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**Psychological war
social movements
and
ecoterrorism**



CESTUDEC

Information warfare as interpreted by Philippe Baumard¹

There is no doubt that information warfare plays a fundamental role in today's economy and society. Furthermore, its importance has led to the emergence of a new form of conflict and therefore led to a change in reasoning. Our highly-digitalized economies and society obviously present significant windows of vulnerability linked to the fact that the modern economic system cannot but be open and fluid. At any rate, the concept of information warfare – as is widely known – emerges primarily from American publications and emerges in the moment in which the legitimacy of information has been placed under discussion in the American context. Required to deal with significant budget cuts, the leading US federal intelligence agencies have attempted to justify the preservation of their budget by emphasizing the importance of protecting the nation's economic security; and yet as early as the 90s, it had become clear that

1 Philippe Baumard, *Les limites d'une économie de la guerre cognitive*, École de guerre économique, 2002.

the logics of conflict present in the geopolitical sphere have been transferred to the context of the economic sphere in which nations must be capable of implementing strategies of dominance based on the control of both the information infrastructure and the flows of technological and economic knowledge. A strategy that takes into account modern new needs must give careful attention to the vulnerability of critical information infrastructures (on the other hand, the rapid growth in computerized piracy has encouraged nations to create ad hoc organizations for the control and surveillance of the development of this new crime). Another observation regards the increase in the strong economic rivalry between nations that has led to the fundamental apprehension that economic intelligence has become an authentic fact of life for the world's leading industries; deeper knowledge of information mechanisms, in fact, becomes a fundamental element of success or failure. It is now precisely this crucial importance in economic context of the leading industries and multinationals that has compelled nations to officialize their approaches in the context of information intelligence. Even if the

use of denigration, discrediting and disinformation campaigns has always been a part of both the political and economic world, in today's world the acceleration of the data digitalization has created the need for both nations and certain companies to adopt offensive and defensive systems sufficient to the situation. A large-scale disinformation operation waged against an industry or multinational corporation can create enormous economic damage.

As known to psychological warfare experts, disinformation is certainly an offensive resource with highly particular characteristics because it is a sword that cuts in one direction only, its effects are particularly insidious and can be discovered only in a second moment, but above all, the objectives of disinformation are oriented to the loss of the adversary's reputation and legitimacy on one hand and the loss of its financial support (in the case of companies, for example), on the other. Yet whereas in traditional conflicts the economy of forces was based on a relationship of inertia, and logistic superiority represented a fundamental dimension for either victory or defeat, in cognitive warfare, similar asymmetry

cannot be imposed in the knowledge system, and above all, unlike traditional conflicts, information warfare has its own autonomy regardless of who constructs or sends the message. Eliminating the spokesman of the message therefore does not modify the dimension of the cognitive conflict but on the contrary only strengthens the adversary. Furthermore, Anglo-American practices are based primarily on the need to immediately control the electronic sources that underlay the economic, political, and military decision-making system. In this strategic view, controlling the public news infrastructure assumes fundamental importance; in any case, a closer analysis shows that the control of the world's information infrastructure is incompatible with its ample and de-structured way of diffusion in today's world. The exponential growth of the information infrastructure does not permit the possibility for vertical or hierarchical coordination. Furthermore, the concept of strategic dominance is based on the ability of a state to prohibit or dissuade a rival nation from emphasizing its rules of conduct and on perception of reality. This approach starts from the assumption that the global control of news flows infrastructure

would permit the achievement of global economic and political dominion. In any case, this concept is revealed ingenuous because it ignores the fact that the control of the news differs from the formation of judgments and beliefs. Faced today with the emergence of cognitive warfare and the complexity and fluidity of information, traditional security services do not possess adequate culture because the belief system on which such systems are based is built on the collection of observable facts and the processing of such information: we have agents collecting information on one hand and agents making analysis on the other. This dual organization is certainly suited to traditional conflicts but is not adequate to cognitive conflict: the logic is completely different because due to the speed with which information moves only a very short time is available to control and analyze it this therefore requires rapid decision-making processes. In other words, the capacity for interpretation and attribution of meaning in real time is the basis for cognitive warfare; furthermore, given that most non-state organizations are in fierce competition and have access to the same news from the same sources, it is highly improbable that a private or

state-owned organization will acquire a decisive competitive advantage unless an improvement is made in the satellite control system over news and human information. After this clarification has been made, it must be repeated once again how crucial the control of the news flow is to victory and how mistaken it is to believe that merely destroying the adversary's information infrastructure will suffice. On the contrary, the destruction of the latter can offer the adversary a greater degree of freedom or promote the use of alternative information tools in a context where – as is known – the distribution of information has been liberalized. Security services must realize that the current trend in worldwide information infrastructure is its Balkanization, or in other words, its dispersion and fragmentation. Efficiency in any case depends more and more on the mastery of decentralized cognitive capacity and less and less on the control of the information infrastructure. Their economy of forces in the context of modern political conflict lies on the mastery of very different cognitive systems and the imposition of a unified interpretation schema is not a strategy capable of providing fruit in the long-term.

Disinformation as interpreted by Vittorfranco Pisano²

Disinformation is certainly one of the most significant parts of psychological warfare. Our article aims at identifying its most salient points in light of the thought of Vittorfranco Pisano, one of the most authoritative experts on terrorism.

From the historical point of view , the term “disinformation” originates from the Russian “dezinformatsiya”, and was used by the KGB to indicate the aggregate of psychological warfare devices adopted to discredit NATO (in this regard, the Author indicates the falsification of documents and correspondence, the use of agents of influence, the release of clandestine newssheets, and the creation of international propaganda organizations under various fronts or coverage as a few of the instruments most commonly used). Above and beyond the origin of the word, disinformation was theorized and applied during WW II in the wider context of propaganda by

² Vittorfranco Pisano, *Lo strumento della disinformazione*, LUNIG, 2009.

US intelligence, which as is commonly known identified three types of propaganda: white, gray, and black. Above and beyond the possibility to use these three psychological warfare techniques singularly or simultaneously, disinformation – as propaganda’s specific communication dimension – is a component widely used in the most diverse contexts, from journalism to historical research, from the context of strategy to that of terrorism. In this regard, Pisano emphasizes how terrorism can be a highly important source of disinformation (recalling the content of claims, the ideological justifications adopted to legitimize its antagonistic and subversive activities, the re-interpretation of its violent actions in terms of self-defense, and its view of history as a series of conspiracies, etc.). Beyond primarily theoretical disquisitions – for the purpose of illustrating the ample scope and insidious nature of disinformation as a whole – Pisano illustrates the efficacy of the disinformation technique using of significant examples, the most pertinent of which is the attribution to US Army of the FM 30-31 B field manual by the KGB, secondly, in regard to the volume entitled *The Terror Network* by Claire Sterling shows how

the error committed by the US analyst consisted in ascribing to the USSR the actual organization of terrorism and not merely its exploitation of the same for purposes of political destabilization.

In any case, other relevant examples taken from the Italian historical context are identified in Pisano's thought. In the volume entitled *Segreto di Stato: La verità da Gladio al caso Moro* [A National Secret: The Truth from the Gladio Organization to the Aldo Moro Abduction] by journalists Giovanni Fasanella and Claudio Sestieri written together with former Leftist Democrat Senator Giovanni Pellegrino, NATO intelligence services are placed on the same level as those operating in Warsaw Pact nations in the instrumentalization of terrorism, but more than anything else, the Gladio case provides an illuminating example of disinformation. This organization, which was developed under NATO auspices against the Warsaw Pact nations, was accused of having subversive ends, an accusation to which Pisano promptly and clearly replies: "The Gladio organization – the Italian component of a vaster NATO structure with specific, limited function and technically known as 'stay-behind' – was accused of having subversive ends which

due to a form of US hegemony. The question to ask in this context is ‘practically speaking, what does stay-behind mean?’ In order to obtain a reply, it is sufficient to consult a US Army field manual, which in this case has been public domain ever since December, 1965, years before the expressions *Anni di piombo* (*Years of lead*) and *Notte della Repubblica* (*Dark Night of the Republic*) were coined. The volume is entitled Special Forces Operational Techniques FM 31-20. While the meaning of FM is clear, the numerical designation of 31 stands for Special Forces, a branch of the Army nicknamed the Green Berets, while the number 20 indicates this field manual as a part of the 31 Series applying to Special Forces. The prefix FM, as in the others of this series and other series (the number 19 indicates the series dedicated to the Military Police, for example), is published by the General Headquarters of the Department of the Army. Paragraph 30, Page 46 of FM 31-20 provides a definition of and the limits to stay-behind, and reads as follows: stay-behind operations involve the pre-positioning of SF teams within their proposed JSOA before hostile forces overrun or occupy the area. These

operations permit the SF teams to organize and train the resistance cadres. Strict precautions must be taken in defense of security, with particular regard for the areas of refuge or other evacuation areas to be employed during the initial period of occupation. The information regarding the locations and identity inside the organization are revealed on the basis of what is indispensable to know. The contacts between the various elements are made through clandestine communication. Secret deposits in scattered order, including radio apparatus are prepared whenever possible. Because it is unadvisable to use Special Forces members as intelligence agents in urban areas, operations behind the adversary's back have greater chance of success in rural areas. When the above-mentioned operations are conducted in densely populated areas, the deployment of the Special Forces rests entirely on local organizations in regard to security, the necessary contacts for the expansion of the network, and the increase of the effort"³. These examples allow us to state that disinformation consists in the creation and distribution of false or partially true information for the purpose of

