represented economic (capitalist) victory (Wallerstein, 2000, p. 59). There is a third point which underlies the discussion and this is the nature of contradiction, and for our debate one of the major contradictions is this. Capitalisms compete yet at the same time may co-operate. (Those that derive their market economic theory from Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations* might choose to dwell a bit longer on the same author's *Theory of Moral Sentiments*.) Each capitalist-based nation-state will at times co-operate with others, yet at other times will be in conflict. This is also true in respect of every facet of capitalism which has to be seen as permanently fractionalized. The capitalist system provides at the same time forms of coherence but also anarchy

as small capital, big capital, commercial capital, banking capital, finance capital, industrial capital, national capital, international capital struggle for the other and against the other in a constant process driven by contradictions.

From rapine to primitive accumulation

The earliest form of capital acquisition and accumulation is usually referred to as primitive accumulation. In brief, the term 'primitive accumulation' in the work of Marx refers to the creation of a landless peasantry which results in the commodification of labour power and ensures that the only commodity available for sale by the labourer is his labour power. As Harvey puts it:

The creation of the modern proletariat was . . . no easy matter, and from the first moments of primitive accumulation up until the present, it has involved violent expropriation, legal manoeuvres of all kinds and not a little chicanery The spoliation of the church's property, the fraudulent alienation of the State's domains, the robbery of the common lands, the usurpation of feudal and clan property, and its transformation into modern private property under circumstances of reckless terrorism, were just so many idyllic methods of primitive accumulation. (Harvey, 2007, pp. 164/344)

Marx summarizes the process in this way: 'The so-called primitive accumulation, therefore, is nothing else than the historical process of divorcing the producer from the means of production. It appears as primitive, because it forms the pre-historic stage of capital and of the mode of production corresponding with it.'¹

There appears to be an element missing here which has some relevance to the modern day, and though the term 'rapine capitalism' has been used here and there, it has received less attention. The acts of rapine capitalism do not necessarily involve the same process as primitive accumulation. Looting, piracy, stealing, holding to ransom and so on are extractions of the surplus for various uses – anything from personal adornment (jewels for the monarch), conducting warfare in the pursuit of dynastic or national interest (e.g. Spanish Imperial aggrandisement), internal repression, social welfare (schools and hospitals by Henry VIII and Edward VI), accumulation of more capital or surpluses (Genoese bankers, promoting industrialization), confiscation of aboriginal territory (colonization). While this rapine capitalism is seen clearly in the history of the English sea dogs and Dutch seizure of Chinese junks or a myriad of other

sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries' acts of rapine capitalism and colonization conducted by people who would now be known as Spanish, Dutch, English, Portuguese, Italians, Belgians. This extraction of surplus may or may not help contribute to modern forms of economic growth based on production (industrialization).

Both primitive accumulation, the process of commodification of labour by the 'state' (the 'state' is important because the process is dependent on the rule of law, the nature of the 'state', the social infrastructure generally, regulations and control of migration) and rapine capitalism required justificatory ideology. The former was provided by Locke, the latter mostly by Grotius. The two, rapine capitalism and primitive accumulation, should be conceptually separate because the underpinning ideologies differ. In the modern world the commodification of labour remains justified whereas rapine capitalism does not. Most obviously, the piracy by Somali pirates is to be abhorred and feared (whereas Francis Drake is to be admired, at least if you are English and feared by those from whom he stole portable wealth); on the other hand, the commodification of labour in Latin America and Africa was encouraged by capitalist ideologues in the name of 'development' as was the freeing of slaves in the southern states of the USA.

In the work of Adam Smith and among his followers capital is amassed as a result of thrift and hard work (and risk taking when enterprise is added to thrift and hard work). One of the ultimate exponents of this is Max Weber, who spent a good deal of intellectual effort in answering Marx though this was never admitted by him despite the fact that it would be inconceivable that Marx played no part in his thinking. The crucial departure is that Weber adhered to the general view of the classical political economists that capital was in fact the result of thrift and hard work, in that his classic *Protestantism and the Spirit of Capitalism* is precisely concerned with that.² It does not take a Marxist to demolish the relationship between religion and capital accumulation. However, objecting to the labour theory of value and surplus value *in toto* (with or without religious roots) is important for the current analysis. It is not possible either on theoretical grounds or empirical grounds to say that the bulk of the surplus created in modern economies comes from labour power or from dead labour. Capital does exist and the surplus comes partially from labour power but partially from precisely the way it is laid out in Ricardo – from land, labour and capital.

John Locke, stealing property, protecting property and justificatory ideology

It is in Locke, though, that we see the laying down of the key elements of justificatory ideology that argues for the legitimization of the theft of land from its rightful owners as long as the acquisition is accompanied by thrift and the application of labour (even if the labour is not necessarily one's own personal digging, weeding and harvesting). And his arguments are best seen when applied in the context of colonialism/imperialism. This point is well made by Edward W Said; referring to Algeria, he notes that 'for several decades after 1830 "booty capital" ran the economy ... until France reproduced itself in Algeria.'³ David Harvey makes much the same general point drawing upon Marx directly. 'Marx's overt purpose ... is to expose the contradictions in the bourgeois account of "primitive accumulation" and so to reaffirm the coherence of his own analysis. The bourgeoisie came to understand the principle of primitive accumulation in the context of their colonization of distant lands' (Harvey, 2007, p. 413).

But it is in Locke that we see the first coherent statement relating to first or primitive accumulation which differs in essence from rapine capitalism. While stealing land is booty, it is productive in a different way from stealing the contents of the Manila Galleon.

John Locke (1632–1704) was a brilliant producer of justificatory ideology. His two treatises on government, written in 1689/1690, gave the philosophical underpinning for the recent removal and replacement of a King of England (James II) by arguing that sovereignty lay with the people, though the people he had in mind were in fact the property owners and by property he meant land and capital, though the word 'capital' is not used. But he also justified the process of North American-style colonization.

By capital, Locke meant property and by property he interestingly argued that the foremost property is one's own individual capacity to labour and to join it with what in essence is capital:

Though the earth, and all inferior creatures, be common to all men, yet every man has a property in his own person: this no body has any right to but himself. The labour of his body, and the work of his hands, we may say, are properly his. Whatsoever then he removes out of the state that nature hath provided, and left it in, he hath mixed his labour with, and joined to it something that is his own, and thereby makes it his property. It being by him removed from the common state nature hath placed it in, it hath by this labour something

annexed to it, that excludes the common right of other men: for this labour being the unquestionable property of the labourer, no man but he can have a right to what that is once joined to, at least where there is enough, and as good, left in common for others. (Locke, Sec 27)⁴

Thus when man in an honest effort to provide produce for himself and others has ‘annexed’ land to his labour he has the right of property. Annexing or enclosing land is perfectly reasonable, he argues, if the aim is to improve the land.

Nor was this appropriation of any parcel of land, by improving it, any prejudice to any other man, since there was still enough, and as good left; and more than the yet unprovided could use. So that, in effect, there was never the less left for others because of his enclosure for himself: for he that leaves as much as another can make use of, does as good as take nothing at all. No body could think himself injured by the drinking of another man, though he took a good draught, who had a whole river of the same water left him to quench his thirst: and the case of land and water, where there is enough of both, is perfectly the same. (Locke, Sec 33)

Locke, calling on the state of nature and God’s intention, argues that it must have been God’s intention that the land was used by the industrious for the benefit of mankind: ‘He (God) gave it (land) to the use of the industrious and rational, (and labour was to be his title to it;) not to the fancy or covetousness of the quarrelsome and contentious’ (Locke, Sec 34).

Locke is careful to argue that in England enclosure of common land cannot take place without the full consent of the commoners supported by the law of the land (which, of course, favoured the aristocratic joint ruling class, the large landowners). As far as he is concerned, North America, which has huge wilderness lands and a less than industrious native population, is another matter. The contrast according to Locke between what the Native-American can achieve and what has been achieved in England and is likely to be achieved by the English in America is enormous. After a long piece on justifying the annexing of land from the inhabitants of wilderness America, he points smugly to what the English might do with the land in the colonies:

I have here rated the improved land very low, in making its product but as ten to one, when it is much nearer an hundred to one: for I ask, whether in the wild woods and uncultivated waste of America, left to nature, without any improvement, tillage or husbandry, a thousand acres yield the needy and wretched inhabitants as many conveniences of life, as ten acres of equally fertile land do in Devonshire, where they are well cultivated? (Locke, Sec 37)

Locke comes up with a brilliant piece, therefore, in linking labour, property in one's self and the effect of adding labour to land for productive purposes. Normally, commentators give the physiocrats the credit for discovering the importance of production and for inspiring Adam Smith to put production before exchange as the driving force of wealth creation. But Locke does, in effect, say that combining labour with land produces wealth: he just misses out on stressing the working and fixed capital to establish the productive link between labour and land that completes the picture. We really have to wait for Ricardo for that clarity. Locke misses out on barns, hedgerows, drainage, ploughs and the like, which seem to all get lumped into labour instead of where they should be, identified as working and fixed capital.

The same measures governed the possession of land too: whatsoever he tilled and reaped, laid up and made use of, before it spoiled, that was his peculiar right; whatsoever he enclosed, and could feed, and make use of, the cattle and product was also his. But if either the grass of his enclosure rotted on the ground, or the fruit of his planting perished without gathering, and laying up, this part of the earth, notwithstanding his enclosure, was still to be looked on as waste, and might be the possession of any other. (Locke, Sec 38)

Locke, therefore, subsumes capital in the term 'labour' which is what of course Marx does, too, in effect regarding capital as dead labour. It is in Ricardo, however, that we have the most perceptive discussion of capital. Indeed, writing in 1817 he introduces his definitive *Principles of Political Economy and Taxation* with a clear statement that places capital with profit as a reward in relation to land and labour:

The produce of the earth – all that is derived from its surface by the united application of labour, machinery, and capital, is divided among three classes of the community: namely, the proprietor of the land, the owner of the stock or capital necessary for its cultivation and the labourers by whose industry it is cultivated.

But in different stages of society, the proportions of the whole produce of the earth which will be allotted to each of these classes, under the names of rent, profit, and wages, will be essentially different; depending mainly on the actual fertility of the soil, on the accumulation of capital and population, and on the skill, ingenuity and instruments employed in agriculture.

Other classical political economists, including Jean Baptiste Say, accepted this position. (However, it is not until later in the nineteenth century that the word 'capitalism' enters the English language, according to Hobsbawm.)⁵

Locke's timing was dictated by observing the establishment of the English North American colonies in a steady stream in the seventeenth century. Indeed, 12 of the original 13 colonies that formed the USA were founded between 1607 and 1682 (though two, New York and New Jersey, were the spoils of war against the Dutch); the 13th colony is Georgia founded in 1732; and Locke's justification for the seizure of wilderness land from the supposedly indolent natives sets the pattern for the next two or three centuries. Mill repeats this position with immense condescension in 1848 in his *Principles of Political Economy* and insists that the colonized lands and their peoples have no right of independence:

These outlying possessions of ours cannot be looked upon as countries ... but more properly as outlying agricultural or manufacturing estates belonging to a larger community. Our West Indian colonies, for example, cannot be regarded as countries with a productive capital of their own ... but are rather the place where England finds it convenient to carry on the production of sugar, coffee and few other tropical commodities.⁶

Marx could not accept the view that capital becomes distinct from labour if he were to fully establish his arguments for surplus value and exploitation, and that production takes place partially through the energies, even personal and familial sacrifices of the entrepreneurs concerned; this means that profits become accepted as a valid pursuit within the capitalist system and the protection of private property (the means of production) becomes a central objective of the capitalist state in the interests of the national economy and its capacity for wealth creation. Crucial, too, is the argument that the key shift in the modern era is the shift from commercial capitalism to production which creates the urban proletariat; it is from this transformation that comes the possibility for revolution. While production remains the key feature of modern capitalism, the prediction of revolution has, as with most predictions, been fallible.

Bribery, corruption and nepotism as rapine capitalism and primitive first accumulation

It may be thought that there is a relationship between primitive accumulation and endemic bribery and corruption within the polity and economy of countries, proto-nations or nation-states themselves. Certainly, in terms of current discussion in relation to the development of so-called developing countries or

emerging economies, bribery and corruption has been the focus of considerable attention because it has been thought that bribery and corruption is one of the key factors that obstruct the wealthier world from helping the poorer world to achieve economic growth. Mushtaq Khan, in an article that looks into the relationship between growth and bribery and corruption, argues, in effect, that no developed national economy arrived at its advanced state without tolerating bribery and corruption *en route* one way or another and that the World Bank, for instance, in attempting to eradicate bribery and corruption in emerging countries by directly attacking the phenomena misunderstands the nature of bribery and corruption in relation to growth; thus he writes that the policy conclusion which the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund have drawn is that poorly performing countries attempting to emulate the more advanced economies must *first* reduce corruption through governance reforms before they can achieve growth, but

our reading of the evidence does not reduce the importance of governance reforms, interpreted as reforms of the state, but forces us to treat with caution many of the policy conclusions which have uncritically become very widespread ... The evidence of the last two decades strongly suggests that liberalization and privatization are often associated with an increase in corruption rather than the reverse.⁷

There is much to be said for this position. After all, one of the significant elements in warlordism and in the earliest development of capital accumulation is close blood ties, and buying off enemies with land or the right to levy tolls or the like in return for feudal loyalty. The history of England offers some insight into the way modern warlordism works and why, perhaps, some commentators talk of a new medievalism.

If we look at what is one of the most famous events in English history, the Norman invasion led by William the Bastard (later the Conqueror) in 1066, we find that all the key supporters who put up the arms, the ships and the logistical support were for the most part half brothers or first cousins. He was also supported by the Duke of Brittany, whom he had defeated in battle, but whose support was won because William held his son as a hostage. In addition, William's wife was well connected with the Pope, who gave the Normans support for the expedition. As part of his strategy for winning, William wanted to use the longbow (famously his opponent Harold was to die from an arrow wound). The Pope had banned the use of bows and arrows against Christian forces as being

against the law of God, but he allowed them against the infidel. William's wife persuaded the Pope to declare the invasion of England a crusade, making Harold an infidel and the use of long-distance weaponry permissible. This has an eerie connection with modern nation-states seeking a United Nations resolution to legitimize attacks on other nation-states. William secured his legitimacy from the Pope, but was able to persuade his extended family to participate on the basis of the range of booty that would be available if the invasion succeeded. Harold of England was backed by his three brothers who as Earls in the kingdom commanded the support of most of England except unfortunately for Tostig, another brother, who out of greed for commanding the whole of England allied himself with Harald Hardrada of Norway, and while William was landing in the south of England Harold was fighting off an invasion in the north. Had Harold kept his brothers together, he would not have lost against William the Bastard. By the time we get to Edward I we see a more mature warlord who has become dependent on his feudal lords and cannot move without them to such an extent that he has to accept the existence of something called a Parliament, composed not only of feudal lords but also key commercial and urban interests. Edward I could still, given his ability to manipulate his subject lords, put dissident lords on trial, subdue them by force, exile them, confiscate their lands and use the proceeds for ruling his kingdom or bestowing lands on those he could rely on for further support. Warlordism, thus, does mature, eventually, as the direct family links of the individual warlord are no longer so important (except perhaps to the narrower dynastic interests of the King) and are replaced by the power of the 'court'. Nevertheless, family links and 'connexions' remained important over the centuries. The range of policy instruments increased steadily: the right to grant monopolies of trade, collection of taxes, tolls, control of the ports, issuing charters to towns, policing, soldiering, control of the justice system, expelling Jews, allowing Jews back and so on.

However, key posts had to be carefully allocated and treachery and greedy neighbours (other warlords) were a constant threat. The safest option was to ensure that significant posts and privileges were dealt out through personal family ties or close connections or, as the Tudors at the end of the fifteenth century and throughout the sixteenth century found out to their benefit generally speaking, to individuals who owed their lives and souls and prosperity to the monarch himself or herself; these were frequently courtiers from the minor aristocracy (gentry) recognized for their talent and loyalty. Blood and/or the cash nexus played the most important part in finding the right person for the right job. It

was very late in the day in the development process that merit replaced bribery, corruption and nepotism. In the Elizabethan era patronage, at the crucial point of England's development as a nation-state, the main system for filling major posts and fostering talent, reached its 'springtime', according to Harold Perkin (Perkin, 1969, p. 49). By the eighteenth century property and patronage clearly went together in a well-tuned process, and permeated the whole of the political and social structure. Robert Walpole, the man acknowledged as Britain's first Prime Minister, 'ran bribery and corruption on an industrial scale' (Pearce, 2008, p. 2). Posts at every level were filled through the process of nepotism and corruption. Moreover, this process was perfectly open and not the least shameful. The mesh that held society together was a tight one of property, patronage, family and 'friends' and this permeated all branches of government from central government to the parish and the deepest corner of the widest interpretation of the 'state'. It has to be said that this was an effective process as this so-called old society provided the stability that served the social and class base for the coherence of the first nation-state and industrial domination and hegemonic world power. But when Adam Smith wrote the *Wealth of Nations* and argued for non-government interference, he was, in essence, railing against the system of bribery and corruption as this process shut out those without 'connexions' and disadvantaged the newer emergent industrial elements.

It really is not surprising that bribery, corruption and, above all, privilege remain essential to the working of the capitalist system. It was also observed that in the latest crisis of capitalism (2007–2009), the bankers and financial houses who have been blamed for the onset of the crisis were found to be especially incompetent. Their places in the boardrooms of the big financial houses were due to contacts rather than merit. This becomes possible not only because of the general irresponsibility and greed of those in influential positions but also because of the concentration of capital whereby more and more power rests in fewer and fewer hands. In other words, we have gone in something resembling a full circle with the power holders in much the same position, *mutatis mutandis*, as the feudal kings of England. However, there are two big differences between then and now (actually, I suppose there are many, many more) and they are as follows. First, the medieval Kings of England were living in a simpler world. The complexities of the early middle ages were quite unlike those of the modern world of science, technology, economic and financial complexities, interdependencies, delegation of responsibility, professional skills, education and training and so on, almost *ad infinitum*. Second, though there was consumption of wants among

the wealthier elites, the main consumption for the ordinary masses was that of needs, overwhelmingly so. Surpluses that were created were for the most part consumed by the regime in order to remain in power, often through the impetus for territorial and dynastic expansion.

Yet, corruption and bribery remain entrenched in modern capitalism as it was in the earlier centuries and in lesser developed or emerging economies. Whereas corruption, bribery, patronage may well have been functional in earlier stages of development, in the modern age it is considered not only morally reprehensible but, oddly, a block on fair competition by not allowing a level-playing field for competing corporations and other interests. (The metaphor of a playing field is, in itself, a little odd since the stakes involved make the process of competition very unlike a mere game where the players shake hands and, presumably, enjoy themselves in healthy physical activity.)

Joseph Stiglitz, a former chief economist with the World Bank and once a severe critic of globalization (global capitalism), subsequently has offered a way of *Making Globalization Work* in which he examines modern capitalism and corruption where he advocates finding ways of eradicating corruption.⁸ On the other hand, bribery and corruption and privilege remain endemic in the most advanced societies; the most reprehensible part of this systemic corruption, however, is where it leads to violent conflict and potential violent conflict. Large modern corporations, especially those involved in resource exploitation and in the sale of arms, all resort to one form of bribery or another that amounts to maintaining repressive regimes in power. Scandals erupt with increasing frequency, and, though exposed through press reports, die down as quickly as they erupt. Many devices are used to cover such exposés: they range from executive privilege in the USA to claims that the national interest in the UK be protected to sustaining bank secrecy and maintaining off-shore banking in small independent countries. The stakes are enormous for the corporations and the individuals involved and their cronies. This has been the case from payments made in Angola, Chad, Sudan, Saudi Arabia and many other places where oil, arms and other resources as well as influence are at issue. Moreover, there has been hypocritical double-think over such issues as bank secrecy, where in order to control international terrorism bank secrecy has been removed but the same has not happened to expose international bribery and corruption. The movement of international funds has been so complex that, for instance, when political circumstances change and it becomes of some interest to trace funds, such as those of Gaddafi and his family and henchmen, it has been difficult to

locate them in order to freeze, confiscate or transfer them. It is all very well advising level-playing fields, the rule of law, regulation and new institutional and legal structures for the emerging economies, but the most advanced economies ensure that their structures, their excuses for corporate confidentiality, their pleas for national security all amount to hypocritical responses of which the main protagonists in the emerging economies and the main proponents of international terrorism are only too aware.

Tendency of the rate of profit to fall (TRPF), the surplus and the absorbers

Under advanced capitalism there is a need to burn off excess capital in the interest of maintaining the rate of profit. It is a feature of the system rather than any groups, classes or individuals within it. As long as surpluses are converted into capital for the expansion of the capitalist system, that very system has to prevent economic expansion to maintain the rate of profit. I demonstrated how this contradiction plays itself out at length elsewhere.⁹

I have also argued elsewhere that the key to understanding the nature of modern capitalism lies in the knowledge that the creation of a surplus is the overwhelming drive, that this is reinforced by the need to counteract the tendency of the rate of profit to fall, a process that is built into the system of capitalism, the process of absorption of the surplus when it threatens to lead to overproduction of commodities and this, in itself, has led to the creation of an absorptive class. As this perspective is somewhat unusual, I will reiterate it briefly here in the context of recurrent economic crises.

What caused the economic recession/great recession/mini-depression of 2007–2009 and its aftermath? So far when you examine the suggested fundamental causes there is not much to go on. The sky-high bonuses to CEOs of major financial institutions have been suggested, not seriously as a cause, more as a symptom of something being rotten in the state of capitalism. When you measure how much these people have received against the total amount of cash and other assets floating around, these bonuses cannot have been responsible for much at all. These bonuses appear to be morally wrong, of course, but there is a lot morally wrong about capitalism. A more convincing approach has been to place blame on the unregulated global movement of financial instruments, especially the collateralized debt obligation (CDO) or the structured investment

vehicle (SIV). Generally speaking, many and various institutions in the financial sector have been increasingly willing to make short-term gains since the last recession of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. What have these short-term gains been about exactly? The answer is that greed or more properly the drive to maintain the rate of profit is, indeed, at the root of the problem, but this greed is not simply a matter of individual action by greedy men (mostly men): the whole capitalist system is driven by the profit motive and, in this system, it is not simply necessary to make profit: it is necessary to maintain the *rate* of profit. When the rate of profit begins to fall capitalists will seek to increase the mass of profit (which is why we get amalgamations, mergers, take-overs, buy-outs and the like) and then when that is not good enough big corporations (especially) will cheat, defraud, swindle, deceive, duck, dive, weave and, if necessary, completely flout the law let alone completely bypass regulators and tax collectors by fair means or foul. Who says so? Well, Karl Marx was the first to notice that the key to understanding why industrial capitalism moved through a series of recurrent economic crises was this tendency (he called it a tendency) for the rate of profit to fall. He wrote:

Wages must not rise faster than growth in productivity ... the ratio between the mass surplus-value and the total capital applied in fact ... constitutes the rate of profit, which must therefore steadily fall. Simple as the law appears ... not one of the previous writers on economics succeeded in discovering it ... One might well say that it forms the mystery around whose solution the whole of political economy since Adam Smith revolves.

When general limited liability was introduced into the capitalist system in the Britain of the 1850s, making the introduction and sale of shares possible on a broad scale, a massive acceleration in the concentration of capital took place, and, indeed, we can take this date as the beginning of the domination of the corporation in modern advanced economies. Writing at the time of the birth of the modern corporation and during the next decade, Marx saw the dangers immediately. 'It [the corporate system] reproduces a new financial aristocracy, a new variety of parasites in the shape of promoters, speculators, and merely nominal directors; a whole system of swindling and cheating by means of corporate promotion, stock issuance and stock speculation.' Once this environment benefitting financial capitalism has been created and then expanded, it becomes impossible to eradicate it. What is worse is that, as the drive to maintain the rate of profit intensifies, capitalism, which brings the potential benefits of more commodities and a higher standard of living for many, is partially negated by a) its tendency

to overproduction and b) its tendency for the rate of profit to decline both of which create an INEVITABLE economic instability. Therefore, the route to stabilization as far as capitalism is concerned is to find a cure to overproduction and restore the rate of profit. This can only be done through 'capital's lying idle or even by its destruction under all circumstances'.

Now we can put the argument in a soundbite: *when the drive for high rates of profits reaches a certain point, capital is forced to lie idle or is actually destroyed*. It is a great pity, of course, if it is your capital or mine that is destroyed, but that is the price you pay if you are one of those standing to gain at other rosier points of time in the economic cycle.¹⁰ In due course, when the economy reaches a new equilibrium point, a point when the profit rate improves and the worst of the state of overproduction is over, the capitalist system will expand. This means that we can now coin another soundbite: *the recession or economic crisis is not the problem but the solution to the problem of overproduction and a falling rate of profit*.

We now have a simply expressed, though irresolvable, contradiction: *the solution for achieving permanent capitalist economic growth is recession but the solution to recession is capitalist economic growth*. After the destruction of many \$trillions of global financial assets, Obama threw in a paltry \$trillion or thereabouts to revitalize the capitalist economy.¹¹ Needless to say, it will take time and pain for global capitalism to find a new equilibrium, but it will do so in due course. How can I say with such confidence that a new equilibrium will be found? We have to answer a new question: how is the huge surplus produced by capitalism absorbed and how is it that capitalism survives regular shocks to the system? Whereas you can find out more about the TRPF if you read the relevant bits of Marx's *Capital*; the answer to why capitalism survives will not be found there. After all Marx was building up to suggest that capitalism would collapse under its own weight with a helpful and none-too-easy assistance, from a conscious proletariat. We have to look elsewhere for the answer.

To answer the newly posed question regarding the survival of capitalism through crises, we need to re-examine radically the nature of the class system that has been produced under capitalism. In the classic formulation, there are only two classes that count: the capitalist class and the working class. Economic crises, it was supposed, would provide the conditions for the collapse of capitalism (and its possible replacement with socialism). However, when we re-examine the class system we still find a capitalist class and a working class, but in addition we find a powerful new class that has hitherto been undiscovered even though

it has, since 1945, been responsible for the survival of capitalism as crises have occurred with great regularity. After all, capitalism has encountered recession or slump or financial crisis or depression at least every decade since industrial capitalism first emerged in England at the end of the eighteenth century. The 2007–2009 crisis is simply the latest of many crises endemic to the capitalist system and a bit more severe than some.¹² I label this potentially powerful new class the absorptive class or ‘the shock absorbers’. What is this new class? How is it constituted? What are its roles or functions?

To answer this question, we have to remember that the capitalist system is a system dedicated to the production of vast quantities of commodities. It is not first and foremost a consumer society since under the modern capitalist system *production* is always dominant over *consumption*. This brings us to the roles performed by the absorptive class. First, the absorptive class has the job of absorbing the commodities that are produced. Without this class there would be insufficient purchasing power in the advanced economies to deal with the massive output that occurs as a result of what is lovingly called ‘economic growth’. Second, the absorptive class has also to absorb the shock of re-current economic crises, in that they have to experience much of their personal surplus assets destroyed and thus help the capitalist system to find a new equilibrium where it can launch into a new phase of production during which capitalists can derive a high rate of profit. Third, the absorptive class has the function of absorbing the political shock that occurs as a result of the economic shock. A simple and current example of this latter point is that, instead of rioting on the streets or promoting revolution or conducting other serious breaches of the rules and conventions of civil and civilized society, the absorptive class has twice voted Barack Obama into office in the USA. And in return he offers what is, in effect, a paltry solution to a wounded system that can only be mended by the crisis itself, for as we have seen the crisis itself is the solution to the problem of overproduction. There have been street demonstrations before the crisis is over and there may well be more. There have been some in the UK and France and the USA and Greece and Stockholm and Spain, but overwhelmingly the rule of law will hold and the absorbers will mostly behave themselves. *Having absorbed the commodities, they will absorb the crisis.*

Who are the absorbers? Where and what is this class? Well, this now requires a feat of imagination and involves a degree of abstraction. There are genuine capitalists of all sorts and there are workers in the traditional sense. In addition, there is huge mass often referred to as the middle class or the middle classes.

Politicians refer to them frequently. Joe Biden, the vice-president of the USA on assuming office in 2009, was given the job of protecting this middle class. Many groups describe themselves as being of the middle classes. It is not clear whether there is one middle class or several or they can be differentiated in some way, one sub-class from another. One author has discovered the creative class, another might refer to the political class. We do not know how to separate this class from the elite or from elites. Sociologists have always had trouble among themselves in deciding exactly what a class is, and Marx and Engels especially are no real help other than knowing that classes exist and that in the capitalist era only two, the bourgeois class and the proletariat, are counted as significant. Marx started to develop a class analysis in his unfinished Volume III of *Capital*. He did not get very far, managing literally a few lines and died before he could get back to the job. Durkheim knew that classes existed as did Max Weber. Left-wing parties like the Labour Party of Great Britain or Social Democrats in Germany know they exist. They are there but we can't see them with too much clarity. The first step to clarity in respect of the absorptive class is to deal with the problem of the individual.

We all appear to be individuals. We are told that we live in a society based on individualism. We are all essentially and existentially alone and are told each person must take responsibility for his her own actions; we are told that you are not an adult until you take responsibility for your own actions; community in the form of the welfare state is denigrated as the 'nanny' state. As we grow up as individuals we must let go of nanny's hand and your mother's apron strings and stand on our own feet: get an education, get a job, learn about family planning, learn to drive, get a car, get a mortgage; we have to find the wherewithal to fill the house and garage with things, buy the services of commodified professionals like lawyers, accountants, actuaries, massage therapists, psycho-therapists, doctors, nurses, pharmacists, airline pilots, chefs, hoteliers, mechanics, grocers, vets, journalists, web designers and so on endlessly. In other words, all individuals are driven to absorb vast quantities of commodities in the form of goods and services. *However, the individual is not a whole person.* At one level only a part of him or her is required, maybe a limb or two or a back or a brain. Also the individual may not actually be wholly a capitalist or a worker or a member of our newly discovered class of absorbers. Thus all classes are made up of fractions of individuals which is why most of us suffer severe angst. Each of us is made up of fractions and we are not clearly conscious of what are our main roles are in the capitalist system or in our everyday activities.

The second point is to note that in the system of capitalist production, huge surpluses are produced to satisfy wants for profit over and above the satisfaction of needs and these surpluses have to be absorbed otherwise we have what we now have which is an economic crisis (or, more correctly put, capitalism in crisis). Some of the surplus can be absorbed by the military and by government demands, but the bulk of the vast surplus has to be consumed in the form of disposable commodities. The capitalist system therefore has to produce along with the commodities a class of people to consume them and dispose of them. This is the absorptive class which in essence might include almost everyone as long as the individual consumes something above what can be described as the satisfaction of needs. At the same time some individuals are also workers and also capitalists. But we have seen that the individual is not really an individual but a fraction so that the absorptive class is a massive collection of fractions of people rather than an enormous collection of individuals that you can see before your very eyes as might be expressed by a demonstrating mass of urban workers marching to the seat of the legislature or blocking the factory gates or calling for a general strike. It is not surprising, then, that the absorptive class, despite its vital roles and its huge size, cannot be seen. Its existence has to be arrived at initially theoretically rather than empirically.

- The existence of the absorptive class explains why class violence is contained within nation-states that are for the most part central to capitalism.
- The commodity narcissism that is produced by the system of production as a necessary feature of the producer society results in much repressed violence which emerges in the form of homicides and high prison populations and, at times, support for bellicose or militaristic expeditions. Surplus violence, in other words, is exported.
- This class, by absorbing crises, helps ensure the seeming stability of what we understand as a democracy.

Globalization as global capitalism

One of the more common terms that have emerged since the 1990s is that of globalization. This, in essence, is an ideological term that tends to obscure rather than enlighten.

It would not be unreasonable to claim that Europeans are defending their culture when globalization is discussed and that other cultures, likewise, may use the term as a word indicating progress and the possibility of better living standards or quite the opposite, an attack on long-held and superior values. The suggestion that there is a common culture in Europe may seem absurd at first sight, given the extent to which a Swabian differs from a Catalan, or a Scot from a Sicilian, or a Norwegian from a Walloon (Sassoon, 2006, *passim*). Yet, there is a common culture bound together by an awareness of history, of literature, a range of culinary skills and language in their very diversity. Europeans are not Africans, Chinese or Asians. While Europeans are perfectly capable of playing their part in the so-called globalization process, they all have an interest in defending their special back-yards against the very global uniformity in which they are participating, yet resisting it simultaneously. While young men and women may be wearing identical denim jeans designed in California as they stand on Tower Bridge or eat in Gran Place or stroll in the Montmartre or meet on the Spanish Steps in Rome and are thus united by the label in the waistband, Montmartre, Tower Bridge, the Spanish Steps and Gran Place maintain their distinctiveness and cannot be globalized. There is a damning sameness of the cities and towns in many parts of the USA, with their malls and motels and their culinary excess and the sameness of their petrol filling stations and the general dominance of post-modernism over history, all of which puts Europe at a distinct cultural advantage and at the very forefront of opposition to a globalized anti-culture led by the USA. The addition of Warsaw, Prague, Budapest, Vilnius, Sofia, Bratislava, Bucharest and all make formidable cultural reinforcements that will, in the longer run, easily defeat the architecture, food and thought patterns of a single nation-state. Europeans are on the verge of not only surprising the rest of the world but surprising themselves. Europe cannot be a political union like the USA because history forbids it, but it will be a political union in its own way, and no less formidable and, in its cultural diversity, inevitably much more benign towards other cultures, including that of the USA. Cultures will survive and, indeed, have survived. The real globalization is not that of culture and language, but that of capitalism. Globalization is, in reality, global capitalism which has the capacity to commodify culture where it offers profit.

Thus, the real importance of the fall of the Berlin Wall is not to be found in the victory of the US superpower over the Soviets. The real importance lies in the unification not just of Germany but potentially of the whole of Europe

(with the exception of Russia), though the speed of that unification is turning out to be slower than might have been predicted before the threatened collapse of the common currency and the lack of stronger political institutions for the European Union.

There has always been long-distance trade which has had the characteristics of international trade, even before there were nations in the modern sense. This cannot be construed as an early form of globalization. In more modern times, the key features of the international economy in the early part of nineteenth century were British industrial, commercial and naval hegemony, closely envied by the USA and Germany and some smaller economies in what we came to call the West. Marx in 1848 summarized the enormous impact of industrialization and development of worldwide multilateral trading relations in the hands of the 'bourgeoisie'.

The bourgeoisie, by the rapid improvement of all instruments of production, by the immensely facilitated means of communication, draws all, even the most barbarian, nations into civilization. The cheap prices of commodities are the heavy artillery with which it forces the barbarians' intensely obstinate hatred of foreigners to capitulate. It compels all nations, on pain of extinction, to adopt the bourgeois mode of production; it compels them to introduce what it calls civilization into their midst, i.e., to become bourgeois themselves. In one word, it creates a world after its own image.

So we see only too clearly that associated with the transformation and expansion of these national economies was the process whereby capitalist drive both crossed frontiers and changed those very frontiers when it became possible to do so, and there was sufficient power available to support this process which took two forms: one form has been described as direct imperialism and the other economic imperialism. Marxist theorists such as those of Hilferding and Lenin labelled this form of imperialism as international monopoly capital, which refers to the way in which large-scale monopolies backed by nation-states pursued foreign and colonial policies in the interests of profit. The monopolies themselves were the result of the tendency for capital to concentrate under centralized control. The theory revealed the following:

- Economic and political developments are unavoidably uneven under imperialism.
- Concentration of capital is an inevitable tendency in capitalist development.

- Competing national economies inevitably clash and lead to war.
- The middle and petty bourgeoisie remain as the social buttress and political pawns of the monopoly capitalists supported by 'state power'; these classes are reactionary, chauvinistic and generally opposed to interests of the mass of the people.

The fact that the value of international trade and investment flow was higher as a percentage of Gross Domestic Product in 1914 might indicate, at first sight, that globalization is nothing new. In the last quarter of the nineteenth century, capital outflows from Britain peaked at an enormous 9 per cent of British GNP and capital exports from France, Germany and the Netherlands were almost as high. World trade overall grew at a much faster *rate* in the nineteenth century than it did between 1914 and 1970. The share of exports in total world output reached a peak in 1913 and was not surpassed until 1970. Moreover there were few parts of the world into which international trade had not penetrated.

However, the period 1973–1983 was a turning point in that exchange rates were floated and all the major trading nations had dropped restrictions on capital flows. The international financial system, which had been held in check to some extent by the Bretton Woods agreements, was finally breached. The flow of direct foreign investment from the major industrial countries quadrupled between 1984 and 1990. Cross-border financial flows from G7 countries increased tenfold in 1980–1992. As nationally insulated stock markets began to become a thing of the past in the decade of the 1980s, cross-border equities grew from \$120 billion to \$1.4 trillion. In the same period, international bank lending increased from \$324 billion to \$7.5 trillion and the international bond market went from \$295 billion to \$1.6 trillion.

At the same time the growth and power and nature of multinational companies have wrought significant changes. One-third of all world trade is constituted by transfers of commodities between subsidiaries of these companies. One half of all world trade is produced by them and when goods and services are combined we find two-thirds of world trade are dependent on multinationals and their subsidiaries. Thus what integrates the global economy is the power and scope of multinationals. World trade is not dependent, then, on responses to a free market but on the planned strategies of these huge international conglomerates representing the concentration of capital and to this extent is confirmation of the observations of Hilferding and others who analysed what was termed 'international monopoly capitalism' at the outset of the twentieth century.

Connected with these phenomena, the emergence of the power of global capitalism through the freeing of financial operations and the growth of multinational corporations, is the relationship with the nation-state. Historically, capitalism has always sought to outrun national boundaries; capitalism in its very nature strains against boundaries whereas nation-states are thoroughly concerned with them. Therefore, one feature of global capitalism is the claim that nation-states are in decline in the face of the size and scope of multinationals and scale of international financial transactions. Given that huge companies operating across many frontiers are driven by the profit motive and their concomitant responsibility to their shareholders, they must generally, if not always, place their profit-seeking interests above national interests unless obliged by relevant legislation to do so (as with, say BAE Systems). And now it is claimed the scale of these companies is such that they are frequently more powerful than the nation-states where they are based or than those in which they operate.

The argument, then, for the difference between international monopoly capitalism and the new circumstance labelled globalization lies in the following:

- Huge quantitative change in movements of capital constitute a qualitative change in international capitalism
- Huge reserves of low wage labour become available worldwide
- Nature and growth of multinational rather than transnational companies help determine the direction of national policy
- The failure of the Soviet system to provide an alternative which collapsed under the weight of the arms race and internal pressure from the 'nationalities'
- Speedier rate of technological change than ever known before accompanied by massive resilience of the capitalist system despite recurrent and inevitable crises.
- Concentration of political power in fewer hands linked to the concentration of capital

But have nation-states been as subordinated as some have suggested? After all, the fiction of *laissez-faire* is itself a construct of 'state' power.¹³ Is the nation-state really in decline? Well, take your dog off the leash in a public park in the USA, try to get a visa to enter Burma, ask for access to the health service in Britain without a national health insurance number, drive through a red-light in Munich, try to

take heroin out of Thailand, do not pay your taxes in Sweden, refuse to serve in the armed forces in Israel and so on. To the ordinary citizen the nation-state is powerful based, as it is, on the effective delivery of the rule of law. It governs everyone's life from the moment of waking to the moment of sleep and even while asleep. The attacks of September 11 showed the power of the nation-state of the USA not only over its own citizens but as part of a community of nation-states worldwide with a common interest to oppose international terrorism. The nation-state of the USA immediately displayed massive powers over the media, over its closest allies, over thought patterns, over the manipulation of the stock markets, and, above all, exercised, what to Weber is the key power of the nation-state, the legitimate use of violence. While the 'state' backed occupation of Afghanistan did have popular support in its early stages, this support declined in due course. The 'state' had to work somewhat harder to justify the invasion of Iraq as we see in more detail in Chapter 7. In many ways, therefore, it would appear that the nation-state is far from dead, but its main functions have become directed even more closely by the interests of big capital.

The term 'globalization', which is now as much a part of everyday speech as peanut butter, computer or Taleban, was not heard much before 1990 despite the fact that you could buy Czech shoes in London, dinner plates made in China in Central America, hats made in Ecuador in Alaska, or NYY baseball caps made almost anywhere almost anywhere. Indeed, for that matter, a Gaul visiting Rome in 100 AD could buy a copper plate made in Cyprus or a woollen cape made in Britain.

International trade does not, therefore, constitute globalization, let alone global capitalism.

Let's take a 'conversation' between the former Director of the London School of Economics and Will Hutton, now Principal of Hertford College, Oxford, and the former editor of the Guardian newspaper in the UK and author of the best-selling analysis of the modern state and economy, *The State We're In*.¹⁴

Giddens (Hutton and Giddens, 2000) argues that the key and unique features of globalization are as follows:

- Worldwide communications revolution
- Financial markets, stunning in their scope as the cutting edge of the weightless economy
- Fall of Soviet system and the collapse of the bi-polar world
- Worldwide shift towards equality between men and women

Hutton responds by saying that communications, financial markets and gender equality are not sufficiently novel even if the scale has changed. What is new is the collapse of the Soviet system. What he sees is a change in the process: a seemingly inevitable advance of aggressive capitalism, accepted by political leaders. The key is 'change'. 'There is no nook or cranny of the economy where change or the potential for change is not happening, driven by technology, markets and powerful corporations, with all the knock-on consequences for patterns of working which in turn refract into our daily lives and relationships' (Hutton and Giddens, 2000, p. 3).

Both agree that the debate centres on continuities versus discontinuities from the past. The problem is how to assess and measure the trends, and, indeed, what trends to measure. For instance, while Giddens argues that it is the knowledge economy that has helped reduce the size of the traditional working class in Western economies to 20 per cent of the working population, Hutton vehemently argues that the growth of the service sector has been in train since the 1930s and the changes in employment and consuming power associated with a richer and ageing population, two-earner families, home ownership and greater personal social and geographical and occupational mobility have all accompanied these changes. The new knowledge economy has to be seen as part and parcel of these changes and is rapidly expanding to the gross detriment of those left behind.

Both accept the key point that the collapse of the Soviet system has left modern capitalism in an exceptionally unchallenged position. One of the problems is the simultaneous scope for capitalism to bring immense benefits and do great harm. To Hutton the main benefit of the Soviet system was to ensure that capitalism retained a 'human face'. Explanations and definitions of globalization therefore have to be preceded by a discussion of modern capitalism both before the collapse of the Soviet system and since. The key features of capitalism are the private ownership of property, the existence of market system for the allocation of resources and the quest for profit as the source of motivation in economic activity. However, such features do allow a considerable degree of variation. German capitalism is not the capitalism of the USA, Japanese capitalism is not French capitalism and so on.

Whatever conclusions might be arrived at as a result of this debate it is clear that globalization is, in effect, *global capitalism* despite the institutional variations within the advanced industrial nation-states.

Associated with downside of global capitalism is the perception of growing inequities rather than the narrowing of them.

As trade and financial markets have been flung open, incomes have not risen faster, but slower. Equality among nations has not improved, with many of the poorest nations suffering an absolute decline in incomes. Within nations, inequality seems to have worsened. The data are rough, but ... the trend is toward inequality ... Those inspired by the vision of one global economy ignore the issue of income and wealth inequality at their peril.¹⁵

It is argued that this inequality is a direct effect of globalizing capitalism. For instance, John Gray argues that there is a clear relationship between global free markets and falling wages (Gray, 2002, p. 83).

The overwhelming feature of this global capitalism is not, for instance the knowledge economy but the growth, scale and nature of financial markets. The huge expansion of global financial markets, their volatility, their frequent vast distance from the real economies from which they emanate, the capacity for destabilization of such geographical areas as Indonesia, South America, former Soviet states and so on are examples of the scope for both good and destructiveness in the world, over which there is as little control as man has over meteorological change.

One feature of global capitalism was thought to be a trend towards the growth of transnational corporations.¹⁶ However, significantly, transnationals are relatively rare compared with multinational companies accompanied by their foreign subsidiaries. Hirst has argued that companies remain nationally based for many reasons. 'The first is that they benefit from national systems of production and innovation ... from a distinct management culture, a store of rules and tacit knowledge ... Contracts, property rights and patents are more securely protected ... The USA is a fierce defender of the commercial and intellectual property rights of national companies' (Hirst, 2001, pp. 120ff.).

There are those who see global capitalism as more of a political process, possibly a slow-acting development of what might have been called simply international institutions for world government or governance. Even key actors over recent years seem less than forceful over the prospect of real globalization in the sense of being able to establish world-wide forms of governance. Lord Mark Malloch-Brown, a former chief-of staff to Kofi Annan, a two-term Secretary-General of the United Nations, argues that one day there will be a global social contract of the kind he imagines (largely falsely) has created the modern nation-state. Somehow the democratic principles and representative government and rule of law that are features of the modern nation-state will be applied one way or another to global governance. This approach seems to owe more to a wishful

utopianism which is strange coming from someone who has been at the centre of all those disappointing outcomes emanating from the United Nations and in strange contrast to E.H. Carr who had similar experiences at the heart of Britain's international politics in the 1920s and 1930s that gave rise to both a form of realism with only a mere tinge of utopianism. Reading Malloch-Brown's memoir, *The Unfinished Revolution: The Limits of Nations and the Pursuit of New Politics*, it is hard to imagine that he had even read such path-breaking works as those of Carr. On the other hand, he does end up as a realist when he concludes that achieving a global contract would be no easy path. 'Each step toward a more integrated future will be contested.'¹⁷ What he does not see is that a major obstruction is what he calls 'the market'. He laments that without this global contract to manage international affairs, the market will dominate the economies of the lesser developed world, the lesser developed in terms of both economics and state-building. In fact, however, what he calls the market is not in any sense a free market at all, in that it is dominated not by an innocent process of distributing resources and goods according to an infinite number of buyers or sellers but is manipulated by both monopolies and monopsonies based on corporations that have been able to concentrate the power of capital; these include the major oil companies or cartels that control the diamond 'market' or the military-industrial complexes of the USA–UK–Israel–France–Germany–Russia–China that control arms or the major banks and so on.

Summary and conclusions

Bribery and corruption was at the heart of the development of capitalism and remains the case, especially in burgeoning capitalist economies. There are no real signs of this abating significantly.

Free trade has been largely a fiction; the 'state' has and has had much greater influence over economic processes than is allowed by the ideological elements in orthodox economics.

The tendency in capitalism is towards the concentration of capital, reflected by the power and extent of multinational corporations, which leads to increasing concentration of political power and is unfriendly to the full development of democracy.

Capital always forces itself beyond those very nation-state frontiers that are held by the capitalist controlled state to be sacrosanct creating a massive

contradiction between the interests of capital and the demands made by national populations to protect their frontiers.

'Globalization' means little unless interpreted as *global capitalism* and the latter term should normally be used rather than the former.

Capitalist crises are inevitable because of the need of capitalism to maintain the rate of profit. In this process it has created a class, made up of fractionalized populations where angst is inherent: this class is labelled as the absorptive class which absorbs economic crises, political crises and surpluses. Crises are inevitable as a result of the need to maintain the rate of profit: *when the drive for high rates of profits reaches a certain point, capital is forced to lie idle or is actually destroyed; the recession or economic crisis is not the problem but the solution to the problem of over-production and a falling rate of profit.* In other words, we have arrived at the following contradiction: *the solution for achieving permanent capitalist economic growth is recession but the solution to recession is capitalist economic growth.*

Two or three centuries of recurrent crises have produced a class within the capitalist system, sometimes erroneously referred to as the middle class (*not* the bourgeoisie) but accurately described as the absorptive class. This class has the several functions of absorbing the commodities that are produced; second, they also absorb the shock of re-current economic crises; third, the absorptive class absorbs the political shock that occurs as a result of the economic shock.

The Americas

Introduction

The central focus of this book is to show how Europe exported modern war to the rest of the world as part of the dialectical relationship between capital and nation and to show how it continues to do so. In this argument, it is a matter of some importance that the USA should be regarded as essentially a European country, an extension of capitalist Europe, and specifically of Britain, a comment which may well annoy the so-called Americans.

The very word America has been hijacked by the nation-state of the USA and by its inhabitants. Other Americans, those of Meso- and South America, are, generally speaking, partially resigned to this and partially infuriated, substituting Latin America, a term introduced at the time of the French occupation of Mexico, for the numerous nation-states and variety of peoples in these geographical areas (Bender, 2006, p. 120). But the use of the descriptive expression 'Latin America' is an admission of a repressive colonial past and does not adequately give sufficient recognition to the Native-Americans of Meso- and South America or to those of the Caribbean. In my several years of living and working in Central America, I found terminologies differed a great deal within these countries from those one heard, say, in Europe or the USA. In Central America, a person from the USA was (rightly) described as a United Statesian (i.e. *estadounidensis*). In Mexico a person from the USA (when not described as a *gringa* or *gringo*) is referred to as a *Norte-Americano* or *Norte-Americana* because the country we usually know as Mexico is in fact the United States of Mexico, and so anyone from the USA cannot be described as a 'United Statesian'. Being referred to as a North American, meaning someone from the USA, however, tends to infuriate Canadians who, when the technicality is resolved,

may be referred to as *Canadiensis*. These linguistic distinctions are not mere curiosities. The point is that the original Europeans, mainly British, colonists who settled on the eastern seaboard of the North American continent developed after the War of American [sic] Independence, a pan-colonial vision of both territorial and economic and strategic domination stretching from the original 13 colonies to include the whole of the continents of North and South America.

This chapter draws the distinction, then, between the capitalist economy of the USA and its territorially and expansionist policies, and a 'Latin America' which was defined by imperial and dynastic but capitalistically backward Spain and Portugal. The capital/nation-state history of the USA has defined the differences between the two geographical expanses of the Americas and has enabled the domination of the one by the other. The USA from its birth has combined its capitalist development with expanding its territorial frontiers. These territorial limits (or limitlessness) have been determined by the extent to which the State of the USA was able to impose its imperial desires on the other European nations, with claims to various land areas of the northern Americas, especially Meso- and South America.

The continental imperative

While there were a number of causes for the 13 colonies to part company with the colonial power of Britain, the major presenting cause was the need to pay taxes for the defence of the colonies (and their expansion) against the threats of the aboriginal populations and the French. This meant in fact that at the moment of the inception of the USA, it was an imperialist power simply taking on the British mantle. As Gareth Stedman Jones writes: 'The United States [of America] was already structurally an imperialist state at the moment of its foundation.'¹ Certainly the men, the institutions, the class base and the policies already in place ensured that the territorial frontiers were to be extended as far as was financially, militarily and diplomatically possible, after which capitalist domination would be the method and drive to extend the influence of the USA across the Pacific Ocean.

A key policy was not to allow the fragmentation of the territory of North America and have it divided by European-style dynastic and imperial interests which led to centuries-long warring on the European continent. This meant that, by whatever means were possible, the French were to be excluded from

a Louisiana that stretched from the Gulf of Mexico almost to the Canadian border. Nor were the Spanish allowed to remain on the mainland and with some reluctance Spain was allowed its possessions in the Caribbean, especially the island of Cuba which has always been prized by a range of interests in the USA. Huge swathes of Mexican territory were seized and prospects for an independent California and an independent Texas were dismissed. The Russian claims were purchased while Canada remained as an irritation.

This dual drive of nation-building and expansion of territory-based imperialism was driven by a fragmented form of capitalism. In the northern states industrial and commercial capitalism provided the wealth, motivation and profit motive for economic and imperial expansion. In the south land-based slave capitalism provided the incentive to expand profits and drive westward, expanding slave-owning federal states. This was an odd form of competitive capitalism which helped lead to the American [*sic*] Civil War.

When Meriwether Lewis and William Clark were sent by Jefferson to find a waterway that flowed from the east coast to the Pacific, the aim was much less to find a navigable river that flowed out to the Pacific but for the USA, less than two decades old, to lay claim to the lands west of the Ohio River and ensuring that the flag of the USA could be planted on, and claims made, to the continent uninterrupted from the east coast to the west. The terms of reference for *The Corps of Discovery* expedition (1804–1806) required the leaders of the expedition, Lewis and Clark, to embark on scientific and geographical studies as well as to report on the commercial possibilities that would benefit a country that had scarcely been formed. But the real intention was perfectly clear. This was the first step of the fledgling nation in the direction of laying an imperialist claim to the whole of the continent but also to an expansionist capitalist claim to the commercial and industrial opportunities of the ocean beyond. Indeed, they were enjoined by Jefferson to find a ‘direct and practicable water communication across the continent for the purposes of commerce with Asia.’ Nothing about the motives, therefore, could be clearer.

The achievements of the Lewis and Clark expedition came after the purchase of Louisiana from Napoleon and were partly induced by that purchase. The importance of their expedition was somewhat understated and for many decades more or less lost to the history books, but other events overshadowed the expedition. Similarly, other events were overshadowed, notably the war of 1812–1814 initiated by President James Madison in an effort to win Canada from the Loyalists, much resented by the founding fathers. (Madison was one

of the five presidents drawn from the so-called founding fathers.) Again, in the history books this has been regarded as a mistake and, in any case, some kind of draw as if it were merely a local derby between two football teams. However, a more recent work has rightly returned this war to a more serious place in the history of the imperialist intentions and continental policy of the USA and demonstrates to some extent the arrogance and contempt of its policy makers towards its continental neighbours (Lambert, 2012). While Britain was involved in the pursuit of its own national interest during the Napoleonic Wars, the government of the USA, led by James Madison, claimed that taking Canada, was simply 'a matter of marching', as Thomas Jefferson put it, and Canada could be taken, given that the British fleet was much more concerned with dealing with France and her allies. The British were victorious for the most part in their engagements at sea and on land with the fledgling USA, apart from some isolated incidents subsequently over-egged by some historians in the USA. Similarly, historians in the USA avoid seeing the unopposed burning of the White House by the British as a humiliation and the pointless victory at the Battle of New Orleans fought after the peace had been seen as a triumph. As Dominic Sandbrook has commented:

At the end when the war weary British, distracted by the events in Europe, agreed to return to the status quo, the Americans [sic] congratulated themselves on a non-existent victory. In reality they had achieved none of their strategic objectives, and only through a vast exercise in partisan dissimulation did they turn the repulse of a British raiding party at New Orleans into the centrepiece of the conflict. But that would have come as scant consolation to the roughly 20,000 people who lost their lives as a result of Madison's bloody, stupid and inglorious little war.²

To those with a sharper view of this conflict driven by the idiocy of Madison and Jefferson's ambitions, the apology Tony Blair made to Bush for the burning of the White House is mildly infuriating. It may well be that the burning of the White House occurred 200 years ago, but the pattern of capitalist and territorial expansion backed by its economic power and its military-industrial complex remains unabated. This, of course, is a strategic policy learned only too well, or only too badly, from Britain. As for relations with Canada, it has taken a long time for US policy makers to give up. The purchase of Alaska from Russia in 1867 under the direction of the Secretary of State of the recently formed Republican Party, William Henry Seward, had of course a territorial, continental and

geographical logic in keeping Russia off the continent and ensuring access to the inhospitable north-western shores. But the double-whammy lay in putting more pressure on Canada, which remained in the sights of the USA. When *War Plan Red* was declassified in the 1970s, it came as little surprise to those historians who did not buy into the claim that the USA was not a nation driven by desires for imperialistic domination. While Britain has clung to the one-sided special relationship (a label largely invented by Winston Churchill), the USA planned how a war against the British Empire might, however improbable, be conducted in the 1920s and 1930s. The first move in such a war according to *War Plan Red* would be the invasion of a more or less undefended Canada.

Similarly, the Monroe doctrine first expounded in 1823 was dual-edged, not only warning Europeans of imperialist and territorial ambitions in the Americas but also reserving those very same territories for their own expansionist ambitions. British rapid industrialization, fast making it a world superpower, would certainly seek markets and raw materials in the Americas given the decline of the Spanish and Portuguese empires and so threaten the opportunities for capitalist enterprise emanating from an already thirsty capitalist class in the USA. While Monroe might well announce that the USA was prepared to protect the new countries of the Americas emerging from Spanish domination from European exploitation, the truth of the matter was that the burgeoning bourgeoisie of the USA, even at this early period of its own nation-building, could see the immense possibilities for exploitation. While the Monroe doctrine was accepted by the new American countries as a statement of their being protected from European exploitation, the rest of the Americas seems to ignore their vulnerability to exploitation by the USA. It was not for some time that the USA was seen to dominate rather than protect the fragmented countries of what became to be known as Latin America. The USA was intent on building an empire 'on its doorstep' as Britain had around the world.

As far as Britain was concerned, its policy makers could easily accept the situation. The Atlantic economy for the time being remained essentially dominated by Britain, with massive trade benefits accruing as a result of the rapid industrialization of the USA. In addition, Britain maintained a strong foothold in the Caribbean based on the sugar trade. At a later stage in the century, Argentina became heavily dependent on the trade with Britain, especially involving the export of meat products. Thus the Monroe doctrine could be interpreted as part of the 'special relationship' that was thought to exist between the two countries, despite the growing populist view which developed after the 1840s that the

stronger culture in the USA was Irish rather than English. The deep debt owed to the English/Britain in relation to capitalist development, which we discuss in relation to the Atlantic Economy below, has been obscured by this sentimental attachment to the oppressed people of Ireland.

The victory of the northern capitalists over the southern land-based capitalists, according to Stedman-Jones, led in due course to the 'triumph of bourgeois imperialism'. He writes: 'The aftermath of the civil war . . . produced an economic sub-structure that impelled a fully-fledged modern imperialism' and

the new American [sic] empire was to be a strictly bourgeois product. It would solve the problem of surplus disposal and reduce discontent at home. The open class conflict at home . . . swung the vast majority of the anxious middle class behind a policy of informal but carefully planned economic domination in Asia and Latin America.³

One of the more articulate exponents of the imperial strategy at the time was William Seward, Republican Secretary of State at the end of the 1860s. Once the territory of North America was in the hands of the USA, further advance would be in the hands of the industrial and commercial bourgeoisie. This would obviate the need for both a standing army of any size or a massive navy, given that competition for markets and raw materials would not lead to armed conflict except on a minimal scale as the lessons of the British Empire was providing with the (misleading) label of *pax Britannica*. The future would see the decline of the British Empire (notwithstanding the fiction of the special relationship) and the rise of *pax Americana* at the very time the Royal Navy guaranteed the safe navigation of the world's oceans to Britain and her allies.

But the growth of the economy of the USA proceeded as all economic growth proceeds via successive economic crises which accelerates the concentration of capital, the concentration of political power and in regard to the law of the tendency of the rate of profit to fall. In other words, imperialism is an outcome of the nation-state furthering the interests of capitalists whose drive for profit has to transcend the territorial boundaries of the nation-state. Thus in the history of the USA in the nineteenth century we see nation-building, state power, bourgeois domination and disregard for democratic processes being formed as the capitalist need to maintain the rate of profit drives commerce into the farthest corner of the earth, accompanied by naval and military intervention in the form of 'small wars'.

The trading relationship with Britain after the war of 1812–1814 is, in some ways, instructive. While policy makers, journalists and other public figures may

have harboured anti-British feelings, the drive for expansion, profit and securing the nation-state was another matter.

The Atlantic economy

It is surprising how few studies of the economic history of the USA include the importance of the Atlantic Economy to the economic development of the USA in the period 1815–1860. Despite the foreign policy of successive political administrations in the USA focussing on antagonism towards the British Empire, trade between the two countries grew enormously to the point where there had never been such a volume of trade between two sovereign countries in commercial history. Though there was some attempt to demonstrate this for a few years by a small number of economic historians, the record now seems to have been obscured. Jim Potter pointed out in 1960:

Yet the insistence that the early decades of American [sic] nationhood are only understandable when American development is studied in the whole context of an Atlantic community is a recent feature of American historiography. The view involves the abandonment of certain well-established introspective attitudes towards American history and an admission that for the most of the nineteenth century the American frontier was also the European frontier of expansion for both labour and capital.⁴

In this partnership, the USA stood to benefit more from the trading relationship and the capital and labour inflows than did Britain, though Britain gained too. It was the 'golden age of Anglo-American commerce'.⁵ For some decades North America (including Canada) remained, in economic terms, in a colonial relationship with the 'mother' country.

At a significant level, cotton was king and the cotton trade was of vital importance to both Britain and the USA. For most of this period, 1815–1860, cotton represented two-thirds of the exports from the USA, and for the British cotton industry cotton from the southern states represented by far the most important source of raw cotton. Thus the cotton gin in the USA and the power loom in the Britain were obvious technological outcomes of the drive for profit from the manufacture of textiles and the supply of raw materials for those manufactures.

By 1846 the USA supplied Britain with the majority of its imported grain. In 1847 over 100 American ships were involved, though there were far fewer British

ships engaged in the trade. And as time went on a huge variety of raw materials were sent to Britain and in the opposite direction came all manner of key manufactures, excluding textiles which did not figure; iron and steel were a major export as the railways were laid down in the 1850s; indeed one half of British iron and steel output went to the USA in 1853. All this was to change of course as the USA became a fully fledged industrial nation and outran Britain. But the point is that the USA for many decades remained in a colonial position in relation to Britain, which to many policy makers and ideologues has long been obscured, and with it the force of the historical point that the pursuit of profit will find a way of outrunning government policy until the two ultimately coincide. As Potter concludes in his article: 'Many aspects of the Atlantic economy have been wholly ignored, not least the migration of labour, especially skilled, and of capital.' A brief exploration of the Atlantic Economy, its existence and progress, would indicate the way in which capitals compete, the way in which capital seeks profit wherever it can despite government policy, leaving the nation-state at times to leave alone where it seems the profit-takers are doing well in the short and medium term.

Militarism, bellicosity and force

While US governments might from time to time consider the use of military or naval force during its nation-building and earlier imperialist phases in the nineteenth century in imitation to a large extent of *pax Britannica* by the end of the century, the chosen method of domination was a continuation of the Monroe doctrine plus considerable help from the dollar. This so-called dollar diplomacy became a pejorative term for the way in which the USA spread its economic and imperial power, supported by the capitalist success of its industrial base. The actual use of force was kept to a minimum mainly because the USA had little military or naval strength until the turn of the century and even then it was severely limited. Though the 13 colonies had won their independence from Britain through dint of arms, there were special circumstances that made this possible, not the least being Britain's temporary loss of sea-power in the context of unfriendly coalitions of other European powers and 'imperial overstretch.' This victory has clouded the general lack of experience of the military in the USA. As we have seen, Madison's attempt to take Canada in the years 1812–1814 involved considerable humiliation (though disguised in the textbooks). The American [sic] Civil War saw mammoth incompetence by both the Confederation and

the Union, with disasters in terms of strategy, mobilization, logistics and supply, medical services and so on.

One possible cause of the incompetence of the military in the USA was that social-class structure in the USA did not produce the kind of militarism that was deeply seated in Britain, France, Prussia or Russia. There was no historical aristocracy based on land, military glory or political and social status. It was Schumpeter who once said 'institutions are coins that do not readily melt'. Moreover, they do not readily transfer from one society to another. Therefore, though the USA was essentially an extension of Britain in many ways, it did not produce the same deep respect for militarism. Captains of industry such as Carnegie, Rockefeller, Vanderbilt and so on took the place of Princes, Archdukes, Earls and Barons in Europe. The main source of status and key access to political power was a matter of wealth and the conspicuous consumption which accompanied it.

While *pax Britannica* was always an essential ideological veneer, *pax Americana* was never to be. Dollar diplomacy, Good Neighbour and Open Door policies did achieve both their imperial aims up to a point and made possible ever-burgeoning profit for the capitalists based in the USA.

As Bender has pointed out, once secession had been averted, economic development was based not in the capital, Washington, but at the centre of the capitalist drive, New York, where it remains to this day. 'After the crisis of the American Civil War, the United States became a distinctly national society, with a national economy headquartered in New York', whereas 'Washington became a national political capital rather than a meeting place of regional leaders' (Bender, 2006, p. 130).

But while the USA continued its Continental expansionist drive, the situation in South America was markedly different as independence from Spain brought violent conflict. The War of the Triple Alliance was marked by massive destruction as Argentina, Uruguay and Brazil almost annihilated Paraguay. The differing experience of North American and Latin American nationalism and economic development is a huge area, but in the following we look at some key arguments in order to help clarify the capital/national dialectical process.

Latin America

Following independence in the early nineteenth century, marked economic decline ensued in the greater part of Latin America. No fundamental,

governmental or economic structures were introduced after independence which occasioned great surprise among many of the people in some of the regions of the Iberian empires. Land tenure did not change and slavery was not abandoned fully until the 1880s in some countries such as Brazil and Cuba. Moreover, boundaries were disputed and strongmen used their power positions to perpetuate war and it became difficult to secure inflows of capital and in various places and at various times there was considerable capital flight. There have been no satisfactory simple explanations for the failure of Latin American countries to imitate the economic (capitalistic) success of the USA or Canada. This much is admitted by Leandro Prados de la Escosura and other authors of the standard Cambridge History of Latin America, for instance. One of the problems with economic analysis of Latin America has been the tendency to write its history backwards, beginning with the dependency theory that applied to the twentieth century to explain the lack of economic development and general backwardness and deep poverty in contrast to the more advanced capitalist economies of North America and Europe. However, it has become recently more fashionable to see Latin American history chronologically. We have seen how, for instance, the Spanish Empire was not an Empire, in the sense that the British Empire was an Empire and that it is possible to gain some insights into how the dominance of Spain did not produce any of the preconditions that were in place for the USA or Canada or Australia or South Africa, though some of the conclusions are not always that helpful. De la Escosura argues that Latin American development fell behind the USA and Northern Europe but was comparable with the European periphery and Asian countries and far above (some) African regions. This is to miss the point, of course, for our purposes. The pattern for advanced development was set by the particular relationship between capitalism and nationalism as exemplified by the UK which it implanted in the USA and Canada. Germany sought its capitalist and national expansion in other ways and France lagged behind. The Dutch developed, too, its own relationship with its empire but failed in the first instance to assist in the growth of another nation on the pattern of the USA and Canada and Australia and South Africa. France is yet another story, with Algeria of special interest.

One simple summary is thus: 'Throughout Latin America, the once-and-for-all gains associated with the opening of new territories were not sustained by subsequent productivity gains.'⁶ Indeed, the institutions bequeathed by the Spanish and Portuguese induced stagnation as did the poor infrastructure, the lack of an administrative and professional civil service and the ratio of

European privileged and ruling elites, especially those families with massive landownership and control of such facilities as mines and ports. However, the landowning elite were not nearly as powerful as the British, French or German aristocracies. Had they been so, they would have been able to accumulate capital and feed it into development. Their weakness meant that they had to concede that the indigenous peasantry were allowed to occupy their own land in return for tribute to the conquerors and in this way subsistence agriculture remained as a stagnant element in the economy, especially as the land could not be sold and in many cases was granted to communities and not individuals. As we have seen, a key concept in this study has been the realization of the importance of securing a surplus through production and of capital accumulation in relation to the pursuit of profit.

Marx makes an important distinction between the exploitation of labour power and the spoliation of labour power.⁷ If this interesting conceptual distinction has any force in practice, then we can see that the tendency in North America would be for capital to do one of two things: exploit labour power or replace labour with capital. In the South and Meso-America, it was more likely that indigenous labour would be spoliated on a significant scale while the nature of trade and development would limit the capacity to replace labour with capital, especially as capital was scarce, in the sense that the elite were more interested in conspicuous consumption than saving at a time when foreign investment capital was hard to come by.

There are those who would claim that the USA was not an imperialist nation. This is unreliable. Apart from the so-called annexations of territories in North America and a consistent continental policy in regard to North America, the USA has jealously guarded its right to dominate Meso-America, South America and those parts of the Caribbean not firmly in the hands of the European powers of Britain, France and the Netherlands. While Franklin Roosevelt's Good Neighbour policy professed to withdraw from intervention south of the Rio Grande and to expand trade on a friendly basis (not unlike Britain's Imperial Preference in the Depression years), in fact intervention continued then and since. Thus in the twentieth century, the USA has intervened in Cuba when 'freeing' the island from Spain and supporting Batista and opposing Castro; in Guatemala; in Salvador; in Nicaragua where marines were stationed for several decades and later in opposing the Sandinistas; in Colombia from 1903 when it was forced to secede Panama until the present day; in supporting coups in Brazil; in Chile with plotting the downfall of Allende; in Grenada when it intruded

into a British sphere of influence; and, of course, in Panama on a number of occasions beginning with the building of the canal and the invasion of Panama in the 1980s to depose Noriega.⁸ The USA has planned coups, trained officers from South American and Central American dictatorships, supplied arms and dictated policies in relation to the production and distribution of drugs. The USA set up the School of the Americas in 1946 specifically to train Latin American army officers, and, though the name was changed in 2000, during its existence it has probably trained some 60,000 officers and many have been key personnel in sustaining the more brutal Latin American regimes.

Summary and conclusions

The main purpose of this chapter is to demonstrate that

1. The USA is, in effect, an extension of European capitalism and nationalism. This makes it possible to say that modern war is a European export.
2. Despite the fact that some historians, politicians and commentators might claim that the USA is not an imperialist nation-state, the USA is in effect a nation-state driven by economic (capitalist) power far beyond its frontiers (as with all the European former Great Powers).

The USA, as with Britain, France, the Netherlands and other European countries, is prepared to use military power to support the capitalist drive, often under the guise of national interest where national interest means the interest largely of the capitalist class that dominates the policies of the nation-state. While the USA does not use this power 'at the drop of a hat', such power is always available. At times this military power has been covert as in the case of the Contras in Nicaragua.⁹ At other times it has been only too obvious.

Democracy, the 'State', War and Human Rights

Introduction

It has become a running debate among those who practice the discipline of both Peace Studies and International Relations to argue that the spread of democracy makes war less likely. One reason for this is that it appears that democratic nations do not fight each other, while totalitarian ones and the like do; that the interconnectedness of democratic nations in terms of trade through transnational and multinational companies, commercial trade links, trade agreements and so on; that international law and other international institutions can settle disputes; another posited reason is that populations within any democratic country act as a drag on the declaration of war or the pursuit of armed violent conflict. It is not uncommon, therefore, to read such wildly optimistic and non-analytical comments:

Given the system of nation-states, each looking after its own interests, conflicts of interests between [*sic*] them are always possible, and may escalate into violence. However, the interdependence of states in the modern world is making this increasingly unlikely. Furthermore, it seems that democratic states are less likely to go to war with each other than totalitarian ones, and the number of democratic states has been increasing. Danger spots remain, however. (Hinde and Rotblat, 2003, p. 66)

This statement is somewhat uncritical of 'democracies do not go to war' argument and is blandly optimistic as well as oddly cavalier about the power of nation-state sovereignty as if this can be over-ridden by the more powerful nation-states or United Nations resolutions. The same authors remind us that the United Nations was set up respecting national sovereignty, but '[at] the present time the

concept of national sovereignty is being increasingly questioned and thus the appropriateness of intervention on humanitarian grounds accepted.

This brings us to the need for a more serious discussion concerning the following:

- The nature of democracy in its relationship with the 'state' of the nation-state. As Fred Halliday has said in the context of inserting the Marxist perspective in the professing of International Relations:

A ... central distinction is that between state and nation. The term 'nation-state', based as it is on an assumption of ethnic homogeneity and political representativity, is, in empirical terms, inappropriate to the modern world ... The question is open as to how far the state represents the nation. (Halliday, 1984, p. 82)

- The importance of class and the exercise of political, economic and ideological power within any country that lays claim to be a democracy.
- In addition, and more obviously, we need to consider the question of the differences between those countries which claim to be democratic societies and those which claim to be countries with merely democratic institutions.

The 'state'

There are two general approaches to describing and analysing the nature of the 'state' in modern capitalist societies. One version is to take what is in very general terms a Marxist-type approach. I say Marxist-type because the reductionist view that the state in modern capitalist societies is the executive committee of the bourgeoisie for managing its common affairs is subject to considerable variation within the Marxist range of critiques and discussions.

The link that connects state and economy is class formation ... arguments [in this regard] conclude that the capitalist state needs both a pluralistic structure and specific processing mechanisms to ensure that the demands of various class forces can, nevertheless, serve the purposes of capital accumulation and political domination. This is because of the threefold economic function of securing the process of economic reproduction, ensures the dominant class remains so through coercion, concession and ideological primacy and unifying the fractions of the dominant class.¹

In very general terms, the 'state' and the economy are a unity. It is impossible to separate the 'state' from the economy except in certain heuristic analytical situations. But for virtually all sensible practical and analytical purposes, the 'state' and the economy form an indissoluble unity dominated by the capitalist mode of production in the advanced nation-states; it is this unity that provides the class structure with its special characteristics, so that in principle and theoretically it should be impossible to discuss the nature of the 'state' without seeing the unity of economy, 'state' and class. However, for analytical purposes as well as heuristic purposes, it does become necessary at times to talk of the economy, the 'state', class or classes as separate categories. Accordingly, the 'state' is presented in inverted commas throughout this book to make a distinction between the 'state' as the class-based system which includes the government as one element within the nation-state, recognized by its existence as an actor with recognized and respected frontiers in the international sphere and the nation-state as such.

The next step in analysing the nature of democracy is to explore briefly the difference between the government and the 'state'. The government is part of the 'state'. The 'state' is the system generated by the mode of production (in this case the capitalist mode of production based on the private ownership of property and the pursuit of profit in the interests of capital accumulation) and by the interplay of class interests and the nature of class formation. It is usually argued that these classes are essentially the bourgeois and the working classes, though there is considerable complexity here, especially if one admits the complexity of class fractions, class alliances among the class fractions and even, as yet little debated, new class formations. For instance, there are those who refer to the political class, meaning in reality political elite and not a class at all or creative class which is merely a Weberian strata. However, I have argued elsewhere for the recognition of a three-class structure – capitalist, proletarian and absorptive – and summarized this view in Chapter 3.²

One way to identify the 'state' empirically rather than theoretically is through the identification of the range of its institutions. These would include education at all levels from primary to post-graduate, the military, laws relating to marriage and the family, operation and composition of the civil service, financial institutions and structures, admission to elites generally, the political constitution, franchise and so on. These were subject to analytical and empirical examination by Ralph Miliband in 1969 in which he deals with what he calls the first requirement in the examination of the 'state': 'The first requirement ... is

not to determine whether an economically dominant class does wield decisive economic power..It is rather to determine whether such a class exists at all. Only after this has been decided does it become possible to discuss its political weight' (Miliband, 2009, p. 19).

Having established the existence of the dominant class, he continues by establishing not only the existence of this class but its dominance over economic and political life. In addition, he finds proof of the existence of the 'state' in its institutions and their composition and membership; 'the state is not a thing, that it does not, as such, exist. What the state stands for is a number of particular institutions which, together, constitute its reality, and which interact as parts of what may be called the state system' (Miliband, 2009, p. 36). To this extent the government, say of the UK, as we understand it, is simply a part of this system and reflects the class base of the socio-economic formation. The work of other Marxists, such as Gramsci, Althusser, Habermas and Poulantzas, has helped partially to undermine this position, mainly to provide a practical programme short of revolution, claiming that the state is identifiable in such a way that it can be 'seized'. While it is not possible to 'seize the state' in any meaningful way in an advanced nation-state, it is the case that because of the fractionalization of classes (and this becomes even more meaningful if one admits the existence of the absorptive class) the state does make 'shaky decisions or compromises that result in a perpetual series of conflicts, debates and differences among competing interests' (Stander, 2009, pp. 58–59). These shaky decisions, most with unforeseen consequences, include decisions to go to war, prolong war and export war which have occurred in the past, are occurring now and will do so in the future.

Before we discuss the nature of the 'state' which was revealed by Miliband, it is important to see what he was attacking and why this attack is of crucial importance in this discussion of war and its export from advanced nation-states of Europe to the rest of the world. The main object of his forceful attack was on the pluralist theory of the 'state'.

Pluralism and polyarchal democracies

It has been the case in the theories relating to the plural society that an attempt (unfortunately largely successful) has been made to show that (a) the 'state' is largely neutral and serves to satisfy more or less equal competing interests;

(b) the 'state' brings together capitalism and democracy and that democracy and capitalism are in fact compatible; (c) the 'state' is more or less the same as government; (d) among the vital roles of the 'state' are the need to protect law and order, maintain the justice system and safeguard private property. (In the last 20 years a considerable amount of clamour has taken the argument further in the context of discussions about civil society and governance which we will leave aside for the moment.)

Pluralist theories developed largely in university departments of political science in the USA after the Second World War and have been more or less entrenched there ever since. Among the lead academics that have produced and developed these theories have been R.A. Dahl and C.E. Lindblom. A key element in the theory is that the pluralist 'state' operates comfortably in socio-economic environments in which the free market manages economic affairs to the benefit of all, more or less. However, Dahl recognized early on that the unfettered market did require a fair degree of intervention. He also acknowledged, increasingly with age, that the polyarchal or pluralist state system did not distribute benefits equally and that the imbalance was not trivial. It takes little reading of the 'quality' press day by day to see the glaring discrepancies that exist and daily worsen in advanced economic nation-states. Bankers run riot, Old Etonians and Yale Skull and Bones graduates appear to rule, the super-rich are opening ever-widening gaps between themselves and the merely rich, and such politicians as Berlusconi and Sarkozy are almost openly corrupt and defy conventions that rigidly bind ordinary people.³ In other words, the forms of pluralist democracy that existed in a symbiotic relationship with a free market capitalism are largely a fiction of the theorists; Dahl, having been involved in a long-standing duel with C. Wright Mills in the post-war period, came to admit in the early twenty-first century of the failure of pluralism to deliver a fair and just society (Dahl, 2000).

One of the simple weaknesses of the pluralist state theory is its failure to recognize the contradiction between the need for big state (government) and the little state (government). The free market is best at allocating resources in a complex capitalist society. Adam Smith saw this development, described it and theorized it. That does not mean it is wholly efficient. It is not, but it has been the best so far in human history. An achievement of this system, supported by the 'state' that is capable of providing the rule of law and protecting private property, has been capital accumulation that provides the wherewithal for further production and distribution of goods and services, but also a surplus

above and beyond the need for further capital accumulation: the big state (government) is required to direct the absorption of this surplus. This massive surplus can be absorbed by providing an expanded welfare state, developing an arms industry, going to war, landing on Mars, launching the Olympic Games or World Cup frolics, or constructing a class of consumers for the purpose of absorbing commodities in the form of satisfying wants rather than needs.

Thus, while living in the kind of democracy that has emerged in the West is now less horrendous than living in many African states or under totalitarian regimes of the twentieth century or in some Middle Eastern or Levantine countries of the present day, it would be wrong to assume that democracy is in any way compatible with the fullest forms of freedom, and while democratic systems are an integral part of the capitalist system, there will also be severe limits imposed on the extension of freedoms.

The need of the system to protect private property is a key reason for the limitation on the expansion of the parameters of democracy. Property, however, has been interpreted in a number of ways by both leftist commentators and those on the right, including economists, journalists, politicians, academics and the man on the top of the Clapham omnibus. I would like to clarify its meaning for the purposes of further discussion in this volume.

Property and its meaning

A main purpose of the 'state' in modern capitalist societies is to protect private property. The aim of economic policies under capitalism is to ensure that the economy 'grows'. The end of economic policy, it might be thought, would overwhelmingly be full employment or the provision of a living wage or the prevention of poverty through proper fiscal and/or welfare arrangements or to increase life expectation. Certainly, in some nation-states reasonably forceful attempts are made or have been made to direct policy in these directions. However, as we look at the capitalist system as a whole we find that the overwhelming tendency is to protect the rate of profit. This point has been mentioned in Chapter 4 on the nature of capitalism.⁴ What has happened over the decades is that the meaning of private property has altered and has helped obscure the real tendency under capitalism (i.e. the subjugation of human beings and their welfare to the pressing need to maintain the rate of profit of the capitalist system emanating from the so-called advanced economies).

What then is property? In a purist sense, and often confirmed in textbooks of economic theory, especially older ones, property is identified as being more or less synonymous with capital which is also described as 'plant and machinery' in introductory textbooks on orthodox economic theory. Property is also land. Thus land and capital make up two of the three factors of production required for creating a surplus. Land and capital are the main constituents of property which, for the most part, is best judged by the 'state' to be owned privately, though some property may in some circumstances be publicly owned. The third factor required for production is labour. While John Locke thought that the individual in essence was sovereign and thus held himself as 'property', the proletarianization of the worker under industrial capitalism left the individual labourer responsible for his own fate. He was the master of his own fate and largely unprotected by the 'state' except in so far as the 'state' provided an overall umbrella of law and order, but in a system that gave primacy to private property over the individual working man.

The law appears to protect private property in that the enforcement of law and order and the justice system protects all residents of a nation-state in their daily business and also their house and car and their contents through the provision of a police force and law courts paid for through the levy of general and local taxation. However, we must make a distinction between property as factors of production and property as chattels. The point is that these chattels are in fact commodities that have been purchased in the interests of maintaining the system of production for profit. Unless you use your house or car for business purposes (to make a profit), they are merely chattels that satisfy wants (rather than needs) and are unproductive. These are not really the subject of the 'state' in its determination of protecting private property which gives us all the thoroughly misleading impression that the 'state' exists for us. The real property that is being protected is the capitalist system of production.

In general terms, the 'state' protects capitalists who own capital in their own interests and to control the degree to which those capitalists are required to surrender their profits in the form of taxation for the common good; the 'state' supports all constituent members of society to own as many chattels as they are able to acquire through the system of production for profit (rather than the satisfaction of needs); it denies working people the right to enjoy the full fruits of its labour and denies labour the right to work as an automatic right, though fullish employment with limited inflation is necessary for a stable social and economic system, and, at times, policy may be formulated in this direction, as

was the case in most nation-states in the West in the three decades or so after the Second World War.