3 Op. cit., p. 26.

“damaging the chosen adversary or his image”⁴. The complexity of the phenomenon of disinformation implies the implementation of adequate counter-measures, however, among which: “the constant monitoring of such disinformation for the purpose of conducting tenacious government work for true information while protecting elements legitimately and obligatorily subject to secrecy while simultaneously waging a public awareness campaign”⁵ and in secondly a close cooperation between government institutions and intelligence agencies not for preventive censorship as much as the achievement of the awareness that misleading information can seriously damage institutions, as shown by the counter-intelligence experience acquired by Atlantic security services during the Cold War in identifying agents of influence.

4 Op. cit., p. 6.

5 Op. cit., p. 6.

Information warfare as interpreted by Jacques Baud⁶

Stating that Western Society depends on information is certainly an undeniable logical truth. An awareness of current events but also the ability to provide prompt, pertinent response has become an integral part of today's society. Yet in regard to information warfare too much accent has been placed on the West's growing dependency on information technology; in any case the real threats come not only from the technological sector but also the amount of influence wielded by information. Consider the fact that terrorism can be seen also as a way of communicating. At any rate, unlike traditional weapons, those of information warfare can be used whenever necessary both to serve economic interests and neutralize international competition. Furthermore, they can be placed into action very easily and adopted by both organizations and individuals. The extent of dimension of the information warfare depends on

6 Jacques Baud, *Le Renseignement et la lutte contre le Terrorisme*, Lavauzelle, 2005, pp. 318-327.

three other types of war:

1. information warfare or the war of numbers regarding the destruction of information infrastructure and that aims at paralyzing the adversary's defense system;

2. the cognitive warfare with the objective of acquiring, circulating and integrating the information necessary to maintain greater knowledge than the adversary in order to gain an operative advantage;

3. the war of influence waged to manipulate both religious and public opinion in order to facilitate action against the adversary.

Even if these three aspects are autonomous they are in any case closely interlinked. It must now be forgotten that in the struggle against terrorism the West has all too often concentrated its attention only on the information dimension whereas the real vulnerability of democratic society lies in the context of the influence that represents, we repeat, the terrorism's field of action. Yet intelligence must intervene in information warfare – as in any other form of conflict – as a useful element in making decisions and not as a weapon. There is no doubt, in this regard, that with the objective of learning

all it can about the adversary, intelligence may prove useful to information warfare in revealing the enemy's weaknesses and waging influence campaigns.

We would now like to dedicate our attention to cognitive warfare that includes all the methods and processes required to acquire, explore and distribute the information necessary in operative context. Acquiring information in all its forms, even computerized, is a part of warfare and implies not only the power of obtaining more news than the adversary but also faster access to the sources of information in order to act on the same with greater efficacy. Consequently, cognitive warfare includes measures for the camouflage and protection of information – the so-called passive measures – and also the instruments destined to deceive the adversary of one's real operative intentions (the so-called active measures). Furthermore, cognitive warfare is an element that is also found both in the mechanisms of industrial management as a completion of the notion of economic intelligence and in knowledge management mechanisms and processes of the diffusion of knowledge through mechanisms of protection.

The war of influence is not only a fairly present threat but also lies at the base of numerous asymmetrical conflicts, and primarily regards the use of the media and the utilization of messages destined to influence or manipulate public opinion (or political decisions). Democratic society based on the free circulation of information does not accept – at least openly – an active practice of influence; despite this, our democratic societies are very vulnerable to information manipulation. Such manipulation is naturally not only made by nations but also by private pressure groups, and can play a significant role in influencing public opinion. Second of all, the influencing actions must necessarily be aimed at the achievement of strategic objectives, known jointly in both civil and military context, monitored to achieve specific psychological ends, and be founded on close cooperation between civil and military intelligence organizations; as it concerns actions of influence, they have one fundamental objective, in other words, the restoration or maintenance of the trust of the civil population in the authorities or the weakening of the adversary's will to fight. In order to achieve these objectives efficaciously, such

influencing actions must be conducted as if they were military operations and therefore on the basis of non-factious objective information. Naturally enough, these objectives can be pursued through secretive operations that include propaganda and disinformation. On the other hand, increasing one's own power advantage – also by denigrating or compromising that of the adversary through disinformation – has always played a part in the art of war. In an open and democratic society, the manipulation of public opinion is certainly possible, of course, but it must be implemented through new forms. In the context of the struggle against terrorism, information remains a determinant element, and must be developed through these three objectives during information warfare:

a) there must be an information matrix upstream from the operative decision-maker, and this requires the ability to generate an awareness of the battlefield and to integrate this knowledge with the information necessary to wage war (which is substantially the ability to anticipate the enemy's moves);

b) the information matrix downstream from the operative decision that serves to acquire and

maintain the technical means and the processes of command and conduct that permit any determined mission to be followed;

c) the communication matrix between the state and public opinion regarding the management and perception of the conflict.

Problems and prospects for Anti-terrorism in Italy⁷

According to **General Mini**, today's international terrorism does not have direct links with the spatial dimension and above all does not have achieving domination as its primary objective; furthermore, it is not linked to a political or religious vision of the world that implies or presupposes a dialectic confrontation with democracy. Yet terrorism must be opposed, and it goes without saying that it cannot be opposed intrinsically. It is necessary to identify those who use terrorism through various instrumentations and not unilaterally inside of which the use of force becomes fully legitimate for the purpose of inducing the promoters of terrorism to avoid resorting to the use of this asymmetrical instrument. In other words, a multi-dimensional struggle against terrorism must necessarily integrate the political and operative dimensions, and such integration must aim at first identifying and then eliminating the causes that have induced

7 A.V, *La minaccia del terrorismo e le risposte dell'antiterrorismo*, Franco Angeli, 2006.

determined subjects and/or organizations to resorting to terrorism. The tools used since 1993 to oppose terrorism obviously include military intervention. A historical comparison of the instruments used in the fight against terrorism shows that military intervention in itself has never been sufficient, whether because this task was not assigned to armed forces trained for such a delicate job (one of the limits of military intervention surely consists in its never having made a clear distinction between normal security and post-war security operations) or because international civil nature organizations are often assigned to manage aspects of security, and the lack of integration between security systems has often resulted in failures in managing the territory; furthermore, the parties responsible have not understood that the control of the territory not only is not a simple task but is also erroneously addressed as if it could be exclusively performed through the aerial/terrestrial surveillance or patrolling the borders. In such regard – General Mini emphasizes firmly – the control of the territory conducted by police forces is often inadequate because in most cases they have not acquired specific skills in

opposing terrorism. Furthermore, the absence of coordination between international police forces and military forces has often compromised the possibility to adequately contrast terrorism. The combination of these problems can be overcome only by taking into consideration a few precise alternatives: 1) first of all, it must be realized that the territory has by now assumed a dimension that is no longer one-dimensional because it does not regard only the control of the borders but also the control of people within and the structures with which they relate; 2) intelligence and prevention operations must not be limited to merely indicating objectives but must also control and centralize the combination of operations with the purpose of carefully controlling – among other things – that the ends to be achieved have been accomplished and that the information necessary for opposing the adversary have been acquired through valid instruments; 3) the role of intelligence must be the control of the territory and must have an operative and strategic dimension while defending also secrecy; 4) another aspect that must be emphasized is that today's terrorist organizations are not structured in vertical hierarchy manner but through

networks and therefore through nodes; 5) opposing terrorism in the territory must also consider phenomena that can induce the proliferation of violence, intolerance, and organized crime, and this implies an ample and deep comprehension of society by the forces involved in the fight against terrorism; 6) an equilibrated and stable political management is required; 7) both an excessive militarization and an excessive privatization of intelligence functions must be avoided ; 8) the integration or the creation of an integrated system implies the transcendence of the division between security forces and police forces, and necessarily implies strategic and operative centralization; and lastly, 9) this multidimensional intervention must be closely linked at regional level by establishing cooperation with neighboring countries wherever possible. The thoughts of **Saccone** place the emphasis on other aspects of equal importance. Specializing in opposing terrorism by intelligence forces and the police is indispensable, as is also the centralization of information. Furthermore – as the experience of extreme Leftist terrorism in Europe has shown – public opinion must be oriented in order to overcome any form of disinformation

or ideological instrumentalization attempting to penetrate as widely as possible civil society. One of the greatest difficulties posed by today's terrorism consists in its transnational dimension and for which reason these actions must be taken in a super-national context (hence the need, for example, to strengthen not only *Europol* but also *Sitcen* and *CASA* in Italy) on one hand, and the need to assign greater value to intelligence services on the other, because its operative methods are not restricted by the same legal and time-related limits usually imposed on criminal police officials. In order for the integration mentioned above to become possible, one good idea would be the use of a model of strategic and operative intelligence that is uniform above all at national level for the purpose of making optimum use of the information collected (a good example in this sense is the Anglo-Saxon *National Crime Intelligence Service*), continue in the centralization of information regarding border police controls at integrated level (a direction in which *Sis II* is currently operating in the European Union context), and increase *Humint* sources because the possibility to acquire believable informers and/or

the possibility to insert them inside terrorist groups becomes fundamental factor in the prevention of threats.

Aspects of military intelligence and psychological warfare during the war in Algeria as analyzed by Maurice Faivre⁸

The analysis of the intelligence organizations made by General Maurice Faivre in the first chapter of his book – *Le Renseignement dans la guerre d'Algérie* – offers a summary of the modifications that occurred in the French political-military context at the level of intelligence organizations.

The *North African Connection Service (SLN)* was created in 1947 thanks to the efforts of Colonel Schoen for the purpose of analyzing the political, economic, and religious situation in North Africa and the Arab nations. The next year witnessed the birth of the *Second Office of the 10th Military Legion* that centralized the intelligence information of 12 sub-divisions. This organization would cooperate – in the absence of a more formalized coordination – with the

⁸ Maurice Faivre, *Le Renseignement dans la guerre d'Algérie*, Lavauzelle, 2006.

Armed Forces *National Defense Safety Service*. Furthermore – with the objective of strengthening the information apparatus – the *Directorate of Territorial Surveillance (DST)* directed by Pontal was flanked by the *External Documentation and Counter-Espionage Service (SDECE)* under the orders of Lieutenant Colonel Germain.

One of the measures of greatest significance was implemented on February 15, 1955, by the new Algerian governor, Soustelle, who would have as military advisor Colonel Constans: a mixed Joint Chiefs of Staff and a centralized *Intelligence and Operations Center* known as **CROGG** that was assigned the task of grouping representatives of all the security services. Colonel Ruysen was placed at the command of this service to work with Prefect Vaujour (this was a phase of transition in which the intelligence apparatus lacked centralization). In any case, a centralized intelligence coordination was entirely lacking during this period, to the extent that even at ministerial level the observation was made that the struggle against terrorism implied coordinated action between civil services and the armed forces, a coordination that was still lacking at the time. Precisely for the purpose of meeting

this need, not only would the command of the **DST** be changed but in November 1955, the *Study Connection Center* (**CLE**) would be created. There is no doubt that the creation of the *Specialized Administrative Services* (**SAS**) established by Soustelle upon indication of General Parlange and Prefect Vaujour – was an organization that was very important for the control of the population. Alongside information operations, a counter-terrorism strategy would be implemented through the *Light Intervention Group* (**THE**) directly under the **SDECE** that would lead to the elimination in 1956 of Ben Boulaid. In this regard, we must recall how collaboration with Israeli secret services permitted the efficacious infiltration of the FLN. In any case, the absence of a real coordination between civil and military intelligence services required the need to make substantial changes that would lead to the assignment of the command of the police force to General Massu on January 7, 1957 and the increase in the counter-terrorism actions coordinated by Lieutenant Colonel Decorse as a result. French Foreign Legion intelligence specialist Colonel Jacquin would orient a military intelligence along these lines that culminated in

the unification of civil and military power that would take form at the political-military level with General Salan, with General Massu at strategic level, and at tactical level through the operative directives issued by Godard. In this new context, the prefects became administrative assistants and political advisors to the officials, in this way relinquishing the central role they had acquired in previous years. It is sufficient to recall that as of 1958, one of the main objectives was to concentrate military intelligence resources against the political-administrative organization of the National Liberation Front – an objective that had not been taken into consideration in previous years. As of 1959, General Challe, through collaboration with Godard, would once again redefine military intelligence objectives with greater emphasis on the need to make ample use of specialized commandos and on the need to implement a structuring of the entire population according to the logic of parallel hierarchies theorized by Larechoy. Together with these decisions that proved determinant in defeating the NLF, Challe set up a coordinated studies office, an intelligence coordination committee (which in any

case would have only an ephemeral existence) and a *Permanent Information Center for Intelligence Officials* created in May, 1959, that proved capable of operating beyond its structural limits in the form of stages organized in previous years.

Particularly important in regard to the objectives of our work was certainly the establishment of the *Monthly Bulletin of the Central Intelligence Directorate* that began a distribution in June 1955 that would continue until December 1962 and whose importance would emerge in parallel with the role of psychological warfare in Algeria emphasized by General Lorillot and Defense Minister Koenig as of 1955.

Particularly interesting are the observations on psychological warfare made by 17 French secular/religious pacifist organizations with an anti-militarist stance aimed at the promotion of disinformation and discredit in regard to the war in Algeria. Out of all these organizations, special mention must go to the *Intellectuals' Action Committee against the Continuation of War in Northern Africa* created in November 1955 thanks to Sartre and Chenu and the *Committee for Amnesty of Political Prisoners Overseas*

created also with help from Camus. Although the combined action of all these organizations never reached any real efficacy, their propaganda amplified by the media had significant influence in the press and civil society. At trade union level, the Bulletin reported with concern the formation of two important trade unions: the *Algerian Workers' Trade Union Federation (USTA)* and the *General Union of Algerian Workers (UGTA)*, the latter closely linked to the National Liberation Front and supported by Abbas and Ahmed Francis. Together with these, the *International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (CISL)* played an important role in coordinating antagonist and anti-military trade union activity, to the extent that this coordination will prove itself to be a dangerous adversary to French interests. Alongside these indications, the considerations regarding the enormous responsibility of the French Left in the waging of a systematic disinformation campaign are of similar interest. In this regard, particularly alarming was the infiltration of the French Communist Party in Armed Forces through the creation of federations or confederations of reserve officers such as the *Federation of Republican Reserve Officers*, the

National Federation of Republican Reserve Non-commissioned officers and the *National Confederation of Army Reserve Officers of the Republic*, organizations that despite operating on different levels were in any case based in Paris in the same rooms that hosted the Communist Inter Press Publicity agency. On the whole, these organizations were created in opposition to the *National Union of Reserve Officials* in pursuit of a precise objective: denouncing the illegitimacy of the war in Algeria on one hand, and systematically discouraging officials and non-commissioned officers from taking part in this war through a demoralization campaign that alternated its emphasis on torture, the political ambitions of the officials, and the political-military conspiracies taking place in the Algerian theater on the other. Particularly significant was the action of disinformation promoted by the Young Communist directorate and coordinated by Thorez that proved fairly efficacious in launching the September '57 Movement against the performance of military service in Algeria.