In these circumstances, can it be said that we are living in a fully fledged democracy? The answer is clearly 'no', since the 'state' will always impose limitations on the spread of democracy. Moreover, under the guise of protecting private property (chattels) the 'state' is able always to enlarge its surveillance society to the approval of those economically repressed populations that believe that the protection is for them when, in essence, it is in the interests of protecting private property *qua* capital rather than *qua* chattels.⁵ Hence Dahl, in his latest observations, is perfectly correct when he claims that democracy is severely circumscribed under capitalism.

Law and order and the export of violence

Democracy in modern advanced societies has achieved a strong degree of day-to-day security for its people, their chattels, owners of private capital, and publicly owned capital and resources, even though this security is imperfect and from time to time there are severe disturbances. In the UK alone we have had in recent years student protests involving kettling and other forms of police heavy-handedness; trade union disturbances involving occasional injury or actual death; urban riots involving arson, confused policing and a number of deaths, injuries and exemplary prison sentences; enforced removal of protesters from parliament square and the precincts of St. Paul's Cathedral; residual though regular street and other conflicts in Northern Ireland; large prison populations attesting to the level of crime; neglect of manpower needs in police forces in their 'struggle' to keep crime at bay. These and many other events occur side by side with regular press reports of tax avoidance on a grand scale by both corporations and super-rich individuals and excessive bonuses for all manner of company directors.

This situation is a comment on two phenomena on the success of domestic democracy: the police and the other law enforcement agencies (MI5, Customs and Excise in the UK or, private contractors such as GS4 worldwide or Homeland Security, FBI, DEA and other agencies in the USA) are overwhelmingly devoted to maintain the surveillance society and that the outbursts of 'ordinary' people demonstrate only a tip of the iceberg of repressed violence in what is sometimes regarded as a peaceful society; and we can look back at the work of Marcuse and

say nothing much has changed since he published his major work.⁶ Associated with this we can also say that Arendt's faith in the belief that power lies with the people is still somewhat misplaced, though we can hope for better things if we so wish.

But the other point is that, in the context of this work especially, while internal violence is contained within modern advanced economic societies as the public in these countries will largely demand a limit to the police state, these very societies are the ones that export violence elsewhere in the world. This is not simply a matter of finding markets for arms industries, as we discuss in Chapter 7, or a matter of seeing clearly that resource wars are frequently generated and prolonged by capitalist greed, as we see in Chapter 8.

Civil wars, as opposed to rebellions, riots, strikes and street protests, have not occurred in what are now the most advanced economies for many years. England last experienced a civil war in the seventeenth century, though the events in Ireland from the Easter rising in 1916 and other events in Northern Ireland between 1966 and the peace accords in the 1990s were in fact a regional civil war; France last experienced the closest event to a civil war with the Paris Commune in 1870 though the struggle with Algeria can also be seen as a partial civil war on the mainland of France; Germany was in state of violent disturbance in 1919–1938, Russia in 1917 and many years afterwards the USA last experienced a fully fledged civil war in the 1860s, but the combined civil rights movement and anti-Vietnam protests lasted for two decades; Spain's civil war lasted with its aftermath from 1936 to the death of Franco and is still simmering beneath the surface with the Basque separatist movement only recently repudiating violence and the Catalans centred in Barcelona edging towards separatism (so far non-violent). Violent conflict is not entirely absent in everyday life within democracies and civil war or quasi-civil war often lies close to the surface within living memory.

Conflict within advanced nation-states is kept within limits; one reason for this is that serious violent conflict is, in effect, exported. This takes the form of drug wars, declaring 'war' on terror or on the 'axis of evil', breaching sovereignty with the use of drones or by other methods, destabilization of vulnerable nation-states, proxy wars (common in the Cold War era but possibly due to recurrence), resource wars (for more, see Chapter 8) and in areas of post-imperial conflict. All these conflicts spread around the world take place despite international arrangements to settle disputes, such as the United Nations and its various offshoots and thousands of 'recognized' NGOs and INGOs (International Non-

Governmental Organizations). Indeed NGOs are among those legitimizing bodies within nation-states that give the appearance of an active civil society that promotes democratic institutions, ideals and objectives, whereas, in reality, they are most likely to be of conservative or mildly reformist in outcome. Such commentators as Ehrenberg, Keane and Hall would all agree probably with Gramsci that these forms of so-called civil society are actually ‘fortresses and earth-works’ that protect the ruling class from the political and economic stress of recurrent crises in capitalism.⁷

The perception of the effectiveness of democratic forms of government in the advanced nation-states (the West) is determined by how the state is theorized. This can be approached by returning to Miliband’s discussion of the ‘state’ utilizing Marx’s partially developed views on base and superstructure and his testing of his position with a range of empirical evidence. We can then pose his argument against the most commonly held views on pluralist orthodoxy.

Ralph Miliband and the modern ‘state’

Miliband was clear as we have seen. He began his treatise *The State in Capitalist Society* with the words ‘More than ever before men live in the shadow of the state.’ The freedom of the individual exists only within the parameters determined by the state. What was true then is truer now. What Miliband set out to do, in the words of Leo Panitch, was to ‘vanquish’ the theory of the pluralist state. To many he has achieved this, but the ideological hegemony of capitalism is so strong that the pluralist orthodoxy remains. This, however, does not diminish Miliband’s insights; indeed, the observation that the ‘state’ dominates orthodoxy is proven by the longevity of entrenched capitalist orthodoxy. His focus is that of advanced capitalist nation-states where the unifying factor is the fact that economic activity is largely under private ownership and where the political significance of the concentration of private economic power is the key element in his analysis. He argues that the Marxist view of the ‘state’ survives intact if it can be shown that an economic elite, or more correctly, a ‘ruling class’, exists. Along the way to establishing the existence of this class, he finds it is unquestionably the case that huge inequalities of wealth exists. For instance, he found, inter alia, that 1 per cent of the population of the UK owned 42 per cent of personal wealth in 1960. (Such figures are not always reliable but one source has much the same figure for the USA in 2010.)⁸ And, as we have seen earlier in this chapter, this discrepancy

is hidden by the failure to distinguish between property as capital and property as chattels. Miliband is no doubt nor is the reader that here is a dominant class in economic terms. In the further construction of his argument, he says, 'the most important of all questions raised by the existence of this dominant class is whether it also constitutes a ruling class ... whether it exercises a decisive degree of political power' (Miliband, 2009, p. 35).

This sounds as if Miliband is about to be somewhat mechanical, but he immediately reassures us of the following which indicates that he is being far more subtle. He asserts (correctly) that 'the state is not a thing, that it does not, as such, exist'. He does admit that one way of conceiving it is as a collection of institutions but the state should always be seen as not so much a state as a 'state system' (Miliband, 2009, p. 36). He reminds us at the same time that while the state and the government are all too frequently seen as being synonymous, this is quite erroneous. While the government may be a highly specific entity to such an extent that men can give allegiance to it, for instance, the 'state' is itself a 'nebulous' entity. So, for instance, while businessmen do not play much of a role inside the governments of advanced economic nation-states (though in the USA this may be slightly different), politicians tend to be 'professional' politicians (and this is increasingly true in the UK), capitalism itself dominates policy making. This is because policy makers and businessmen and members of the judiciary and senior civil servants and senior members of the armed forces and of the churches and so on are all drawn from the same class and their lieutenant class fractions. Overwhelmingly, this means that the major policy makers are drawn from the top 5 per cent of the population in terms of wealth, education and influence. Miliband is thus able to say unequivocally:

Governments may be solely concerned with the better running of the economy. But the description of the system as 'the economy' is part of the idiom of ideology, and obscures the real process. For what is being improved is a capitalist economy; and this ensures that whoever may or not gain, capitalists are least likely to lose.

What is more, he points out, not only does business, especially large-scale business (and here we would include financial capital which has overtaken commercial and industrial capital), dominate the system from *within*, but it also dominates the system from *without*. The progress of capitalism within any one country (say, the UK) is severely circumscribed (and now even more so than in Miliband's day) by the UK's situation within the international system. Therefore, when Tony Benn

suggested the nationalization of the pharmaceutical industry in the 1960s (to further advantage the National Health Service), he had to concede it could never happen as the industry would simply flee the UK; Harold Wilson's attempts at French-type long-term planning was scuppered early on and there was even talk of a *coup d'état* as Wilsonian ideas appeared to threaten the very heart of the UK class system; and increasingly over the years, high levels of taxation for business and the rich have been opposed because of the danger of enterprise, large corporations and individuals escaping the net within the UK and endangering employment levels and innovation. The proletariat has been seriously weakened so that countervailing class power is too weak (the union movement in the UK has never recovered from the confrontation with the miners in the 1980 and the massive decline of that industry); as a consistent process under industrial and finance capital, the evermore rapid introduction of new technology, the fragmentation of the workforce and of individuals within it and many other destructive tendencies generated by capitalism have ensured a weak opposition to the system of capitalist domination: this has been reinforced by the major opposition party, the Labour Party, succeeding in elections only by capturing a centrist vote and betraying its supporters by unashamed support for big capital and a willingness to chip away at the welfare state, failing to provide genuine equality of opportunity and unable to solve the problems of the endemic poverty created by the system one would have hoped it existed to eradicate. Elsewhere, say, in the Nordic countries, privatization has massively undermined the welfare model, while in the USA, reform of the dominance of the market has been enormously difficult to generate.

Miliband underlines, in addition, that nationalism, a feature of all advanced economies, is also an element that reinforces conservative ideologies in the post-war world. We can see this is still the case in the UK. British shoulder-to-shoulder support for the USA in its attempts to command world oil supplies is clearly one such glaring example which we discuss in the context of military-industrial complexes: the hopelessly chauvinistic media coverage of British Olympians, the UK 'wonderful' delivery of the Olympic Games in 2012, the upfront militarism of the Princes William and Harry 'Spike' Wales in their helicopters, the hob-nobbing of Prince Andrew with doubtful autocrats and arms dealers and so on leads to despair of those not captured by the ideologies of nationalism, chauvinism, patriotism and militarism. In the very year of the media celebrating the thirtieth anniversary of victory in the Falklands War (2012) war the newspapers also report in their business papers of the progress of oil exploration in those same South Atlantic icy waters.

Miliband underlines what many critics, before and since, have pointed to, namely the power of a largely conservative media as well as the power of advertisers and advertisement. It is the case, of course, that at various times government agencies have opposed some business interests such as the tobacco industry and are poised to attempt a similar attack on alcohol provision in the UK. Both of these are in the interests of reducing costs to the National Health Service which would mean an alleviation of the tax burden (so in a way specific interests are attacked for the greater good of business in general). However, only too often a 'success' of this kind only leads to the export of the offending product: that is, selling tobacco products in poorer countries or being safe in the knowledge that the production of scotch whisky, for instance, will find rapidly expanding markets in China and elsewhere (despite the falling sales in Europe). The justifiably vaunted quality of capitalism, which is its adaptability to change, constant innovation (innovate or die, as some businessmen would say), technological change, regular search for new markets and destruction and creation of new commodities are all easily achieved in the face of the counter attacks made on the system by weak and uneven reformist tendencies within the system. Miliband places emphasis on the weaknesses of reformist tendencies by observing that even when there are campaigns against the worst excesses of the 'state' system, the tendencies are contained within heavily proscribed parameters. He makes this damning comment on newspapers, for instance, throughout the capitalist world: 'But whatever their endless differences of every kind, most newspapers in the capitalist world have one crucial characteristic in common, namely their strong, often passionate hostility to anything further to the Left than the milder forms of social-democracy' (Miliband, 2009, p. 160).

Since this was written other commentators have said much the same, yet the vast bulk of the public remain unmoved (Chomsky and Herman, 1995). This is partly because there is an *appearance* of debate, especially where the TV and Radio are concerned, especially in the UK, but the range of the debate is held severely within limits.

In addition, Miliband launches into criticism of the educational system, quite correctly. The content of education is, in effect, closely controlled by the state system especially by ensuring what Miliband describes as a *class-confirming* role. This, of course, is true of primary and secondary education. Increasingly, too, universities, once thought of as islands of independent thought, have become places where applied studies have increased to the disadvantage of those islands of independent thought.

On the issue of reforming a dominant capitalist 'state', he concludes with harsh, uncompromising words: 'The problem does not lie in the wishes and intentions of power-holders, but in the fact that the reformers ... are the prisoners, and usually the willing prisoners, of an economic and social framework which necessarily turns their reforming proclamations, however sincerely meant, into verbiage.'⁹

Miliband's arguments demonstrating that the 'state' in capitalist countries is in effect a system substantially enlightens our view of the oft repeated 'executive committee of the bourgeoisie' or 'base-superstructure' arguments. Marx and Engels have misled us, even if they did not mislead themselves.

Miliband has clearly rejected the idea of the executive committee as government and has replaced that model with a system which is much more what Marx and Engels clearly intended in the massive body of their work rather than as a catch phrase coined in 1848 in order to capture the attention of possible adherents and thus provide a clear enemy for a revolutionary movement. This false impression, later reinforced by Gramsci and adherents of a strategy suitable for Euro-communists in the post-war world, has provided a wholly erroneous view of the real nature of the capitalist 'state'.

Miliband's view potentially makes redundant the question: do democracies go to war with each other? He does not regard those nation-states, driven by the 'state', as true democracies at all but sees the nation-state as a tool of a dominant class acting in the interests, largely, of that class. However, the question cannot be ignored or dismissed simply by reference to Miliband or the Marxist theory of the state and the question remains as a problematic for a number of reasons.

Attempts to spread democracy (and human rights) in order to achieve a more peaceful world has become an ideological front for new forms of imperialism including the legitimation for intervention in the domestic affairs of other nation-states that are labelled as 'non-democratic regimes', bestowing the right of democratic nation-states to insist upon or force regime change.

In addition, the definition of democracy itself raises problems. On the face of it none of us could complain about living within a nation-state that boasts the following: regular elections at national, regional and local level, universal franchise, secret ballot, open competition for a non-political civil service, an independent judiciary, the rule of law, military and police forces under civilian command, freedom of speech, free mass media, freedom of movement and the results of elections accepted without resort to violence. We, of course, cherish these if we are lucky enough to have them. However, as we have seen

in summarizing Miliband's position and that of others including Robert Dahl, there are severe limits to the extent to which these democratic freedoms and safeguards affects the entrenched 'state' which is based on the private ownership of the means of production, on the demands of capitalists to make profits and the severe degree to which the dominant class prevents the fullest flowering of democracy.

When we say democracies do not fight each other we also mean 'democratic' nation-states that they are simultaneously capitalist do not fight each other. *But what we are really saying is that advanced capitalist countries do not fight each other directly.* One reason for this might be the existence of nuclear weapons. Capitalists, for the most part, are not that keen on destroying the planet in this way. In any case most advanced economies either have nuclear weapons (USA, UK, France) or are under the protection of nation-states that have them (Japan and the whole of Western Europe is protected by treaties such as NATO or other understandings) or will have them (China). Given, however, the competitive nature of capitalist drive for profit that helped give rise, for instance, to the First World War and many other conflicts, violent conflict is exported in the form of proxy wars, resource wars and other conflicts. These exported conflicts make nonsense of the suggestion that democratic nation-states are constrained by their own people. While it is the case that the French 'people' refused to fight in Indo-China, the USA pitched in and though at a later stage the anti-Vietnam protests in the USA contributed to the departure of the military forces of the USA, the domestic protests were not the definitive reason for the departure of the US military from Saigon: they left because the North Vietnamese won the war despite a huge input of soldiers and *materiel* from the USA.

If what we regard as fully fledged democracies have their limitations with their populations capable of considerable manipulation by 'power-holders', those nation-states that have merely democratic institutions and a historical absence of democratic behaviour among its people and its politicians and other power-holders it is not possible to expect these nation-states to be free from corruption or to behave in necessarily peaceful manner in their relationship with their neighbours or other nation-states. Therefore, the idea that international peace might be established through simply establishing a surface arrangement of, say, parliamentary democracy in these new nation-states, is naive in the extreme. Moreover, the history of economic development does not indicate that the best means of becoming an advanced economy is with the help of democratic institutions. China's emergence as an industrial, commercial and financial

power-house was not achieved through the implementation of democracy and is strong contrast to India which can claim democratic institutions but, to date, a much slower, though not inconsiderable, development. The Chinese have so far deliberately eschewed participation in war for the last few decades (since Korea, Tibet and Vietnam) while India is in a permanent stand-off with Pakistan except in Kashmir. China, however, is busily engaged in expanding its arms industries and developing advanced technologies. Recent observation suggests that China has moved its DF-2D missiles to coastal areas in order to cover a range up to 1,250 miles off-shore; the missile would be capable of destroying any carrier fleet within that distance given current technologies.¹⁰

Human rights

While generally speaking nations that count themselves as democratic, however shaky that democracy is in effect, no longer go to war against each other, the more recent tendency is that democracies do go to war for a variety of reasons or bring pressure on the basis of spreading human rights. There is a literature that objects to the very concept of human rights as a reality in international politics. Human rights, in other words, are the values of the superpower or have been the values of the hegemonic power(s). Currently, the arguments of the USA that they define universal interpretations of human rights which can offer a rationale for military intervention to spread justice is mere justificatory ideology and hypocrisy that hides real motivations. Ulrich Beck, Noam Chomsky and Jurgen Habermas are the main proponents of this view.

The Human Rights argument assumes that being human gives all of us wherever we happen to be exactly the same rights simply by being human. Where does this following list begin and end? Personal liberty, free speech, rights of assembly, gender equality, protection and security under the law, the right to work, the right to decent housing, food security, freedom from arbitrary arrest and torture, the right to a fair trial, the protection of personal chattels, right to education according to one's abilities, provision of health and welfare, care of the elderly and scope for living without fear of racist oppression or genocide or mutilation by the state or by one's neighbours. In other words, there is an assumption by the West that their civilization can determine what are the priorities in this list, what can be added or extracted and that the civilization that the West wishes to see worldwide is correct and can only be seriously challenged at the margins. A list

of rights provides in fact a programme for 'state' action in the best of all possible worlds. Some would argue that a list of wrongs provides a programme for action for the nation-state at the international level and may provide justification for coercion, economic sanctions, armed intervention or even a full-scale war.

However, the universalist approach, the view that there is a fixed and absolute set of rights and all of which are on the list that emanate from the West, is challengeable, despite the fact that this view would be regarded as the orthodoxy.¹¹ The strongest defence of the list that the West puts forward lies in the fact that it has taken many centuries for the list to evolve and the fact that it looks biased or incomplete is no reason to abandon the gains. The fact that, at times, the West justifies breaches of national sovereignty in the name of human rights does not mean that the objective of spreading what human rights we have which derive from a common view of humanity should be consigned to mere relativism. For instance, is the amputation of a limb for the crime of theft a breach of human rights more than deriving a person of his liberty, the right to work, to provide for his family and his conjugal rights for five years or so or consigning individuals to prison for life with no chance of rehabilitation? Some may well say this is a debatable issue. However, genocide is not debatable. Genocide is wrong. All human beings are equal (whatever rights they may have in a particular society) and all human beings have a right to live. While the Nuremberg trials may well have been a pseudo-legal international court set up by the victors in a horrendous war fought for many complex reasons, it was correct to establish internationally a precedent, that genocide is a wrong. However, directly, and by implication, the court also established that persecution, albeit short of genocide, of one human group by another was also a human wrong. Despite this, persecution, whether legal, economic, social or in any form, has been more or less universal and virtually never punished by an international court.

The leftist position was first stated by Marx and Engels writing in the nineteenth century when it was clear to them that universal human rights were in effect bourgeois rights so that policies based on human rights were to be utterly rejected.¹² To some extent this position is tenable in the sense that the sanctity of private property dominates what is or is not a human right. On the other hand, it is easy to suppose that Marx would have accepted that in different social circumstances, i.e. under socialism, that rights could well be justified in absolute terms. Human rights exist within the context of a particular space and a particular time. Currently human rights may be claimed within the context of a particular nation-state or as with the European Union by agreement among

an agglomeration of nation-states. Beyond these agreed territorial boundaries these rights may well differ. These territorial boundaries may be of great significance. For instance at the time of the dominance of the British Empire, rights within the mother country were more advantageous to the bulk of the population than they were in the colonial or subject territories of the Empire. It would appear that as democracies developed and matured, fuller human rights even where they were not fully present in the mother country, were accorded more widely. These rights have taken time to become established and, in many cases, are fairly recent as with extending the franchise to women in the UK, educational opportunity to women in the UK, extension of the franchise and other rights to certain minorities in the USA and so on. On the other hand, while private property is paramount and there is a tendency for the dominant class to continue to rule, democracy cannot be complete and therefore full human rights are not available. In addition human rights are constantly under threat with the supposed ever present immanence of war, actual war, terrorism, civil disturbance or insurrection. The Patriot Act in the USA and the police powers in Britain in the face of terrorist threats are obvious examples of restrictions on human rights in democratic nation-states as is the ever increasing systems and technology of surveillance exercised on movement and on communication. Recent revelations involving Julian Assange, Bradley Manning and Edward Snowden, and allegations relating to GCHQ and bugging of visiting heads of states and so on all contribute to the certainty of a massive growth in all manner of surveillance by governments in the West.

Nevertheless, since the Second World War there have been genuine attempts to lay down a list of human rights and set up a legal or quasi-legal international system to extend and protect human rights. The United Nations Charter embodied humanitarian principles and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights attempted to set a standard of decent governmental conduct in dealing with their own citizens. In addition there has been work done by the European Court of Human Rights, Inter-American Court of Human Rights and more recently the International Criminal Court. None of these should be derided to the extent that they succeed in their aims. However, the most cynical absentee from the International Criminal Court remains the USA. This nation-state, supposedly providing the leadership of the 'free world', stands aside from an international court that aims to curtail torture, genocide, mass exploitation of a nation's resources that rightfully belong to its citizens, the generation of terror, violent conflict and war for personal, family or tribal enrichment. There are those

who are convinced that Kissinger, George W. Bush and Tony Blair should stand arraigned by the ICC. If any single governmental act provides a damning critique of the current use of human rights issues as an excuse for the West's transgression of sovereign rights it is this. Some commentators are unequivocal. Ulrich Duchrow, for instance, writes: 'Modern human rights were born out of the capitalist system which at present is actually digging its own grave.'¹³ This comment is straight from the Marxian body of work whereby it is argued that while private property is at the core of the orthodoxy of the West, adhering to their list of human rights is merely to support bourgeois domination. In these circumstances the West is free to export arms to whatever governments it chooses whether in support of human rights defined by the West or in defiance of its own beliefs.¹⁴ Attempts at the so-called 'ethical' arms exports have failed miserably because of 'national interests', resource interests, strategic interests and when regulations have been set up they have been relatively easily circumvented. Most commentators expect the same fate for the UN declaration on the arms trade agreed in 2013. The concepts of cosmopolitanism or universalism are simply unconvincing and you do not have to be a Marxist to see this. Chris Brown introduces his argument in an article entitled 'Universal Human Rights: a critique' thus: '... the idea that here are universal human rights will be attacked, and attacked quite forcefully'. His argument brings him to the following not unreasonable conclusion:

Rights have no separate ontological status; they are a by-product of a particular kind of society, one in which the 'state' operates constitutionally under the rule of law, is separated from 'civil society' and the 'family', and in which private and public realms are, in principle, clearly demarcated. Societies in which human rights are respected are more civilised and secure than those in which they are not, but rights are a symptom of this civilisation and security, not a cause. (Dunne and Wheeler, 1999, pp. 103–127)

Spokesmen for powerful sovereign nation-states driven by capitalism do have some rectitude when they speak out against, say, genocide. But these spokespersons do not really occupy the high ground when judging all human rights. Human beings under capitalism are not equal. Competition, privilege, wealth, property, class domination, uneven application of the law, especially tax laws, differences between laws applied in the mother country and in the colonial territories and many other features of capitalist-based so-called democratic societies make the politicians and other spokespersons appear thoroughly hypocritical to listeners in non-Western and, especially currently, in Islamic nations.

The human wrongs approach may be simpler. For instance, the extreme Taleban position on female emancipation appears to the West as a matter of human rights. Laws on divorce, adultery, marital rape, denial of educational opportunities, enforced styles of dress and so on appear as a denial of human rights. These laws enabled the Bush administration to harness women in the USA to justify the invasion of Afghanistan and garner public support and electoral strength for a war that had nothing whatsoever to do with the emancipation of women. This was not a matter of human rights intervention, but cynically utilized human rights arguments for political and propaganda purposes. Moreover, the story of female emancipation is still unfinished pretty well everywhere in the Western world. The difference between the Taleban and the rich and powerful white men of the West who control most of the wealth and seats of economic, political and social power is only one of degree. This comment is not to justify the Taleban one jot for their oppression of women but to point out that observed and overt hypocrisy carries no weight in the non-Western world.

Summary and conclusions

The policies and international acts of the advanced nation-states are developed and implemented by the 'state' which tends to be anti-democratic in the sense that it is still class dominated and therefore foreign policies tend to be in the interests of that class. This arises because of the dominance of a system that favours the concentration of capital and therefore the concentration of political power. While it is not possible for one class to ride rough-shod and willy-nilly over the rest of the nation, there are immense problems in containing the systematic exercise of power by wealth holders.

The question of whether democracies go to war with each other is more or less irrelevant: advanced nation-states powered by capitalist economies, which tend to have the more advanced forms of democracy, do not fight each other because to do so would be too destructive and counter-productive. *Violent conflict tends to be exported to non-democratic societies where possible and this helps contain internal violence within those nation-states designated as essentially democratic.*

While 'human rights' issues may help in providing criteria for the West to intervene in the affairs of other countries and to set aside arguments related to the sanctity of national sovereignties, it is still the case that the 'list' of human rights is dominated by Western values and, given that to a large extent Western

governments are dominated by capitalism, the value system is not simply Western but also capitalist, and, therefore, tends, *inter alia*, to protect private property. Moreover, when it suits the more powerful Western governments to set aside human rights issues (for instance, in the case of arms exports), it acts accordingly.

Military–Industrial Complexes

Introduction

The outstanding feature of many advanced economies lies in the permanent development, continuous technological innovation, research and production of arms of all kinds to be used by all branches of the armed services. The system, especially marked in the UK, the USA, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, China, Russia and Israel as well as in existence in India and Brazil, is a continuation of the tendency that began in Europe for the export of arms worldwide based on a strong domestic production which is now known as the military–industrial complex. Nothing illustrates the way in which Europe and the USA have spread war around the globe than the history and current state of military–industrial complexes. This tendency is not so much a matter of defence though defence issues do have their role. It was Adam Smith, in justifying limited government expenditure, who asserted that ‘defence comes before opulence’. On the other hand, a large part of the motivation for the export of arms and their production is driven by the profit motive, and the intervention of the nation-state in the name of national interest and/or defence confirms the prospect of a permanently irremovable element in the modern mix that guarantees there will be wars somewhere or other on the planet day to day. This chapter looks at the military–industrial complex as in the USA and in the UK as well as Israel though, of course, there are many others.

It is commonly acknowledged that the origin of the term, as we now understand it, lies in the farewell speech Dwight Eisenhower made to the people of the USA after eight years of his Republican presidency in January 1961. However, there is much more to the speech than the mere coining of the phrase which has now been extended in the context of the USA to including the role of

government (military–industrial–congressional complex). At first sight it seems slightly surprising that a former general and two-term Republican president of the USA should seemingly warn against the danger of the tight and possibly indissoluble marriage of the military and of large corporations. However, we see deeper in the speech a reference to the necessity of this marriage. ‘A vital element in keeping the peace is our military establishment. Our arms must be mighty, ready for instant action, so that no potential aggressor may be tempted to risk his own destruction.’ This is a clear reference not merely to conventional arms but to the nuclear arsenal that must always be kept ready for use. He also saw the economic and employment importance of the arms industry by referring to its size. ‘Three and a half million men and women are directly engaged in the defense establishment. We annually spend on military security more than the net income of all United States corporations.’ Eisenhower sees the downside of this in many respects when he goes on to say:

Today, the solitary inventor, tinkering in his shop, has been overshadowed by task forces of scientists in laboratories and testing fields. In the same fashion, the free university, historically the fountainhead of free ideas and scientific discovery, has experienced a revolution in the conduct of research. Partly because of the huge costs involved, a government contract becomes virtually a substitute for intellectual curiosity. For every old blackboard there are now hundreds of new electronic computers. The prospect of domination of the nation’s scholars by federal employment, project allocations, and power of money is ever present – and is gravely regarded.

Eisenhower saw also the distorting effects of the military–industrial complex on the nature of government itself and that one answer to this process was disarmament, but in rejecting this he argued that it was not possible to change direction because of the existence of a ‘hostile ideology global in scope, atheistic in character, ruthless in purpose, and insidious in method’.¹

He had seen the rise of Nazism and fought it, knowing that this enemy and that of totalitarian Japan could not have mustered the military strength it had without the unwavering support of industry and powerful interests of industrial capitalism, and he knew equally that if the USA were to win the Cold War, the military–industrial complex had to be strengthened not weakened. The Soviet Union, by 1961, when the speech was delivered, was winning the race into space which stood to be militarized, despite the fact that the USA had taken on board not only Werner von Braun but a thousand or more of his scientific colleagues direct from employment by the Nazi regime. When Eisenhower’s successor,

John F. Kennedy, hesitated to confront the Soviet Union over the passage of missiles to Cuba, Eisenhower unhesitatingly advised Kennedy to take a strong stand in turning the missiles back. Since those days, despite the reduction of the number of obsolete but nevertheless devastatingly powerful nuclear weapons, the production of evermore powerful and sophisticated arms by the USA as well as the UK, France, Germany, Italy, Israel and China has continued unabated. In other words, it is the trade of arms exports driven both by the supposed national interest of each nation-state and the interests of profit takers that has promoted war worldwide and has contributed in a major way to death, mutilation, permanent armed conflict and political instability and destabilization in vast territories around the globe.

As short aside order to make an historical reference, we saw in Chapter 2 the rules and advice that John Donne gave the early English colonists in the seventeenth century as they set out for the New World. In fact when the more famous Mayflower set off to New England, half the emigrants were in fact pioneers seeking commercial wealth and *not men of religion* seeking freedom of worship and the efforts of the Stuart monarchy, their aristocratic supporters, the men of commerce of the seventeenth century and early investors in ships and enterprise were seeking profit. Their survival was dependent on a variety of ways of dealing with the indigenous tribes they encountered. As any schoolchild in the USA knows, one supposes, one method of survival was to supply the indigenous tribes with the most modern fire-arms in order to maximize the acquisition of furs for export back to the commercial backers in England. Of course, in arming the North American Indians with muskets in order to expand commerce, they were simultaneously exporting war. Arms exports, greed, profit and war all went hand in glove. Thus the export of arms has been intimately connected with dynastic aggrandizement, ambition of the nation-state, colonization, imperialism, commercial and industrial profit and the creation of a segment of capitalists now known as the super-rich. Dynastic aggrandizement in the UK has declined to such mere, but revealing, symbolism as Prince Harry at the controls of an Apache attack helicopter and the marketing of doubtful products by the Duchy of Cornwall. In a way, we are led to believe that not much has changed when we watch a production of Shakespeare's play, Henry V, and listen to the speeches of King Harry before Harfleur and Agincourt. The English and later the British have a long history of arms exports as well as military expeditions at the heart of their culture and way of life which they share with their fellow Europeans in the process of giving the rest of the world modern warfare. Currently, politicians

want these values embedded more firmly in school curricula as well as elements in the homework provided for aspirant citizens.

When Einstein wrote to Freud he was only too aware of the dangers of arms manufacture. It was he who wrote to Roosevelt, for instance, telling him of the scientific possibility of producing a nuclear weapon. In his letter to Freud he was well aware of the destructive possibilities that arose from the actions of nation-states and the arms industry.

The craving for power which characterises the governing class in every nation is hostile to any limitation of the national sovereignty. This political power-hunger is wont to batten on the activities of another group, whose aspirations are on purely mercenary, economic lines. I have specially in mind that small but determined group, active in every nation, composed of individuals who, indifferent to social considerations and restraints, regard warfare, the manufacture and sale of arms, simply as an occasion to advance their personal interests and enlarge their authority. (Einstein and Freud, 1933, p. 16)

Freud generally concurs with this position, though he sees acts of aggression as being also the response of individuals to their natural disposition. Nevertheless, he fully recognizes the problem with modern war especially, no doubt thinking of the experiences of the Great War with machine guns and gas with the modern addition of the threats of aerial warfare:

[W]ars, as now conducted, afford no scope for acts of heroism according to old ideals and, given the perfection of modern arms, war to-day would mean the sheer extermination of one of the combatants, if not both. This is so true, so obvious, that we can but wonder why the conduct of war is not banned by general consent. (Freud and Einstein, 1933, p. 52)

Weaponry

This brings us to a discussion of the export of arms and its relation to the military-industrial complex or more correctly complexes. There are, of course, a huge amount of data which can be examined in the publications of such arms watchers, for instance, as SIPRI (Stockholm International Peace Research Institute or CAAT, Campaign Against the Arms Trade) and many others. I do not propose to overload this chapter with reproductions of these data but simply to give a flavour of the mortal dangers that accompany the vast production of arms and their export. Underlying this is the growing principle of the hugely

ugly, if not actually disgusting phrase, 'more bangs for the buck', a phrase that has become a matter of pride uttered by producers and the salesmen who peddle, evermore cheaply, in relative terms, death-dealing technology.

The problem with weaponry is that once it has been invented it will be used or at least purchased; the only thing that will prevent its use is the invention and introduction of arms in a superior and even more deadly form. Moreover, unused or obsolescent arms all too often find their way to fighting forces somewhere or other in the globe. Technological change under capitalism is the process whereby new commodities are produced for profit in the competitive process. This process of constant technological change is nowhere truer than in the area of arms and armaments. Let's start this discussion more or less in the middle of the nineteenth century with the emergence of the modern nation-state and modern industry based on machines and machine tools and modern science applied to the needs of arms manufacturers. We are at the dawn of modern military slaughter made possible by the industrial age driven by the capitalist system and intimately connected with the formation of the modern nation-state in Europe and its plantation in North America.

The military-industrial complex in its modern and accepted form is readily traceable to the early days of the Industrial Revolution in Britain, closely followed by Germany. An early example of firms which are to become typical of this period and for the future is provided by Anthony Sampson, for instance, when he describes the formation of Armstrong in the UK and of Krupp in Germany. Both companies, however, developed and expanded on the basis of foreign exports rather than domestic purchases. For instance, in the case of Krupp's, who sought business in true capitalist fashion wherever it could be found: 'Krupp's remained essentially an international company, prepared to do business with any other government unless formally prevented; and half their guns were sold abroad ... In 1909 they had actually offered to build eight warships a year for the British Navy, before the Kaiser vetoed it' (Sampson, 1977, p. 43).

Similarly, from the 1860s Armstrong's sold much more abroad than it did to the British government and by 1883 was the second biggest exporter of arms in the world, outsold only by Krupp's. According to Sampson, the two companies dominated the armaments world. At this point, in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, Vickers entered the field to add to the substantial expansion of large-scale arms manufacture in Europe.

Andrew Feinstein begins his splendid work on the arms trade, *The Shadow World*, in the same spirit as Sampson's with the story of arms dealer Basil

Zaharoff (1849–1936), who typifies the modern process of selling arms involving sharp business practices, encouraging the fomentation of conflict, amassing huge personal fortunes, extravagant living and carefully placed philanthropic giving.² In the case of Zaharoff, his most celebrated involvements were with Hiram Maxim and Vickers (later Vickers-Armstrong). It was normal practice for Zaharoff to sell to all sides of armed violent conflict and this was especially the case with Vickers preceding the First World War. In the years leading up to the Great War, Armstrong-Whitworth built 36 ships for the Royal Navy, but over 100 for foreign fleets, 26 of which went to Britain's eventual enemies. During the war itself Vickers shipyards and factories produced 7 major warships, 53 submarines, 2,238 artillery pieces, 8 million tonnes of ordnance, 100,000 machine guns, 22,000 torpedoes, 5,500 aircraft and much more which provided massive wealth for Zaharoff and many others. The decline of demand for arms in the post-war period left the UK governments in a dilemma. While peace was to be a major hope for the future, the interests of the arms industry mitigated strongly against this hope. To this extent war was welcome not only by big business in Germany but also in Britain and it has been a matter of policy in both the USA, Britain and France to maintain their arms industries in good order ever since. As Feinstein writes: 'The Second World War signalled the creation of the military-industrial complex in Britain and elsewhere. This militarized economy, born out of an imperial system and expanding to vast proportions during the war, largely remained in place into the Cold War' (Feinstein, 2011, p. 10). And, of course, beyond.

The growth of ever more nation-states after the decline of the British, French, Dutch, Belgian and Russian Soviet Empires has kept the arms industry alive where the Zaharoff-type practices have also survived. While the arms trade immediately after 1945 was largely in the hands of the USA and the UK, the arms industry in the USA has become by far the most dominant in the world, with the UK increasingly hanging on to the coat-tails of the huge corporations in the USA. But the major British arms conglomeration now known as BAE Systems did strike a huge bargain with Saudi Arabia, which gave BAE a base from which to expand. The Al-Yamamah arms deal, signed in 1985 between the UK and Saudi Arabia, was the biggest arms deal in the world, providing a rich life-line for the newly privatized BAE; it made fortunes for the facilitators, caused Margaret Thatcher to strengthen her image as the iron lady and provided £43 billion turnover for the companies involved with BAE (Rolls-Royce, Plessey, Ferranti, GEC and Dowty). As with Zaharoff, the facilitators ended up wealthy,

could secure access to influence at the highest political level and set out to secure credibility and respectability through philanthropy. In an interview of a key middle man with *Forward Magazine*, Wafic Said, we can read the following:

It is no secret, I have great affection for Britain and I am a great admirer of Margaret Thatcher. I was asked by her government to advise and help them secure the al-Yamamah contract, one of the biggest procurement contracts ever, because of my wide knowledge of Saudi Arabia and my contacts there. I was convinced that this was a strategically important contract for both Britain and Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia needed the technology and Britain's support for their air force, and Britain needed to save its struggling aeronautical industry and to create thousands of jobs. I am very proud of the small part I played in helping Prime Minister Thatcher secure 'the contract of the century' for Britain, but sadly some of the press chooses not see it that way.

As Sampson puts it: 'Zaharoff's ghost still flits through the ministries of defence, and his philosophy still has its followers' (Sampson, 1977, p. 55).

Wafic Said has always denied his central role as a Zaharoff figure, though his contacts, life style, occasional comments and his wealth might indicate otherwise. This is certainly a view that Feinstein reinforces. In 2009 Wafic Said was placed as the 40th richest person in the UK by *The Sunday Times* with £1 billion, though by 2011 he had dropped to 67th and in the 2012 *Sunday Times* had fallen to 72nd. His wealth measured by this same source has remained, however, at £1 billion, though his son, it was announced in September 2012, purchased a house in Notting Hill for £34 million. In the meantime he gave the University of Oxford £20 million to found its first business school, with a subsequent gift amounting to £25 million. He is listed by *The Sunday Times* as being in finance and with homes in Oxfordshire, Mayfair, Paris, Marbella and Monaco. This counts as an especially successful career for the son of a Syrian eye surgeon with a career aided by his friendships with the Princes Bandar and Kahlid of Saudi Arabia, with Mark Thatcher, the son of a former British prime minister and allegedly other highly placed members of the UK establishment.³

One of the crucial parts of the process, as Feinstein argues convincingly, is not only the way in which money that can be described as bribes passes from one hand to another, but the way in which key government actors and top corporation executives (prime ministers, presidents, CEOs) work hand in hand to secure major deals for the leading nation-based multinationals. Moreover, Feinstein stresses the importance of the 'revolving door' where civil servants, top military personnel and so on share key positions which enables the sale of

arms. The most telling aspect, however, of the Al-Yamamah deal was how closely linked it was with the sale and supply of oil to the UK.

The revolving door issue, however, hits the headlines from time to time. For instance, in October 2012, a journalist uncovered a significant network of former generals and admirals who were in a position to use their experience as lobbyists for major arms firms. All that was exposed was that these top military men were advising firms before the agreed two-year period of retirement from their posts had expired. This was a scandal *manqué* in effect.⁴ The real scandal is that there is absolutely nothing to stop a retired general in the UK from moving into the arms business two years after retirement. In the USA and Israel, for instance, even this limited restriction does not apply. In other many areas the revolving door is more hidden from the public view. Currently, one such company in the UK is exemplified by Hakluyt & Company. This firm was formed under a different name in 1996. Its main office is in Mayfair, London, with other offices in New York and Singapore. Various sources say it was founded by former MI6 officers, Christopher James and Mike Reynolds (former head of station in Germany) as well as Peter Cazalet, a senior BP executive. It is said to employ former personnel drawn from the Secret Intelligence Services (MI6) and branches of the military, preferring mainly those with public school backgrounds. This is where we can see how the internal 'state', as discussed in Chapter 6, is actually a system which connects, class, state interest, capitalism, education and privilege.