Conclusion

Despite the brevity of the considerations made thus far, it is hard to avoid drawing precise conclusions from the indications above. First of all, we must observe how civil intelligence, which depended on the French Ministry of the Interior, was entirely unprepared to deal with an organization as vast and widespread as the National Liberation Front; secondly, it is equally clear that civil intelligence was flanked by military intelligence (given the existing impasse), which thanks to the experience acquired during the Indochina war and the skills developed studying the revolutionary war of the Vietmin proved capable of efficaciously opposing the terrorism and the psychological offensives of the FLN; thirdly, the centralization in military context in terms of both strategy and tactics permitted the achievement of efficacious results. Lastly, the emphasis placed by intelligence on the presence of anti-military organizations in France conducting disinformation campaigns helped clearly understand the importance of psychological warfare and the inevitable need during a war of such vast extent as the one in Algeria to handle

at the same time an internal conflict constructed on disinformation and propaganda and an external conflict in which the National Liberation Front (FLN) made ample and systematic use of terrorism and guerrilla warfare.

Disinformation and propaganda in the thought of Loup Francart⁹

It is hard to deny the importance that the manipulation of information has acquired both in totalitarian context and in the world of traditional and asymmetrical conflicts has gained during this century. Yet modern French strategic thought – in continuation of the considerations made during the war in Algeria by Larechoy – placed cognitive warfare, a strategic concept that had become indispensable in the military context at the center of attention. With precise regard to this topic, General Loup Francart – Director of Research at the French Strategic and International Relations Institute – has made contributions of undeniable relevance. Starting from his reflections, we have placed our emphasis only on certain aspects of cognitive warfare – or in other words, disinformation and propaganda – in our indication of the main characteristics.

There is no doubt that the term *disinformation* is a relatively recent expression that dates back to

⁹ Loup Francart, *La guerre du sens*, Economica, 2000.

the use made by Russian intelligence right after WW II that designated the use of the freedom of information for purposes of manipulation made by Capitalist nations. Above and beyond this historical note, the author makes a few particularly succinct definitions, among which: disinformation seen as the propagation of untruthful information for the purpose of creating confusion in public opinion, an aggregate of techniques used to manipulate information in order to influence judgment and reaction, and in the final analysis manipulate public opinion to political ends. The sum total of these and other definitions clearly reveals number of common aspects. It is by now accepted fact that disinformation regards the dominion of what is known as mass information and therefore the domination of the mass-media. Disinformation is most certainly addressed to the public at large or more precisely for the purpose of influencing public opinion in favor of those who create disinformation. Precisely because it is addressed to civil society, disinformation cannot also be a part of public domain and therefore in the event of military conflict it cannot also regard the political and strategic dimension. At any rate,

the author emphasizes, disinformation is not necessarily linked to a unilateral vision of the world because it can be practiced in all arenas: political, by private interest groups, and information and communication professionals, etc.

Another aspect of extreme relevance emphasized by the author regards the fact that disinformation is a technique used for propaganda and subversion, and therefore regards a certain amount of freedom of the press. It is in any case clear that unlike propaganda disinformation is not a constant action applied in light of prolonged influence but rather aggregate of specific and more or less expected actions conducted to generate a context in which certain elements of information that are true but in opposition to the common view appear totally incongruous. Yet in order to avoid misunderstandings, it is necessary to clarify that disinformation has nothing to do with the expression of an explicitly factious point of view because the often bitter comparison between different opinions is a part of democracy's pluralism. In other words, information is manipulated through disinformation for the purpose of providing a fictitious compression of reality, and the objectives

of disinformation include the intentions, the elements of strength or weakness of the adversary and his errors. More specifically, disinformation can proceed through the negation of selected elements of information, deny others, omit yet others, cast discredit on certain facts or intentions, can deviate attention to information of scarce importance, provide contradictory information, exaggerate facts or intentions, release unconfirmed elements or others of dubious credibility, and add invented elements to real information. Naturally, as observed by the Russian analyst Volkoff – disinformation can be used to excellent results in an authoritarian and/or totalitarian context in which an absolute and dogmatic opposition is created between I and We: the incarnation of greed by one part and the incarnation of the evil by the other part. Yet in this regard the author clearly sees disinformation as one of the most efficacious tools of propaganda, and totalitarian propaganda in particular. To French strategic scientists, the term propaganda falls within a context that attempts to impose a monolithic vision through all the means of persuasion at its disposal and impose behavior that reflects this vision. Precisely for this reason,

propaganda – according to the author – serves a totalitarian ideology (with ideology intended to mean a unified system of interpreting the historical-political world). Yet propaganda does not accept the legitimacy of a different vision (in the totalitarian context, propaganda is consolidated through omnipresent censorship) and aims at the masses. In order to be efficacious, it must construct an ample variety of reasoning on a selected few points, transforming them into slogans in such way as to transform itself into an instrument of psychological submission that feeds on its utopian dimension (the myth of a new man, for example). From the technical point of view, propaganda makes use of a symbol that summarizes one of the fundamental aspects on which its influence is built, determining in this way an irrational attraction and nourishing the action (naturally, in order to be efficacious, the symbol must be suggestive and immediately evoke the idea that it represents the emotional basis on which it depends) of the slogan, which must be shrewd, incisive, mechanical, selected with care, and destined to excite the emotions of the public in order to provoke mass action (and in other words must be

a combination of worlds that provides a rational appearance to profoundly irrational sentiments) of the passwords that drive people to actions that are mediated more by mechanics than rationality. In terms of the reasoning technique, propaganda is implemented through the simplification of events and the insinuation it leaves in the mind of the listener to reach his or her own conclusions, the fairly frequent use of the logic of the authorities, the establishment of scapegoats, the ridicule of the adversary, and appeals to tradition and nostalgia. Furthermore, propaganda must cause the effect that the author considers that of the majority that purports the belief that the opinion in its entirety admits the point of view promoted by propaganda (for the legitimization of which the propagandist is not ashamed to use otherwise credible personalities).

Reflections on revolutionary war by Colonel Charles Larechoy

The Indochina experience radically changed the strategic and tactical choices of the French armed forces. Among the first to perceive the need for a change in the reasoning was Colonel Larechoy, who formulated in the light of his own military experience and the military strategy of Mao the doctrine of revolutionary warfare that would have such a pronounced effect on the French strategy in Algeria between 1952 and 1957. The aim of this brief study is to illustrate the itinerary that brought Larechoy to his concept of revolutionary war on one hand and an indication of its main features on the other.

The premises that led Larechoy to dramatically change his strategic convictions cannot but be located in 1946 when after resuming his career as a colonial officer he attended the courses held at the *Center of High Administrative Studies on the Muslim Administration (CHEAM)* created in 1937 on the initiative of Professor Robert Montagne, a man with whom Lacheroy had been on friendly

terms since the early '30s. Subsequently appointed commander of the first autonomous battalion in Ivory Coast, he was obliged to take part in the bloody repression of the uprising fomented by the African Democratic Union (RDT). This first encounter with “subversive propaganda” and attempts at “communist infiltration” in the African colony would lead to a radical change on both emotional and strategic levels. When Lacheroy landed in Saigon in February 1951 at the summons of General Lattre, unlike West Africa, the Far East was completely unknown to him. Appointed commander of the First Army in the Bien-Hoa sector in Indochina, he was afforded ample opportunity to become familiar with the Viet-minh and its disconcerting, elusive modus operandi based on support from the local population that allowed the Viet-minh to be everywhere and nowhere at the same time. Deeply shaken in his convictions, Lacheroy wondered how despite possessing far superior weapons than those in the hands of the enemy, the French expeditionary force was unable to triumph. The following year, more precisely, November, 1952, at a conference held in Bien-Hoa, he explained this incongruence (thanks

also to his reading of the military works of Mao) in the ability of the Viet-minh to create parallel hierarchies by which the inhabitants of South Vietnam were imprisoned in a coercive system of Machiavellian perfection in a political system that might be referred to as a populist dictatorship coordinated by the military.

The success enjoyed at the supreme military commands in the wake of the report led to his appointment as director of the *Asian and African Studies Center (CEAA)* at the Lourcine Barracks in 1953 and to formulate with even greater articulation on April 25, 1955, at the *Institute of Higher National Defense Studies (IHEDN)* a new doctrine that Larechoy defined People's War, which was characterized by the total control of the population that binds the individual since youth in a triple professional, territorial, and ideological structure while constantly conditioning him through indoctrination achieved by simple and incisive slogans and selected reading. Forced to deal with this new weapon – which as Larechoy himself points out, emphasizes the psychological dimension – it becomes imperative to adapt the modus operandi to the new strategic context

without further indulgence. With the intention of expanding the popularity of his thought, in this way accelerating the necessary and urgent modifications at strategic level at the Army General Staff and the Ministry of Defense, together with journalist Blanchet of the renowned Parisian daily, *Le Monde* – a writer he had met at the **CEAA** – anonymously published three excerpts from a typewritten text entitled *La campagne d’Indochine ou une leçon de guerre révolutionnaire* in the newspaper on August 3 and 4. Appreciation from both the general public and military institutions offered the authors the chance to present the doctrine of People’s War to General Guillaume in May 1955, and in June 1957, at the Sorbonne in the presence of General Challe – Major General of the Armed Forces – and two-thousand reserve officers in a 90 minute lecture entitled *The War of Insurgency and the psychological weapon*. According to Larechoy, the People’s Protracted War can be divided into five stages:

Stage 1: “Dans une période calme, seuls les services spécialisés décèlent les signes précurseurs d’un orage, et en général, les signalent aux autorités responsables. Mais l’expérience prouve qu’ils sont

rarement écoutés. Et brusquement des bombes éclatent, des attentats sont commis, des mots d'ordre se mettent à circuler et tout cela de façon spectaculaire. Dans le même temps, les 'incidents' sont montés en épingle par certaines puissances étrangères qui commencent à alerter l'opinion et les grands organismes internationaux... Nous sommes en présence de la Phase Publicité et ce n'est que lorsqu'elle aura joué son rôle que sera abordée la suivante”;

Stage 2: “Face à cette situation et au climat de nervosité – entretenu par les médias – qui l'accompagne, les autorités sont amenées à prendre des mesures é caractère policier. Le mouvement révolutionnaire va alors axer son action sur la prise en main des populations de plus en plus terrorisées. La deuxième phase s'achève. L'adversaire a gagné la bataille pour la complicité du silence. Il suffira par la suite d'entretenir cette complicité du silence par quelques attentats beaucoup moins nombreux mais bien choisis et bien exploités”;

Stage 3: “Une distinction s'opère enfin entre les actions de caractère militaire et celles essentiellement politiques. Les premières sont le fait d'éléments rebelles armés mis sur pied grâce

à la complicité de la population, insaisissables (il leur suffit pour cela de revêtir le costume local ou de circuler la nuit) et commençant à pratiquer la guérilla; les secondes s'appuient sur des noyaux actifs chargés de transformer peu à peu la complicité passive du silence en une 'complicité active', les spectateurs en acteurs, les neutres en sympathisants puis en fanatiques”;

Stage 4: “Est essentiellement une phase de transitions au cours de laquelle les actions de guérilla et de prise en main des populations s'intensifient”;

Stage 5: “Des véritables troupes régulières font leur apparition lors qui sont réunies différentes conditions : un commandement rebelle indiscuté...; un territoire assez vaste...; des hiérarchies parallèles. Dès lors, les autorités rebelles, s'appuyant sur l'organisation populo-politico-militaire ainsi constituée, se substituent progressivement aux autorités légales; pratiquement la légalité et la force ont changé de camp”¹⁰.

These five stages – Larechoy continues – are

10 Paul et Marie-Catherine Villatoux, *La République et son armée face au “péril subversif”*, Les Indes savantes, 2005, pp. 303-304.

planned at central level by the USSR: “après avoir pris pied sur le continent asiatique, use de techniques psycho-politiques pour encercler le continent européen en contournant ses défenses par le Moyen-Orient et l’Afrique”¹¹. These profoundly innovative hypotheses for French strategy will lead the way in France to a wider and more detailed reflection on revolutionary war whose most valid theoreticians will include General Beaufre and Colonel Trinquier.

11 Colonel Charles Larechoy, *De Saint-Cyr à l’action psychologique*, Lavauzelle, 2003, p. 14.

The cognitive warfare: aspects of new strategic thinking

Combining the strategic observations on revolutionary war – those made by Colonel Trinquier during the war in Algeria, in particular – with US strategy regarding information warfare, the authors Harbulot and Lucas, leading experts at the French *École de guerre économique*, and Moinet, Director of the DESS (*Intelligence économique et développement des Entreprises*) – place their emphasis on the profoundly innovative and strategic role played by information warfare and on its implications for companies. Naturally enough, it emerges with clarity that the authors' intention is to utilize cognitive warfare in defense of the interests of French companies against their US competitors. It is undeniable – in the opinion of the authors – that the date of September 11, 2001, represented a change in strategic thinking of fundamental importance. Undoubtedly, the war in the Persian Gulf, the US military intervention in Somalia, and the conflicts in former Yugoslavia had already presaged – even if in terms not yet

precisely defined – an evolution of military strategy in the direction of newer strategic scenarios. It is enough to consider – the authors observe – that at the time of the invasion of Kuwait, US public opinion was mobilized following a disinformation process planned at military level or more exactly, at psychological warfare level. In this regard, it is sufficient to recall how the televised landing of US troops on the beaches of Mogadishu, the televised lynching of a US Army soldier enabled the marginalization of the politico-military dimension of the civil war in progress. Yet the importance ascribed to the manipulation of information was determined by the conviction – which proved to be correct – that the absolute mastery of the production of knowledge both upstream (the educational system) and downstream (Internet, media audio-visual means) can ensure – the authors emphasize – the long-lasting legitimacy of the control of world affairs. Yet in light of the American political-military choices and reflections on the revolutionary war in Algeria, French strategy felt the need to define in strict terms exactly what information warfare is. First of all, the expression used in the context of French

strategy is the one of cognitive warfare defined as the capacity to use knowledge for the purpose of conflict. In this regard, it is by no mere chance that Rand Corporation information warfare specialists John Arquilla and David Rundfeldt assert the domination of information to be fundamental to American strategy. Secondly, the ample and systematic use of information warfare by the US creates the need – in geographical-strategic terms – for the European Union to do some serious thinking on cognitive warfare. On the other hand, the absence of legal regulation of manipulation of knowledge in the architecture of security inherited at the end of the Cold War can only lead to serious concern above all for economic security of European companies and must consequently bring about the formulation of a strategy of dissuasion and the use of subversive techniques that must be capable of creating barriers against attempts at destabilization.

Naturally enough, this presupposes: “au préalable la maîtrise de principes élémentaires issus de la tactique dans un rapport du faible au fort: contourner et prendre à revers, attaquer sur les points déficients, affaiblir et contre-argumenter

(avec une notion d'anticipation) plutôt que de désinformer.”¹² By no coincidence, the work group's conclusions at European level read as follows: “Intelligence économique et stratégie des entreprises du Commissariat général au Plan – dit rapport Martre 15 – ont mis en valeur l'importance de l'intelligence économique comme facteur immatériel de la compétitivité des organisations.”¹³ Precisely this awareness of the crucial importance of a conflict-oriented information dimension has brought economic operators to adapt themselves to the new equilibrium that is being established between competition and cooperation, obliging them to realize that by now industrial strategies depend essentially on the abilities of companies to access strategic news in order to better anticipate the markets and strategies of their competitors in the future. Precisely for this reason – the authors emphasize – the strategic management of economic

12 Christian Harbulot-Nicolas Moinet-Didier Lucas, *La guerre cognitive: A la recherche de la suprématie stratégique*, VI Forum intelligence économique de l'Association Aéronautique et Astronautique Française Menton, 25 septembre 2002, p. 8.

13 Ibidem, p. 8.

news has become one of the fundamental motors behind the overall performance of both nations and their companies. Despite the fact that significant results have been achieved, the “maîtrise des aspects offensifs de l’intelligence économique demeure encore imparfaite dans l’immense majorité des grandes organisations. Pourtant les procédés concurrentiels visant à l’affaiblissement ou l’élimination d’une entreprise ont un coût bien identifié”¹⁴.