A second feature of arms deals is that one military-industrial complex will compete with another. For instance, the French, who now stand ahead of the UK as the fourth biggest arms exporter in the world (Britain, as I write, stands fifth according to SIPRI), are invariably in many of the same markets.⁵ The French government in harness with Dassault satisfied Gaddafi's bid for fighter jets when he seized power at the end of the 1960s, the French were also in contention in Saudi Arabia in the 1980s and, as I write, are competing fiercely to land a huge contract with the Indian air force. David Cameron immediately led the biggest sales team ever assembled to sell arms to India to persuade the Indian government to buy the products of UK factories to oust the French manufacturers who had almost completed their sale of Dassault aircraft.⁶ Indeed, the current biggest importer of arms is now India. Sales, of course, to India and Pakistan can only fuel the likelihood of increased violent conflict in the region. But as we have seen none of this is new. British guns were sold to the Turks who used them against the British in the Dardanelles; Germans were faced by their own guns when they fought the Russians on the eastern Front in the Great War; at the

Battle of Jutland in 1916 both fired shells with Krupp's fuses and the shells were fired by the German battleships at British ships clad in Krupp's armour plating (Sampson, 1977, p. 65).

The Cold War and the arms race

Historically, the years before the First World War, in the context of the last phase of the balance of power theory so beloved of realists, saw the first modern arms race which produced killing on an industrial scale: the period saw machine guns, long range and ever more powerful artillery, weapons of mass destruction (gas) and presaged tank and aerial warfare. Potentially the most destructive arms race in history was that of the Cold War that was built, in terms of weaponry, on the Second World War experience: aircraft carriers, tanks, blockbuster bombs, guided missiles and long-range rocketry and, above all, nuclear weapons with chemical and biological warfare developing more out of sight.

There are those that believe the Cold War was about the production of weapons for the sake of providing capitalists with profit and maintaining the *rate* of profit rather than actual preparation for war. Included among these is E.J. Hobsbawm, who writes: 'the Cold War ... filled the world with arms to a degree that beggars belief. Economies largely militarized, and in any case with enormous and influential military-industrial complexes, had an enormous interest in selling their products abroad ... the unprecedented global fashion for military governments provided a grateful market' not only for big hardware but other 'murderous devices' such as the Kalashnikov assault rifle and Semtex explosives when the Cold War was at its most intense.

We saw that Eisenhower, though warning against the military-industrial complex, admitted its absolute necessity in the face of the perceived threat of the Soviet Union. This became most acute after 1949 when the USSR exploded its first nuclear weapon. Eisenhower's successor John F. Kennedy maintained the same position at his inauguration that Eisenhower had established at his departure from office. In referring to potential adversaries, by which Kennedy clearly meant the USSR, he says clearly in the speech: 'We dare not tempt them with weakness. For only when our arms are sufficient beyond doubt can we be certain beyond doubt that they will never be employed.' He goes on to mix the struggle against the obvious adversary with the fight wherever and whenever it might arise with a combination of biblical and Churchillian phraseology:

Now the trumpet summons us again – not as a call to bear arms, though arms we need; not as a call to battle, though embattled we are – but a call to bear the burden of a long twilight struggle, year in and year out . . . a struggle against the common enemies of man: tyranny, poverty, disease, and war itself.

This speech is not only a speech to the people of the USA but to the allies of the USA which set itself up as ‘the leader of the free-world’. The UK with its own nuclear weapons tested in the early fifties and with its ship-building industries, aircraft industries and other related industries was determined to hang onto the coat-tails of the USA while the French capitalist system was equally determined to manufacture arms and aircraft and fighting ships as well as its own nuclear bombs and delivery systems. The foundation of NATO gave arms industries in Europe and the USA a further chance to manufacture and sell arms to other Western governments and further afield. In the light of these comments, we can ask whether, while the Cold War without doubt provided private industry to produce and sell arms in the interests of profit, the Cold War was simply about arms sales and profit for those that produced them.

Certainly, the arms industries in the USA had something of a field day when it came to the nuclear armoury. Van Crefeld, for instance, puts this down partly to inter-service rivalry: ‘Just about every concept for delivering an atomic weapon to the target was tried by the US Navy, Army and Air Force, and, in the end, for reasons that had more to do with inter service rivalry . . . most of them were adopted’ (Van Crefeld, 1991). While more and more resources were poured into the arms industry, actual war between the two central protagonists looked more and more unlikely except by some sort of accident or sheer idiocy or accident. A number of participants, such as MacArthur in Korea, or Curtis LeMay or Edward Teller or W.W. Rostow during the Vietnam War, argued that nuclear bombs could be used. As time progressed it became possible to build nuclear weaponry and the means for delivery relatively cheaply (i.e. as a declining proportion of the GDP) so that, while under Kennedy the arms industry might have seemed a crippling financial burden, by the early twentieth century the cost of the arms industry as a proportion of GDP was a third or a quarter of what it had been so that Van Crefeld is wrong when he writes that the arms industry brought the USA to the brink of bankruptcy under the Bush administration (Van Crefeld, 1991, p. 179). The Cold War and its concomitant arms race, by contrast, did bankrupt the USSR. Indeed, the combination of the arms race and the pull of ‘nationalities’ were the key factors in the disintegration of the USSR. The central difference between the USA and the USSR was that

the USA is a 'nation-state' while the USSR was and the Russian Federation is in fact an empire. The differences between the USA and the USSR, therefore, were immense and not simply a matter of differing forms of economic and 'state' organization. Empires are always subject to failure as the 'mother-country' loses its power and influence over the territories it aspires to dominate. Moreover, if the imperial territories are excessively exploited, fail to become fruitful markets, cause outflows of expenditure from the centre in the form of the need for policing or military repression or fail to supply manpower or soak up manpower (as the case may be) and so on, the inherent fault lines will open up and pull the empire apart while impoverishing or weakening the mother-country. The fault-lines within the USA by comparison were minimal despite the anti-Vietnam and preceding civil rights protests. Apart from dreadful pockets of poverty among African-Americans and the high level of prison inmates drawn from those communities, by and large the black population aspire to be 'Americans' and become fully part of the 'American dream'; this tendency, of course, has been enhanced by the Obama presidency and his first lady and their children. At the same time the Native-American populations have become anachronisms with little influence over internal or foreign policy. The same cannot possibly be said of the peoples that formally constituted the Soviet Union. The fall of the USSR led to the formation of two dozen new nation-states, most of who sustain a degree of animosity to the new Russia and the Russian language that helped enslave them in an all permeating totalitarianism. Their military-industrial complex did benefit some territories and industrial areas but, on balance, the ability of the USSR to create the huge surpluses that were created in the USA and the West was severely limited. A potential benefit is still to be reaped in post-communist Russia because their industrial capacity to produce high-tech arms and even low-tech arms was and is still considerable. As one commentator said at a relatively early stage of the new arrangements in post-Soviet Russia:

The military-industrial complex (MIC) was always the most technologically advanced branch of Soviet industry; its manufactured products were often superior to their Western counterparts. It appeared that the collapse of the Soviet Union would bring the MIC enormous profits, since the Soviet Union had delivered about \$20 billion worth of weapons abroad annually, but had received payments of only \$3-5 million in currency; the rest was a donation to ideologically friendly regimes. In reality, everything turned out differently. Yearly exports of Russian weapons fluctuate from \$1.7-4 billion. This is less than 4% of the total volume of Russian exports and allows Russia to hold fast

to a not very honorable fourth place among major arms-exporting countries. The annual average of \$2.8 billion is the main income of 1600 MIC enterprises. The share of the main buyer of the industry's production, the state, amounts to only about 30% of purchases of domestic armaments. Nevertheless, as before, the state represented by the Ministry of Defense, specialized government arms agencies, and Rosoboroneksport, the special government middleman for arms exports, plays and will continue to play a key role in the industry's development. (Kommersant)

One important defining factor of the Cold War was the dialectic process. For instance, the proletariat in any one country is defined by the capitalist class and the capitalist class is defined by the proletariat. Similarly, the communist regimes were defined by their opposing force – that of the West – but the West, in turn, was defined by the communist regimes. Once the inter-systemic conflict has been established as a result of historical circumstances and the manufacture of ever more effective and extensive nuclear weaponry and delivery technology is in place, the two massive regimes work towards the annihilation of each other, not through nuclear holocaust, but through the *threat* of it. According to much of the literature there can only be one outcome: victory of one side over the other without compromise despite the fact that the options for compromise were always available. As Halliday writes in the context of the inter-systemic argument: 'As long as two distinct systems existed, Cold War conflict was bound to continue: Cold War could not end with compromise, or convergence, but only with the prevailing of one system over another' (Halliday, 1984, p. 175).

During this Cold War era there were attempts to develop convergence theory and some also argued that the Soviet system was actually a form of capitalism, i.e. state capitalism. The arguments related to mixed economies in the Nordic states and in the UK and economic planning in France made it seem that some credence could be given to convergence theory at a time when computers and planning techniques and econometrics seemed to open up a promise in the West of a more effective version of capitalism that would iron out recurrent crises or stop-go policies or whatever. This would dismiss the communist claims that capitalism was unstable and that there would always be a threat of 1930s capitalist collapse, or what Kennan referred to in analysing the Soviet perception of the West – 'the palsied decrepitude of the capitalist world'.

Halliday writes, as do other commentators on the left, that in much of the literature analysing the Cold War, especially from within the Anglo-American discipline of International Relations, the term 'capitalism' is scarcely mentioned.

The influence of a half-hearted convergence theory which led to both systems being simply labelled 'industrial societies' led to delusion as to what the two systems really were.

Once it is possible to say that the West is driven by capitalism, it is possible to accept that victory for the USA and its allies in the West also driven by capitalism meant capital had access to resources across the whole planet where scarcely any corner was denied to capitalist exploitation. It also means that where markets were closed or could not be extended, capitalist drive for profit and capital accumulation would benefit. And with this victory might come peace, so that the search for capitalist expansion would not be handicapped by the need to spend money and expend manpower on warfare. In these circumstances, the life of the capitalist system would be extended far into the future and the possibility of severe economic crises might be averted. To this extent the Soviet system had everything to fear from the West's deliberate policy of encirclement, made even more intense as the core of the USSR was Russia, the history of which under the Tsars was more or less identical in that it was both a matter of guarding against encirclement and simultaneously pursuing imperial expansion. In this case the international policies of the USSR represented a continuation of history just as the Russian Federation continues the centuries old tendencies of Imperial Russia, but in doing so will always remain potentially unstable as all Empires have proved to be.

As we have seen in our examination of Marcuse, the leftist argument was that both sides needed the international dialectical process to work in favour of repressing the populations of the nation-states involved. This is sometimes referred to as the two dungeons thesis and has been reinforced by a number of theorists and commentators including Noam Chomsky and to some extent E. P. Thompson and has similarities to the earlier work of C. Wright Mills, though Mills was the most pessimistic of all in the 1950s arguing at times that a Third World War was inevitable. However, while the two military-industrial complexes and their extensions expanded in their scope and their range of technologies, the dialectic also proceeded through the process of 'demonstration'. Each system competed to show that their respective national systems produced consumer products or welfare or health services or housing or educational and scientific accomplishment or victories at athletics or chess.

Subsequent events have shown that any kind of homogeneous international society is a long way off. China does hold to a set of communist ideals but its compromises may well in due course lead to a massive disintegration of the

communist hold. The compromises absent from the USSR are present in China. Moreover, it has been observed that the Chinese leadership have accounted for the collapse of USSR by pointing to what seemed to be an unsustainable arms race and the disintegrative power of 'nationalities'. On the other hand, China is and will continue to develop its own industrial–military complex but in such a way as to avoid threatening the integrity of the 'nation-state'. The Chinese leadership and the people can afford to wait. The nation-state, if not the state, is impregnable. On the other hand, if China is viewed as an empire rather than a nation-state, it should be regarded as unstable despite the fact that the Chinese 'empire' does not have a mother country.

The new dialectic, therefore, is less China and the West (though it is still there) but the West and Islam as we discuss elsewhere (Chapter 10). No Islamic nation-state nor pan-Islamic movement has a military–industrial complex to compete with the USA and violent conflict will continue to be based on asymmetric warfare and the supply of arms, willy-nilly, to segments of the Islamic world, nuclear weapons aside. For the moment, then, let's concentrate, on the obvious sources of modern violent conflict, the military–industrial complexes of the USA and some of its allies.

Military–industrial complex in the UK and the USA

In November 2012, David Cameron, the then old Etonian prime minister of the Conservative-Liberal Democratic coalition government of the UK, took himself off to the United Arab Emirates, Oman and Saudi Arabia. The purpose was to sell arms, most especially Typhoon fighter jets in rather large numbers. At the same time Cameron wanted to re-assure the governments of those countries that he was not there to urge them to introduce a range of democratic institutions. He stated publicly that human rights were not his concern; he recognized that these governments had every right to introduce changes in their own time and in accordance with their customs and beliefs. This was in marked contrast with statements about human rights that justified the Arab Spring, notably in Libya which provided a rationale for supporting regime change in that country. Looking too far ahead was not Cameron's problem. The fact that these regimes may topple and the arms fall into the 'wrong' hands was not his concern nor was it his concern that arms sold to repressive regimes may actually be used for repression. He simply saw himself as a super-salesman whose first duty was to

protect a deal worth £17 billion to Britain's most important industry, much of which operates through its subsidiaries, in the USA, BAE Systems.

BAE Systems is the direct descendant of British Aerospace (which itself was a direct descendant of many of Britain's key arms manufacturers), but, as with British Airways and British Petroleum, it is now a privatized multinational conglomerate of companies based in Britain; its shares trade on the open market and are listed as a constituent part of the FTSE100, though the British government's 'golden share' enables it to veto those it disapproves of, who wish to hold shares or issues involving mergers. It represents therefore a major arm of British and international capitalism whose interests at times coincide with that of the British nation-state but, at times of acute and chronic need for profit-taking, may conflict with it. In these conflicts profit, generally speaking, may override the national interest.

The formation of BAE Systems was driven by the tendency towards the concentration of capital which has been observed widely by political economists, from Marx to Hilferding to Baran and Sweezy to David Harvey. The form of concentration, however, is not simply a matter of intra-national concentration but also takes the form of integration with a range of foreign companies that increases the strength of the domestic holding companies as well as tying the UK national interest to that of such countries as the USA and Australia and, at times, other European countries such as France, Spain and Italy. The importance, however, of BAE Systems to the UK economy in terms of maintaining a firm base in the UK and protecting patents and technologies is provided by a clause which allowed the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (now Secretary of State for Business and Innovation) to intervene to ensure that the CEO is always British and shareholding by foreign interests is limited to 15 per cent of the total shares in the UK corporation. Since 2004, however, it had been overt company policy to look towards expansion and co-operation with the USA rather than with Europe or other countries until the abortive attempt to merge with EADS, supposedly vetoed as a result of the intervention of the German government led by Angela Merkel. Thus, the tying together of the UK and US military-industrial complex must have important, if not deleterious, outcomes for UK foreign policy, given the observed role of the UK in its complicity with helping to supply a false basis for the invasion for Iraq. By 2012, BAE Systems were being forced by changing circumstances to plan what was described as a £29.8 billion merger with the European conglomerate EADS.⁷ The merger would have created the world's largest defence, security and aerospace group while allowing France

and Germany an unprecedented involvement in Britain's arms conglomerate. The conglomerate would have combined the manufacture of civilian and military hardware from nuclear submarines to super-jumbos and would have included some Spanish interest.

In some ways this combination of multiple national interests in such a sensitive area as defence is unusual; the proposed merger did indicate the extent to which the needs of capitalist enterprise to increase the mass of profit as a prelude to increasing the rate of profit overrides the narrower interests of the nation-state when the profit chips are down. This process, because of the growing closeness of the UK and US military-industrial complex, is an indication of the need of the West, in the future, to face potential competition on a huge scale from China. This news came at more or less the same time as news of the potential heating up of a military confrontation between China and the West's ally, Japan and Taiwan, in the South China Sea.

Despite the fact that both the USA and the UK are reducing their demand overall for military hardware in many areas, innovation continues in order to be able to conduct wars in ever-changing circumstances, especially those where asymmetric warfare becomes more pressing. Among these innovations is the robot form of warfare required for a number of reasons, either to reduce battlefield or, increasingly, to pursue guerillas and so-called terrorists in such a way as to infringe sovereignties of nation-states short of actual invasion using weighty conventional arms and armed forces. The obvious example is the drone.

Drones (UCAV) and the military-industrial complex: A case study

UCAV is the abbreviation for aerial unmanned combat vehicle, which is a development from unmanned aerial vehicles, UAVs, originally designed for surveillance only. UCAVs provide an interesting case study for a number of reasons. First the use of unmanned combat air vehicles has raised questions of transgressions of national sovereignty, especially in the case of the USA using drones armed with Hellfire missiles to assassinate alleged terrorists, which also raises the question of extra-judicial execution, the perpetration of war crimes and, in the context of the politics of the USA in the period 2010–2012, the personal, moral and political position of President Barack Obama, who held out so much hope for many people inside the USA and beyond. Second, the development of

UCAV raises issues related to the capacity to counter asymmetric warfare with the latest and most sophisticated design, research and manufacturing expertise without risking death or injury to aircrew in action. Third, it is possible to predict their vulnerability as counter-measures may be taken; however, this provides for even more research funding to provide sophisticated protection and endless scope for continued and escalated production. Four, almost as an aside, we see the origin of the UCAV which lies in the sheer inventiveness of the capitalist set of entrepreneurs in what John Gray has called creative destruction by which one does not mean the destruction in terms of the ravages of war but in terms of the constant scope for the introduction of new technologies.⁸ We are back to the point where we can revive the principle of built-in planned obsolescence so favoured in the sixties of the last century and popularized by Vance Packard in *The Waste Makers*.⁹

At the time of writing, the most commonly observed UCAV is the Predator or Predator B or MQ-9 Reaper. Whenever there is a piece in the press, often in the liberal press, correctly worried about collateral damage, breaches of sovereignty, extra-judicial killing or riding rough-shod over human rights, we usually have a picture of the Predator in one form or another accompanying the article. This device is manufactured by General Atomics Aeronautical Systems, which is a private company based in San Diego, California, and claims to employ about 5,000 people. What we do not see are the competing or potentially competing air vehicles. These include UCAVs made or in development by Dassault in France, BAE Systems in the UK, EADS in Germany and Spain, Israel Aircraft Industries (IAI), factories and laboratories in China, Turkish Aerospace Industries, possibly factories in Iran and in Russia by MIG. Proliferation is inevitable. The technology is either perfectly within the range of the scientific, technological and manufacturing expertise of the more advanced countries or may become available or may be accelerated through spying, technological exchange or actually capturing a downed vehicle as Iran has claimed to have done. There are never any permanent winners of arms races; leaders will always be caught, even those dominant in the field for a time. German capitalism caught up with British capitalism in the nineteenth century; Japan learnt from the UK, the Dutch and others as we saw in a previous chapter; the USA outstripped most other countries though were closely followed by the USSR till the system collapsed leaving behind, however, weapons dominance over the years, which have included the T34 tank and the AK47 assault rifle and MIG fighter jets. When it comes to arms, the bulk of development is supported one way or another, directly or indirectly, by the nation-state.

Perhaps surprisingly, the Predator is not manufactured by any of the recognized aeronautical corporations such as BAE, Boeing, Northrop or Lockheed but by General Atomics Aeronautical Systems. This company was originally set up, if the company blurb is to be taken seriously, to develop peaceful products within the nuclear industry. It was owned by Chevron Oil until purchased by the brothers Neal and Linden Blue in the 1980s for what seems a bargain price of \$60 million. Neal Blue, the CEO, has had a colourful and successful career as a pilot, a banana plantation owner and (at the time of writing) controls a range of mining and other companies, including uranium mines in Australia and other mining interests in Telluride, Colorado, as well as real-estate interests. Journalists and corporation watchers, especially in San Diego, regard him with some suspicion and lay at his door a number of allegations of sharp practice and accumulation of large sums from federal funds. The ghost of Zaharoff may well be walking the Washington corridors of power, though Neal Blue does not, it seems, lead an extravagant lifestyle. On the contrary he likes to lie below the radar like his drones.

Barney Gimbel in *Fortune Magazine* makes the point that Neal Blue 'has transformed the way in which the US military fights wars. But it is his take-no-prisoners approach to business that has made him infamous'.¹⁰ Gimbel traces billionaire Blue's career back to the time he grew cocoa and bananas in Nicaragua and was making large profits as an oilman in Colorado. Apparently, he was in close contact with the Somoza family in Nicaragua before their overthrow by the leftist Sandanista regime at the end of the 1970s. He was convinced that ridding Nicaragua of the Sandanista regime might be a simple matter: he could send 'GPS equipped unmanned planes on kamizaze missions to blow up the country's gasoline storage tanks'. Moreover, sending them by remote control and out of sight would make it possible to have 'total deniability'. After an interview with Neal Blue and a number of competitors and associates in his milieu, Gimbel concludes: 'Blue is a razor sharp business man [who] will do anything to maximize profit – even if it means violating agreements'. It is also the case that he has been taken to court for 'breach of contract, fraud and racketeering'. The local newspaper, the *San Diego Reader*, has followed much of this and records the Federal prosecutors wanting to know about what the *San Diego Reader* describes as Blue's 'hanky-panky' in 2001. This involved allegedly huge unsubstantiated invoices totalling \$438,140,354 to the Department of Energy, \$119,000,000 to the Department of Defense and \$90,000,000 to the National Science Foundation.¹¹

Whatever Blue's reputation, aged 74 at the time of writing, however, we still see the Predator in its various forms flashed up on screen or pictured in the newspapers, an aerial weapon first conceived as a weapon to protect a US entrepreneur's banana plantations in Nicaragua.

This weapon began as a reconnaissance instrument but soon became armed and deadly with increasing range and ceiling and speed. As I write and as far as I can tell the most advanced Predator can reach a height of 50,000 ft or more, reach a top speed 550 miles per hour, has a range of around of over a thousand miles and can stay aloft or up to 40 hours while being operated many thousands of miles away. The first USAF squadrons are now being equipped with and trained to fly these vehicles. However, their vulnerability is obvious in that they are susceptible to certain kinds of air defences and certainly fighter jets. Israel's air force shot down an unmanned and unarmed intruder over the Negev desert early in October 2012, having shadowed it for several minutes with three fighter aircraft. Iran claimed to have done the same over its own territory. Moreover, UCAVs have what is, in effect, a limited range. If one left London, it would have an effective range that would probably make it able to patrol from Brussels and back. While the USA has bases in Afghanistan they can operate easily in Pakistan, but there are obvious limitations for their use if there are no land bases within their (currently) limited range; this means the USA has to complete a worldwide series of bases in order to be sure that it can reach its desired targets. The biggest limitation is the legal one in that questions of sovereignty arise when used over the airspace of countries who, technically, are not at war with the invasive aerial vehicle. Nevertheless, as we have seen, other nation-states are rushing to develop their own versions and there is bound to be a technological race to stay ahead as well as finding ways of negating the invasive possibilities of 'enemy' vehicles. In the meantime, companies, such as General Atomics in the USA and BAE, who are developing their own version, the HERTI or High Endurance Rapid Technology Insertion, are due to see their profits soar. Interestingly, the HERTI was produced in massive secrecy and at one point during the discussion of the merger between EADS and BAE Systems might have become one of the many sticking points as it was labelled a 'black project'. 'One of the latest black projects,' wrote Rupert Neate in *The Guardian*, 'a drone called HERTI ... was developed in complete secrecy at BAE's Warton airfield in Lancashire.' Only a few members of staff know of each of a range of black projects. As, in some cases, the government of the USA and major elements of the arms industry in the USA are also involved, it has become difficult for the

British-based military–industrial complex to become simultaneously merged with the European military–industrial complex that involves Germany, France and Spain.¹²

Technology does not stand still in any part of the military–industrial complex, of course. Now unarmed and handheld surveillance drones have been designed and are operating in a range of situations, including the civilian and battlefield; some believe these have already fallen into the hands of those waging asymmetric warfare. Currently, there is growing opposition developing to resist the use of so-called nano-drones or ‘robotic butterflies’. In the forefront of this development is the Israel Aircraft Industries (IAD).¹³

There are many other examples of the scope for high-tech development that has become or may become central to research, development and implementation within the military–industrial complex of the USA and in France, Britain, China, Brazil and other arms manufacturers worldwide. There will always be among the new nation-states some that will increase their GDPs sufficiently to buy arms from the West, Russia or China and causes will be found to use these arms to pursue an ever-increasing application of the ‘national interest’.

Syria, which has been largely under Russian influence in recent decades, was armed by Russia and its military personnel were trained by Russia and previously the USSR. This country composed of 22 million (a third under the age of 15) at the beginning of 2012 probably had nearly 11,000 armoured fighting vehicles, of which 5,000 were tanks, 5,000 towed artillery pieces, over a thousand self-propelled artillery pieces, 7,000 anti-tank guided launchers and another 4,000 SAM launchers. The offensive air force consisted of MIG fighters, some old but others were MIG29s. As a fighting force, the Syrian army and air force can do nothing without Russian support. However, this is as nothing compared with the dangerous position to the south, in Israel, but massively supported by the USA, as we see in the section that follows.

Israel’s military–industrial complex

Israel’s military–industrial complex exists in its own right but is also intimately connected with that of the USA. Indeed, the USA has an agreement to stockpile weapons in Israel against future need. When Israel ordered 102 F-16s in 2002, it was adding to a stock of 250 already in operation, making it the biggest F-16 fleet of fast jets outside the USA. Moreover, Israel, as with other nation-states

with highly developed arms industry, exports arms around the world as well as know-how. Indeed, it has been argued that one of its major manufacturers, Israel Aircraft Industries, does business with over 70 countries.¹⁴ While the population of Israel has a population of 7.6 million, its arms industry is now tenth in the world and, according to SIPRI, is the tenth largest exporter of arms (averaged over the period 2001–2012). Their policy seems to be based simply on profit and, according to CAAT, Israel is really the ‘bad boy’ of the arms trade – as if other countries can be called ‘good boys’!¹⁵ Many countries exporting arms do have rules though they may be readily broken in a range of convenient circumstances. There appears to be no set of principles set down by the Israeli government that prevents these sales. When one Israeli defence adviser was asked whether there were any principles, for instance, human rights, the adviser, David Ivri replied that as Israel disliked anyone intervening in its internal affairs, it had no interest in intervening in the internal affairs of any other country.

However, in 2007, the Knesset did pass laws attempting to regulate the trade in arms exports from Israel at the request of the USA, and the USA has prevented the export of certain arms and equipment to Russia. India is also an important customer, and the two countries may have consulted each other on nuclear capabilities. Turkey is now a major ally of Israel, and despite some objections from the USA, Israeli industries have upgraded Turkish tanks and this may, at some point, have a bearing on the destabilization in Syria. The Campaign Against the Arms Trade has listed all the countries to be known buyers from the Israeli military-industrial complex; these include Angola, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Botswana, Brazil, Burma, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Finland, Georgia, Greece, Holland, Indonesia, Italy, Lebanon, Lithuania, Mexico, Nepal, Nicaragua, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Singapore, Slovakia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Taiwan, Uganda, Ukraine, the UK, Venezuela, Zambia and Zimbabwe. These involve missiles, ammunition aircraft, boats, helicopters, electronics and training; there is almost no area untouched; it has been reported that they have even collaborated on attack helicopters with Russia, hardly an obvious ally. The arms and associated industries are both state-owned and in the private sector with perhaps Elbit being the foremost private sector company and Israel Aircraft Industries and Israel Military Industries as the major industries from the public sector, all of whom have ‘excellent’ reputations for their production quality and advanced technology and delivery. In turn, Israel has received arms

not only from the USA but also from Germany, France and the UK at various times during the last two decades, though there have been blips in the supply depending on international agreements (and disagreements) relating to peace moves in the Middle East. This trade unquestionably contributes to challenging the possibilities for peace not only in the Middle East but in many other parts of the world where the weaponry and war *materiel* generally are used not only for cross-border conflicts but for the repression of domestic populations and helping to maintain corrupt regimes in power.

Israel's military-industrial complex is almost an extension of that of the USA, though it has now reached a point of considerable autonomy. Without the support of the USA in military and financial terms, Israel may well have not survived as a nation-state. According to a recent Congressional briefing paper, the support of the USA for Israel is based on the following four points:¹⁶

1. Shared strategic goals in the Middle East
2. A mutual commitment to democratic values
3. Historical ties going back to 1948
4. Continued support from the public in the USA with 63 per cent of the public in the USA, according to Gallup in February 2011, supporting Israel

Moreover, the justification for support to Israel is along the lines that peace is best achieved in the Middle East by ensuring that a strong Israel exists to deter 'potential aggressors'; a strongly armed Israel ensures stability and is therefore 'a core interest of the United States'.¹⁷ Aid to Israel is almost entirely of a military nature and has one end: to ensure that it has a QME or Qualitative Military Edge. In other words, the USA is dedicated to ensuring that there is a permanent arms race in the Middle East as, according to established bi-partisan policy, the national interest of the USA is tied up with Israel dominating all of its Arab neighbours from an arms point of view. This brings Israel into conflict with the USA in its attempts to ensure that Saudi Arabia has a QME over its potential Arab neighbours but, presumably, not over Israel. The \$30 billion in military aid pledged over a ten-year period in 2007 was thought to be 'an investment in peace'. As a result, among other hardware, Israel may well purchase up to 75 F-35 highly sophisticated, state-of-the-art stealth aircraft. In addition, the USA will purchase up to \$4 billion worth of equipment from Israeli arms industries. Indeed, Israel may build 800 wings for the F-35 according to a Reuters report, dated 30 August 2010. Among other exports to Israel, Congress has been told

that Israel has received bunker busting bombs and excess arms, surplus to requirements by the US military. These are known as Excess Defence Articles (EDA), and Israel received large quantities of these quaintly named 'articles' as Israel is regarded as a major non-NATO ally by the USA.

An example of the tendency towards escalation in the arms race is the Iron Dome: 'The United States has helped defray the cost of Israel's domestically-developed short range anti-rocket system dubbed "Iron Dome" which 'was developed by Rafael Advanced Defense Systems' began in 2007. Each battery of anti-rocket missiles costs \$50 million and Israel will require 10-15 batteries to protect its cities closest to Gaza. However, these batteries are probably less than 70 per cent effective and would be useless against a sustained attack. Other anti-missile measures are being developed, including David's Sling and Arrow I, Arrow II and Arrow III as well as X-Band radar, to defend against fiercer attacks from a longer range. It is not hard to imagine that even if these systems were to be fully developed and effective, putative enemies would find ways of circumventing them. And so the development of arms technology is destined to continue, with the main beneficiaries being Raytheon, Rafael and other companies and other laboratories, electronic firms and the like involved in the profitable business of arms manufacture, marketing, distribution and sales.

Finally, while Israel neither denies nor confirms its nuclear capability, it is commonly supposed that Israel has nuclear bombs and the means to deliver them.¹⁸ It is also determined to prevent its neighbours possessing nuclear weapons. In the circumstances that exist in the Middle East, the determination of Israel to maintain the hardest of positions to secure its own survival as a nation-state and the support it gets from the USA in the face of the growing ferocity of the opposition to Israel, especially from Iran, there are grave dangers here. Hezbollah attempted to send an unarmed drone over the Negev desert in October 2012 to gather intelligence on Israel's nuclear facility in the Negev desert close to the town of Dimona (not for the first time). Israel shot the UAV down and claimed that the drone was assembled with the help of Iran.

What escalated as a result of Israel's capacity and seeming willingness to use its military and airpower revolved further around the insistence that Israel maintain military dominance in the region and that Iran should not increase its capability to the extent of acquiring nuclear weapons and the means to deliver them. In the latter half of 2012, Israel insisted that they would not let Iran finalize their preparations. In October 2012, an aerial attack took place on a munitions factory in Sudan, about 1,000 miles from Israel. *The Sunday Times* reported on

this strike and outlined the planning and purposes behind it. It was an Israeli attack aimed at preventing Iran-backed munitions from being manufactured in Sudan and to be later sent to Hamas in Gaza. But this attack was not only to prevent such manufactures and shipments but also demonstrated the capacity of Israel to strike at a distance at Iran if the case demands it.¹⁹ While Netanyahu, the prime minister at the time, appears to have been gung-ho in relation to bombing Iran, the military and Mossad are more cautious. There is an awareness that a string of events could lead to a Third World War or an all-out attack on Israel from the armed enemies of Israel that would be catastrophic on the country and completely destabilize the Middle East. There is the alternative option of what Israel describes as 'containment'. It is not clear how long a policy of containment would stay in place.

Basically the West has, with its exportation of a military-industrial complex, again potentially unleashed Armageddon within a few years of the fall of the major nuclear power, the USSR.

Tentacles and mergers

In the USA, the military-industrial complex now knows no bounds. Partly because of the Cold War, partly as a result of the political decisions to prop up all kinds of military regimes around the world, partly because of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, partly because of the support for Israel in the Middle East, the military-industrial complex is completely entrenched in the economy and society of the USA. The military-industrial complex has become known in some quarters as the military-congressional-industrial complex and in other contexts, as expressed by Nick Turse, for instance, as the military-doughnut complex and the military-academic complex and so on (Turse, 2008, *passim*). Though from time to time pressure is brought to reduce the military and arms expenditure, industry has its own ways of surviving and minimizing attempts to reduce its size and influence.

These methods include merging and strengthening its arms industries; development and selling of new weaponry to the Pentagon and abroad; sharing with civilian projects; ensuring a revolving door for key personnel to move from industry to political positions; lobbying in Washington; extending its tentacles; privatizing in many areas previously the preserve of government short of actually providing front-line soldiers.

C. Wright Mills in 1956, one of the first social scientists to warn comprehensively, empirically and theoretically of the dangers of the rise of the military in the USA, even before Eisenhower's speech, wrote: 'Historically, the warlords have been only uneasy, poor relations within the American [*sic*] elite; now they are first cousins; soon they may become elder brothers ... the economy must be their servant ... politics an instrument by which they manage the nation in modern war.'

These tendencies are now enormously powerful and for all to see if they wish to lift the cover. One way of doing so is to look at the individuals who have access to power, where they come from and what pressures they are sure to exert or have exerted. Nick Turse devotes space to the revolving door experiences of Edward C. 'Pete' Aldridge Jr. (Turse, 2008, p. 26). He left Aerospace Corporation to become a senior civil servant in Rumsfeld's Pentagon in 2000. Within months he had allocated a huge contract to Lockheed Martin which soon rose from \$200 billion to \$276 billion, with Lockheed invoicing the government within a few months of the award of the contract. After further allocations to Lockheed Martin, he left and rejoined the Board of this same company. Aldridge was replaced at the Pentagon by another Lockheed Martin employee, Michael W. Wynne, who rose to become secretary of the air force in 2005. There are, however, any number of other examples of those who travel through the revolving doors from the arms industries to government and back again. The administration of George W. Bush offers a whole range of examples.

Richard Lee Armitage, a former naval officer who saw active service in Vietnam, was appointed second at the State Department to the former general, Colin Powell, who, once Chief of Staff of the whole US military, was made responsible for US foreign policy, has clear links with the secret services, the education of the armed forces, at least one major bi-partisan think-tank, the eighth (1998) biggest arms manufacturer in the world, General Dynamics and was a civil servant under both Presidents Reagan and George H. W. Bush. He has his own private firm of political consultants.

Despite his advanced years (b. 1925) Brent Scowcroft, with a high-ranking military background as a three-star air force general, having been involved for several decades in policy making at the highest levels, continues, apparently, to exert his considerable influence. He retains a hold within key think-tanks and other institutions, has brought along his own acolytes and makes a living by advising big business on how to stay big, by providing governmental contacts in the USA and abroad. He is on the board of at least three manufacturing companies linked to the military-industrial complex in the USA.

Philip Odeen was a key executive with one of the world's biggest arms firm (TRW), and at one stage he was a leading member of the Science Defence Board, which is a key committee in issuing government contracts and feeding into government policy. Immediately afterwards, he went back to the board of Northrop Grumman. At first, deceptively by contrast, James Roche's appointment by George W. Bush as Secretary of the Air Force at the Department of Defense (2001–2005) appeared to be 'bipartisan' as Roche has sound Democratic credentials; on the other hand, his career indicates an interlinking of military, governmental, business and political careers. While there might thought to have been conflicts of interest in his appointment, he is presented as an ethical person with superb planning and man-management skills and a love of literature. In reality, he is clearly influential in ensuring that there are fruitful contacts between government and relevant parts of the military-industrial complex. Having served in the US Navy for 23 years, he made it to the Board of Northrop Grumman.

Perhaps the most remarked upon appointment of all was that of Paul Wolfowitz in March 2001 as Deputy Secretary of Defence, which was in fact his third visit to the Pentagon as an influential civil servant. Amazingly, he was approved unanimously by the Senate. This was an appointment that gave him hair-raising power, day-to-day control of the Pentagon. He symbolizes one of the worst elements of what Turse describes as the military-academic complex. Immediately prior to his appointment, 1993–2001, he was Dean and Professor of International Relations at the Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies at the John Hopkins University.²⁰ He raised large sums of money and doubled the endowment for that department. But his real claim is as a leading member of the neo-conservative cabal and founder member with Dick Cheney and others of the *Project of the New American Century* (1997–2006). Also involved were a tight-knit group dedicated to ensuring that the military strength of the USA led its foreign policy. These men included not only Cheney but also Steve Forbes, Francis Fukuyama, Frank Gaffney, Norman Podhoretz, Donald Rumsfeld, John Bolton, Richard Armitage, Richard Perle and others of the same ilk. If any foreign observer doubted that the intention of the Bush government would be anything but bellicose, then they were not observing the situation fully or did not listen to such remarks that came from Wolfowitz's mouth after the demise of the USSR as (to paraphrase) 'since we are the only cop in town we should start throwing our weight around'. Taking note of the key ideas of Wolfowitz's mentor at the University of Chicago, Leo Strauss might well also

have issued a warning of things to come. Wolfowitz served during, 1989–1993, the Reagan administration as Under Secretary of Defence for Policy at the Pentagon, responsible to Dick Cheney for strategy, plans and policy. He later ran the World Bank for a short time before he was forced to resign.

Enough ink has been spilt over the role of Vice-President Dick Cheney, his role in making all the key appointments under George W. Bush and especially his role in relation to Halliburton and the enormous expansion of projects awarded to Halliburton by the government of the USA, and especially by the Pentagon and the increase in their range of work far beyond their original business activities associated with the oil industry. It is sufficient to remind readers of this role as a prime example of the military-industrial complex in its relationship with Congress. While Cheney was CEO of Halliburton he ensured that this corporation rose from being 73rd on the list of contractors to the Pentagon to eighteenth in the ranking of top contractors (Worrell, 2011, p. 14; Turse, 2008, p. 42–43).²¹

Thus we not only have a revolving door but an almost integrated elite that can dominate the foreign policy of the USA and influence its direction towards sustaining the armaments industry. But the military-industrial complex now goes far beyond simply arms and armaments, and into every part of the economy, providing orders for foodstuffs, clothes and footwear, catering, construction, electronics, cinema, film-making and so on almost endlessly (Turse, 2008, *passim*). But among the most sinister and damaging developments has been the bringing into being of the so-called private military companies which provide security and prison services formerly provided by the military and, at least, subject to military law. These new companies have been able to act above the law in many instances and make possible even more abuses that have been occasioned by the military itself. These companies grow in number and in size and already had revenues exceeding \$200 billion in the early days of this century but by now have expanded enormously (Chalmers, 2004, p. 140; Worrell, 2011, pp. 14–16).

Hence we can say with confidence that the drive for profit maintains the existence of the armed forces; the existence of armed forces almost guarantees war somewhere or other in the world. There has been a dictum bandied around for centuries: if you want peace, prepare for war (*si vis pacem, para bellum*), and this crude assertion has provided a rationale for much of the foreign policy of the USA in recent decades, and one that the liberal reformer Barack Obama has had to subscribe to, willy-nilly. However, the truth is that if you prepare for

war, you get war. Attempts to spread Euro-American capitalism accompanied by the cultures that go with are done as a series of dialectical struggles. These struggles will continue. Resource extraction will continue. Competition will continue. Opposition from Islam and elsewhere will continue. Contradictions will multiply. Behind this lies the enormous power of the arms industries of the USA and Russia and China, followed, at some distance, by the British, the French, the German, the Italian and a growing number of others. It is simply impossible to abolish or transform the arms industry implanted as it is in the fabric of the societies and capitalist economies and quasi-capitalist economies that have produced it. If there is a simple answer to why war, the answer would be that war is caused to a major extent by profit and availability of arms. In this quick response we haven't moved much from the leftist answers to why war in 1914. Nevertheless, a truth remains. Cutting matters to the bone; we can say that if you make and sell arms driven by private ownership of property and profit and allow the arms to spread internationally, there will be war and violent conflict somewhere or other on the planet, the precise place being dependent on the special disposition of circumstances, not the least of which revolves around the question of demands for and control over natural resources as we shall discuss in the chapter that follows. The United Nations Treaty which opened for signature on 3 June 2013 took many years to achieve. Though it received yes votes from 154 countries, 23 abstained and 3 countries voted against, and every country voting in favour will have to ratify it. The crucial thing about the vote is the almost universal recognition that arms produces wars. However, in terms of effectiveness, the treaty provides more a statement than an effective programme. After all, the efforts to produce a convention to remove nuclear weapons, proposed by Costa Rica in 1997, have at one level huge numerical support at the United Nations, but no-one seriously holds out hope for the progressive dismantling of nuclear weapons as suggested in the convention proposals.