Precisely for this reason it has by now become necessary to accept that these strategic choices no longer possess the unexpected or exceptional nature they had before. In a context of global competition, companies can no longer rest content with understanding and even anticipating the strategies of their competitors but “doit se préserver des attaques envers son patrimoine informationnel, et plus généralement à l’encontre de ses intérêts vitaux. Les aspects offensifs et défensifs sont à ce point imbriqués qu’il est difficile de les séparer et même dangereux de les penser distinctement”¹⁵. From this point of view,

14 Ibidem, p. 8.

15 Ibidem, p. 9.

European economic enterprises must defend themselves not only from American competition but also from the various antagonists who place the Capitalist system itself in doubt: “Parce que les États-unis sont les seuls en mesure d’asseoir une réelle supériorité dans l’ensemble des domaines fondamentaux, il importe que l’Europe s’arroge les principes tactiques et stratégiques de fragilisation ou de contrainte à l’encontre du fort. L’avènement de la doctrine de sécurité économique américaine a généré une mutation profonde des antagonismes concurrentiels. Par ailleurs, au-delà des menaces représentées par la concurrence, les entreprises vont de manière croissante être également confrontées aux courants contestataires issus de la société civile, et dont les revendications idéologiques seront en mesure de porter gravement atteinte à leur image. Les firmes de certains secteurs industriels (énergie, alimentation et grande distribution) figurent déjà parmi les cibles de telles organisations. L’opposition des qualités de l’esprit aux défauts du profit, des constantes humanitaires aux variables économiques, et les mobilisations des intellectuels contre les intérêts marchands monopolistiques sont déjà autant de motifs de déstabilisation que

seul un projet discursif de contre-argumentation peut rendre caduque.”¹⁶

In conclusion, the emergence of new information technologies – above and beyond their initial utopian prospects – has contributed to an exasperation of the competition while determining – the authors emphasize – a conflict that has not been seen since the end of the Cold War: “En effet, au temps de la guerre froide, la rivalité entre les deux blocs était prioritairement de nature idéologique, politique et militaire. La maîtrise de l’information relevait quasi exclusivement du champ géostratégique. Or, l’effondrement du bloc soviétique a transformé ce paradigme. Désormais, l’appréhension de l’information dépasse le seul cadre géostratégique classique et s’immisce en profondeur dans les sphères concurrentielles et sociale”.¹⁷

16 Ibidem, p. 9.

17 Ibidem, pp. 9-10.

The new challengers to intelligence

1. Strategic models and alter-globalization movements

The present tendency of strategic analysts is to alternate the focus of their observations, which shifts from the operative procedures and organizational structure of terrorism (Islamic, far left, far right, anarchic, ecoterrorist, separatist) to the need to underline the pervading action of organized crime before finally emphasizing the breaking points of critical information infrastructures. The point remains, however, that the worldwide achievement and consolidation of alter-globalization movements must lead the main intelligence agencies to recognize the threats posed to national security determined by the explicitly antagonistic purposes of such movements, and more precisely, the resolute opposition of alter-globalization movements to neoliberal institutions, national and supranational military institutions, and liberal democracy as well. To prove our assertion – the threats of the antagonism of alter-globalization movements – it will be sufficient to underline the

political relevance of the mobilization against the enlargement of the military base in Vicenza. According to the sociologist Gianni Piazza: “the first demands of the No Dal Molin movement were focused primarily on the health and environmental issues raised by the increased pollution (air, water, noise, electromagnetic and radioactive pollution) that the enlargement of the American base would cause and secondarily on the negative economic impact such expansion would have on local businesses. The entry of other players in the protest network (environmental associations, pacifist movements, anarchic groups and even more radical opponents such as squatter groups and certain trade unions) widened the interpretative patterns to other themes ranging: from the rights of local communities to decide on the use of their territories to repudiation of war, the presence of US and NATO bases, and the militarization of the territory. The No Dal Molin movement goes beyond the *Nimby* principle both because the players involved are not just local people (citizen committees) and include groups and associations with universalist identities (ecologists, trade unions, far left and extraparliamentary parties)

and because the protesters' concerns with local and global issues turn it into a NOPE mobilization with marked pacifist and antimilitarist features (local people do not want military bases in their own 'backyards' or in anyone else's) that invests directly the national and supranational level of government"¹⁸. After identifying the reasons, no less important are the protests carried out by the society and antagonist movements: "No Dal Molin diversifies the protests: from the occupation of Vicenza's railway station, to the permanent garrison in front of the disputed airport; from the sit-in in front of Montecitorio to the organization of the national demonstration of February 17th, which involved around 200,000 people across the streets of Vicenza. (...) In the meantime, once the works of construction have begun, the mobilization goes on with many initiatives, among which the occupation of the prefecture (...), of the railway tracks, the occupation of the site of the civilian airport and the roadblocks"¹⁹. In a nutshell, quoting Piazza

18 Francesca Longo – Antonello Mangano – Gianni Piazza – Pietro Saitta, *Come i problemi globali diventano locali*, Edizioni terrelibere.org, 2009.

19 Ibidem, pp. 24-25.

would be sufficient to emphasize the national and supranational impact of these demonstrations. On the Italian scene, Piazza observes: “The No Dal Molin mobilization hardly affected the national government at all, influencing the decision of the newborn Democratic Party to break its alliance with the far left wing (Sinistra Arcobaleno) at the latest political elections”²⁰; and concerning the international front: “despite the change in US administration from Bush to Obama, American and Italian politics regarding Camp Ederle does not change, as recently stated by national security vice-president of the Congress, Loretta Sanchez: ‘We will discuss the Dal Molin case at the G8 as well, but (...) there will not be any reassessments. All the decisions have already been taken by both governments. The plan and the budget have been voted by the Congress’ (Mancassola in www.ilgiornaledivicenza.it 16/04/09). Nevertheless, the Vicenza’s protest is still affecting the decisions of the US government and bringing the Pentagon to considering the idea of moving the F16 based in Aviano (Udine) to Poland due to the increasing ‘hostility’ towards American installations

20 Ibidem, pp. 26-27.

which started with the extension of the base in Vicenza”²¹. In other words, these movements have unquestionably carried out a real war against political, military and economic institutions, a war extremely different from the conventional type. In this regard, it is sufficient to mention the content distributed by organizations such as Pax Christi, Beati Costruttori di Pace, Ruckus Society, Centro Gandhi, Rete Lilliput, social forums, Attac, Disubbidienti, and others. Furthermore, the crucial role played by lay and religious scholars in theorizing the alter-globalization movement and its antagonism should also be emphasized, and it is equally important to consider the institutional context in which these ideological directions have emerged and developed: educational institutions, high schools and universities. Understanding the structure – undoubtedly reticular and well-organized as has been amply demonstrated both in Arquilla and the sociology of social movements – of alter-globalization movements and the ways they perform their antagonism, implies from a strategic point of view a necessary semantic widening of the meaning of war and strategy in order to

21 Ibidem, pp. 27-30.

clearly understand the syntax of alter-globalization movements. In this sense, the definitions of **war** given by *Busetto* and *Mini* are extremely effective for our purposes. Busetto defines war as the contrast between organized human groups of variable duration in which opponents attempt to impose their will on one another; Mini defines it as a contrast of purposes between organizations that use any violent or coercive means to impose their interest. Regarding the notion of **strategy**, the vast definition given by the *Dictionary of US Military Terms for Joint Usage* says that the art and science of the development and usage of political, economic, psychological and military forces necessary both in times of peace and war to increase the chances of victory is appropriate and effective at the same because a wide range of actors can be included. From here, contemporary strategic literature lets us classify the nature of alter-globalization movements at least theoretically.

1a. The French strategic analysis

Regarding the meaning of *misinformation*, in particular, the considerations of the French

strategist Loup Francart are very helpful in more clearly understanding the operative procedures of non-conventional conflict in the context of antagonist movements and maybe considered a key reading of the merely psychological dimension of antagonism. In his essay *La Guerre du sense* (Economica, 2000), the French scholar contextualizes misinformation in the field of mass information and observes that it is carried out by several individuals whose aims are propaganda and subversion. In particular, it points to detecting our weaknesses and our mistakes through proven manipulative techniques such as: 1) negotiation of information or part of it, 2) the denial of real information, 3) omission, 4) compression, 5) discrediting facts and/or intentions, and 6) accreditation of false information. *Propaganda* is closely related and aims to influence the masses by forcing them into a unitary vision of reality, and its primarily objective is to weaken the enemy and strengthen his own real or potential allies. Totalitarian propaganda has been particularly effective over the years because it has been able to create a new man, use specific topics (anti-Semitism, for instance), use semantic tools of

extreme symbolic value (such as evocative symbols, slogans and passwords), and use manipulative techniques like simplification, implication, the frequent use of the authorities' logic, isolation of the enemy, and the creation of scapegoats. It is usually associated with *indoctrination* which affects habits and behavior in its attempt to impose its own view of the reality and impose psychological submission through ideology to create a new order through fierce proselytism with psychic and physical imprisonment as its final goal. *Propaganda* is followed by *subversion* conducted through specific stages: discontent crystallization, mass intimidation, and then mass agitation and finally militarization. If undoubtedly – says the author – subversion in its entirety is part of an indirect strategy – and is therefore the weapon of the weak – cultural subversion aims firstly to dissolve consent and social ties, destroying them morally and psychologically, and secondly aims to impose a new order on society. In a political context, subversion attempts to paralyze public life and become effective on a social level through the formation of armed groups constituted of parallel

hierarchies with insurrection as its only purpose. Another important approach useful in understanding alter-globalization movements can be found in the considerations of *Christian Harbulot*, director of the **École du guerre économique**. The French school – which differs from the American and Chinese – uses the expression *cognitive war* to explain the polemical use of knowledge. Within a disciplinary profile, this covers psychology, sociology, linguistics and computer science, while within a historical profile, Sun Tzu, Mao, the Comintern, and Churchill can all be considered as important predecessors. Concerning modern theorists – in the French context – the analysts *Mucchielli* (with his essay *La Subversion*, CLC 1976), *Geré*, (with his volume *La Guerre Psychologique*, Economica, 1999) and of course *Harbulot* must be considered the most relevant. Nevertheless, from a historical point of view, the beginning of cognitive war can be traced back to the remarks made by Chassin, Blanc and especially Larechoy, Nemo and Trinquier, after the Indochina war and at the beginning of the Algerian war. As far as the doctrinal sphere of cognitive war is concerned,

according to the interpretation given by Harbulot, it implies both psychological and information warfare, and therefore the planned and systematic use of intoxication, misinformation and propaganda, or in other words, the use of techniques aimed at discrediting the enemy and neutralizing him through informative manipulation. The use of information and media technology has unquestionably widened the effect and impact of cognitive war. Moreover, examples that dramatically illustrate the dynamics of cognitive war are provided by Harbulot in the anti-globalization movement – and especially in Attac and in the Porto Alegre Manifesto – in citizens associations, and in the unscrupulous and exploitable use of law. On this point, and extremely useful to our purposes, is the analysis of the renowned French organization Attac made by two well-known scholars of EGE, Lucas and Triffau. Apart from the historical origin of Attac – on which French scholars often focus – other elements that clearly emerge from the analysis made by French analysts are fundamental in our context. First of all, Attac extended its antagonist action in a short period of time by pointing awareness to the

tragic consequences of GMOs, retirement funds, and the ultra-liberalistic economic politics of the WTO. Secondly, the alliance formed with trade unions, cultural and environmental associations to build a wide and dynamic network was made by considering the “gauche plurielle française” ideological nature of these associations. In this regard the French scholars observe – not without some pleasure – that a closer exam of the strategies “de cette association nous rappelle celles du Komintern”. In fact, the ideological background of the founders of Attac – Cassen and Ramonet in particular – has its roots in Marxism and allows Attac to combine the different souls of the French far left. Thirdly – observe ironically Lucas and Triffau – the addressees of Attac arguments, who are keen on rhetoric, are not economic experts but rather scholars without the necessary scientific skills and therefore easily prone to misinformation, and these people are asked to become the actors of a renewed democracy – participatory democracy – and a new anti-liberalistic globalization. Nowadays, Mucchielli’s subversion-related remark is a reading full of inspiration and topicality. In the author’s opinion, subversion was used

during the Second World War as an auxiliary instrument of traditional war. Starting from the Algerian war –a revolutionary war – subversion has been contextualized in a well-defined theoretical and strategic framework, that of psychological warfare. This, in practice, overcomes the boundary between war and peace, and in other words provides one of the best examples of non-conventional war unrelated to the rules that govern international law. It is in some ways something of an immaterial war, elusive and susceptible to metamorphosis and incarnation. Unlike revolution, subversive action or simply subversion is part of a preliminary action in which a part of a minority aims to take power. As a general rule, subversive action tries to achieve three objectives: demoralize the nation and dissolve the groups it is made of, discredit authority, its defenders and officials, and finally neutralize the masses in order to ease the taking of power. Nevertheless, it must be pointed out that the achievement of these three targets is possible only through the use of media, because without the press, radio and television subversion would be helpless. The author then clearly and briefly analyzes the main features of the subversion

purported objective. The nation is demoralized by the destruction of its values and the systematically spreading of doubt and suspicion on the defenders of its institutions; authority is discredited through systematic propaganda of widespread disrespect and mistrust. The neutralization of the masses is achieved by inhibiting the action of the masses and creating apathy. Identifying the techniques by which authority is discredited is extremely relevant to the author, and one of the most techniques most commonly adopted by subversive propaganda is to depict the power as inquisitorial and society as repressive. Particularly effective – suggests the author – is the subversive action of counter-power which from time to time depending on historical and political contexts – has changed through Black and student power.

1b. Non-violent action and alter-globalization movements

In the context of non-conventional conflict, non-violent action constitutes a strategy of great importance (see the remarks by Gandhi, Capitini, and Lanza del Vasto in this regard). Operational

syntax of non-violent action legitimately falls into the field of non-conventional conflict and therefore in the field of strategic studies, as has been amply proven by *Gene Sharp*, who recognizes the distinctly asymmetrical nature of non-violent action, acknowledging its affiliation with the remarks by *Liddel Hart* on indirect approach and guerrilla warfare. The approach of the American scholar represents a fourth interpretative approach which is useful in comprehending both the psychological and the merely operative dimensions of alter-globalization movements. To clarify the nature of non-violent conflict, Sharp compares it with guerrilla warfare, especially on the psychological and organizational level. Analyzing the analogies between non-violent action and guerrilla warfare according to Sharp's thesis, the psychological profile of non-violent activists must have specific features: full confidence (in values and choices), courage (of their ideas and actions), ability, and persistence. The tasks of the activist leader – like the guerrilla leader – are creating the strategy and the tactics, negotiating with the enemy, encouraging his or her comrades, choosing the right moment, and keeping

discipline. The technical and practical training of the activist is, in fact, decisive to the achievement of his aims. If the attrition of the enemy is one of the purposes of his actions, not only should he focus on the weaknesses (as in every conventional or non-conventional conflict), it will be necessary to aim at partial but well-strengthened victories. For this purpose, education and publications for the masses (in the field of psychological war) will promote the achievement of localized but strong victories (specifying that one of the most evident differences from guerrilla is the publication both of purposes and organization charts, whereas secrecy is essential to guerrilla movements). To detect a common ground with the strategy of guerrilla, non-violent action should catch the enemy off guard or, to use Sharp's words, drive the enemy out of his territory. In order to do that, taking and keeping the initiative are priority aspects of non-violent action, and carrying out a clear line of command will ease the action. Using psychological war, the activist should try to determine or use events to stir up a scandal (with consequent indignation of the public opinion) of national or international range to weaken the enemy's psychological strengths. In order to

weaken enemy strengths, using psychological war again, the activist should promote defection, internal division or mutiny in enemy lines. More generally speaking – as acknowledges Sharp – the final result will contribute to: 1) economically damaging the enemy; 2) creating disorder; 3) creating or increasing internal opposition. Also in the context of non-violent action, only three final options will be possible: a) total victory; b) total defeat or – in most cases – c) settlement. The extents in which non-violent action is effectively carried out according to Sharp are: I) protest and non-violent persuasion, II) social non-collaboration; III) economic non-collaboration; IV) political non-collaboration; V) non-violent intervention. It must be clarified that Sharp's review is extremely important to our purposes because it helps us to explain the meaning of non-conventional conflict. Here are the strategies for each area. Regarding the *first* field, the techniques used are as follows: public speech, opposition letters, subscription of public statements, slogans, banners, manifestos, flyers, brochures, books, newspapers, magazines, CDs, radio and television, groups of parliamentary pressure, picketing, counter-elections, exhibition