Summary and conclusions

Of all the conditions that promote war the existence of large and complex capacity for arms manufacture and their exports is the most threatening. This is heightened by the control and support of these industries by the 'state' whereby by 'state' we mean the kind that we discussed fully in Chapter 6. By virtue of the interaction between industry and government and the tightness of

the elites controlling government we can move to describing this whole system as, in effect, class domination. The dialectical relationships between the 'state', class and capitalism in forming the foreign policies of nation-states are well demonstrated. These complexes allow the major manufacturers to arm all sorts of nation-states and so-called failed nation-states enabling wars to be executed with small arms, tanks, warships, artillery, aircraft and rockets. The USA arms Israel which has enlarged its own capacity to manufacture and export arms. The British provides arms for the Gulf States. Britain and France vie to arm India. The USA has armed Pakistan. The USA and their allies have left arms behind in Iraq and Afghanistan. Africa is strewn with weapons manufactured in the West and by the former Soviet Union. Weapons have left Libya and fed into all sorts of so-called rebel movements in Saharan Africa and helped further destabilize Mali. There is no doubt that the capitalist nation-states of Europe and the USA essentially provide arms to the rest of the world; these are made and sold by private firms as much in the interests of profit as defence. *But, in reality, nowhere is peace the primary aim of such provision.*

Resource Wars

Introduction

Resource wars have been increasingly central to violent conflict since the flowering of the capitalist era. The resource in question may be land, raw materials such as timber, water, waterways, minerals such as copper, iron, gold, silver, diamonds or sources of energy like coal or oil and so on. The mere existence of resources may be intimately connected with war if the resources are scarce or may have some value simply in the market (like gold and precious stones); the resources themselves may be productive like fertile land or they may be required to spur or maintain technological change like oil or they may have become obsolete or obsolescent like coal. These points have to be considered in the special historical and geographical circumstances. For our purposes in discussing modern warfare in the circumstances of rapid technological change driven by capitalism, profit and private ownership of property, it is quite clear that the availability of a wide range of resources remains a central cause of certain kinds of violent conflict if not actual full-scale war. It is certainly the case that to the extent to which there has grown up a strong degree of international inter-dependency, wars have been replaced by trade, though this has also been historically the case given the trade for flint, tin, copper, iron, jewellery, spices, silk and so on. However, war and the struggle for access to certain resources do go together in the modern world. This has been the case, for instance, as between France and Germany over coal and iron in Alsace-Lorraine until 1945 or Japanese need for oil from the East Indies or the desire for gold in South Africa. It is now the case over access to oil and other minerals in demand by world manufacturers that war and violent conflict have been an ongoing outcome of resource hunger. We can start with a clear example of Britain's war that presaged the end of *pax Britannica*.

The Boer War

The standout example of a resource war which marks out the close of the nineteenth century was the Boer War (1899–1902), fought between the Boer population of South Africa to assert its independence from the British Empire and Britain. It is worth using this example as an introduction to this chapter. If there is a single important cause of modern war it is the fight for resources in the context of the rise of the nation-state and the spread of capitalism. In the history of the Boer War we see the connection between exploitation of the native populations, the interest of various parties in grabbing enormously valuable gold supplies, strengthening the nation-state of Britain, furthering imperial militarism and satisfying the needs of finance and banking capital based in the City of London. But at the core of it all was gold, which was not only of interest to the individual and corporate capitalists owning it but to Britain at the centre of international trade based on the Gold Standard.

When the Boer provinces of Transvaal and Orange Free State decided to bid for the political and economic independence from the British Crown, Britain went to war. While it was important for reasons of asserting British imperial dominance in Africa at a time when other 'great powers' were also scrambling for empire in Africa, there was also the matter of maintaining control over the newly discovered gold mines and of the key cities of Johannesburg and Pretoria. By 1899, exports of gold from the Transvaal amounted to £24 million per annum, making it the richest province in Africa (Pakenham, 1991, pp. 588ff). It was also in the position of buying the most modern weaponry available on the international market. The Germans were only too happy to supply rifles and ammunition while the French seized the opportunity of supplying artillery to the Boers. Both nation-states were especially happy to see the paramount power in Africa being faced with a breakaway province. The Uitlanders, the non-Boer white immigrants from the Cape and Natal, claimed that they were being denied what they thought were their civil rights; they appealed for assistance from the British government, which in turn was seeking ways of bringing the gold mines into the fold on behalf of the British nation-state and on behalf of key city interests in the form of such actors as Alfred Beit and Julius Wernher whose stake in the Rand currency was around £17 million. Kitchener, the commander-in-chief of British forces, himself owned shares in gold mines.

By the end of three years of war, the fight had cost the British tax payer £200 million, and deaths on both sides probably amounted to 75,000, soldiers,

civilians and native Africans. It was a costly war in every sense. At its heart was a valuable resource gold (and diamonds), the nation-state, imperialism and capitalism. This is the deadliest mixture that the modern world can put together. The war brought the British Empire into disrepute, mainly because of the treatment of Boer women and children, who died in large numbers in the concentration camps juxtaposed to the causes of war which were seen as heavily motivated by the capitalist greed for gold, diamonds and imperial insistence to control land and gain strategic advantage.

Malthus

Historians of earlier ages, moralists, polemicists against war and so on usually refer to the importance of resources in being at the heart of conflict: primitive survival struggles for water or food resources during climate change or population explosions are suggested from time to time in explaining the movements of barbarian hordes or suchlike. Of the classical writers who place the relationship between war and resources at the centre of his argument, Malthus is the most obvious. After all, he insisted that population growth would press on food resources in such a way as to cause war and famine and disease. His population theory, of course, has frequently come under fire, then and since, and the world population has exploded to a figure quite beyond anything he could have predicted since he wrote his essay at the end of the eighteenth century when the population of England (now around 52 million) was 8.3 million and with a world population now in excess of an astronomical and previously thought insupportable 7 billion. Though there are neo-Malthusians, such as the Club of Rome and its adherents, to keep this brand of apocalyptic thinking alive, Malthus tends not to be in the forefront of modern theory even though it remains as an underpinning for Classical Economics, and he is remembered as an inspiration to Darwin.¹ In the nineteenth century, Malthus was thought to be, by Marx and Engels, for instance, as a major threat to the construction of socialist and communist paradigms.

The reaction of Marx and Engels to Malthus was apoplectic ... Engels railed at the 'sham philanthropy' which 'produced the Malthusian population theory – the crudest, most barbarous theory that ever existed, a system of despair which struck down all those beautiful phrases about love of neighbour and world citizenship'. Later he asks: 'Am I to go on any longer elaborating this vile,

infamous theory, this revolting blasphemy against nature and mankind? Am I to pursue its consequences any further? Here at last we have the immorality of the economist brought to its highest pitch.' In this violent reaction Marx followed Engels:

The hatred of the English working class against Malthus – the 'mountebank-parson' as Cobbett rudely calls him – is therefore entirely justified. The people were right here in sensing instinctively that they were confronted not with a man of science but with a bought advocate, a pleader on behalf of their enemies, a shameless sycophant of the ruling classes.²

However, the work of Malthus does enable us to make a claim that wars may well be seen as struggles over the control of resources and that the scarcer the resources, the more vicious will be the struggle and if the war is not obviously about the direct control of resources as such, they are struggles for political control to enable better to gain access to those resources. Ethnic or racial groups may be involved in these political struggles and have and will continue to be caught up to their disadvantage in their struggles.

What has allowed Malthus's theoretical work to fall from grace (including his theory of rent that was torn apart by Ricardo) has been technological change in pretty well every direction of production and distribution during the British industrial revolution and ever since worldwide as well as the industrialization of agriculture.³ Some resources have become less in demand while others in huge demand. Most significantly technological change has reduced the importance of coal and increased the importance massively of oil and natural gas. The scope and range of scientific and technological change has led to the ability of the advanced nations to make a mockery of food shortages where obesity has taken the place of starvation in those countries, while, in the process of exploitation, the very poorest countries on this earth face, oddly, a kind of neo-Malthusian fate. Thus, for instance, a country such as the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which should be one of the richest on earth, has a population that daily faces starvation and disease where huge numbers try and survive below subsistence wages. The problem relates to the conflict over scarce resources for the process of capitalist production that produces both new knowledge and new technologies working to satisfy the need for capital accumulation and the maintenance of the rate of profit in the face of the incidence of regular economic crises. This is why the argument in this chapter moves away from arguments that explain war as being a war of resources as part of the human condition from time immemorial. Our interest is in underplaying the primordial explanations of war and replacing

them in the context of capitalism and the emergence of the European nation-state. These modern struggles are quite different from earlier ones since they take place when, in essence, the possibilities of producing surpluses are vast and where war, one might have thought, would have been eliminated. Let's turn to take a closer look at this modern relationship between resources and war.

Resources and war in the modern age: Oil

While the USA frequently appears to take the lead in securing scarce or potentially scarce raw materials for the productive process, all advanced countries are involved, at times in competition with the USA or in concert with them or in conflict with other advanced industrial nations. This process has accelerated since 1990, according to some observers: 'the United States is not the only nation to have assigned greater significance to economic and resource concerns in the post-Cold War era. Since 1990, almost every major government has done so ... Global demand for many key materials is growing at an unsustainable rate' (Klare, 2000, p. 13).

While conflict over oil began at the earliest stage of the technological shift away from coal, it has taken some time for a range of commentators to admit to the importance of oil as a source of conflict; take the surprised tone of *History Today* in 1981:

The important role that oil played in shaping British foreign policy in the Middle East at the close of the Great War has come to light in several recent historical works. These studies examine Britain's newly-developed awareness of the importance of oil almost exclusively, however, in terms of Mesopotamia and Mosul. Historians have ignored whether oil considerations (other than the oil in southwest Persia) might not have played a significant role in the development of the Anglo-Persian agreement of 1919. A more thorough examination of the evidence indicates that the agreement was a product of Great Britain's diplomatic preoccupation with the control of future of oil supplies. Lord Curzon, architect of the agreement, spearheaded Britain's attempt to gain control of the oil reserves of the Middle East. Likewise, other countries, opposed the Anglo-Persian Agreement, primarily because of their desire to forestall an English monopoly.⁴

However, it is now more common place to point to the plans laid by the British Government, especially after the fall of the Ottoman Empire, to secure oil reserves. Niall Ferguson, for instance, refers to an unequivocal Admiralty

memorandum of 1922 which reads with perfect clarity: 'From the strategical point of view the essential thing is that Great Britain should control the territories on which the oil is situated.' At the time the British owned more than 50 per cent of the embryonic BP, the Anglo-Persian Oil Company (Ferguson, 2004, p. 316).

It now seems strange that it took over half a century for historians to discover the importance of oil in British foreign policy. The collusion of the CIA and MI6 in the overthrow of Mossadeq may have given more credence to the special relationship than is justified. There is no doubt whatsoever that access to oil resources has been a vital part of foreign policy of the USA, Britain, France, the Netherlands and more recently that of China and Russia. However, it has not been merely a matter of nation-states gaining strategic access to oil and gas but these resources have been of vital importance to the profit driven multinational corporations involved, providing their shareholders and their leading executives with profits and vast fortunes.

It is not surprising that historians and other commentators have been quieter than they might have been and the so-called experts and politicians and human rights activists (who should know better) have denied that oil and natural gas resources are at the heart of significant modern wars. For instance, Pulitzer Prize winner Daniel Yergin, almost in denial of what much of his narrative otherwise indicates, claims in respect of the invasion of Iraq in 2003, backed by the UK, that 'Iraq was an oil country ... It was a nation defined by oil. But the ensuing war [of 2003] was not about oil' because, he argues, Saddam Hussein was addicted to weapons of mass destruction (Yergin, 2011, p. 147). The war, therefore, according to Yergin was about bringing stability to the Middle East by removing Saddam, earning the gratitude of the Iraqi people and to the relief of such other countries in the Middle East as Saudi Arabia and, well, Israel. Let's leave aside Israel for the moment and see the implication of this for Saudi Arabia and Iran.

Britain and the USA were constrained to work together rather than against each other after the Second World War to ensure sufficient control over Middle East oil. Even before the war ended in 1945, Franklin D. Roosevelt and Harry S. Truman established their right to protect the Saudi dynasty in return for rights for multinational oil corporations based in the USA to exploit oil exploration and production. The security of the ruling dynasty in Saudi Arabia has remained a matter of the national interest of the USA ever since. The UK, to some extent in tandem with the USA, has exerted considerable influence in Saudi Arabia with similarly lucrative deals for UK arms industries via the Al-Yamamah arms

contracts that have been in their time labelled the biggest on record even in a world of massive arms trading.

President Jimmy Carter made his position clear in relation to the Gulf though with special reference to Saudi Arabia, on behalf of both the national interest and multinational corporations based in the USA, during his short presidency with the words: 'An attempt by any outside force to control the Persian Gulf region will be regarded as an assault on the vital interests of the USA, and such an assault will be repelled by any means necessary, including military force.'⁵ One might say that these are pretty prophetic words and successive governments of the USA have been as good as Carter's words given the response to the invasion of Kuwait by Saddam Hussein and the made up threat of the existence of Weapons of Mass Destruction under Saddam's control.

Global oil reserves

The overall geographical distribution of reserves of the non-renewable energy source provides the pattern for the struggle for control. This picture of what are called 'proven' oil reserves changes with some frequency. There are two key reasons for this. One is exploration which continues unabated and new discoveries come with great frequency. Exploration, however, is dependent on the degree to which the major corporations, supported by relevant nation states, can control the politics of those nation-states that technically have sovereignty over the relevant areas of the globe. The second reason is changing technologies. These technologies come into being because of the drive for profit and for extending the availability of non-renewable sources of energy (including natural gas) as far into the future as possible. Thus crises of scarcity tend to recede though some nation-states who are key actors have limited reserves of their own and others see their reserves severely dwindling. For instance, the USA, the highest consumer of oil in the world, has only about 1.5 per cent of global reserves of oil. New technology, however, has enabled these reserves to be extended through, for instance, more advanced drilling techniques and off-shore drilling expertise (despite the environmental risks involved and damage done). Moreover, as shortages appear and prices are predicted to rise, more costly means of extraction will take place as new technologies lie waiting. Thus the shale oil of Canada will see greater and greater exploitation if (when) oil prices stabilize at higher levels.

Currently the picture looks like this. Saudi Arabia has almost 20 per cent of oil reserves which includes the biggest oil-field in the world. No wonder the Saudi government has been promised full military protection by the USA. Canada, if the so-called unconventional shale reserves are counted, is second with 13.21 per cent. Iran has about 11 per cent of reserves while Iraq has 10.6 per cent. However, it is argued that there is much more to discover in Iraq which could make Iraq the largest producer in the world. This may well account for the desperation of the USA and the UK to embark on the war of 2003. Kuwait is fifth with nearly 9 per cent of world reserves. Venezuela, a major player in OPEC, has over 7 per cent though from time to time claims more, and is 6th in the rankings. The United Arab Emirates is seventh in the rankings with a similar amount of reserves. Russia is eighth in the rankings, and oil in Russia plays an important part in the economic recovery of Russia though, in due course, Russian governments will want to be more active in the carve-up of oil reserves elsewhere. Libya has 3.4 per cent of world reserves of oil, and political and economic influence there is clearly seen to be important to the French and the UK. Many of the current smaller, though significant, reserves are to be found in Africa with increasing reserves being exploited in Nigeria, Angola, Sudan, the Congo basin, Chad, Cameroon and so on, and in all those areas there is either conflict or has been conflict or there is the serious prospect of conflict. Oil and natural gas reserves were a major source of conflict in East Timor. Also in this region, such as in the East and South China Seas, the competing claims of China, Japan, Vietnam and Indonesia have already in recent years occasioned tensions.

Iraq invasion 2003

At this point we might look briefly at the George W. Bush–Dick Cheney–Halliburton–Paul Wolfowitz–Richard Perle–John Bolton axis for regime change in Iraq with the intention not only of enriching some of the individuals and corporations involved but also for ensuring on ideological grounds the domination of the USA over the vast reserves of oil not only in Iraq but ultimately in Iran.

This group, who conceived of the war and pushed for it, were members of or were supporters of the neo-conservative *Project for the New American Century*, a short-lived think-tank that ran from 1997 through 2006. The aims of the PNAC were somewhat alarming, though they reinforce the major thesis of this volume in demonstrating how main players in the political elite see the relationship

between capital and nation-state which leads to the satisfaction of personal greed and lust for power.

The aims were clearly and publicly stated as follows:

We need to increase defense spending significantly if we are to carry out our global responsibilities today and modernize our armed forces for the future;

We need to strengthen our ties to democratic allies and to challenge regimes hostile to our interests and values;

We need to promote the cause of political and economic freedom abroad.

One of the leading figures among this group was Dick Cheney who must be seen as the ultimate political fixer whose own pocket gained immeasurably from his position as Vice-President of the USA and connection with a key company in the military-industrial complex, Halliburton. It is well established that this corporation gained enormously too from contracts issued during the period of capitalist swashbuckling of the George W. Bush period in power. There was never a moment's doubt among every rational commentator that the invasion of Iraq in 2003 was about profit and regime change with the clear intention to remove Saddam Hussein and replace him with a government friendly to the USA and its oil interests. There was no justification for this invasion in international law; there was no connection between Saddam and Al-Qaeda and there were no weapons of mass destruction. The invasion at root was about oil and profit and maintaining the political hegemony of the USA. The only significant supporter was the UK whose national interest was oil and arms made manifest by the interests of British Petroleum and BAE Systems which is less in the interest of the nation-state than of multinational capital with headquarters in the UK. It was said at the time that the Prime Minister, Blair, could be contacted instantly by the Chairmen of these two corporations. In a densely argued piece by international lawyer Peter Danchin entitled 'Is the War Justified Under International Law', he concludes that the invasion of Iraq was clearly against international law.⁶ For instance, according to the UN Charter, four conditions are required for an attack to be justified under Article 51. These are

1. An armed attack must take place.
2. It must be directed against a Member State of the United Nations.
3. The Security Council must not yet have taken any measure necessary to maintain international peace and security.
4. The measure taken in the exercise of self-defence must be immediately reported to the Security Council.

Saddam had made no armed attack, not even in the support of an Al-Qaeda act of terrorism despite attempted fabrications to that effect. No 'anticipated attack' could be proven given the weak suggestion that Saddam was in a position to launch weapons of mass destruction within 48 hours. For instance, Israel's attack on the Osirak nuclear reactors was justifiably condemned in 1981, given that a reactor still under construction cannot be judged as a 'an instant, overwhelming threat'.

Nor can there be any justification under international law or United Nations provision in particular to invade sovereign foreign territory to secure regime change.

It is absolutely clear, having looked at the circumstances that surrounded the invasion of Iraq and the way in which the occupation of Iraq has been implemented, that the single main motivating drive has been to secure the huge oil deposits there in the interests of the occupying forces and their corporate supporters. What is also significant, however, has been the split between the USA and the UK, on the one hand, and France and Russia who have consistently opposed the occupation of Iraq, on the other hand. In this way we can reinforce our position that sees the frequent shift of the make-up of the so-called allies according to shifting national and corporate interest.

It has also become shockingly clear that the key supporters of the *Project for the New American Century* were not simply interested in regime change and exercising control over future Iraqi governments for the purpose of securing the massive oil deposits, but that the so-called 'coalition' forces would then be in a position to secure regime change in Iran with the ultimate objective of being able, at the end of the day, to be in overall strategic command of Saudi, Iraqi and Iranian oil reserves, the sum of which constitutes at current estimates over 40 per cent of global oil reserves.

Britain and Libya 1945–2011

The territories of Cyrenaica, Tripoli and Fezzam were united under the auspices of the British following the desert campaigns of the Second World War and formed the country now known as Libya in 1945. King Idris I (formerly Emir of Cyrenaica and chief of the Senoussi Muslims) was planted as head of a country where there was no real historical unity between Tripolitania in the west and Cyrenaica in the east. The hinterland, Fezzam, was virtually uninhabited and the

terrain largely impassable (and still is). We saw quite clearly in the 2011 uprising against Gaddafi that the two main segments of the country of Libya had still not been united, and that the western territory dominated the former Cyrenaica. From 1945 until oil was discovered Libya counted as one of the poorest countries in the world, but soon after 1959 when oil was discovered the country started on the path to become yet another wealthy oil nation.

When the regime of King Idris came under pressure in 1969 and was toppled by Gaddafi, it was a clear possibility that Libya had become another oil-producing country on a significant scale. The British governments of both Wilson, who lost the election in 1970, and his successor Heath wanted Gaddafi removed as soon as possible in order to protect British influence in the area but also to protect British oil interests and other profit-making enterprises including those involved in the construction and building of the Libyan economic infrastructure. With the lessons to be learned from Nasser who had taken control of the Suez Canal and established independence from western capital, Gaddafi's coup should not have come as a surprise. Indeed, intelligence sources in the USA had suggested not only that Nasser had financed Malcolm X in 1964 but that Nasser had considered overthrowing Idris and annexing Libya to Egypt (given that Egypt lacked oil deposits).

The British, the USA, France and Italy were not sufficiently in concert to prevent Gaddafi's coup in 1969. After the event, both Labour and Conservative prime ministers, Wilson followed by Heath, pressed MI6 to find a way of dislodging Gaddafi and restore the Senoussi-backed kingship. The blatant drive of national interest which was, in effect, a state response in the interests of British capital is discussed succinctly in Richard Deacon's biography of Maurice Oldfield who at the time was deputy head of MI6.⁷ The British had already found some measure of success in maintaining their strategic, non-oil interest in the region, especially with the use of so-called special forces in Yemen and Oman. MI6 tried one of their usual clandestine techniques of inducing a coup using private mercenaries to be led by the ageing but still gung-ho Colonel David Stirling who had invented the Special Air Service in that very region during the desert campaign of WWII. The plan, using Senoussi informers and those Senoussi willing to seize power back, seemed to be to land mercenaries to release political prisoners from jail, gather dissenters who had tribal differences from Gaddafi and depose him. Two groups would be assembled, one in Trieste and the other in Malta. This plan sounds doomed to failure especially as weapons had to be acquired secretly in Yugoslavia so as to ensure that the Soviet weapons would divert attention from

British. The weapons would be flown to the Cameroons and then transported to Chad and driven overland from there led personally by Stirling. The CIA would have nothing to do with it, no doubt recalling the Bay of Pigs and, according to Deacon, regarding the Senoussi as being as unreliable as Gaddafi. In any case, the attempt was a shambles. Stirling was too old and ill to lead the operation from Chad. The Italians arrested the Trieste ship and the other one mysteriously sank in Malta's Valetta harbour. This incident seems to have been largely lost to history which is certainly, from the British and point of view of the Secret Intelligence Services, just as well. What has not been lost is that when Gaddafi seized power he had no hesitation in ordering a huge number of fast fighter jets from France and hundreds of tanks from Russia. The manufacturers of the jet aircraft Dassault were only too eager to supply them, even though it would take years to train Libyan pilots. (Gaddafi had to borrow pilots from Egypt when he wanted to organise a fly-past for some special occasion.)

What this little slice of history has shown, however, is the importance of oil as well as the failure of national capitalists to organize any degree of cooperation with each other. Indeed, it shows, in this instance, the competition between the capitalisms of different nation-states in their desire to control what is always perceived as limited oil resources. The French and the USA, in this case, were in distinct contention with UK corporate and state interests. When, however, we fast forward to the Arab Spring in Libya in 2011, we see a much closer (hypocritical) cooperation among the corporate interests of the UK, Britain and France as, by this time, all have extensive and expanding oil interests in Libya. The distancing of the USA has less to do with their wariness of involvement as such, though the USA was, admittedly, over-stretched in Afghanistan and Iraq, than the fact that multinational corporations based in the USA were not in the forefront of players in Africa as much as they are in other parts of the world.

Oil and global conflicts

Oil and natural gas has not only been at the root of the wars in the Gulf in recent years, but has been at the root of war and violent conflict in several places in Africa, in the Caucasus, in East Timor and is rapidly threatening peace in both the South China and East China Seas. The conflict that led to millions of deaths in Angola was funded by both oil and diamonds. There is increasing bloodshed in the Niger Delta over oil drilling and exploitation in Nigeria. There have been

long-standing disputes between Nigeria and Cameroon. The oil pipeline from Chad through Anglophone Cameroon to the sea threatens conflict in an area where one of the worst dictatorships dominates a country with a francophone majority. The conflict in Indonesia/Timor centred on the huge reserves of natural gas and oil off the coast of Timor; this led Indonesia, Australia and the tiny resistance movement in East Timor to struggle for years for supremacy and control in the region. Writing in 2004, Michael Klare, in linking oil with worldwide war, notes:

Angola, Azerbaijan, Colombia, Nigeria and Russia, have undergone civil wars or ethnic conflicts ... Kazakhstan, Mexico and Venezuela have had riots, strikes or other forms of civil disorder. Violence has also erupted in ... Chad, Congo-Brazzaville, Equatorial Guinea, Sao Tome e Principe. (Klare, 2004)

Minor but potentially serious conflicts have taken place in the South China Sea around a group of uninhabited island, atolls and reefs covering 80,000 square miles and number about 400 specks in the ocean; they are known generally as the Spratly Islands. The incidents that have occurred, though, at times, causing loss of life, cannot, as yet, be called a war but disputes have been brewing for a number of years and involve Brunei, China, Malaysia, the Philippines and Taiwan. The most serious clash as listed by Klare involved the Mischief Reef incident in 1995 (Klare, 2000, pp. 133ff). The potential for conflict goes even beyond the claim to the islands not only for drilling rights for natural gas and oil but also for the passage of trade through the area, especially to Japan and for the trading interests of the USA.

However, since the dangers for wider conflict were noted by Klare in 2000, other potential clashes have emerged in the East China Sea. This time the disputed islands, also related to both potential drilling rights and passage of commerce, have occasioned tension between China and Japan. Potentially this dispute could lead to serious outbreaks of war-like activity, especially as Japan is heavily supported by the USA. In addition Japanese naval power is considerable when measured by its submarine fleet. China has not yet developed a powerful deep sea navy and trained crews to go with such vessels. Both sides have engaged in what might be described as posturing. To this extent it is unlikely that an 'old' war in the traditional sense is likely to occur. Japan has no non-renewable sources of energy of its own. The Japanese totalitarian, militaristic, capitalist state of the 1930s became especially unstuck in trying to extend its Empire in the Pacific in search of oil and other resources such as rubber and tin. Nor, on

the other hand, does the Chinese leadership want to destroy its hard-earned success through a full-scale or even regional war that would always threaten to spread. China does have extensive supplies of coal and also a fair amount of off-shore drilling options closer to home. Moreover it is spreading its influence throughout burgeoning oil states in Africa and elsewhere. The USA would also be expected to back down from a serious military conflict with China. Indeed, when assessing China's recent history, while that country has been the victim of western capitalist impositions and has had to fight off Japanese imperialism, modern China does not have a history of aggression in the Pacific region since Korea and Vietnam. While one would expect to see an increase in posturing by the players in the field, it is most likely that strong power blocs do not fight each other. The stakes are too high.⁸ It will be left to the oil companies to deploy their huge financial resources to negotiate their way through crises that will re-occur for some time yet. For the time being some posturing will continue going beyond the mere boycotting by China of the WTO talks in October 2012.

Other potential flashpoints include the Falkland Islands (Las Malvinas). The war of 1982 may well have taken place for a number of reasons that did not have much to do with oil. On the other hand, those who suggested at the time that the possibilities of offshore drilling around the Falklands were central to the causes of the war may have their arguments more recently reinforced by the news in July 2012 that Premier Oil was given support in taking over from Rockhopper Exploration in seeking to locate the estimated 300 million barrels of oil in the Sea Lion field. Argentina responded in clear terms by refusing British commercial interests access to Argentine ports and airports. Another war will not take place. One was quite enough. One might imagine that capitalist efforts will be spent in buying off Argentine protests.

Enormous multinational corporations can well afford to buy their own protection from the police and armed forces of the nation-states in which they operate the process of resource extraction or even supply their own private armies.⁹ One such glaring case has been the Anglo-Dutch Shell oil company in the Niger Delta. As of 2011, the company spent \$1 billion on security for its global operations on security. In Nigeria, Shell maintains its own defence force of over 1,000 employees, it sub-contracts security to third parties and also pays the Nigerian government large sums of money towards protecting its operations in that country. The theft of oil, kidnapping and other forms of violence committed both by those antagonistic to Shell operations and by Shell direct and indirect employees does not constitute a war, but it does indicate the

scope for violent conflict by the so-called non-state actors and an extension of a version of asymmetric and guerrilla warfare. However, elsewhere, there is always the prospect of outbreaks of violence that are more akin to full-scale regional warfare fuelled by Western arms and demand for one kind of resource or another. A case in point is that of the M23 ‘mutineers’ in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. One press report described the movement as ‘Africa’s world war’.¹⁰ This is partly because the ‘war’ involves Uganda and Rwanda on the eastern border of the Democratic Republic of the Congo whose army had few successes in 2012 despite being supported by Belgian commandos and special forces. In addition the UN peacekeepers and their helicopter gunships have been drawn into the action. What is at stake? What funds the conflict? A partial answer is coltan for your mobile phone, gold as a sound alternative to paper money, tin for soldering most electric appliances and tungsten for Formula One cars and many other things. In other words, one of the richest places on earth occasions murder and mayhem.

Glaringly obvious

In a chapter headed ‘Clear and Present Danger’, Dambisa Moyo, in her book on China’s current and future demand on the world’s resources, demonstrates in straight-forward language the extent to which resource wars have contributed overwhelmingly to violence and armed conflict, and the extent to which this will continue into the next decades. What was obvious to *History Today* about the past role of oil in determining much foreign policy of the declining Great Powers in the early twentieth century onwards which we noted earlier in this chapter is true in relation to a range of commodities over recent decades. Taking her lead from data provided by Michael L. Ross she lists a probably non-exhaustive list of intra-state wars over one decade, 1990–2000, the very decade when many thought the end of the Cold War was about to lead to peace and the benefits of a ‘peace dividend’.¹¹ The list includes Afghanistan, Angola, Burma, Cambodia, Colombia, the Congo in its various forms, Aceh in Indonesia, Liberia, Peru, Sierra Leone and Sudan. The resources at the core of the conflict include oil and natural gas, of course, but also diamonds and other precious gems, timber, opium, coca, opium, copper and cobalt. In certain circumstances, resources have also been at the heart of inter-state wars and fostered all too often by the drive for profit on the part of huge conglomerates, or smaller cartels such as

those which control the diamond, gold or coltan markets. Dr Moyo describes this resource issue as a problem hiding in plain sight. This is a good expression because no matter how often resource conflicts command the headlines one way or the other, the overriding ideology of the market and the beneficence of Smithian theory of self-interest still manages to hold sway. Take Glencore, a company that represents the tendency towards the concentration of international capital, secrecy of its directorate, possible sharp practices and tax avoidance. Though there are regular reports of Glencore's major acquisitions and occasional comment in the quality press, it, as Dr Moyo says so aptly, hides in plain sight (Moyo, 2012).¹²

Glencore and Xstrata

The Guardian newspaper carried one such special report in February 2011, almost in semi-obscurity in its Business section, which carried the headline: 'the rise of Glencore, the biggest company you've never heard of'. The article reported on a \$37 billion flotation and on those behind it who strove to be. As the report states, 'very private'. They therefore joined other very private, very rich men such as the Barclay twin brothers, based in the UK, and David and Charles Koch who run Koch Industries in the USA. When Glencore was floated on the London Stock Exchange it was at the time the biggest in the history of the London Stock Exchange and was billed as the world's largest commodities trading company. As *The Guardian* wrote: Glencore's chief executive is, Ivan Glasenberg, a man so secretive that *The Financial Times* has described him as 'one of the great enigmas of the corporate world'. The authors of the article continue: 'In commodities, Glasenberg's name enjoys instant recognition. This is unsurprising, given his company's role in supplying the basic materials that heat, feed, move and house the world. Glencore and its subsidiaries have a hand not just in buying and selling all of these, but in producing, extracting and transporting them.' These commodities include oil, gas, coal, aluminium, bauxite, nickel, iron ore, zinc, copper, grain, rice and sugar. What guarantees the respect of investors is that Glencore will be included in the FTSE 100 and the company's profitability will have an effect on 'the pension funds of millions of people'. Yet, Ivan Glasenberg 'is probably the Most Important Businessman You Have Never Heard Of'. The important piece of background which has been given considerable coverage is the relationship between Glasenberg and Marc Rich who, in essence, began the

worldwide span of Glencore, then known as Marc Rich & Co. *The Guardian* records the background succinctly:

Rich was America's most-wanted white-collar criminal, and his picture adorned the FBI's list of top-10 fugitives alongside that of Osama bin Laden. He stayed on the list until Bill Clinton's controversial decision to pardon him during the final hours of his presidency in 2001. However, when Rich went on the run, Glasenberg was told there was still a job for him at Marc Rich & Co: back in Johannesburg.

It is not surprising now to find that the list of Glencore's subsidiaries is extensive and covers both minerals and agricultural products and as one Web source puts it:

Glencore International plc is a Swiss commodity and mining company headquartered in Switzerland and with its registered office in Jersey in the channel islands. Glencore is the world's largest commodities trading company, with a 2010 global market share of 60 percent in the internationally tradeable zinc market, 50 percent in the internationally tradeable copper market, 9 percent in the internationally tradeable grain market and 3 percent in the internationally tradeable oil market.

The massive company continues to grow and is now merged with Xstrata. When you make a list of the operations and geographical areas of operations favoured by Glencore, the list is remarkably similar to the list of resources associated with both intra-state and international conflicts. Wherever Glencore and Xstrata operate there is actual conflict or potential for it. However, so huge are the resources of these companies, merged or otherwise, they have the capacity, like Shell or Exxon or other massive multinational conglomerates, to operate with their own security or pay nation-states for such security. The tendency towards concentration of capital and the search to maintain permanently not just profit, not just the mass of profit but to keep up the rate of profit ensures the continuation of the global capitalist drive, sometimes with the support of the nation-state, at other times in the face of its opposition from nation-states.

The next superpower and resources: China

In the Summer of 2012, Hillary Clinton, in her then capacity as Secretary of State, visited several African countries 'warning' political leaders about the encroachment of Chinese businesses and the Chinese government on African

resources. Again, in plain sight, China is easily on the horizon as the next superpower. It is not only Dr Dambisa Moyo, but many others looking ahead with some trepidation at the enormous potential demand that China is making and will continue to make on African resources. It is also the case that the Chinese are interested in Latin America since other continents, apart from Latin America and Africa, will be closed off to them by existing businesses and interests of the nation-states currently in pole position or commanding sovereignty over the territories concerned. On the other hand, Chinese investment and attempted investment takes place in Australia and Canada. The problem with direct investment in parts of Latin America and in Africa is the weakness of state formation in many countries, especially, of course, in Africa. However, the Chinese have shown that they can take the long view and some involvement may take time to materialize. Nevertheless, the picture that emerges after the merest glance is that the anarchy of capitalism and of the international political system which we discuss elsewhere will ensure enormous scope for violent conflict; this is likely to be short of all-out conflagration between the major players; there is too much to lose, but the violent conflict will continue to be transferred to the people of Africa who are most exposed to exploitation, not only by foreign business interests and their supporting nation-states, but by their own corrupt regimes. The fact that oil and natural gas continues to be identified in Africa and off-shore means China will be there among the bidders for control, leading to a form of Chinese neo-economic imperialism. While economic recession limits to some extent the scale of intervention by the USA and Europe, China, as things stand and despite some slowing up of economic growth and the much talked of 'hard-landing', is well placed to steal many a march over its rivals.

The drive for access to resources, even the cornering or near cornering of the market for a range of resources, has historically been a major source of conflict, not necessarily the only one, but a key one. The Japanese invaded the East Indies for the oil. Nazi-led Germany headed for Romania and the Caucasus for oil and tried also to take North Africa as the gateway to the Middle East which the British grimly defended. The foreign policy of the USA is dominated by the need to capture as much of the world's supply of oil as possible. Huge corporations collude with the nation-states of the USA or Britain or the Netherlands or France or Italy, as the case may be, not only to amass profit but to protect the national interests of the nation-states involved. Where resources, especially oil and natural gas, are concerned and are intimately involved simultaneously with the interests of capital and of the nation-state, war was on the agenda in the first half of the twentieth

century; now among the advanced nations the conflicts have become transformed as these countries can no longer fight each other because to do so would be too destructive. Therefore, the capacity for reformism of global capitalism is tested to the full. However, while the people of the USA, of France, of Italy, of the UK, of Germany, of the rest of the European Union, of Japan will not fight each other in a properly declared war, old-style, violent conflict, as with proxy wars, will be a feature of the less developed and 'undemocratic' world where there is a global demand for a specific range of resources from oil to timber to diamonds to tungsten to many other minerals, including coltan to which we now turn.

Coltan

The best current discussion of coltan as a cause of war in the east of the DRC is that by Michael Nest.¹³ Coltan (tantalum) hit the headlines at the beginning of this century when there happened to be a price hike for special market reasons and the metal came into prominence because of its role in being a key component in the miniaturization of electronic products. The metal, which melts at extremely high temperatures and is increasingly vital in batteries as a capacitor, is also important in a variety of other products as a component of high-tech metal alloys. Nest is at pains to dismiss myths about the rarity of coltan (tantalum) worldwide. The internet, sometimes excellent and at others highly misleading, is responsible for perpetuating the myth that 80 per cent of coltan is to be found in the DRC whereas the best guess is that the DRC has about 7 per cent of known tantalum. The metal can be found in every continent apart from the Antarctic, and a number of mines have actually been closed, notably in Australia, and others have been delayed. But a number of conditions have applied to the DRC that links it to the dreadful turmoil and violent conflict in that country. First of all, the mineral, which is close to the surface, can be mined by small teams armed only with picks and shovels; basically small teams of miners simply dig a large crater; therefore the mining of coltan in the DRC does not require heavy investment in deep mines or heavy machinery common in open-cast mining operations. Warlords, armed groups and DRC soldiers can control the mining and provide armed protection. There are commercial agents to whom the ore is delivered and the same armed groups can tax the movement of the ore as it is taken to collection points for sale. It is calculated that perhaps 2 per cent of the final cost of the product is earned by the armed groups so that for the final buyer the tantalum is cheap.

It is possible to say that if there were no coltan, there would still be war in the DRC. However, it is not possible to say that the wars in the east of the DRC are not resource wars. This sounds, of course, like a complete contradiction but it is one that is, in a way, resolved within Nest's arguments.

As he explains, there are a number of warring groups in the Congo and there are a number of other minerals that can fetch good market prices and, most importantly, there is land which, after all, is the natural resource. This exists within an area that can be described as more or less having no government, rule of law or legitimate policing. It is a 'wild west' writ large. Moreover, there are those who will purchase the primary products. These commodities consist of coltan, gold, tin, tungsten, manganese, diamonds, copper and cobalt. The warring groups are the army of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Mai Mai (an ever-changing alliance of armed militias), PARECO (Patriotes Resistantes du Congo), FDLR (Force Democratiques pour la Liberation du Rwanda), CNDP (Congres National pour la Defense du Peuple), the Rwandan army, Rwandan Hutu rebel forces, the Ugandan army and others. The situation, therefore, is complex and quite unlike a simple Manichean struggle between two sides where one is good and the other evil; in these circumstances third-party peace-keeping intervention is enormously difficult even if one could analyse the situation adequately and then prescribe any sort of helpful intervention. But it is possible, as Nest tells us, that the 'United Nations identified scores of private trading, brokerage, banking and transportation firms as having participated in the illegal exploitation of natural resources from the DRC'. The commodities have found their way to Malaysia, Germany, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Britain, Kenya, India and Pakistan. Nest concludes that 'violence in the DRC is not the result of a single issue, and the coltan industry is no more culpable than any other natural resource in the perpetuation of conflict'. In other words, resources in the resource-rich country of the DRC in the political conditions of that country plus the willingness of otherwise respectable businesses to participate in the trade in coltan (and other resources) for profit does indeed contribute significantly to murder, repression, extortion, rape and the employment of drugged-up child soldiers in that part of the world.

Summary and conclusions

Resources are at the centre of much modern conflict. This is especially the case when the interests of huge corporations and the nation-state coincide as is the case with oil and the demands of such nation-states as the USA, Britain,

France, Russia and increasingly China. Access to energy is not only the key to the production of commodities but also to the capacity to wage war if necessary. However, many other resources are also at the centre of conflict; these include gold, diamonds, coltan, timber, land itself, water and so on.

The power of capital involves a number of contradictions. Capital does not want to destroy the world; it wants to profit from it and so, in many circumstances, turns towards seeking the benefits of cooperation. In Marxian terminology, capital is about exploitation not spoliation of labour power or any other resource. On the other hand, capital is also competitive and will drive out rivals by a number of means including bribery, financial malpractice and even on occasion encouraging military intervention or often by merging with rivals, nationally or internationally. Therefore, in the struggle for resources, given that capitalism is war by other means, the power of big capital backed by the 'state' of the nation-state will tend to avoid confrontation that might lead to hot wars with strong nation-states or small and poorer nation-states if fully backed by a powerful one. Moreover, while some nation-states hang on to navies and air forces and armies, there is a strong tendency to slim down these forces (in relative terms). This is happening in Britain and in the USA. Other countries are determined to eschew military force as does Germany.¹⁴ On the other hand, all three countries engage in the production and sales of arms abroad. It is these sales abroad which make possible much of the conflict over resources. Moreover, slimming forces down is one thing, but much new weaponry is designed to fight what has been called asymmetric warfare. It is these weapons that find their way to those countries where resource wars, especially in Africa, are most common.

Of the conflicts brewing say with Argentina and Britain, oil companies may well seek compromises. In the conflicts in the South China and East China Seas, it is unlikely that a fully fledged all-out war will take place. There is too much to lose for all concerned. Thus resource wars will remain, but it is the least fortunate on earth, like the Congolese or the indigenous peoples of the Niger Delta, who will suffer most. While it has been possible to contain the use of nuclear weapons, the assault rifle, the pick-up truck or the RPG are not going out of use any time soon.

End of Empires, Decolonization and War

Introduction

The collapse of Empires in the modern age has given rise to a new spurt of nation-building, seemingly in the pattern of nineteenth-century nation-state formation. Though the new nations may have constitutions, governmental forms, administrations, judicial systems, they do not necessarily conform to the nineteenth-century models as much as the nation-states of Europe and North America would wish in the last 100 years or so. The three main seismic changes have been as follows:

First, there was the reordering and disordering of the world's territories following the Great War and according to the Treaty of Versailles and associated Treaties and the violent conflicts that ensued in the years immediately following 1919: this included the Balkans, Central and Eastern Europe, parts of Africa, the whole of the Middle East and Asia Minor and stretching as far East as the Bismarck Archipelago and the Shantung Peninsula and Manchuria.¹

Second, following the Second World War, from 1945–1970, there was the reordering and disordering of many parts of the world's territories following the decline of the British, French, Dutch and Portuguese Empires. This affected the whole of the Indian sub-continent, Indonesia, Malaya, Burma, Indo-China, the whole of Africa and the whole of the Middle East and the Levant and gave rise to an enormous expansion of nation-states recognized by the United Nations.

The third period has been the addition of nation-states in the post Cold War period as the great Soviet Empire, heir to the Russian Tsarist Empire, disintegrated.

The world is living, therefore, in a multi-layered post-colonial era which has given rise to the opening of old fault lines, the generation of new ones and in an

anarchical system of international politics exacerbated by uncontrolled, equally anarchical global capitalism.

End of Empire, end of Communism, resurgence of Islam

Amin Maalouf, the Lebanese-born Christian novelist and journalist and Middle East watcher who has lived in France for his adult life, writes:² ‘The slide from ideology to identity has had devastating effects all across the globe, but nowhere more so than in the Arab Muslim world where religious radicalism ... has achieved massive intellectual predominance ... in the course of its rise, this tendency began to adopt a violently ant-Western stance’ (Maalouf, 2011, p. 9).

In other words, the decline of the counter-ideologies to capitalism, that of Marxism and Socialism, has left the Arab Muslim world with little alternative but to seek a new ideology, one labelled ‘identity’ as the basis for the struggle against the domination of the West, but essentially against the economic imperialism of the USA and against strong residual domination of the British and French culture, ideas and remaining economic and military strength. Maalouf claims there are two ways of looking at the nationalism in the Arab world. One is to say that Islam has been incapable of adopting the modern universal values that are correctly promulgated by the West. Alternatively, the Arab world argues that it has had to struggle with limited resources to resist the misguided cultural, corrupt, decadent and economic domination of the West. Each point of view has its own iron logic so that the two views never seriously meet. He argues that unless some meeting of views takes place the only route into the future is via a ‘common barbarism’ (Maalouf, 2011, p. 16). He argues that 50 years ago the rifts within Arab society were of little consequence and Shi’a and Sunni communities could live together in a fair degree of harmony. This may have been possibly so; on the other hand, I have heard similar arguments by Croats and Bosnians and Serbs or by Greek or Turkish Cypriots. The harmony may not have been as great as is sometimes suggested. The fault lines have been there for centuries. It takes a shift in the underlying tectonic plate to open the fault lines. Maalouf summarizes the current situation as exists between the Arab world and the West as follows: ‘And if the tragedy of the Arabs is that they have lost their place among nations and feel unable to recover it, the tragedy of the West is to have assumed too large a global role, which it can no longer fulfil but from which it cannot extricate itself’ (Maalouf, 2011, p. 19).

He adds that what is most worrying is that the West, but most especially the USA, attempts to make up for their inability to control the Arab world by resorting to military intervention. This among other things erodes the moral superiority of the West. In Mary Kaldor's terms this would be the failure to inject cosmopolitan values into the Arab world. This is partly because the West has failed to meet its own promises to assist the poorer parts of the globe. All the supposedly noble millennium aims to eradicate poverty and to increase assistance to the poorer parts of the planet have failed notwithstanding the formal statistics. Moreover, there is now an impatience with the argument that the failure of the Arab world to achieve economic growth and welfare on the scale of the West is a result of the inheritance of colonial domination and exploitation. Maalouf summarizes his position thus:

For my part, I remain convinced that Western civilization has contributed more than any other to the creation of universal values, but it has proved unequal to the task of transmitting them effectively ... The West's tragedy, today as it has been for centuries, is that it is perpetually torn between its desire to civilize the world and the will to dominate it. (Maalouf, 2011, p. 34/43)

However, he does deliver a strong history analysing the fight back of the Arabs from 1919 to the second decade of the twenty-first century. He considers succinctly the seismic events associated with the Great War, its aftermath and the so-called peace settlement, the shift in energy source from coal to oil, the disappearance of the Ottoman Empire, its replacement by the newly forged nation-state of Turkey, the decline of the French and British Empires and the rise of the distinct style of the cultural and economic imperialism of the USA. The Arab world is simultaneously thrust together and parted along its fault lines, all made worse for them in the interest of specific nation-states, especially the USA, Britain and France and the capitalist drive for resources and domination and also in the interests of ever more technologically powerful military-industrial complexes. He also accepts what we know as observers of the history of capitalist development: the global economic system is increasingly out of control in the sense that one economic crisis follows another, that there can be no even economic growth; while one crisis after another is inevitable, its dates and timing and intensity are not predictable; and its effects on the fault lines and its intensity are unpredictable. Moreover in the light of the recent events that have seen insider dealing, bankers' collusion, outlandish pyramid schemes, the growth of a superrich elites, massive tax avoidance schemes and much more,

the capitalist system even at this tip of the iceberg destroys the legitimacy of the West in attempting to impose its dominance on the Arab world where, after all, modern civilization began and where the Arabs can quote Baghdad, ancient Mesopotamia, Pyramids of Egypt, the invention of the wheel, of algebra and so on. Schools in the West in this post-modern age probably spend the merest moments in the classroom on the origins of modern civilization, but, in the Arab world, it is not just a matter of Islam but the deep culture that has been lost and along with it the capacity of the Arab world to fight back.

Increasingly many voices have been raised along with that of Maalouf's which seek to show the reasons and the justification for the Islamic anti-Western responses in recent years. Some of these have been heard in the area of arts as well as politics. *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, a novel by Mohsin Hamid and also a film, takes a similar position as that of Maalouf in the sense that there is a careful degree of balance in that Western capitalism is not all bad but the direction is that of support for a good degree of fight-back from the Muslim world. Pankaj Mishra in *From the Ruins of Empire* is more outspoken and less apologetic. Typical comments are:

The West is no longer the source of good as well as bad things, deep in material benefits but shallow in spiritual matters; it has to be rejected *in toto*. This conviction had been building up over the decades among many Muslims. Two destructive world wars and the Great Depression had revealed serious flaws in the Western models of politics and economy. Decolonization further undermined the political power of Western countries ... A further devastating blow to the reputation of the West was the creation of the state of Israel ... The spell of Western power has finally been broken. (Mishra, 2012, pp. 263/307)

Ironically, it cannot escape Mishra's attention that he has a much freer voice in the West than he may have elsewhere in the world, given that he writes regularly for publications written for the Western 'intellectuals' that he is so anxious to voice strong counter-opinions including being free to launch an attack on Ferguson's conservative views on the rise of 'civilization'. Nevertheless, he writes with some substance, for instance in *The Guardian* newspaper where he has had extended space to state his position which includes the view that 'Europe's much vaunted liberal traditions didn't travel well to its colonies, and accuses the West of producing a "narcissistic history", one which is "obsessed with western ideals, achievements, failures and challenges."³ On the other hand, what country does not produce its own solipsistic history? He sounds bitterly disappointed on behalf of Asian leaders

who had hoped for a new cosmopolitan world that is now, in his opinion, clearly dashed. Dominic Sandbrook dismisses Mishra as a 'pound-shop' John Pilger.⁴ On the other hand, we are constantly fed British solipsism in many forms. For instance in September 2012, William Hague, the then British foreign secretary, asserted that the past was the past and it was about time the UK should 'shed any lingering feelings of post colonial guilt' after 60 years. This is simply providing critics of the West with ammunition. While Asian apologists may well be accused of their own forms of solipsism, Hague's position and that of the foreign office shows a desperate need to hurl a declining UK capitalism back into the African and Asian fray in the interests of more effective exploitation of raw materials and markets, especially when it is observed that the major new competitor with the UK for these is China whose overseas investments in the newly formed nation-states, carved from the former colonial territories, are mainly designed around resource exploitation. The clear intention of the UK Foreign Office to expand Britain's 'diplomatic' presence in former colonial territories is a clear announcement of the needs of UK capitalism to be backed by the nation-state.

There is a real history as opposed to an ideological cover for one and much of it is clearly unpalatable when fully exposed, as it is increasingly, as historians delve into the regularly released documents from government archives. However, despite the revelations of the dark side of Empire, there are those who feel it makes no impact on the general public (unsurprisingly). George Monbiot writes:

The story of benign imperialism, whose overriding purpose was not to seize land, labour and commodities but to teach the natives English, table manners and double-entry book-keeping, is a myth that has been carefully propagated by the right wing press. But it draws its power from a remarkable national ability to airbrush and disregard our past.

Also among the surge of work on the legacy of Empire is included the recent *Ghosts of Empire* in which the author, Kwasi Kwarteng (Conservative MP for Spelthorne), examines the British Empire at work in a small number of territories that can be counted as part of Britain's late Empire. The drive for exploitation, however, is downplayed and he seems, oddly, to be in favour of a repetition of the 'small wars' of late Empire for the good of the native peoples. Perhaps closer to reality is Julia Lovell's *The Opium War* where the rapaciousness of the imperialists is somewhat more evident (Lovell, 2012).

One reason why the interpretation of Britain's imperial past is so important (and this would include the other major post-imperialist nation-states) is not

simply to provide a form of accountancy of blame or praise; so much of the current debates do seem to be about (with say Starkey and Ferguson on one side and Mishra and Maalouf on the other) considerations of blame, guilt and apology. On the other hand, it is important to provide a proper understanding of the historical processes whereby the Empires came about and were kept in being. In the case of the UK two things are important: one outcome is that we come away with a solipsist bias in favour of Britain and its democracy which obscures the real nature and limitations of Western democracy; uncovered is the nature of the 'state' that rules the nation-state (as we saw in Chapter 6) and which, if the more conservative elements in government were to have their way, would dominate in school and university syllabuses. A further point is that it remains important to understand the permanent nature of capitalist exploitation that provides wealth, commodities, employment and a relatively high degree of well-being to the peoples of the exploiting nation-states at the expense of the populations of the exploited territories.

Those that argue that the colonial age cannot be blamed for the parlous condition of many of the post-colonial nation-states are wrong. The colonial age is not past. It does not simply go away after a numerical period of years. When does the colonial period end? After two generations, three, four? The point is that the West, that juggernaut composed of the most advanced and powerful capitalist economies plus their associated nation-states and notwithstanding the number of contradictions and rivalries connected to this conjuncture of political and economic power, still impose a variety of forms of domination.

Maalouf shows us how prolonged was and is the escape of the Arab world from the past since the Second World War. On the other hand, the Arab world was still trying to escape from the world war that preceded it. In a way, one might have a glimmer of hope for the future of cosmopolitanism from that historical moment when Chaim Weizmann, the academic chemist, naturalized citizen of Britain and future president of Israel, met the future King Faisal during the peace negotiations in Paris in 1919. The two men signed an agreement boasting of blood ties among the Arab and Jewish Semites and agreeing to the establishment of a land for the Jewish people within a Hashemite Arab Kingdom stretching across the Middle East. However, the post-Imperial Ottoman history took a very different direction and the Arab world then had to escape the domination of the French and the British mandates and the hunger of the oil companies and domination of the Suez Canal and its isthmus while Israel became increasingly a creature of the influence of the USA.

Maalouf offers an expert summary of the end of the attempt by the West to assume the Ottoman domination of the Middle East by 1956; here he refers to the Suez debacle and the collusion with the recently formed nation-state of Israel:

In the end, the British leader and his French counterpart, Guy Mollet . . . recalled the troops. Despite their military success on the ground, their political defeat was complete. Having behaved as though they still possessed world empires, the two European powers had suffered a devastating blow. The Suez crisis sounded the death knell for the colonial era; thereafter the world entered a new age As a result of revealing this seismic change and emerging victorious, Nasser became a major figure on the world stage overnight – and for the Arabs, one of the greatest heroes in our history. (Maalouf, 2011, p. 103)

Well, this may be so. But despite the intervening struggles with Israel backed fully and almost unhesitatingly by the USA through several changes of administrations (Eisenhower, Kennedy, Nixon, Carter, Bush I, Clinton, Bush II, Obama) as well as the West backing the Pahlavi family in Iran and the attack on Iraq, nothing much has actually changed. The West has been determined to maintain its dominance over the Middle East and the Arab world struggles on. As with Suez, the invasion this time led by the USA and with Britain still tagging along won an overwhelming military victory, and though Saddam Hussein was no hero, the West has been forced to withdraw after many years instead of a few days. Perhaps Bush and Blair should have read up on the Suez invasion more carefully.

The history of the last few decades relating to Lebanon and Syria has been no better, though tentatively and via several assassinations the governing Hashemite sect of Jordan has survived despite its disastrous intervention against Israel when it surrendered the West Bank, two wars against Iraq engineered by the West and the crisis in Syria that began in 2012 as well as decades of destabilization of Lebanon during which deep-seated fault lines were opened up by both the Israelis and the Syrians. Here a kind of proxy war has continued with the USA backing Israel, Russia arming Syria with Lebanon off and on the battlefield. As with these situations the war has devolved on Syria.

To say that the effects of colonization have gone away in the face of Western deep-seated interference determined by oil and the policy of Zionism that was planted after the Balfour Declaration of 1917 appears to be, on the face of it, an illusion.

The growth of nationalism is not nearly fully played out in the Arab world. Nationalisms and identities still have to work themselves out: Iraqi, Sunni,

Shi'ite, Kurdish, Hashemite, Christian, Coptic and many other smaller groups almost lost to history as Maalouf has pointed out.

It was, however, at root the British and French who 'summoned the djinn of nationalism to their aid during the (Great) war' and they found that during the negotiations in Versailles and subsequently 'that it could not be easily sent away' (Macmillan 2002, p. 398). The British had supplied gold and weapons for the Arabs as well as military advisers, not the least of which, of course, was T.E. Lawrence and had encouraged Faisal in daring to dream of a huge Arab nation. But, in the face of that, not only had the allies encouraged the Zionist dream, but decided to hold sway in the Middle East, controlling, one way or another, Egypt, Suez, Palestine (Israel), Lebanon, Syria, Jordan (Trans-Jordan), Mesopotamia (Iraq) and Persia (Iran). No-one much cared about the Arabian Peninsular as oil had not yet been discovered there; much greater interest was being displayed in Mesopotamia, especially in the territory around Mosul in the north where there had been some exploration for oil.

The British, especially Churchill and the Royal Navy, wanted the oil whereas at least to begin with, Clemenceau had allegedly said that if he wanted oil he would go the grocer's. The French, however, soon caught up with the British and not only wanted the Mediterranean littoral but also a share of the oil (Macmillan, 2002, pp. 406–407). At this stage, the French and the British were happy to keep the USA out of the Middle East, though, as we know that was not to last and the USA has been a major player in the Middle East since the Second World War. But in the world of 1919, it appeared strange that Basra, Baghdad and Mosul were put together to form Iraq. There was no unified group of people that appeared to be Iraqi in any sense. This was simply a convenience and a steal for Britain. The population was half Shia, a quarter Sunni and the other quarter included Jews, Christians, Kurds, Persians and Assyrians and other less numerous groups. 'There was no Iraqi nationalism, only Arab' (Macmillan, 2002, p. 409). Needless to say, the British colonial administrators, politicians and business interests assumed that the Arabs would not in the foreseeable future be able to govern themselves fully; however, the British wanted to merely pull the strings of largely puppet governments as this was perceived as the cheapest method at a time of austerity at home and a method that had been employed in Egypt when the Khedive was a mere figure-head directed from Whitehall and business interests in the UK: it was a method that was also used widely in India and Africa to seemingly good effect. However, forms of nationalism were emerging in Syria and Egypt

and though nationalism was in its infant development in Iraq the seeds were planted. The arrangements were approved by the League of Nations in 1922. But, in the end, it was the 1919 arrangements that lit the fire of nationalism where it has burst into flames fanned with pan-Arabism and compounded by the West's hunger for resources and the historical burden of Palestine and its aftermath. It has been a seismic change which has not only extended age old fault lines but generated new ones which may take decades or even centuries to close. Again, those who say that you can no longer blame colonialism for today's disordered world of the Middle East are quite wrong. Domination and exploitation then as now in all too many cases was the name of the imperial game, so for instance Marx did not mince his words in laying blame in the context of Britain's exploitation and domination of India in the nineteenth and previous centuries: 'The profound hypocrisy and inherent barbarism of bourgeois civilization lies unveiled before our eyes, turning from its home, where it assumes respectable forms, to the colonies, where it goes naked' (quoted by Zizek, 2009, p. 116).

This nineteenth-century statement seems to some extent to sum up a contemporary issue: the West simply does not understand its own barbarity.

Thus it is not surprising that counter ideologues, Arab, African, Vietnamese, Cambodian and so on, develop theories of violence to counter centuries of domination and exploitation. Time, it has been said, is a great healer but exactly how much time does it take to wipe out the domination of overlords? After all, there is nothing clearer in the history of the last 150 years than the gross exploitation by Europeans of so many parts of the world.

France, Italy, Germany, Belgium all busied themselves with their imperialist extensions.

Britain's domain covered a quarter of the earth's surface. India alone would have been roomy enough for any nation to control. But Britain also held – besides its strong influence in white Commonwealth powers like Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa – imperial supremacy in three widely distant areas. In the American hemisphere, its colonies were Jamaica, Trinidad, British Guiana, Honduras, the Leewards, the Windwards, the Bahamas, and Bermuda. In the Mediterranean, Middle East, and Indian Ocean region, its holdings were Gibraltar, Malta, Cyprus, Palestine, Jordan, Aden, the Gulf protectorates, Ceylon, Mauritius, and the Seychelles. In Africa, its writ ran in Gambia, Sierra Leone, the Gold Coast, Nigeria, Cameroon, the Sudan, British Somaliland, Kenya, Uganda, Tanganyika, and Northern Rhodesia.⁵

But Britain was far from alone. The world was still open for exploitation.

The French Empire included even more of Africa than Britain's did – Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, the Congo, Mauritania, Senegal, the Ivory Coast, Dahomey, French Sudan, French Guinea, Upper Volta, Niger, Chad, Gabon, the Middle Congo, Ubangui Chari, and French Somaliland. Its Caribbean empire included Guadeloupe, Martinique, and French Guiana. In Asia it held Indochina, in the Middle East Syria and Lebanon, in the Pacific Tahiti and New Caledonia, in the Indian Ocean Madagascar, and off Newfoundland the fishing bases of St. Pierre-et-Miquelon. The Dutch Empire held the vast archipelago of Indonesia, with its 13,000 islands. Belgium had the Congo. Portugal had Angola and Mozambique in Africa, along with Goa, Macao, and Timor in the Far East. Italy's African empire was composed of Libya, Eritrea, and Italian Somaliland. Earlier in the century, the German and Habsburg empires were broken up. Just to list the parts of the world formerly held by Europe shows how much history, and what diverse worldwide grievances, we carry around so casually in an adjective like 'Eurocentric.' It also tells us what wrenching changes had to take place for us to refer to ours as a 'postcolonial' world.⁶

Departing Africa

Ferguson, an otherwise apologist of Empire in many respects, comments on the unholy speed with which Britain dissolved their Empire after the Second World War. 'The break-up of the British Empire happened with astonishing – and in some cases excessive – speed. Once the British had made up their minds to get out, they aimed to catch the first boat home, regardless of the consequences in their former colonies.'

This was true of all major parts of the Empire – India, Middle East, Asia and the Caribbean. This hasty departure, the lack of development in the colonies, the availability of raw materials in most of the former colonies, the willingness of the USA to take over the British mantle wherever it suited their interest, the unwillingness of the French, the Dutch, the Portuguese and the Belgians to relinquish empire, the continued hold of the British and French in large parts of Africa and the Middle East and the threat of the Soviet, Cuban and Chinese forms of influence led to civil wars and proxy wars.

In Africa the aftermath has been tragic even with the decline of proxy wars. Though other Imperialists may have been a bit slower to leave, they all, the

British, the French, the Portuguese and the Belgians, left behind pitifully poorly developed regions pasted together in quite illogical packages called nations. While some commentators may wish to say that after the last few decades the imperialists can no longer be blamed for the poor conditions that exist in Africa, this rationalization holds little water. Table 1 shows the existing enormous discrepancies between the colonizers and imperialists and some of the nations that have been brought into existence.

Table 1 shows current GDP for the main colonizers of Africa – Britain, France, Belgium and Portugal – and a sample of the territories that have been left behind as nation-states and gives an idea of the size of the countries, the GDP and a simple measure of development by showing the length of roads and railways in kilometres. Clearly the imperialists and colonizers simply did not develop the territories in Africa after their own image. Despite what apologists such as Niall Ferguson or Jeremy Paxman have written, the real, clear aim of the advanced nations was exploitation (Ferguson, 2004; Paxman, 2012). Any civilizing aims, developmental aims or liberal-democratic aims were absent despite the fact that some individuals might have thought differently because the capitalist system which drove this exploitation is incapable of behaving in other way. We saw, for instance in Chapter 4, that the system, if typified as an individual, would be labelled as a ‘psychopath’. Strangely, as if he had ignored the whole of his earlier text, Ferguson writes in the last chapter of his book with the grandiose title *Empire: How Britain Made the Modern World* thus:

Table 1 Decolonization and development

Nation-state	Population	Sq. kms	Paved roads (km)	Railways (km)	GDP
UK	63,047,162	243,610	397,403	16,116	\$ 2.29 tr
Zambia	14,309,486	752,618	2,157	2,157	\$ 22.16 bil
Nigeria	170,123,740	923,768	28,980	3,505	\$ 238.9 bil
Kenya	43,013,341	580,367	11,197	2,066	\$ 34.8
Uganda	35,873,253	241,038	16,272	1,244	\$ 18.81
Ghana	25,241,998	238,533	9,955	947	\$ 36.166
Zimbabwe	12,619,600	390,757	18,481	3,247	\$ 9.323
Tanzania	43,601,796	947,300	6,578	3,689	\$ 23.33
France	65,630,692	643,801	951,200	29,640	\$ 2.77tr
Belgium	10,438,353	30,528	153,955	3,233	\$ 513.4
Portugal	10,781,459	92,090	82,900	3,319	\$ 238.9
Angola	18,056,072	1,246,700	5,349	2,764	\$ 100.9
Mozambique	23,525,934	799,380	6,303	4,787	\$ 12.83

Though it fought many small wars, the Empire maintained a global peace unmatched before or since. In the Twentieth century, too, it more than justified its own existence ... without the influence of British imperial rule, it is hard to believe that the institutions of parliamentary democracy would have been adopted by the majority of states in the world to-day ... Consider too the role of the British Empire in facilitating capital export to the less developed world ... the notion that British imperialism tended to impoverish colonized countries seems inherently problematic ... to blame this legacy of poverty on colonialism is not very persuasive. (Ferguson, 2009, p. 366–368)

Perhaps one source that Ferguson might have dwelt on is the empirical measure of the actual investments overseas calculated by A.K. Cairncross of the British investors in the nineteenth century and especially in the last quarter which indicates that the so-called *tabula rasa* countries (Australia, USA, Canada plus South Africa) received the bulk of the huge quantity of money that constituted the surplus produced at home (Cairncross, 1953).

Generally speaking, writes Cairncross, British investment was ‘economically advantageous to the investor’. Though there were constant defaults during the nineteenth century and during the last quarter, especially in South America, they were by and large minor (despite some heavy ones in the 1820s and 1870s). The returns from investments were substantial. This is not surprising as the amount going abroad was unprecedented in history; one writer has suggested it was the equivalent of a Marshall plan every six months. The returns in terms of the mass of dividends were, accordingly, enormous.

The return, in profits and interest, was substantial. And the opening up of new countries with British capital- the building of railways, the provision of banking and insurance, financing of public utilities of all kinds, the operation of mining ... was attended with solid advantages to this country over and above the picking of judicious investment. (Cairncross, 1953, 225–226)

In returns alone British investors earned an estimated £4,000 million in the period 1873–1913.

The original investor benefitted but so did British capitalism as a whole through the expansion of trade, growth of markets and emergence of finance capitalism out of the successes of industrial capitalism. However, by the eve of the First World War, loans were mostly within the British Empire and loans to Europe were ‘comparatively small’. Foreign investors were, on the whole, looking for higher interest rates abroad, in other words there was a distinct orthodox

market response, whereby, in this case, investors required somewhere around one and half per cent higher rates abroad than were available at home, there was another process at work. This process was one of favouring the *tabula rasa* countries which offered what was considered good interest rates, well short of the dramatic or highly speculative, and one that favoured extensions to Britain, with companies managed by British capitalists and territories peopled by British or at least European immigrants and favoured above all investment in the stocks of Empire governments. In addition investment assisted in cheapening imports to the British consumer by developing economies where Britain had a cultural connection. This was especially true of railway investment in the USA, Argentina, India, Canada and Australasia. In 1870 there was a total of perhaps 62,000 miles of track in these countries. By 1900 there was a total of 262,000 miles of track, and in the seven years before the First World War, the British investor provided £600 million for railway building alone. Virtually none of these investments were in any way the consequence of or monitored by or stimulated by the British government. Capital flowed because there was an enormous surplus in the UK, because investors wanted good rates and investors trusted people like themselves. This meant that, on the whole, investment took place in, for instance, African territories for the purposes of exploitation not for establishing democracy or home rule or benefitting the indigenous populations. Some historians and commentators argue, perhaps over politely, that Britain was in some ways a beneficent Empire.

For instance, Ahmed Rashid writes: 'in the nineteenth century the British epitomized a colonialism that exploited with responsibility, used force judiciously, and yet learned about its subjects' (Rashid, 2009). This seems overly polite. British investment followed market principles, investment tended to be in *tabula rasa* countries, much investment went into nation-building in those countries as the investment went into government bonds and regional loans and where the investment took place in less developed regions it was in the interest of securing resources or strategic advantage and certainly not in any sense serious nation-building or establishment of democratic independence. The educated elites in these colonies, small in number, may have been able often to associate British ideals with colonial beneficence, literature, science and liberal philosophy; but the level of that beneficence was shallow. The best-known commentator on the native elite and the struggles for political and economic independence on this is Frantz Fanon.⁷

An issue of crucial importance for Fanon is the way in which the colonial masters oppress the native peoples but allow a tiny native elite to be created

in the western mould, and when the colonial powers are forced to relinquish their political power (if not their economic power) the new territory is forced into a chaotic route towards nationhood built on the flimsiest of foundations and bound to fail. Sartre summarises Fanon's position:

... the mother country is satisfied to keep some feudal rulers in her pay; there, dividing and ruling she has created a native bourgeoisie, sham from beginning to end; elsewhere she has played a double game; the colony is planted with settlers and exploited at the same time. Thus Europe has multiplied divisions and opposing groups, has fashioned classes and sometimes even racial prejudices, and has endeavoured by every means to bring about and intensify stratification of colonized societies ... in order to fight against us [the colonizers] the former colony has to fight against itself: or, rather, the two struggles form part of the whole. (Fanon, 1967, p. 10)

Elsewhere there is evidence to support the case made by Fanon. For instance, in the case of Pakistan, we read in the work of Shuja Nawaz the pressure for the formation of the new state of Pakistan came from 'the movement of the salaried classes and hence was not supported either by the Islamist parties or by the rural masses in the Muslim majority provinces' (Nawaz, 2008, p. xxvii).

Fanon also argued that in the context of the liberation movements and decolonization in the fifties, ready reserves of manpower would be found from the impoverished mass of peasantry that resembled a lumpen-proletariat and that the anti-colonial movements were attracted to socialism not because socialism offered a real vision of the future but simply because it was not capitalist since to be capitalist was to be an exploiter of the masses and any new state would remain, in effect, in the hands of the colonial exploiters. Moreover, the movements would have to be international in character and constitute an international socialist revolution. The revolution would have to create a new culture and avoid at all costs being drawn back into the barbarity of the past. Fanon warned that the essence of colonialism was to dehumanize the masses, to wipe out their traditions and language and to give them nothing valuable in their place beyond the production of a tiny elite created in the image of the West. He not only attacked the Europeans, but also North America which he described as that 'super-European monstrosity'. Further, he says unequivocally that decolonization must be 'always a violent phenomenon' (Fanon, 1967, p. 27). Colonization, its implementation and its temporary existence, was always based on violence and so must end as a series of violent events. Thus while the form and

degree of exploitation of colonies differed from place to place and from empire to empire, the essential features remained the same and so inevitably does the process of decolonization remain the same; most importantly, the exploiters remain ignorant of their own histories. This same kind of point is made by George Monbiot in discussing the horrors committed by the British in Kenya during the Mau Mau struggles for independence from their colonial masters: ‘The process of dehumanization, so necessary to the colonial project, turns inwards. Until this nation (the UK) is prepared to recognize what happened . . . , Britain, like the countries it occupied, will remain blighted by imperialism.’⁸

Moreover, because the colonial territories were created as the outcome of a series of specific historical circumstances, few new ‘countries’ made sense when turned into nation-states. Indeed, the United Nations, in an effort to prevent massive conflict, perpetuated the colonial contradictions by insisting that the frontiers of the new nation-states be respected by all other newly formed nation-states. As Hobsbawm has said echoing many other writers: ‘the post-colonial world is . . . almost entirely divided by the frontiers of imperialism’. He also echoes in somewhat more measured language exactly the points made by Fanon. ‘The major task of middle-class nationalist movements in such countries was how to acquire the support of the essentially traditionalist and anti-modern masses without jeopardizing their own modernizing project’ (Hobsbawm, 1994, pp. 207ff).

So, the fact remains that the fate of the new African countries is still intimately tied up with their colonial histories as well as their post-colonial relationships with the former imperialists. We have seen in the context of the unrealistic optimism of the Arab spring that the development of many of these countries remained tied to their colonial masters. In Egypt, for instance, despite the early electoral success of the Islamic Brotherhood, the economy is so tied to the West in terms of trade and military aid, it is unsurprising that the motor forces of the Egyptian military-industrial complex removed the Islamic Brotherhood from power within a short space of time.

Pakistan

If we move to other lands and take, for instance, Pakistan, we see this dialectic relationship continues in ways that not only prevent the development of Pakistan to the benefit of the mass of the population but also to confuse the West, notably Britain and the USA; the memories of the past add to both bitterness and

generate a kind of despair for the future. Many factors are in play here including the unsatisfactory partition of the Indian subcontinent, particularly in relation to the religious questions but also such territorial disputes as Kashmir. There has also been the question of a fully nuclear-armed Pakistan in the context of Afghanistan and the Taleban. One of the best commentators on the incompetence of the West to develop adequate policies is Ahmed Rashid in his work aptly titled *Descent into Chaos*. While there are many examples of the relationship between war and violent conflict, on the one hand, and decolonization, on the other hand, there is no better example than the history and present circumstances that exist as those among Pakistan, Afghanistan and the West.

As Rashid puts it succinctly, 'Pakistan's insecurity is partly a legacy of two centuries of British rule in India' (Rashid, 2009). The North-West frontier was in effect, he claims, a garrison based in Lahore to protect the rest of the subcontinent; Pakistan inherited this 'security state'. (It should not surprise anyone, therefore, that Pakistan regards Afghanistan as its sphere of influence.) He stresses that the modern 'identity of Pakistan is rooted in fears, insecurity, and contradictions inherent in Muslims living in the Raj' (Rashid, 2009, p. 33). While Jinnah, who died very shortly after Pakistan, East and West, was formed in 1947, clearly aimed to develop a secular nation-state, his heirs, army generals, were more dedicated to defending Islam than a secular Pakistan. Therefore, it has been, according to Rashid, ethnic nationalism that has been the most important legacy which has stood in the way of modernization. The Pakistan nation-state, led by its military, took advantage of the Cold War and sought military strength from the USA to act as a buffer against the USSR just as Punjab had become a buffer against Russian imperialism in the nineteenth century as part of the Great Game. (Some would say this Great Game has never ended.) By 1957 military aid amounted, covertly, to what was then a massive sum of \$500 million per annum. As a result of Russian attempts to control Afghanistan and using the principle that the enemy of my enemy is my friend, the USA by the 1980s was pouring ever more vast sums into Pakistan to fight the USSR in a proxy war in Afghanistan. Apart from the substantial amount of arms and cash, the CIA assisted with the training of 35,000 Muslim fighters from 43 Muslim countries in Pakistan.

There is, of course, much more to be said about the recent history of Pakistan, but what is clear is that Pakistan's failure to develop a vibrant modern economy has nothing much to do with, say, the theorizing of Daron Acemoglu and James A. Robinson in *Why Nations Fail* (Acemoglu and Robinson, 2012). The permanent armed nation-state of Pakistan is a direct result of the historical circumstances

of the imperialism of British/USA and Russian/Soviet imperialism which has continued from the eighteenth century to the present day. Of course, nothing stays exactly the same in history and the war in Afghanistan has now a momentum of its own; it has what Clausewitz would call its own logic. Unravelling this special logic would be a first step to possibly bringing peace, though, too often, even understanding a situation does not allow the possibility of solution. There is such a phenomenon as tragedy. Afghan is a tragedy and, sadly, there are many others. Unravelling the solution caused by the demise of empire has provided the greatest set of challenges and tragedies now for over half a century and shows no sign of abating.

A polemic

Let's take some of these points as a way of concluding this chapter and pose some questions that have arisen in respect of Britain, its Empire and the aftermath of decolonization.

How real was Britain's global *pax Britannica*? Has Britain really spread parliamentary democracy around the world? Did Britain's capital exports go to the 'non-white' colonies? Do the elites in new nation-states in Africa have only themselves to blame for the impoverishment of their own citizens? Did Britain spread democracy and liberty and fair play to the rest of the world? What are the causes of war and violent conflict in the former colonies?

Britain's Empire was laid firmly in the eighteenth century, not during the period of so-called *pax Britannica* which was a label attached to Britain in the second half of the nineteenth century, and, in any case, was not entirely *pax* nor entirely *Britannica*. Britain was involved in a major war for more years in the eighteenth century than she was at peace. Britain in the eighteenth century was involved in wars against the France of Louis XIV, the Seven Years War, the War of American Independence and the French Revolutionary War and the Napoleonic War at the beginning of the nineteenth. Britain lost the American Colonies but hung on to Canada, safeguarded its Caribbean empire, settled Australia and New Zealand, the Cape, won Mediterranean islands and many other territories of strategic significance in the Pacific and South Atlantic that were required to ensure its naval superiority as well as defeating the French East India Company through the offices of the English East India Company which led to the command of the Indian sub-continent. Hardly can this be claimed as a peaceful period. Even

in the nineteenth century Britain went to war to safeguard this Empire and extend it further into Africa. She protected her interest in the eastern Mediterranean against the Russian threat through war in the Crimea; fought three Afghan Wars; initiated the opium wars; fought two Boer Wars and killed large numbers of tribesmen in the Sudan. The wars may have been 'small' but they were all of great significance, fought by the naval super-power and major industrial hegemon, and, importantly, driven by capitalism in the interests of both accessing raw materials and the opening up of markets and developing commercial opportunities. Seeking the welfare of native populations was never a serious or primary drive, despite ideological and propaganda professions to the contrary.

It is hard to believe some commentators believe that Britain's gift to the world has been parliamentary democracy. We saw in Chapter 5 that there is a huge gap between a society that has the most developed parliamentary democracy (and even here the parameters are severely circumscribed) and those with merely democratic institutions simply superimposed on whatever arrangements the hotch-potch post-colonial nation-state has been left with by historical circumstances. The most superficial look at Africa shows how the British, never mind the other colonial powers, were more interested in accepting or helping to establish regimes that were compatible with either the direct interests of British capitalism or the indirect interests in terms of controlling directly strategic or military territory. Examples of these abound from colluding with the USA in the coup against Mossadeq to helping the hideous Idi Amin into power to extreme repression in Kenya to hanging onto Gibraltar and the military bases and its listening post in Cyprus. There wasn't much fair play in British Kenya as it now emerges despite efforts to destroy evidence to the contrary. George Monbiot does not shirk summarizing some horrors perpetrated in the name of Britannia. While it has been claimed as we have seen that Britain may have been more compassionate and humane than other imperial masters, the evidence from Kenyan history makes it seem that there is not much to choose between imperial masters when it comes to horror within a few years of the news of the Nazi holocausts became common knowledge. 'Many tens of thousands were tortured ... large numbers of men were castrated ... others were raped, sometimes with knives, broken bottles, rifle barrels and scorpions. Women had similar instruments forced into their vaginas. The guards and officials sliced off ears and fingers, gouged out eyes ... Untold thousands died.'⁹

To repeat an earlier comment in this chapter: the West simply does not understand its own barbarism.

Having failed to hold down the colonies, finding that investment in defence of Empire was beyond the resources of the mother country and the once mighty sterling currency, the retreat from Empire was astonishingly sudden, leaving behind poor infrastructures, a tiny educated elite caught between the traditions, languages and religions of the bulk of their mixed peoples, on the one hand, and those of the West, on the other hand.

One hundred new countries have come into existence in a few decades. All took the form of nation-states with boundaries and were formally attached to such notions as sovereignty which allowed whatever kind of regime to be recognized worldwide and legitimated by the United Nations based in New York. The sudden departure of the imperial masters, the lack of investment, a willingness to supply them with arms as long as they did not appear to be 'communists', and attempts with various degrees of success to continue their domination via economic ties and maintaining capitalist exploitation all contribute to ensuring that for the most part democracy in those countries is superficial, fragile or actually absent and that the overwhelming poverty of the masses is endemic everywhere except in such exceptional places as Singapore.

For the most part, violence breeds violence and as we have seen the birth of new nation-states is in fact accompanied almost inevitably by violence (if we subscribe to Fanon-like analysis). Once men of violence lead liberation movements and continue into the new society, that society will be violent. This point was made by the now largely forgotten Russian anarchist, Sergei Nechaev, who coined the phrase (sometimes ascribed to Bakunin) 'the urge to destroy is a creative urge'. However, he also knew that men of violence should not survive the revolution and he is supposed to have willed his own death in the Peter and Paul fortress despite the offer of escape by his guards sensing that the revolution would take place at any moment and it would be wrong for him to be part of it. Such romantic acts are not the stuff of the world of violent conflict and those worlds born of violence, as history indicates, have been doomed to stay violent. There are those who would say property is violence and poverty is violence. Therefore, capitalism based on greed and exploitation is essentially a form of violence in an extended sense. It is not surprising then that colonization and decolonization, seen as one continuing process, is a major cause of war and violent conflict. To many this would come as no surprise, including to Freud who had no doubt that man is a wolf to man.

Is there an economic theory to explain all this? Well, yes. It might be called the Marx-Hobson-Lenin-Luxemburg theory of late capitalism (an early

twentieth-century theory that more or less holds true) (Stander, 2009, p. 144 and *passim*). It is also the case, according to Bernard Porter, that the British Empire developed because of the surpluses created as a result of the industrial revolution, itself a result of massive expansion of trade. ‘Virtually no historian,’ he claims, ‘dissents from [the] economic explanation’ now freed from the ‘taint’ of Marxism (Porter, 2004, p. 17).

In short, capitalism moves through a series of economic crises. The capitalist system, however, strives to survive as does any living organism. Given that the domestic capacity to absorb crises has limitations, imperialism became the route to survival. The effective demand required to absorb the tendency towards over-production by capitalism must lay outside the domestic system of production, that is outside the capacity of both capitalists themselves and the proletariat or in other words in the process of imperialism which at first provided raw materials but at a later stage provided markets. But these markets were provided, let’s say, in the case of the British Empire, by the Dominions of Canada, Australasia and South Africa and to some extent by such South American countries as Argentina. The underdeveloped countries, not populated by ‘people-like-us,’ supplied resources and if necessary were also valuable as strategic possessions. Imperialism not only provided therefore opportunities for profit, opportunities for ‘absorption’ of such commodities as arms and armaments and mitigation of the tendency towards economic crises in the mother capitalist country. Once the colonial powers had left, the former colonies had to do the best they could with limited resources, limited or negligible investment, boundaries that often made no sense, populations divided by clan, tribe, language and religion. No wonder that the post-colonial heritage with a few exceptions has left many parts of the world cursed with violent conflict, dominated by the capitalist-driven nation-states and unable, where they have the potential, to benefit from their own wealth of natural resources.

The domination, by and large, of former colonies by the colonial powers or their heirs has stood in the way of their proper development. The tattered state of Indo-China, millions dead in Vietnam, more millions dead in the Congo region, the failure of Nigeria to mould a nation effectively, the struggle to rid South Africa of an apartheid-led government, the continued Great Game on the North-West Frontier and so on are all historical continuations from the colonial age of the British, French, Belgians and their heir the USA that have stood and will stand for some time as obstacles not only to a settled and prosperous future but in many places of the world to a peaceful one.

Conclusions

Introduction

A debate that runs through the disciplines of both International Relations and Peace Studies relates to the question of New Wars. In other words, can the wars of the last two decades, since the collapse of the Soviet Empire, be classified, in any sense, as New Wars? Given that the European modern nation-states in their relation to capitalism have exported modern war to the rest of the world, the same processes that have occurred over the last couple of centuries have not changed in essence. Capitalism is still based on production for profit and the nation-state is now a worldwide political form imposed by or inherited from the 'West'. Thus the wars fought more recently are New Wars, but these New Wars began progressively two or three centuries ago.

New and old wars

The horrors of the First World War or the war to end wars advanced to the horrors of the Second World War. However, it is a strong possibility that these twentieth-century wars will never be repeated as far as Europeans are concerned or indeed as far as any of the more advanced nation-states are concerned. It turns out that to the extent that the Second World War was a continuation of the First World War, these two together *were* the wars that ended wars up to a point. That does not mean that New Wars are analysable as 'genuinely' New Wars even though they appear, at first sight, to be quite different from the twentieth-century conflagrations and the wars of the eighteenth century when judged by the manner in which they were fought.

It has been suggested, especially by Mary Kaldor, that while modern wars are marked by the predations of corrupt elites, the actual fighting is caused by bandits, militias, *ad hoc* armed bands and tribal groups; the wars are seemingly intra-national wars in which civilians suffer most; the elite groups in these territories live on the proceeds of and finance violence through the plunder of raw materials of one sort or another which are sold on world markets or by other criminal means. One might call these acts rapine capitalism (see Chapter 4). Other writers such as Paul Hirst have argued that New Wars ‘involve old problems’ (Hirst, 2001, pp. 82 ff). He argues that these New Wars can be traced back to previous historical events such as the problems associated with the aftermath of the decline of the Ottoman Empire and the drive towards self-determination by certain ethnic groups: Greeks and Serbs and others in the Balkans, for instance. Or that de-colonization in Africa left issues to be resolved in Angola or Somalia or in any of a number of other territories on that continent. However, he sees some advantages in the approach of cosmopolitanism, to which Kaldor subscribes, in the understanding and possible resolution of ‘new’ violent conflict. Her definition of cosmopolitan is a kind of definition of ‘us’, that is the liberal peoples of the West with their established democracies which can build on pools of civilized civil society in areas of conflict to build peace rather than resort to military solutions. Of course, there is an obvious problem with ‘the West’ even in this analysis: the West does not have the reach, the capacity or the will to fully enforce peace through military means, willy-nilly, across the globe. It is largely within the policies of the Western nation-states to determine exactly when and where they will intervene, at times in co-operation among themselves, at other times in opposition. Capitalist greed and the national interest of the nation-states of the West are the key motor forces of violent conflict. While Hirst generally disagrees with Kaldor’s analysis and the concept of cosmopolitanism, he agrees that the West should intervene sparingly and there could never be any question of risking war with Russia or China or India or Brazil to intervene in their internal affairs or recognized spheres of influence. Syria in 2012–2013 is a good case in point where there has been a clear stand-off between the USA (and NATO), on the one hand, and Russia, on the other hand, over the internal affairs of Syria.

A similar approach, historical in character and from the perspective of a German-based academic, is provided by Herfried Münkler (Münkler, 2005). He subscribes to the view, held by Hirst and Kaldor and other writers in the field, that more or less all the wars that we treat as New Wars have their historical

roots in their colonial origins. This applies to Africa, the Balkans and South-East Asia. The crucial element that determines whether a war develops or not, in the first instance, is the existence of a stable state as in Western Europe or North America. In the conflict areas, the lack of a stable state and the existence of a corruptible elite that seizes power constitute the possibilities for violent conflict. Interestingly, Münkler insists (and I would concur strongly with this) that war is not *caused* by poverty though it may be prolonged or inflamed by the conditions of poverty. The poor do not make war, though at times they may rebel spontaneously but rarely have the organization or resources to sustain conflict; it is the rich who make war out of greed.

Contrary to a view widely heard in discussion of the causes of the new wars and the scope for ending them, poverty as such by no means points to a danger of escalating violence and war; the most that can be said is that the juxtaposition of desperate poverty and immeasurable riches is a significant indicator that [violent] conflicts within a society are likely to develop into civil war...[which] will grow into protracted transnational wars, increases with the suspicion that the disputed territory contains mineral resources whose sale on the world market would enrich those who are trying...to bring it under their control. Potential wealth is much more significant than chronic poverty as a cause of wars. (Münkler, p. 7)

However, having established the state as the crucial area of study, he goes on to ask: Is the war in question state-building or state-disintegrating? Here, he argues that the failure of state-building can be laid at the door of what he calls economic globalization, where the 'young and unstable state has been subject to constant political attempts from outside to influence the course of events', especially when raw materials and commodities valued on the world market are evident in the territory in question. Münkler uses the term 'shadow globalization' to express the relationship between the advanced and stable nation-states, as exemplified by membership of OECD and those territories where tribalism and unstable and ill-formed nation-states exist. Frequently, the violent conflict or wars continue over extended periods as in Sudan, Angola and Somalia. Therefore, argues Münkler, one distinction between the wars of nation-state formation and the great power struggles of the twentieth century is the length of wars when, by comparison, wars were, generally speaking, short and consistent with Clausewitzian and Weberian dictums. In these circumstances, wars should be fought with definite aims and battles with the definite purpose of ensuring a sought-after peace settlement and in circumstances where the state has the monopoly of legitimate

violence. Moreover, it is possible to separate war-time from peace-time by means of a treaty or treaties. In New Wars there is no accepted stable state (government) to ensure these conditions exist and there is no distinct peace as opposed to war conditions. War becomes protracted and truces here and there may be made, but there is no mechanism whereby they can be said to hold. Indeed, the belligerents stand to benefit in many circumstances by prolonging violence in their territories or adjacent ones. They may benefit from the theft and confiscation of humanitarian aid, exacting tolls, offering protection, smuggling petrol or drugs or weapons, engaging in banditry and piracy and kidnapping for ransom and so on. Indeed, the 'normal' conduct of war in these circumstances is intimately connected with what some would term 'criminality'.

It can be said that the 'statization' of war did regulate war between nations. In the case of so-called New Wars, however, war is commercialized in its own special way and is configured by a warlord structure which may be encouraged by various external interventions, often in the form of injecting highly trained mercenaries or by bribing warlords (as with the NATO intervention led by the USA in Afghanistan where warlords were bribed to support the intervention and now dominate the politics and economics of the country). Wars are thus fought by means of small war or guerrilla techniques and are based on strategic and tactical asymmetry where there can be no final outcome unless the conditions that have created the war change dramatically. The growth of international terrorism adds to this asymmetry, and we have an acknowledged 'war' on terror, which is not a war in any previously defined sense but creates the kind of fear that exists in war-time without the kind of casualties one associates with an all-out war among the nation-states of the West. These New Wars, then, are not formally declared and they are not formally ended but 'smoulder on'.¹ To a large extent this is made possible by the cheapness and availability of weaponry and of manpower (usually young men and boys) and by the fact that war is profitable to those who control the instruments of violence, warlords or tribal leaders or corrupt elites. However, as we all now know, the dead and injured are more likely to be civilians, that is women, children and the aged, rather than soldiers in uniform on the battlefield.

Münkler seeks historical inspiration by referring to the Thirty Years' War and other wars of the early modern period as do other writers who have written of the new medievalism. The New Wars seem at some levels to have parallels with the wars in Europe of the middle ages and of the early modern period that preceded the age of nationalism and industrial warfare in the nineteenth century.

It was the period of what he calls 'the statization' of war that introduced what we now understand as 'old wars' and involved precisely what we have mentioned above: the introduction of Clausewitzian and Weberian principles governing the purposes of war and the control of legitimized violence. This meant the evolution of disciplined armies, state recruitment of the national population for the military and the navy and payment by the government out of legitimately raised taxation and/or properly raised loans. So seemingly effective was this process that by the end of the eighteenth century, as we saw in an earlier chapter, Kant considered it possible that a permanent peace might be implemented, at least in Europe, even before the theorizing of Clausewitz or Weber. Another point gleaned from Clausewitz is methodological and Kaldor agrees with this: wars have their own logic. Clausewitz clearly saw that it was possible to unravel the logic of the wars he experienced at the turn of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, aided possibly by the fact that he was on the losing side, and that all wars in his era could be fathomed. Therefore, if we accept this it must be possible to fathom the New Wars, different or not as they may be from the old wars. If we look at artistic attempts to explain war through the cinema, say, we find that the overwhelming representation of war is one of insanity or lack of logic or rationality: in *Apocalypse Now* or *Full Metal Jacket* or *Cross of Iron* or *Das Boot* or *Stalingrad* or *Platoon* and so on war is represented as a form of insanity as experienced by its participant men in uniform.

Can this be right? What can be the logic of war? Yet, the so-called New Wars do have a logic as Clausewitz would agree to, no doubt. It is a matter of explaining where the rationality lies. The insanity in the films mentioned relates to the insanity of war as seen by individuals. However, the 'state' is not necessarily insane but the 'state' does produce an insane world as we saw when discussing Marcuse. The logic of old wars based on the 'statization' of war leads to symmetry and defined aims as a continuation of policy by other means as we have come to accept. The logic of New Wars is asymmetry, lack of 'statization' and a lack of generally understood political aims other than enrichment of a small coterie within the territory under discussion plus excessive statization by hegemonic participants. This is associated with the apparent relative powerlessness of the most hegemonic nation-states to effect peace. Transnational agencies, international law, treaties and coalitions do not exist with sufficient weight or means of enforcement to bring peace to those areas of violent conflict labelled as New Wars. The advanced, wealthier nation-states resort to humanitarian aid (some of which are provided by voluntary funds and labour inputs) and are

guided by issues of human rights (as defined by the wealthier nation-states and their volunteer religious and secular acolytes) and by democratic principles (as defined by the wealthier nation-states).² This has led some commentators to label the international or global system as anarchic, both in respect of political analysis (e.g. Bull, 2002) and the system of global capitalism (e.g. Gray, 2002).

Mary Kaldor and cosmopolitanism

The problem here is that though much of her analysis is helpful as discussion points, the policy prescriptions that are offered built on the analysis appear to be adrift.³ Certainly, judging from the sub-title of Kaldor's book on *New and Old Wars* which she offers as a discussion of 'organized violence in a global era', one suspects she is a Clausewitzian in that the concept of 'organized' suggests that she is offering a logic or explanation for both New Wars and old ones, assuming they are different. Her arguments that establish the nature of New Wars do lead to the seemingly impractical solutions that surround the concept of cosmopolitanism. It was the founder of International Relations, E.H. Carr, who referred to the methodology associated with alchemy. If you want to turn base metal into gold or discover the elixir of life, you had better get the theory right first. The alchemists knew nothing of modern physics and the nature of elements and atoms and molecules, so their search for the secret of turning base metal into gold or discovering the elixir of life was doomed to failure. It is also the case that they were driven to use their inadequate knowledge in this way by their masters or by their own hunger for rewards, since their masters were after sources of precious metals that were not in plentiful supply unlike the silver that was pouring into Europe available to Spain from the New World. And that, of course, is the problem of applied studies of all sorts which demands policy prescriptions rather than the development of pure theory to guide the direction of applied knowledge. As Amartya Sen has observed: 'well meaning attempts at pursuing global peace can have very counterproductive consequences when these attempts are founded on a fundamental illusory understanding of the world of human beings.'⁴ He might well have added in a world of human beings it is the systems of domination they create which constitute the problematics. There we have it with cosmopolitanism which is the product in many ways of the kind of Utopian thinking that Carr was inclined largely, though not totally, to reject. Others have got in earlier with this kind of methodological comment not the

least being George Bernard Shaw when commenting on his own play set in that 'troublesome' Balkans of the 1880s, *Arms and the Man*: 'To me the tragedy and comedy of life lie in the consequences, sometimes terrible, sometimes ludicrous, of our persistent attempts to found our institutions on the ideals suggested to our imaginations by our half-satisfied passions, instead of on a genuinely scientific natural history' (Shaw, 1948, p. xviii).

While Kaldor's starting point is that there is similarity between New Wars and old wars, the crucial distinction lies in the 'growing illegitimacy of these wars' and this leads her to advocate a cosmopolitan response.⁵ She goes on to say that whatever is happening has to be understood in the 'context . . . of globalization'. This is, of course, true and is consistent with Münkler who, as we have seen, likes also to use the term shadow globalization, though we get closer to reality if we replace that term with 'global capitalism'. Kaldor seems, however, to be confused if not actually wrong when she claims that there has been an erosion of the modern state and that there has been an erosion of the monopoly of legitimate organized violence. The advanced nation-states have powerfully kept control of their sovereignties for the most part or only surrendered them to economic alliances such as the European Union to a limited extent. In those territories where the nation-states have not taken a hold in the European manner, there never was a universal acceptance of a legitimate monopoly of violence except on local or regional basis fostered or tolerated (as the case may be) by an imperial or colonial overlord.

There is some agreement among analysts that what marks out the New Wars is the way they are fought, the purposes of violence within given communities and territories, asymmetry and financing of the wars through the trading of raw materials on the markets of global capitalism (what they misleadingly call globalization), and by various forms of criminality, banditry and piracy.

In terms of the history of the so-called old wars, the formation of the modern state, the nation-state, the monopolization of the use of violence, the professionalization of the military, standing armies and/or navies were crucial to the conduct of 'old' wars. Moreover, each nation-state came to realize key Clausewitzian principles of organizing the military on scientific, rational principles and using overwhelming force. No general goes into battle, Clausewitz wrote, with a blunt sword. However, the use of overwhelming force, in the context of the New Wars, seems oddly outdated. NATO had overwhelming force in the invasion of Afghanistan and the Coalition led by the USA had overwhelming force in Iraq (2003). The invaders won on the battlefield but lost both wars.

When Kaldor, for instance, refers to the Iraq invasion in Chapter 7 of her 2nd edition, she seems to ignore almost completely the national interest of the USA and the UK in attempting to guarantee that the greater part of the world's supply of oil should be under their control (Kaldor, 2007). She says 'what is new about the war needs to be analysed in terms of the disintegration of states and the changes in social relations under the impact of globalization.' (Iraq had a strong state; however, one might disapprove of its totalitarian nature, until it was disintegrated by the Coalition forces.) The nation-states of the USA and the UK are clearly as strong as ever given the way they mounted the attack on Iraq backed by all sorts of capitalist interests of British Petroleum, Halliburton, private military companies and the joint efforts of military-industrial complexes of Britain and the USA. She says, rather oddly, that 'the purpose of the war was war'. In other words the USA was making war because that country could make war, felt sure of winning it and needed it as part of the fight against terrorism (though there was never any link between the Iraqi regime and the more well known terrorist organization of Al-Qaeda) whereas in actual fact the war was about resources (oil), corporate profits, the United States controlling the Middle East even more firmly, threatening Iran and its oil reserves, and, incidentally, the British furthering their oil interest (British Petroleum) and its arms industries (keeping and extending the contracts made by BAE Systems with the United States of America and its military-industrial complex).

Kaldor's solution to the problems of peace-making remains a matter of idealistic adherence to cosmopolitanism which she defines thus: 'By cosmopolitanism, I do not mean a denial of identity. Rather I mean a celebration of the diversity of global identities, acceptance and, indeed, enthusiasm for multiple overlapping identities, and, at the same time, a commitment to the equality of all human means and to respect human dignity.'

Well, wouldn't we all, lefties and liberals alike be happy with that in our gentrified houses and second homes and hybrid cars?

And, of course, in the midst of the most awful brutalities one might well have come across a few cosmopolitans, even many, who would oppose what was happening in Sarajevo or Kigali or Kinshasa or San Salvador or in the countryside outside Bogota. But what do you do if a bunch of renegade young men burst into your home in Bosnia and say here's an AK47 and come with us or we'll kill your brothers and father and rape your sisters. You can't say: Sorry I'm a cosmopolitan and carry on reading *The Good Soldier Schweik*. What's more this idea of the sanctity of human life does not mean much even in the most advanced

societies where the commodity has become sacred and the human being has become profane. Barbarism is not only about ‘disappearing’ people, hacking them to death or shooting them in the head; even the capitalism experienced in the advanced nation-states has its own barbarism when the human being becomes socially fractionalized and rendered profane (Stander, 2009, Chapter 3). Of course, it is easy enough to admit that being rendered profane while being offered the possibility of acquiring numerous ‘sacred’ commodities is preferable to being hacked to death by one’s neighbour. Yet, living in ignorance of the effects of imperial domination, of the Amritsar massacre or the torturing of Mau Mau suspects or accepting the existence of Guantanamo does not bring peace. Some would say that what brings peace is knowledge and education. As H.G. Wells once wrote, ‘Human history becomes more and more a race between education and catastrophe.’ But the belief that small pockets of cosmopolitanism might spread like crystals or bacteria in a petri dish smacks of both utopianism and alchemy.

Looking back over two or three centuries we can say New Wars are new because they are caused not by corrupt elites in resource rich countries but by nation-states backing national and in some circumstances international capital in their search for raw materials for production for profit and the continuous accumulation of capital. New Wars, so-called, are new because of the impact of the military-industrial complexes on international politics and foreign affairs, they are new because the contemporary hegemons decide what is a just war, because the hegemons decide on what constitutes human rights and precisely when humanitarian aid can be inserted in situations of violent conflict and when ‘governance’ has to make do as an alternative to representative ‘democracy’ (however imperfect that may be) is impossible to implement and so on. New Wars appear to be new because they appear to be at root the result of failed states or the exercise of asymmetric fighting formations, but this is a matter of merely observing the manner of fighting the wars. The way wars have been fought for millennia have constantly changed, but for our age to-day and for the last three centuries the fact remains that it is the *dialectical relation between nation-state and capitalism that is, in essence, new, but that ‘new’ takes us back three centuries.*

Thus, for instance, when a combination of rapine capitalism and primitive capitalism (as discussed in Chapter 4) merges with contemporary industrial and finance capitalism and international big capitalism backed by their relevant nation-states the outcome may lead to violent conflict. This is worsened by the various attempts at nation-building that itself has outcomes resulting in

violent conflict both within the burgeoning nation-states as well as with their neighbours.

As we have seen the problem with Münkler, Hirst and Kaldor is the use of the term 'globalization' or, even worse the half-hearted 'shadow globalization'; the term is not helpful and is used to mean no more than international intervention or involvement in one way or another. As we have seen in an earlier chapter if globalization is to mean anything it has to be something qualitatively new and the proper description is global capitalism. *It is global capitalism that both transcends the interests of nation-states, individually or collectively, while at the same time incorporating those interests in a truly dialectical fashion.*

Also, as we have seen, Kaldor does not seem to accept that the properly constituted nation-state is as powerful as ever and the most advanced nation-states have not been significantly downgraded by global capitalism.

Another approach to the question of new versus old wars is to consider the historical conjuncture of 'old' fault lines with 'new' seismic shifts. The Balkan conflicts which so absorbed such observers in the post Soviet era as Kaldor and Ignatieff represents the obvious example. The Balkan wars are clearly old though the actual violent conflict may be partially new in their asymmetric nature.

Margaret Macmillan in commenting on the Peace of Versailles in 1919 writes:

Besides the Serbs, Croats, Slovenes, Albanians, Bulgarians and Macedonians, the Balkan peoples also included the Greeks... Rumanians... as well as a host of minorities left behind by the tides of the past: the Jewish merchants of Sarajevo, the Italian colonies on the Dalmatian coast, Albanian patriarchs, the descendants of German settlers in the north, and the Turks in the south.... (Macmillan, 2002, pp. 120-121)

The big three peacemakers, Lloyd-George, Clemenceau and Wilson at Versailles were confused by and understood virtually nothing of the complexities in the Balkans. 'Lloyd-George inquired whether Serbs and Croats spoke the same language... Only a handful of specialists, or cranks, had made it their business to study' the Balkans. 'What most people knew, though, was that the Balkans were dangerous for Europe.' Seventy-five years later NATO was bombing Belgrade.

These fault-lines exist all over the world to a greater degree or another and the fault lines open certainly when there are seismic shifts such as the collapse of the Soviet Empire after 1989. It may take only minor shifts of the political and economic tectonic plates to open up others. North Sea oil and the growth of regionalism within the United Kingdom have encouraged many Scots to

attempt to seize back political power though without going to war as happened in the middle ages and forgetting how the fault line closed as a result of the dire economic crisis caused in Scotland by the Darien scheme which led to the imbalance between the economic power of Scotland vis-a-vis England. Other shifts have closed the fault lines in Ireland (to some extent) though the fault lines remain and there is also the faint possibility of renewed asymmetric war; though without Libyan arms and the blockage of clandestine funds from romantics in the USA, the fault line is currently almost, but not quite, closed.⁶ But a combination of resource issues, new alliances, fractured old alliances, weak or failed states, the anarchic global system will always play on these fault lines produced by history, ethnicity, failure to accept cultural diversity, and, above all by the drive for profit, greed, conservatism, irredentism, intransigence, and ignorance, all very much the polar opposites of cosmopolitanism.

Anarchy of the state system and of global capitalism

Linked to the question of old and New Wars there is the issue of anarchy. While it is part of the anarchist creed to believe that the urge to destroy is a creative urge, John Gray has adapted this dictum to help describe the way in which global capitalism works. Because of the way in which capitalism incessantly destroys one technology and replaces it with another, he finds himself able to describe modern global capitalism as a process of creative destruction. 'This process of Creative Destruction is the essential fact about capitalism' (Gray, 2002, p. 195). In other words, Gray says, our world is not one of the free market but one of the anarchy of sovereign states, rival capitalism and stateless territories.

There are no truly effective transnational institutions, no readily enforceable universal international laws or regulations, no overarching superpower or collectivity of allied nation-states to supervise, control or legitimate peace treaties. War, therefore, has to be a permanent part of this world since from time to time and place to place matters are contested by force but not necessarily settled by force. The 'West' contested international terrorism in Afghanistan but cannot settle anything by force in that region; the USA attempted to command Iraqi oil production and possibly also with an eye on Iranian oil but despite massive military superiority cannot settle the issue by force. Again, as Gray writes: 'with the withering away of Clausewitzian war, peace has ceased to be enforceable' (Gray, 2002, p. 201).

The problems with 'prescription' and prediction

Gray's otherwise excellent account and analysis of global capitalism falters at the level of prescription. He, along with Robert Kaplan and a number of other commentators, can point to a form of anarchy as being the weakness of the global and or international system (Kaplan, 2001). But, as with anarchists of another cut who advocate anarchy as the solution to ending the oppression of the 'state', alternatives are not readily practical. The prescription of establishing forms of control to end anarchy internationally ring somewhat hollow when the words stare out at you baldly from the page:

A regime of global governance is needed in which world markets are managed so as to promote the cohesion of societies and the integrity of (nation-) states. Only a framework of global regulation – of currencies, capital movements, trade and environmental conservation – can enable the creativity of the world economy to be harnessed in the service of human needs. (Gray, 2002, p. 199)

What does this statement say? The problem with the world is anarchy so we need governance. Does the comment mean that we cannot have a universal democratic government and, therefore, we must settle for something as ill-defined as governance. Does it mean some sort of universal capitalism but managed better? Do 'we', people like us, know best? It says nothing about how this may be achieved. Indeed, in a world of anarchy, anarchy is the rule and wishing otherwise does not make alternatives appear. We are back to the E.H. Carr comments on utopianism that we discussed in an earlier chapter. Thus the call for global governance seems to be as more or less empty as a call for cosmopolitanism. The near seeming failure of the Euro in 2011, and the inability or unwillingness of the German decision-makers to provide 'governance' bodes ill for any future experimentation in governing world currency or the wider democratization of finance capital on an even grander scale. The major banking firms are unable to control fully their internal behaviour with rogue traders, dishonesty in regard to LIBOR, and vast bonuses for executives all indicate anarchy. The growing economic power of China and its use of its massive surpluses does not indicate any kind of control or governance over world resources, at least, not yet or even in the foreseeable future. Nor does the failure of international meetings to control environmental degradation bode well. The increasing possibility for the opening up of fault lines as a result

of the exposure of the North West passage as a result of global warming in the Arctic, the access to new sources of (shale) oil, disputes in the East and South China Seas and so on do not indicate any likelihood that forms of global governance are going to emerge in a consistent and rational way, though piecemeal solutions are found and are bound to be found in the future since the desire for planetary conflagration is not universal. The capitalist system is about exploitation not total destruction (generally speaking). The failure of the United Nations to effect peace talks in Syria in 2012 indicated yet more failure at the level of transnational organization, that is the failure of Kofi Annan's and Brahmini's proposals backed by the United Nations. The frustrations of Ecowas and Ecowog in West Africa are similar failures and half failures to oversee the implementation of truces, peace talks and stabilization of violent conflict. And the less said about the process of policy formation and implementation in the European Union the better.

As for Mary Kaldor, she is too smart to push her theories of cosmopolitanism too far, indeed there is a point where she scarcely wants to stand by it all and, ultimately, falls short of any serious prediction or prescription: 'Which of the... three scenarios – clash of civilizations, coming anarchy, cosmopolitan governance – will the future hold?'

Intelligently she does not offer an answer to her own question, only more ifs and buts. Maybe, she says, Huntington is right, maybe Kaplan or maybe there is something in cosmopolitanism (Kaplan, 2001). But 'in today's reflexive era, a cosmopolitan project is, of its nature, tentative.' Most will concur without any doubt that the industrial mass slaughter wars of the twentieth century are unlikely to re-occur, but there can be no magic bullet if one can use that metaphor for ensuring peace in the world except in our own enclaves, give or take a bomb or two or mass murder here or there. In these peaceful enclaves we work toward cosmopolitanism however imperfectly and accept multiculturalism equally imperfectly while anarchic capitalism mindless of frontiers takes its toll and the strong nation-states operate in their special dialectical manner, while well-meaning people believe erroneously that our leaders are spreading democracy and championing human rights when, in reality, they continue to impose Western cultural values and anarchic capitalism globally. In doing so, they export modern forms of war, just as they have done so for the last two or three centuries.

Nation-state/capital dialectic

Edward Said writing in *Culture and Imperialism* notes Wallerstein's position in respect of capital accumulation and he seemingly accepts it.

The main feature of imperialist expansion historically was accumulation, a process that accelerated during the twentieth century. Wallerstein's argument is that at bottom capital accumulation is irrational; its additive, acquisitive gains continue unchecked even though its costs – in maintaining the process, in paying for wars to protect it, in 'buying off' and co-opting 'intermediate cadres', in living in an atmosphere of permanent crisis – are exorbitant, not worth the gains. (Said, 1994, p. 335)

The problem here is three-fold. First, the process of accumulation is not irrational. Attempts at accumulation may *overall*, in any time period, not be especially successful: on the other hand the process of accumulation is determined by the nature of the fractionalization of the capital class itself as well as the conflicts and contradictions that arise among classes. It is always the case that some fraction will gain enormously. We made a reference to an historical example of this earlier: viz:

Thus, in England, the wider merchant class saw the marauding of privateers and seadogs over the previous centuries as detrimental to ordinary business practices in Bilbao and Seville. This observation raises two points: one is the importance of fractions of class occasioned in this instance by conflicting interests of the far from homogenous nature of capitalism, and, second, the problems associated with so-called 'national interest'. When Captain Woodes Rogers and William Dampier sort forth in 1708 to seek out sources of sudden wealth during the War of Spanish Succession, they met a relatively easy source of huge wealth by capturing the Manila galleon bound for Spain (a British ally). When they returned with a profit of £200,000 on an investment of £14,000, the private interest coincided with the national interest and provided a key source of funds for the East India Company and thereby the effective exploitation of the Indian sub-continent. Rapine-capitalism served both private and national interest.

To enlarge the point further we would have to say that it would have been ridiculous to maintain a world ranging navy simply to protect a handful of rapine capitalists; however the nation-state serves those fractions of the capitalist class that holds sway with alliances with other fractions and with other classes. It was believed to be, for instance, in the interest of a segment of working

class in Manchester in the nineteenth century to oppose cotton imports (thus refusing to support the exploitation of slave labour) from the USA along with the manufacturers themselves. Eventually, the UK, despite still being one of the richest economies in the world in terms of GDP, found it in the interests of the nation to forgo Empire when the cost-benefit calculation of Empire no longer made sense to those fractions that once stood to benefit from continued imperial exploitation.

A second issue that leads us to argue that the process is not irrational is that of reform/reformism. The system of capitalism remains the same in essence over time since it is based on capital accumulation (in many forms) and on private property (protected by the nation-state) but is reformed in a variety of ways as a result of dialectical processes. These processes, once believed to spell the doom of capitalism from within, now seem to determine the survival of capitalism for the foreseeable future. I have discussed this elsewhere (Stander, 2009, Chapter 7). What I have tried to get across, in short, is that the capitalism system is not self destructive. This is in marked contrast to one perspective found in the work of Marx, namely that capitalism contains the seeds of its own destruction, though to be fair to this we might also say that the biggest fear of the revolutionists was that reform would consistently dampen class struggle. And, like it or not, very generally speaking, reformism holds way even in the USA which is reflected in Obama winning a second term. Like most organisms in the natural world its actual purpose is survival. The survival process occurs as a result of the continuous accumulation of capital. The system, worked at relevant moments in time and place by fractions of the capitalist class, is part and parcel of the dialectical process that has been historically created. Its survival depends on reform; that is, the dialectical forces created leads to permanent reform rather than permanent revolution. The most important force observed and analysed by Marx was the capitalist/ proletarian dialectical struggle which helped create the reformist world that allowed and allows capitalism to survive (i.e allows continuous accumulation of capital to take place) by accommodating itself to the existence of a permanent conflict of interests between the classes. I have shown elsewhere that the reformist process has gone so far that a new class has been created, the absorptive class; this has helped extend the life of capitalism into the foreseeable future. The important issue is to note that the dialectic is essentially permanent: the central contradictions do not go away. Thus, for instance, economic crisis is permanent: on the other hand, capitalism is dependent, curiously, on the contradictions it has created.

As far as this current work is concerned, the contradiction of capitalism bursting through frontiers yet at the same requiring the existence of nation-states with frontiers firmly in place is of permanent importance to the capitalist system as a whole just as, in much the same dialectic manner, the nation-state itself exists as a need for a small state (government) yet simultaneously as a need for a big state (government). The small state (government) is required since capitalism requires as little intervention as possible in the interests of allocation of resources, profit and further accumulation of capital; however, and simultaneously, it needs the big state for the redirection, distribution and management of the massive surpluses created by the productive processes.

The third problem concerns an issue that constantly presents itself, that of ideology. Nothing causes more irritation than the issue of ideology because at one level, much of what we hear, read and are presented with by various media and by politicians and the content of the educational system is clearly of an ideological nature. Once this was a struggle mainly between a Western ideology that was based on the system of capitalist ideas, theories and pragmatics and that of various socialisms one of which was communism in a number of different forms: Marxism, neo-Marxism, Euro-Communism, Maoism, Ho-Chi Minism and so on. Now the ideologies are presented as mainly between Western versions of capitalism in its various forms (market capitalism, global capitalism, social welfare reformist capitalism) and, on the other hand, forms of Islamism often reinforced by various identity based nationalisms as in Indonesia, Pakistan, Iran, Palestine, Egypt, Middle East and North African and Saharan countries and peoples. In the forefront of the recent intellectual, philosophical and sociological debate on the nature and meaning of ideology has been Slavoj Zizek (Zizek, 2009, p. 9). In presenting a central debate about crises in capitalism, he argues that capitalism proceeds through a never-ending series of crises and that politicians who claim to be in charge of economic policy claim that they have control over crises and their policies will work and never mind the prospect of the next one. This has been noted not only by Zizek, of course, but also by Krugman, Stiglitz, Naomi Klein, Henry Paulton and even myself. In my case I offer a re-examination of Marx's theory of the TRPF as being of crucial importance in the understanding of crises in capitalism. Others may simply offer a shrug of shoulders or, in the case of Stiglitz, urge changes in the institutions of the domestic and international system of management of banking and financial arrangements (Stiglitz, 2007). But the fiction that capitalist economic growth can proceed smoothly and without crises if properly

directed is compounded by many other ideological fictions. For instance, Zizek points out, 'those who claim a natural link between capitalism and democracy are cheating with the facts in the same way the Catholic Church when it presents itself as the 'natural' advocate of democracy and human rights' (Zizek, 2009, p. 39). The overwhelming desperateness of this is that those who promulgate this view tend actually to believe it and it is rarely doubted. We can cite many commentators, academics, politicians, practising economists, journalists and the like, who know only too well the limitations of the so-called market economy and the inevitability of crisis, but there are few voices that attack with any ferocity the view that democracy and capitalism are, in essence, incompatible.

At times it becomes enormously difficult to drive home the view that spreading capitalism does not spread democracy. It becomes enormously difficult for many to accept that democracy and capitalism are in conflict, as we have seen in an earlier chapter (Chapter 6), which makes ideological obfuscation that much easier for those who profess orthodoxies. The tendency towards the concentration of capital that leads to the concentration of political power inevitably undermines the working of both democratic society and democratic institutions. The success of a capitalist society based on production in producing commodities also produces a society of commodity narcissists whose susceptibility to ideological smoke screens are increased over time and are hardened from one generation to another. Moreover, in this process the multitude of consumers in this system are led to believe that their pleasure lies in their consumption:

At the level of consumption, this new spirit is that of so-called 'cultural capitalism':... we buy... commodities to get the experience provided by them, we consume them in order to render our lives pleasurable... Consumption is supposed to sustain the quality of life.... How is it, however, that in our era of spiritualized hedonism..the number of people suffering from anxiety and depression is exploding? (Stander, 2009)

The point is that the people of the West are crushingly susceptible to this kind of ideologically based repression but, for our purpose in this book, we can assume and see it expressed by many, that those who are outside this ideology can see the repression for what it is and may genuinely fear it. The extent, therefore, to which, say, the Islamists of various hues can see their culture being attacked by Western ideologies, provides the conviction that opposition to Western values is *fully justified and thus becomes a holy cause in the face of a profane enemy*. But what we get is a position where the populations located in the West see

the opposition from the Islamists as mere intransigence leading to mindless barbarian behaviour, suicide bombing and adherence to an almost pre-medieval set of cultural norms. The West, however, as we have noted elsewhere *is unaware of its own barbarism*.

But capitalism did not develop in a vacuum; it developed as part of a dialectical process. In other words capitalism developed, at least according to Marx, as part of a dialectical process with feudalism; similarly the proletariat has developed as part of the dialectical process with the bourgeois class. During the greater part of the nineteenth century and the twentieth century, capitalism was defined by its struggle with forms of socialism. According to Zizek, capitalism now needs socialism to continue to develop. Certainly in the USA, there is the tendency for commentators to accuse Obama of attempting to implement socialist policies in the context of his health insurance legislation and attitudes to welfare. This is the kind of comment that keeps the political right going in the USA. The 'spectre' of socialism is all to the good for the capitalist system to be able to define its ideology.⁷ Similarly and more cogently, however, Islamist tendencies and pan-Arabism and Sharia law are equally to the 'good' in hardening capitalist ideology. Without such dialectical conflict, capitalist ideology would be in danger of becoming threadbare to such an extent that even the man on the top of the Clapham omnibus would be able to see through it.

Addendum: Do men want to fight? The individual versus systems

As a final issue, as we have overwhelmingly discussed systems – the system of capitalism as well as the system of nation-states – we can say one last word on the individual human being by briefly focussing on the answer to the question. Are men and women fit to fight and kill in the modern world? The answer is an unequivocal no. And this answer should give us hope despite everything I have said earlier on idealistic utopias and false expectations.

Societies can be organized to raise military prowess to high status, anything from the duelling scar to military rank to smart uniforms with rows of medals. We become swamped with the view that men's involvement is not only worthy but natural and, in any case, forced on societies inducing men to train, risk their lives and protect their loved ones, including the 'mother' country. In looking at the historical record, violence and war appear to be endemic. This is partly

because societies have been organized on the basis of dealing with both defensive and offensive violence. It is partly also because history badly records periods of peace and the desire of human beings to live in a non-violent world. The media do not regularly report that 'to-day no war took place in 93% of the nation-states on the planet' but will tell us about war in Mali or Syria. The record of violence and war is based on what happens when the clan, tribe, the population of a territory or whatever become organized as a collective. For those misguided commentators who assume that the primeval desire to fight and kill is somehow natural, we should say that archaeologists among others have served us ill. They too easily show us arrow head embedded in human bone or skulls split by axes rather than spending time telling us that we could never have had Stonehenge and the Durrington timber circle on the Wiltshire plain or the Callinish stones without significant periods of peace and cooperation.

Individual human beings are, when left to themselves are *not*, for the most part, suited to war; they are too fragile both physically and mentally. This means that society and the group have to prepare selected individuals to fight and kill.

Even as we come closer to the modern day we have built into classical nineteenth political economy the accepted Malthusian argument that population growth will always press on resources so that shortage, low wages and permanent poverty are essential features of the economic system despite industrial expansion at the end of the eighteenth and beginning nineteenth centuries. Malthusians appear from time to time to warn that soon or later population pressure will produce disease and war. Thus the existence of scarcity from primordial to 'modern' times reinforced the view that violence would remain a cultural norm. Francis Fukuyama, the apologist of rightist views on politics, is unequivocal: 'the idea that violence is rooted in human nature is difficult for many people to accept' (Fukuyama, 2011, p. 73). He continues: 'Many anthropologists, in particular, are committed, like Rousseau, to the view that violence is an invention of later civilizations, just as many people would like to believe that early societies how to live in balance with their environments. Unfortunately there is little evidence to support this' (Fukuyama, 2011, p. 73).

Interestingly, he also claims that in modern societies the warrior class, integral to pre-industrial tribal societies, has been replaced by an ethic that has placed gain and economic calculation as a mark of a virtuous individual. There are those who might agree that the domination of the banker in a suit is closely related to a spear carrying thug in a loin cloth. State of nature theories of men and their ape ancestors may be fun, but they are part of a continuing ideology

that insists we are fit to fight and kill when the exact opposite is the case. What he should be saying is '*the idea that violence is NOT rooted in human nature is difficult for many people to accept because elements of Western society demand otherwise*'.

When it comes down to it, men (and women) do not want to fight and to kill each other. Looking round superficially at some parts of the world one might say killing is the most natural act that one can come across. In many parts of the world and historically almost universally people killed each other. But the truth is that men do NOT want to kill each other (or, of course, be killed). Freud as we saw in earlier chapters that men have a dual capacity, *eros* (*the love of self and of others*) and *thanatos* (*the death wish and hatred of others*). Though Freud was a pessimist he did put some faith in *eros* overcoming *thanatos* in a situation which might be called civilization. Clearly in some circumstances individuals have the capacity to kill others. Many of us can be brought up, educated and socialized into being killers. That tells us something about the adaptability of humans just as many of us can be brought up to self-immolate in the interests of peace or some of us can be educated and socialized into becoming suicide bombers. *However, none of this is in any sense natural*. Indeed, men (let's look at men as they usually do the direct killing) are simply not suited to fighting and killing. As we become more knowledgeable and educated and try and clear away the ideological smoke screens that the Fukuyamas like to blow across our knowledge, we learn that human beings are fragile, haunted by fear, and suffer all manner of psychological disorders when they spend time killing other human beings, even when they are told they are defending their children and women, even when they are told they are defending their country, their values, their (often non-existent) freedom, their honour, their way of life. We are surrounded by killing in our everyday life. We kill to eat. Unless we are among the more militant of vegetarians we accept the view promulgated in schools and TV documentaries that the domestication of animals and the killing of them for food is one of the first steps toward civilization and urban life. We are led to marvel at our primeval ingenuity. Therefore, if one group of humans want to kill another group, it helps if the enemy are classified in some way as sub-human. The massacred in Rwanda were described as cockroaches. The Japanese enemy in 1941 were caricatured to begin with as myopic, buck-toothed simpletons (though, after their victories on the land and sea and in the air they were pictured as samurai warriors.)

It is as we approach this subject we must avoid going back to supposed state of nature as in Hobbes, Locke or Rousseau. The starting point, as with this book

as a whole, is much the same as that expressed by an author seeking the causes of genocide who writes in a similar spirit: 'The nineteenth century's industrial and technological revolution . . . altered politics, social relations, the nature of culture, and even of human beings . . . most relevant is the emergence of the contemporary state . . . altering the world is a matter of human control' (Goldhagen, 2010, p. 22). In other words the modern 'state' and the nation-state can alter the very nature of human beings; if war becomes a priority for whatever reasons, the human individual has to be made to overcome his fragility. Each one of us lives exposed to and pressurized by a myriad of contradictions. We, as individuals, are led to believe that warfare is a necessary evil; at times any one of us may be called upon to make sacrifices of life or limb in the name of our country and in association with our 'friends' and allies; for some this may mean having our legs blown off or receive our nearest and dearest in a flag draped coffin. On the other hand newspapers, law courts, books, plays, films and other media have come in recent years and increasingly to report on the phenomenon of post-traumatic stress disorder previously referred to as 'shell-shock', 'in need of rest and recuperation', 'lack of moral fibre', 'cowardice', 'funking it' or whatever. In other words what is universal for individuals – even when fully trained, exposed to *esprit de corps*, clothed in uniforms, young and physically hardened, and full of patriotic zeal – is that human beings are not designed in any sense for fighting to the death. The feature most common to human beings is that of fear; this can be overcome for short periods, but fear and the stress, guilt or shame or remorse and brain disruption caused by war conditions stays with the individual for the rest of his/her life, assuming they have lives after their experiences. This applies, too, to those who have not been called upon to fight but are located in war zones, and, therefore, have every right to be desperately afraid. Civilians of all ages are included here and even the war correspondents who have sought out the experience for themselves and might, once upon a time, have thought to have been immune as if all war correspondents had the hollow bravado of a Hemingway.

Robert Capa, the Hungarian war photographer, whose most famous phrase was if your picture is no good, you're not up close enough was close to the Spanish Civil War where his lover was killed, was in North Africa, in Sicily, was on the Normandy Beaches and photographed the Arab-Israeli war. But he knew enough was enough on 6 June 1944 on Omaha beach. He was among the first wave ashore. He lay flat on the back having been lucky to even get that far. He continued to lay flat on his back in the sand clicking his camera until the rolls of

film were used up. Then, quite suddenly, he was finished and ran back in blind panic oblivious of bullets flying around him to the nearest boat. He wrote in his memoir:

... then I had it bad. The empty camera trembled in my hand. It was a kind of fear shaking my body from toe to hair ... I just stood up and ran ... I reached the boat. The skipper was crying. His assistant had been blown up all over him. He was a mess.... I woke up in a bunk..On my neck a piece of paper read: 'Exhaustion case.'

He beat his breast all the way back trying to convince himself he wasn't a coward. He wasn't; he was a very brave 30 year old man who had photographed wars in Spain and China and North Africa and Sicily who could only take a few moments of hell on the beach in Normandy (Capa, 2001, p. 148). An extravagant life-style, before and after, meant he ran out of money at the time of the French colonial war in Indo-China in 1954. Though traumatized, he went on to photograph that war, too, not wanting to, having had enough, not wanting to see anything close up again and stepped on a mine. Like many soldiers sent back into battle, the traumatized soldier despite his experience, is in greater danger of not returning and not just because the odds are against him, but he ceases to function effectively. Many do not realize that there is more to it than conquering their fear. When Janine di Giovanni wrote of her experience in Sarajevo she described the madness of the Serbian led siege and the horrors inflicted on the young men who were fighting back and the civilians caught up in the war. This was one of the most cosmopolitan cities in the world: Serbs, Muslim Bosnians, Croats, Romas and Jews lived side by side and had done for centuries. In her first book she wrote tellingly of 'madness' invisible and the post-traumatic aftermath in a city supposedly getting back to normal (Di Giovanni, 2004, p. 286). Again, we read, as with soldiers' description of war as insanity... as if nothing can explain the way people behave other than the non-explanatory terms 'madness' or 'insanity'. In a way she wondered about how she maintained her own sanity and her freedom from post-traumatic stress, but she wrote another book some years later in which she described and discussed how, once she had become pregnant a few years later, she developed stress symptoms from which she had earlier thought herself immune (di Giovanni, 2012). Her husband, too, returned from the Ivory Coast broken by his experience of the violence and an alcoholic. At one stage, di Giovanni had interviewed Martha Gellhorn, an elderly survivor of the Spanish Civil War and of a Hemingway marriage. Gellhorn had said once

you can only fall in love with one war. That very same thing happened to di Giovanni and she went back to Sarajevo to try and recover that time, the time and place that she 'loved'. The fighting was over by then which was just as well because, like Capa, she might not have survived.

But the fact remains, male or female, we are not suited to fight and live so close to sudden death. Gradually it has become easier for those who put on uniforms in the name of the nation to admit to fear and post-traumatic stress (Bourke, 2005, p. 357). It is not clear how fully the military accept fear as an essential part of the fighting and killing process and that the number of gung-ho, 'gutful' unrepentant cold-hearted Rambos are tiny compared with the mass of even volunteer soldiers. Ben Shephard has produced an excellent summary of the road from shell-shock to PTSD (Shephard, 2000). During the Second World War in North Africa and later in Europe, the generals were increasingly alarmed by the rate of desertion. A high percentage of men, anything from 6–15 per cent, simply ran away rather than engage in combat. Indeed only about 30 per cent could be relied on the fight with any degree of ferocity. One calculation went like this. Out of a platoon of 20 men, 'six gutful men will go anywhere and do anything, 12 "sheep" will follow at a short distance if they are well led, 4–6 will run away' (Shephard, 2000, p. 237; Glass, 2013). Several British generals, including Auchinleck and Alexander, tried to get the death penalty for desertion restored. They failed, though even had it been restored the desertion rate, it has been judged, would not have been much different. Fear is in the moment and takes no account of the law or the future.⁸ What conquers fear in war-time conditions for soldiers is partly discipline and socialization, but overwhelmingly it is loyalty to the smallest of all groups, your immediate comrades in arms, your immediate band of brothers; clearly, Shakespeare knew a thing or two in leaving this telling phrase behind for us to contemplate. This information is now a key element in the training of modern armies. The country, patriotism, nationalism, the regiment and so on is as nothing beside one's immediate comrades. A second discovery has been that men cannot function in a combat zone for more than around 200 days; this, too, determines now the length of duty soldiers are expected to perform, though for British armed forces currently it is six months and for soldiers of the USA, a full year.

It helps for commanders to have volunteers rather than conscripts. This way they can maximize the number of 'gutful' men, but even among volunteers fear reigns. Again, in the Second World War, aircrew, all volunteers, suffered fear to such an extent that for bomber crews signs of burn-out appeared after

15 missions, though some would return after their full tour of duty for a second one. Guy Gibson, of Dam Busters fame, returned to duty but was killed. Going back as mentioned before is not crowned with success despite all the combat experience of the individual; Leonard Cheshire, the most decorated pilot of all time in the RAF, went back but was taken off flying when his commander saw that one of his eyes twitched uncontrollably.

In the years following the Vietnam war, with the mass conventional wars seemingly over, and the need for mass conscription armies required to fight a thing of the past, it became possible for doctors, military commanders, politicians, media commentators, peace demonstrators and so on, to establish slowly the existence of post-traumatic distress syndrome; the meaning of fear and cowardice became viewed with new perspectives to some extent. But the fact that human beings are too fragile and have a strong sense of their own mortality means that the individual human being is made of quite the wrong material to fight to the death; that human beings are in essence peaceful and non-violent despite an environment that tests them sorely is not yet fully established. Men have been driven to fight, and taking violence into any new world that develops merely keeps violence alive; there is as yet one route left and that is reform of what we have: we can only work toward mitigating an increasingly unbridled capitalism and a psychopathic nation-state.

This book has avoided prescriptions for ending wars or predictions of the future of warfare among nations as we have to avoid the errors of the alchemists; we just have to remember that we as human beings are too fragile to fight and to kill, and that every life is sacred; the capitalist systems and the nation-state and the dominant 'state' consistently will demand that we do what we are too fragile to do; we can, on the other hand, do what we are able, if nothing else, to reform those systems as best we can; we are not too fragile for that.

Notes

Preface

- 1 Simon Tisdall in *The Guardian*, ‘This Death Is a Grim Omen’, 13 September 2012.
- 2 Recent findings reported in the UK press suggest that the population at large are prepared to tolerate cross-border attacks on terrorist targets; for example, the results of the UK government research conducted on behalf of RUSI, described as a defence policy think-tank, found a clear majority in favour. One might expect nothing less as RUSI stands for Royal United Services Institute (March 2012).
- 3 Pinker, Steven (2012). *The Better Angels of Our Nature: A History of Violence and Humanity*. London: Penguin (1026 pages, of which 130 pages are endnotes); Elias Canetti (1973). *Crowds and Power*. London: Penguin (some 572 pages); Jared Diamond (1998). *Guns, Germs and Steel: A Short History of Everybody for the Last 13,000 Years*. New York and London: Vintage (almost 500 pages).
- 4 Carl von Clausewitz (1987). *On War*. London: Wordsworth, p. xiii.
- 5 Nassim Taleb made an excellent case for the hopelessness of prediction in his work *Black Swan* written on the eve of the crisis of 2007+. See Part Two: We Just Can’t Predict, pp. 135–212. His arguments still stand.
- 6 The CIA completely failed to predict the coming of the Arab Spring in any of the countries in North Africa. See, for instance, Mazzetti, Mark (2013). *The Way of the Knife: The CIA, a Secret Army, and a War at the Ends of the Earth*. London: Penguin.

Chapter 1

- 1 J. Glenn Gray points out in *The Warriors: Reflections on Men in Battle* that Eros was the son of Ares (Mars) and Aphrodite (Venus). He regards this as a suitable myth to reflect how men behave in modern war given his own experience at the battle front.
- 2 The very term civilization does pose problems. At times there is a tendency to throw one’s hands up in the air in the manner of Dostoevsky:

... civilization has made man, if not more bloodthirsty, then certainly more hideously and more contemptibly bloodthirsty. In the past he looked at bloodshed as an act of justice and exterminated those he thought necessary to exterminate with a clear conscience; but now we consider bloodshed an abomination and we engage in this abomination more than ever.

- F. Dostoevsky (1992), 'Notes from the Underground' in *The Best Short Stories of Dostoevsky*, New York: The Modern Library, p. 138. Clausewitz wrote: '... even the most civilised nations may burn with passionate hatred of each other.' 'Civilized' and 'peaceloving' do not, as a rule, go together when applied to nation-states.
- 3 Freud's pessimism is generally acknowledged. 'Freud takes a thoroughly pessimistic view of human nature.' Comment by Iris Murdoch quoted by A.S. Byatt in her introduction to *The Bell*, Vintage, London 1999. p. viii. Gray, John: 'Freud: the last great Enlightenment thinker' *Prospect*, January 2012, *passim*.
- 4 Steven Pinker, in his attempt at a comprehensive argument dealing with a perceived decline of violence over the centuries, offers up as a bottom-line explanation for the spread of 'civilization'. (Steven Pinker (2012), *The Better Angels of Our Nature*. London: Penguin).
- 5 Throughout this work the 'state' as distinct from the nation-state is presented in single inverted commas. Chapter 6 contains a more detailed discussion of the 'state'.
- 6 The 'country' is frequently anthropomorphized in the English language as well as other languages to 'she' or the 'mother-country'. This softens the aggressive nature of the nation and replaces it with both a vision of caring but also of the need to protect at all costs the 'woman' who nurtures us.
- 7 For a detailed discussion on this, see Simon Stander (2009, Chapter 5).
- 8 Max Weber, *General Economic History*; Max Weber, *The Rise of Capitalism and the Protestant Ethic*; Hannah Arendt (1973). *Origins of Totalitarianism*. New York: Harcourt, Brace; J. Barrington Moore Jr. (1966), *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*. Boston: Beacon Press; E.J. Hobsbawm (1992), *Nations and Nationalism since 1780*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- 9 Naissance=birth. See, for instance, Hobsbawm 1990 (2 Ed).
- 10 This famous poem was seized upon by Ernest Hemingway to provide the title and *leitmotif* for his novel *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. Originally the poem was a piece of prose: Meditation 17, from *Devotions Upon Emergent Occasions*.
- 11 www.historynet.com/powhatan-uprising-of-1622.htm
- 12 Edward Waterhouse reported to the Virginia Company at some length concerning the massacre of 1622: <http://www.memory.loc.gov/learn/features/timeline/colonial/indians/good.html>
- 13 India is normally regarded as the jewel in the crown, but Britain had an adverse balance of trade with India involving the export of bullion; the West Indies was probably the real jewel in the crown.
- 14 Some would say 'state-capitalist'; the rise of China is beginning to raise this terminology again. Cf. *Economist* 20 October 2012. Others have used the term Leninist-capitalist.
- 15 Giddens (1962). He quotes Otto Hintze, *Staat und Verfassung*. Goettingen: Vandenhoeck, p. 27.

- 16 To the extent that Giddens separates the political from the economic, he is following the propositions set by Morgenthau with whom we deal later.
- 17 There is an interesting line put into the mouth of Lord Cornwallis in the film *The Patriot* which shows the film had an informed researcher and sums up a wealth of information indicating how the USA became the heirs to British industry and commerce. CORNWALLIS: 'These colonials are our brethren and when this conflict is over, we will be reestablishing commerce with them.'
- 18 The cover image is that of Oskar Nerlinger's 1928 representation of workers taking 'The Morning Train' to mine and factory.
- 19 *Why Capitalism Survives Crises: The Shock Absorbers*, 2009.
- 20 *Timon of Athens*, Act IV, Sc 3. Shakespeare knew that money made the world go round but, oddly, hated the fact. An indication, perhaps, that he all too frequently had a hard time making ends meet. Marx knew these lines as every socialist should, and capitalist for that matter. Marx left just £250 in his will; this being about the equivalent to a year's wages for a proletarian.
- 21 Quoted by Hutchinson and Smith, p. 167. This is also a position firmly held by Immanuel Wallerstein in his several works. See, for instance, *Historical Capitalism* (1983).
- 22 Wallerstein does occasion a degree of discomfort also among some historians: cf. 'I have always been skeptical of world systems theories A sociologist like ... Wallerstein may every now and then hit upon a subtle insight. But the terms in which they frame their huge general propositions virtually guarantee that most of the time they will recycle banalities.' Tony Judt (2012). *Thinking the Twentieth Century*. London: Heinemann, p. 298. The insights are worth the banalities if they are so judged.
- 23 Lenin treated both Kautsky and Plekhanov with utter contempt, accusing them of merely pursuing the implementation of parliamentary government sympathetic to the proletariat but falling well short of overthrowing bourgeois domination. See, for instance, V.I. Lenin, (1976). *The State and Revolution*. Peking: Foreign Languages Press, p. 8 etseq. Similarly Kamenev, often regarded as a 'rightist' himself when asking for his manuscript to be published, wrote: 'it's not only Kautsky and Plekhanov who got off the track'. Kautsky had opposed the capitalists and the possibility of war in 1912: cf. from *le Socialisme*, 2 November, 1912: 'The future alone can show us success. Our obligation is to prepare as much as possible by energetically activating the work of our organization, and in tirelessly carrying out propaganda against war and its ultimate cause: capitalist thirst for profit.' Later Kautsky attacked the Bolshevik Revolution.
- 24 See Leon Trotsky (1996). *The History of the Russian Revolution*. London: Pluto Press, p. 976.
- 25 Tony Cliff, <http://www.marxists.org/archive/cliff/works/1959/rosalux/6-natquest.htm>

- 26 Nadine Gordimer (1988). *A Sport of Nature*. London: Penguin.
- 27 <http://libcom.org/library/nationalities-question-in-the-russian-revolution-luxemburg>
- 28 <http://libcom.org/library/nationalities-question-in-the-russian-revolution-luxemburg>
- 29 See Chapter 9.
- 30 Alfred Cobban (1965). *A History of Modern France 1799–1871*. London: Penguin, p. 12.
- 31 Leon Trotsky, *History of the Russian Revolution* etc.
- 32 David Priestland (2009). *The Red Flag: Communism and the Making of the Modern World*. London and New York: Allen Lane, p. 79.
- 33 V.I. Lenin (1976). *The State and Revolution*. Peking: Foreign Languages Press, p. 26.
- 34 Nikolai Bukharin was born in 1888 and executed at the last of the show trials in 1938. He was editor of *Pravda* for many years and for a long time a favoured and loyal popularizer of Marxist thought.
- 35 I have discussed the issue of the absorption of the surplus in Stander (2009), especially Chapter 6 which discusses Luxemburg.
- 36 Norman Geras (1976). *The Legacy of Rosa Luxemburg*. London: NLB, p. 32.
- 37 See, for instance, Gilbert Rist, *The History of Development: Western Origins to Global Faith*, Zed 3rd. ed, London; Immanuel Wallerstein (2000), *The Essential Wallerstein*. New York: The New Press, pp. 60ff; Chinua Achebe (2000), *Home and Exile*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Chapter 2

- 1 Leo Tolstoy (1983). *War and Peace*. Oxford: Oxford World Classics, Oxford UP, pp. 4–5.
- 2 It may or may not be worse to be slaughtered rather than sold into slavery. However, the fact that there was a market for slaves prevented complete annihilation of the Melians. Can we ask the question: does the existence of a market for slaves prevent genocide?
- 3 Hedley Bull (2002). *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics*, 3rd edn. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- 4 Lest anyone think that More's *Utopia* was a place of peace, More, on the contrary, saw clearly that in this ideal society an army was required and wars would take place but his utopia laid out the rules for war which are, in his terms and those of the day, fair and just though to us would still be barbarous.
- 5 For example, Peter Wilson, Department of International Relations at the London School of Economics, refers to Carr's 'hallowed status in the discipline of International relations, and the reputation of his book *The Twenty Years' Crisis*

- as one of the few classics in the field'. *EH Carr: The Revolutionist's Realist*. www.globalsite.ac.uk/press/012wilson.htm Cf. also 'Successive generations of scholars have read it (*The Twenty Years' Crisis*) as an introductory text only to return to it and discover new meanings and overlooked phrases in later years' and 'is one of the few books in the last 80 years that has left us nowhere to hide'. Tim Dunne et al. (1998) *The Eighty Years' Crisis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. xiv.
- 6 Dunne et al. *The Eighty Years' Crisis*, p. 12.
 - 7 Dunne et al. *The Eighty Years' Crisis*, p. 12.
 - 8 Carr quotes Hobbes: 'Before the names of Just and Unjust can have place there must be some coercive power.'
 - 9 Thus he quite rightly also laments such presentations as choices between guns and butter because guns always come first in a sense. Or, at least, the first question asked is: is the nation-state sufficiently secure?
 - 10 Cavour, one of the architects of modern Italy, is quoted as saying: 'if we were to do for ourselves what we are doing for Italy we would be great rogues'. It is easier for England to hate Germany than for an Englishman to hate a German. In this way we delegate our animosities.
 - 11 The United Nations is a group of states that behave politically according to a range of national interests. It is not a genuine society of states.
 - 12 See M. Achbar et al. 'The Corporation', DVD, Canada 2004.
 - 13 On the whole 'ordinary' men and women do not want war; ordinary men and women do not start wars nor are they, as individuals, much good at fighting them. See Chapter 10, Addendum.
 - 14 Waltz, 1959/2001, p. 102.
 - 15 The power of reason permeates much liberal thought. We see it in Morgenthau and his followers. Also in the now more or less forgotten C.E. Joad (1939) *Why War*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
 - 16 For the importance of the Theory of the State, please see Chapter 6.
 - 17 Quoted by Kenneth Waltz (1959/2001), from *A Lasting Peace*.
 - 18 Terry Eagleton (2011), *Why Marx Was Right*. London and New York: Yale University Press, p. 92.
 - 19 Thucydides III.39: 'for it is a general rule of human nature that people despise those who treat them well and look up to those who make no concessions.'
 - 20 Milton Leitenberg of the Center for International and Security Studies has calculated that deaths in wars and conflicts for the whole of the twentieth century amounted to between 130 and 142 million while deaths since the end of the Second World War up to the year 2000 have amounted to about 50 million. See 'Deaths in Wars and Conflicts between 1945 and 2000', paper presented at Conference on Data Collection in Armed Conflict, Uppsala, 8–9 June 2001.

- 21 For more on this, see J. Glenn Gray (1998). *The Warriors: Men in Battle*. New York: Bison Books, p. 79.
- 22 See E.H. Carr (1987). *What is History?*, 2nd edn. London: Penguin, p. 15. Many non-historians are especially guilty of sinking their arguments under an ocean of facts.
- 23 Fred Halliday (1994). *Rethinking International Relations*. London: Macmillan.
- 24 Robert Hinde and Joseph Rotblat (2003). *War No More*. London: Pluto, p. 55. This is a somewhat strange view to find in an otherwise thoroughly left-wing press.
- 25 Kant, *Perpetual Peace*, 1795, available at <https://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/kant/kant1.htm>
- 26 See also Noam Chomsky (2000). *Rogue States*. London: Pluto.
- 27 Margaret Macmillan (2002). *Peacemakers: Six Months That Changed the World*. London: John Murray; John Maynard Keynes (1919) *The Economic Consequences of the Peace*. London: Macmillan.
- 28 See the work of such authors as Paul F. Diehl, M. Doyle, N. Sambanis, V. Fortna, D. Bratt and P. Collier.
- 29 I. William Zartman has been the leading exponent in this field.
- 30 Peter Elwood, formerly CEO of the major banking concern, Lloyds TSB, kept a well-thumbed copy of Clausewitz's *On War* in his office. It helps him think about strategies for future conquests. *The Economist*, 14 July 2001, p. 69.

Chapter 3

- 1 Barry Buzan (1991). *People, States and Fear*, 2nd edn. Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner. Note, too, the popularity of the phrase: 'if you want peace, prepare for war'. This was presented in two Latin formulae: *si vis pacem para bellum* or *igitur que desiderat pacem, praeparet bellum* and associated with the Roman writer Publius Flavius Vegetius Renatus, but the phrase, which otherwise would be lost to history, gets its currency from such nation builders as William the Silent and especially Frederick the Great of Prussia.
- 2 Muzaffer Sulaymanov (2004). 'Central Asia: A Question of Identity', http://www.monitor.upeace.org/archive.cfm?id_article=209
- 3 Anyone who suspects that Stalin was simply a Georgian barbarian might benefit from reading *Young Stalin* by Monettefiore. While Stalin was undoubtedly a mass murderer and paranoid maniac, he was highly intelligent with an excellent well-read self-education. In terms of IQ he was (judging from exam records) streaks ahead of his contemporaries Churchill, Hitler and Roosevelt.
- 4 Quoted by John Hutchinson and Anthony D Smith (1994). *Nationalism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 20.

- 5 Quoted by Hutchinson and Smith.
- 6 <http://lexicon.ft.com/term.asp?t=Dutch-disease>
- 7 In the unlikely event of the pirates being left alone, the resources of the Somali pirates would ultimately lead to a form of nation-building.
- 8 See Chapter 6 for conceptions of the 'state' as distinct from the nation-state.
- 9 Cf. Immanuel Wallerstein (2000). *The Essential Wallerstein*. New York: The New Press.
- 10 By historically determined I mean a set of complex circumstances that occur in the past that are not susceptible to replication even though we may garner lessons from the circumstances as they are analysed assuming we avoid all the ideological traps. See Chapter 10.
- 11 Quoted by Eric Hobsbawm (1995). *The Age of Capital*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, p. 84.
- 12 Fanon argues that the drive to de-colonization is in essence a drive led by narrow educated elites and not by the mass of the peasantry.
- 13 It is often supposed, though challenged, that the Treaty of Westphalia which is allocated as the peace treaty that ended this war (or wars) is the beginning of the European (or World) system of nation-states and made sense of the term sovereignty since the governing state within the borders of a defined nation-state was given the right of autonomy over religion and the system of law and legitimacy within that territory.
- 14 List refers to England rather than Britain.
- 15 This article is available in the online Marxist archive at www.marxists.org/archive.
- 16 The commercial, financial and industrial relations between Japan and Britain are dealt with in Chapter 3.
- 17 John Hutchinson and Anthony D. Smith (ed) (1994). *Nationalism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 150.

Chapter 4

- 1 *Das Kapital*, Chapter 26.
- 2 Classical political economists refers to economists such as Adam Smith, James Mill, Nassau Senior, David Ricardo and John Stuart Mill.
- 3 Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, p. 171, quoting David Prochaska (2004). *Making Algeria French*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- 4 Paragraph references are to *Two Treatises on Government* by John Locke available on the internet at <http://www.efm.bris.ac.uk/het/locke/government.pdf>
- 5 E. J. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Capital*, 1848–1875. Capitalism appears to have been first used in France by early utopian socialists and was used in English mostly from

the 1860s onwards as Hobsbawm has suggested, though the word does appear in the *OED* with an accreditation to Thackeray for its first use.

- 6 Quoted by Said, p. 59.
- 7 Mushtaq H. Khan (2002). 'Corruption and Governance in Early Capitalism: World Bank Strategies and Their Limitations,' In *Reinventing the World Bank* edited by J. Pincus and J. Winters Ithaca: Cornell University Press. Also online <http://mercury.soas.ac.uk/users/mk17/Docs/Corruption%20in%20Pincus.pdf>, p7, p11.
- 8 He attacks globalization in *Globalization and Its Discontents* and then offers us a way out with *Making Globalization Work*. London: Penguin, p. 151ff.
- 9 Stander, 'Why Capitalism Survives Crises.'
- 10 There are those who are currently experiencing this outcome in Cyprus, Spain, Ireland and elsewhere in the European Union.
- 11 Even now, at the time of writing, the surpluses are huge. This is evidenced by worldwide low-interest rates throughout the economic recession since 2007. *The Economist* reports that that businesses in the USA are basically stockpiling their cash rather than investing it and this amounts to almost \$2 trillion (which is not far off the current GDP of the whole UK economy). *The Economist*, 6 April 2013, 'A world of cheap money.'
- 12 Some would argue (and this would include Immanuel Wallerstein) that the advanced capitalist economies are in the midst of a long-term downturn in the Kondratieff cycle which, to put it crudely, is 25 good years followed by 25 bad years and during the downturn economies would experience a good deal of restructuring and shifting economic emphases from one national economy to another with continued cyclical movements and with the recession years being lengthy compared with the shorter term recovery years.
- 13 For example, John Gray (2002). *False Dawn*. p. 212 et seq. and Chapters 1 & 8.
- 14 Will Hutton (1995). *The State We're In*. London: Jonathan Cape.
- 15 Regular updated statistical material can be found at www.inequality.org & www.epinet.org. UNDP Human Development Report published annually provides standardized measures of global inequality. See also Mark Weisbrot, Dean Baker, Egor Kraev and Judy Chen, *The Scorecard on Globalization 1980–2000, Center for Economic Policy Research Briefing Paper*. If the basic facts presented in this paper were well known, discussions of globalization and international economic policy would look very different than the ones we see today. At the very least, the burden of proof would be squarely placed on those who claim success – by any available measure of human well-being – for the last decades of the experiment in globalization. (p. 3)
- 16 For example, Leslie Sklair (2001). *The Transnational Capital Class*. Oxford: Blackwell.

- 17 Mark Malloch-Brown (2011). *The Unfinished Global Revolution: The Limits of Nations and the Pursuit of a New Politics*. London: Allen Lane, Chapter 11 and Conclusion.

Chapter 5

- 1 Gareth Stedman Jones (1972). 'The History of US Imperialism', In *Ideology in Social Science: Readings in Critical Social Theory*, edited by Robin Blackburn. Glasgow: Fontana, p. 215.
- 2 Dominic Sandbrook writing in the *Sunday Times*, 25 March 2012 reviewing Andrew Lambert (2012). *The Challenge, Britain against America in the Naval War of 1812*. London: Faber & Faber.
- 3 Jones, 'The History of US Imperialism', p. 221.
- 4 Jim Potter (1960). 'Atlantic Economy 1815–1860: The USA and the Industrial Revolution in Britain', In *Studies in the Industrial Revolution*, edited by L.S. Pressnell. London: Athlone Press, pp. 236 et seq.
- 5 This is quote from F. Thistlethwaite (1954). 'Atlantic Partnership', *Economic History Review*, 2nd series, vii.
- 6 *Cambridge Economic History of Latin-America*, Volume 1, CUP, Cambridge, 2006 edited by Victor Bulmer-Thomas, John H. Coatsworth and Roberto Cortes Conde, p. 241.
- 7 Karl Marx in *Das Kapital*, Chapter 10.
- 8 The scale and frequency of the intervention of the USA in what used to be called Third World countries of the Americas is quite considerable though no different from, say, Britain or France and their intervention in Africa, the Levant, Middle East or Indo-China or elsewhere. According to such commentators as Miliband, this kind of intervention, especially by the USA, was not simply dictated by the concern to protect investments. Miliband writes: 'When the government of the United States (of America) decided in 1954 that the Arbenz government in Guatemala must be overthrown, it did so not merely because that government had taken 225,000 acres of land from the American-owned [sic] United Fruit Company' but because such an act was evidence of 'communist leaning'. Thus the failure of a particular country to respect the business or free market ideology of the USA warrants intervention, armed if necessary, of the government of the USA (see Miliband, *The State in Capitalist Society*, pp. 61–62).
- 9 See, for instance, Bob Woodward (1987). *Veil: The Secret Wars of the CIA 1981–1987*. New York: Simon & Schuster; Mazzetti, Mark (2013). *The Way of the Knife: The CIA, a Secret Army, and a War at the Ends of the Earth*. London: Penguin.

Chapter 6

- 1 Simon Stander, 'Why Capitalism Survives Crises: The Shock Absorbers', p. 64. See also B. Jessop (1982). *The Capitalist State*. New York: New York University Press, pp. 103–104.
- 2 See Stander, 'Why Capitalism Survives Crises', *passim*.
- 3 We have seen in an earlier chapter how corruption and capitalism have always existed side by side; indeed, capitalism relies on certain forms of corruption to 'succeed'.
- 4 Simon Stander, 'Why Capitalism Survives Crises.' Chapter 6 and this volume Chapter 4.
- 5 For a discussion on the relationship between surveillance and how it endangers democracy, see Heather Brooke (2010). *The Silent State: Secrets, Surveillance and the Myth of British Democracy*. London: Heinemann.
- 6 Marcuse (1991, Chapter 1) and Arendt (1970, Chapter 1). The Global Peace Index in 2012 placed Iceland and Denmark as the most peaceful countries on earth but the UK came in at 44th and the USA was 100th; Marcuse would have found that fitting.
- 7 J. Ehrenberg (1998). *Civil Society: The Critical History of an Idea*. New York: NY University Press; J.R. Hall (1995). *Civil Society: Theory, History, Comparison*. London: Polity; J. Keane (1998). *Civil Society: Old Images, New Visions*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press; Simon Stander 'Why Capitalism Survives Crises', p. 59 *et seq.*
- 8 <http://www2.ucsc.edu/whorulesamerica/power/wealth.html>
- 9 Miliband, *The State in Capitalist Society*, p. 197.
- 10 Cf. *The Sunday Times*, 24 March 2013. Report by Michael Sheridan.
- 11 For example, see the debates in Tim Dunne and Nicholas J. Wheeler (1999). *Human Rights in Global Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Ken Booth defends universalism while Jack Donnelly attacks it.
- 12 For a quick run through of most arguments in relation to human rights, see Rhona K. M. Smith and Christian van den Anker (2005). *The Essentials of Human Rights*. London: Arnold Hodder.
- 13 Smith and van den Anker (2005). *The Essentials of Human Rights*, p. 33.
- 14 Cameron personally intervened to save arms contracts in the Gulf in November 2012 and in India in early 2013.

Chapter 7

- 1 For the most recent account of the vehemence of Eisenhower's anti-communist policies, see Michael Burleigh (2013). *Small Wars, Far Away Places: Global*

- Insurrection and the Making of the Modern World 1945–1965*. London: Viking Adult.
- 2 Andrew Feinstein (2011). *The Shadow World: Inside the Global Arms Trade*. London: Hamish Hamilton. Feinstein provides extensive bibliographic sources for Zaharoff, the most recent being George Tallan (2007). *Peddler of Wars*. AuthorHouse.
 - 3 Sunday Times Rich List for 2012, p. 25; Andrew Feinstein, *The Shadow World*, pp. 87–92.
 - 4 See banner headlines in *The Guardian*, 16 October 2012. ‘3,500 military staff join arms firms’. Report by Nick Hopkins, Rob Evans and Richard Norton-Taylor.
 - 5 *Stockholm Institute Peace Research Institute Yearbook* 2012.
 - 6 See, for instance, *The Guardian*, 19 February 2013. Andy Beckett ‘Making a Killing: Up in Arms’ This article claims that the UK is the second biggest exporter of arms in the world, and lists sales of frigates to Chile, artillery to Poland and Canada, anti-ship missiles to Malaysia, helicopters to Algeria, armoured vehicles to Iraq, missiles to Switzerland, Hawk aircraft to India and so on. It is claimed that the arms industry in the UK employs somewhere between 225,000 and 300,000. It is also claimed that the ship-workers in Barrow-in Furness have secured employment until 2040, building submarines contracted for the UK Royal Navy.
 - 7 Cf. *The Guardian*, 13th September 2012, report by Dan Milmo, Industrial Editor.
 - 8 John Gray (2002). *False Dawn: The Delusions of Global Capitalism*. London: Granta Books. See also Chapter 10 of this volume for reference to destructive capitalism.
 - 9 The term was probably first used by Bernard London in the thirties.
 - 10 *Fortune Magazine*, 31 October 2008.
 - 11 www.sandiegoreader.com/news/2001/jul/12/general-atomics-color-it-blue
 - 12 *The Guardian*, 28 September 2012.
 - 13 See, for instance, James Ball in *The Guardian*, 13 April 2013.
 - 14 Sharon Komash, *Israel’s Military-Industrial Complex*. www.monitor.upeace.org
 - 15 See www.caat.org.uk. *Campaign Against the Arms Trade: Arming the Occupation: Israel and the Arms Trade*.
 - 16 See Jeremy M. Sharp. *US Foreign Aid to Israel*, March 2012, Congressional Research Service, Report for Congress RL 33222, p. 1.
 - 17 This is from a statement by Obama’s Assistant-Secretary of State for Political-Military Affairs, Andrew Shapiro, in November 2011.
 - 18 Seymour Hersh (1991). *The Samson Option: Israel. America and the Bomb*. London: Faber & Faber; Yoel Cohen (2005). *Whistleblowers and the Bomb: Vananu, Israel and Nuclear Secrecy*. London: Pluto.
 - 19 See *The Sunday Times*, 28 October 2012.
 - 20 Paul Nitze was regarded by some as an archetypical Cold War warrior.

- 21 ‘... in 2005 Judicial Watch obtained communications records through the Freedom of Information Act that indicate that the awarding of contracts to Halliburton was ‘coordinated’ through the office of the Vice-President, Dick Cheney, the former CEO of the firm’ Worrell (2011), p. 15.

Chapter 8

- 1 Malthus’s decline is admitted by the International Society of Malthus. See: <http://desip.igc.org/malthus/index.html>
- 2 See <http://www.ditext.com/flew/malthus.html>
- 3 The industrialization of agricultural production is a feature of the advanced economies but is also an increasing feature in the so-called emerging economies and in the hands of such huge conglomerates as Xstrata, recently merged with Glencore.
- 4 *History Today*, 12 April 1980.
- 5 Quoted by Yergin, Daniel. (2011). *The Quest: Energy, Security, and the Making of the Modern World*. London: Allen Lane, p. 127.
- 6 Peter Danchin, ‘Is the war in Iraq Justified Under International Law?’ *Peace and Conflict Monitor*, 14 April 2003, to be found at www.monitor.upeace.org/archive.cfm?id-article+16
- 7 Richard Deacon (1985). *A Biography of Sir Maurice Oldfield: Head of MI6*. London and Sydney: Futura, pp. 154–155. Oldfield had cut his teeth in intelligence in the Middle East during WWII and was regarded as an expert in this region.
- 8 Needless to say there are those who disagree and suspect that the perceived underlying instability of Chinese politics might lead to aggression. For instance, Timothy Garton Ash writes: ‘China has profound systemic problems which, if not addressed, may both slow its rise and make it an unstable, unpredictable and even aggressive state.’ *The Guardian*, 8 November 2012. Of course, prediction is fraught with problems and as Ash himself says both the USA and China may be able to introduce reforms that prevent any serious stand-offs in the future. That’s the joy of those in the prediction game ... you can with the right wordage hedge one’s bets.
- 9 See, for instance, Afua Hirsch and John Vidal, *The Guardian* newspaper, ‘Shell Pays Millions to Nigerian Security Forces, Data Finds’ 19 August 2012. Also at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/business/2012/aug/19/shell-spending-security-nigeria-leak>
- 10 *The Guardian*, 10 July 2012.
- 11 Michael L. Ross. ‘How do Natural Resources Influence Civil War? Evidence from Thirteen Cases’, *International Organization* 58, no.1 (Winter 2004), pp. 35–67.
- 12 Dambisa Moyo (2012). *China’s Race for Resources and What it Means for Us*. London: Allen Lane.

- 13 Michael Nest (2012). *Coltan*. London: Polity.
- 14 See, for instance: 'No Shooting Please, We're German,' *The Economist*, 13 October 2012.

Chapter 9

- 1 See, for instance, Margaret Macmillan (2002). *Peacemakers: Six Months That Changed the World*. London: John Murray; A.J.P. Taylor (1964). *The Origins of the Second World War*. London: Penguin.
- 2 Amin Maalouf (2011). *Disordered World: Setting a New Course for the Twenty-First Century*. London: Bloomsbury, translated by George Miller, p. 9.
- 3 *The Guardian*, Review section, 28 July 2012.
- 4 *Sunday Times*, 29 July 2012.
- 5 Gary Wills, 'A Readers' Guide to the Century,' *New York Review of Books*, 15 July 1999.
- 6 Wills, 'A Readers' Guide to the Century'.
- 7 Chinua Achebe stands as a splendid witness, too, to the blindness of Europeans to the African condition. He approaches his comments via literature; through his own novels and by demolishing many of the European writers who have laid claim to understanding 'the African.' He rejects the views of a range of writers otherwise regarded as insightful: Elspeth Huxley, Joseph Conrad, Graham Greene and Joyce Carey. He also enjoys the propagation of genuine African tales and proverbs, one of which goes: 'until the lion has his own history, the story will always be about the hunter.' See Chinua Achebe (2000). *Home and Exile*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- 8 George Monbiot, *The Guardian*, 9 October 2012.
- 9 Monbiot, *The Guardian*.

Chapter 10

- 1 Münkler, p. 34.
- 2 See Chapter 6.
- 3 Mary Kaldor admits in a *Guardian* article that some of her ideas are 'utopian.' See *The Guardian*, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2008/apr/01/mary.kaldor.interview>
- 4 Amartya Sen (2002). *Identity and Violence: The Illusion of Destiny*. London: Allen Lane, p. 12. He starts his book with a quote from Oscar Wilde: 'most people are other people' which is itself worth thinking about.

- 5 Kaldor (2007, p. 3).
- 6 There are still sporadic attempts to breach the Peace accords in Northern Ireland. In recent months one policeman has been killed, bombs have been defused and riots have taken place in Belfast.
- 7 Slavoz Zizek (1994). 'The Spectre of Ideology.' I. *Mapping Ideology*, edited by Slavoj Zizek. London: Verso, p. 1.
- 8 See also Charles Glass (2013). *Deserter: The Last Untold Story of the Second World War*. London and New York: HarperPress.

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