of flags and pictures, symbolic demanding, disrespectful acts, vigil, assemblies and protest meetings, theatre and music shows. In the *second* field, Sharp includes social sabotage (general and selective), strike, civil disobedience, withdrawal from social institutions due to protests, non-collaboration, emigration due to protest. In the *third* field, the operative procedures are the following: refusal of tax payment, lockout, strike (due to protest, lightning, sympathy, work-to-rule and selective). In the *fourth* field, Sharp indicates the following non-violent acts: boycott against legislative organs, against election and departments, withdrawal from educational institutions, boycott against pro-government organizations, non-collaboration with police forces and military institutions, refusal to accept the orders of public officials, refusal to dissolve the existing institutions, popular disobedience, sit-down, refusal to cooperate with conscriptions and deportations, hiding, assuming false identities and mutiny. In the end, in the last field, the *fifth*, the author underlines the opportunity to act as follows: fast, action of non-violent harassment, sit-in, stand-in occupation, ride-in occupation, foray, non-

violent occupation, creation of new social models, guerrilla theatre, alternative social institutions, selective patronage, and publication of top secret documents. The preliminary preparation – to start the non-violent action – is not different from that of the guerrilla. First of all, we should illustrate the aim of a mobilization, and then gather information not only on the aspects of the problems to be faced but also on the actors and the enemy institutions. From an organizational point of view, a net-like structure or affinity groups will preferably be chosen, avoiding a hierarchical formation wherever possible. Regarding the symbolic field, the use of manifestos, t-shirts, asphalt mosaics, graffiti or fake first pages could be a good solution. For psychological war the creation of a website that helps alternative information is a crucial step, as is the creation of a press office. In this sense, media activity should be built around a few simple rules: a) news should be about current affairs; b) the news should be given a dramatic connotation; c) the source to which dissent must be directed should be defined; d) the conditions required to create allies among culture, show business, politics, or religion should be provided to widen the

significance of the message or its “bursting effect”, but e) conditions should be especially provided to a nationwide or international scandal. In the end, if a big demonstration takes place f) mobilization should have an efficient director and good logistics (especially in view of arranged or non-arranged fights with police or fast retreats). Generally speaking, disorientation and over-identification (theorized by Blisset) would be crucial elements. Concerning techniques in different contexts, in cyber-warfare the activist will use: 1) mail bombing; 2) net-strike; 3) alternative radio and web for alternative information and misinformation; 4) national and international links. On a logistic level, the subversive agitator will use: 1) collective management to subvert hierarchical structures; 2) the creation of alternative and independent spaces (e.g. self-managed social centers); 3) shake march, and 4) lie-in.

2. Antagonist subjects and ideological orientations

In the light of these contributions it is easier – thanks to the sophisticated methodological

instrumentation presented in the first part of this essay – to detect the antagonist subjects and their ideological orientation. The activists who coordinate and fuel the practice of non-conventional conflicts, work in the following fields, in fact: 1) NGOs; 2) trade unions; 3) parties; 4) collectives; 5) self-managed social centers and 6) religious movements (of monotheistic, polytheistic and new age inspiration). The age of the activists runs in the wider range of sixteen to seventy and from one end of the social spectrum to another: 1) Lumpenproletariat; 2) unemployed; 3) temporary workers; 4) public and private employees; 5) scholars; 6) students; 7) free-lancers, and, to lesser extent, 8) managers. Their ideological orientation is multiform and varied because it involves: a) *anarchy* (more precisely, anarchic individualism, anarchic communism, anarchic trade unions, anarchic-insurrectionalism, and eco-anarchism); b) *libertarianism*, and can be placed between anarchism and the neocommunist left; c) *communism*, and, more precisely, marxist-leninist, trotskyst, luxembourg and castroist; d) *feminism* (communist, anarchic and eco-feminist); e) *belonging to trade unions* (from extreme left to

anarchic trade unions); f) *communism of catholic* and *third-world inspiration* present across the board but rooted in religious groups; g) new age and fundamentalist religion, and h) the *extra-parliamentary right* (including the French Nouvelle Droite and *naziskin/skinheads*). The motivations that inspire the antagonist movements range from elative, contained change to radical changes involving different 1) cultural; 2) psychological; 3) political; 4) social, and 5) economic fields.

3. Intelligence and counter-measures

In light of these considerations, the effective counter-measures must obviously be identified. The contributions from Nativi and Mini – after the G8 uprising in Genoa – are surely inspiring. **Andrea Nativi**'s remarks are particularly pertinent. According to the editor of *Rid*: “It is strange how the impending danger has been underestimated: Gothenburg, Nice and Prague were more than alarm bells. Still, the Black Blocs and similar enjoyed a surprise effect, there was no preparation with respect to the adopted techniques, with small groups, with local guides, communication system

(cellular phones and internet) and motorized explorers, logistics, medical support, psyop structure and communication, that acted with the same techniques of urban guerrilla warfare, striking everywhere, and then moving to another place, dislocating and provoking police officers who charged at innocent demonstrators, trying in vain to stop the violent ones”²². To prevent these actions, the author proposes some measures that can be greatly shared: “since the anti-globalization guerrillas are well-known to the police, it should not be difficult to create an European-international database, to identify many dangerous people, infiltrate the organizations, and then, close to an event, proceed with preventive measures, such as forced collection of signatures, with controls at the boundaries and interruption of Shengen treaty. The units dedicated to this task should be chosen formations, professionals, real *élite* units”²³. In fact – continues Nativi – “it is necessary to lead targeted actions, aimed to isolate, neutralize and arrest

22 Andrea Nativi, *Militari e poliziotti: le lezioni da imparare*, tratto da Limes, *L'Italia dopo Genova*, 2001, n. 4, p. 53.

23 Ibidem, p. 53.

leaders and violent protestors, without using only ‘blind’ charges, it is necessary to have a complete picture of the situation, fast deployed reserves, a higher mobility compared to the organized thugs. And it is important to note which results have been achieved by well trained troops as the airborne brigade Tuscania, used to public order operations in the Balkans, where demonstrators shoot regularly and snipers always lie in ambush”²⁴. Concerning the operative counter-measures to use, direct energy systems, foam-glues, nets and electronic goads should be taken into consideration. Under the information profile, difficulties increase: “If we move to the field of public order, information managing is more difficult, because there are hundreds of journalists, photographers and cameras directly on the field ready to shoot and tell whatever they want, not always what really happens. But police troops have (or should have) equivalent or more documentation, have or be able to access hundreds of fixed and moving cameras, direct shooting in the hot spots, helicopters. Most of the collected material, depurated by elements covered by investigative discretion, should be

24 Ibidem, p. 58.

wisely and fast broadcast. Not telling or telling badly and late can provoke a disaster if the reporters are faster and do a better close examination. And communication facilities that just work for press releases to present the results of routine activities are almost useless”²⁵. On the contrary – as Jean stated in the same issue of the magazine – alter-globalization members have demonstrated excellent skills in managing information. Also important are the remarks by **Gen. Fabio Mini**: “the violent protest of the global system (in this case equal to terrorism) is radical but does not propose ideological or social alternative patterns. In reality, violent contestation and terrorism tend to create a contrast and destabilization, exploiting the fear of the system itself and using its own means, among which, first of all, the resources of information warfare, of symbol warfare and the technologies of the Web”²⁶.

Once again the importance of information and misinformation control emerges; control which skillful use of communication instruments allows.

25 Ibidem, p. 58.

26 Fabio Mini, *Come vincere la guerra dei simboli*, tratto da Limes, *L'Italia dopo Genova*, 2001, n. 4, p. 37.

Nevertheless, Mini does not forget to remark how the complex articulation of the alter-globalization movement can be the result of a subtle American manipulation: “Since Seattle, where anti-globalization began basically in protection of the special interests of US producers, the road of violent protest has become more impracticable and less controllable. Anti-globalization has become a new ideological tool, new both for those (Russian and Chinese included) who see the return of US imperialism of the 60s in the globalization and those who think, also in good faith, that individual welfare and environmental protection values should prevail over the logic of profit and the expansion of the market. In this concern, the Seattle front has technically broadened (through misinformation and counter-intelligence) and been used as a *Leitmotiv* for State propaganda in countries like Russia that currently feel left out or penalized in the distribution of the dividends of Capitalism. It is not to be excluded that beyond ideal support, by those countries politically antagonist towards the Western system, there could be material support, especially funds, specialized personnel, and

training courses”²⁷. Then, in light of these remarks, Mini proposes a series of preemptive measures of great interest: “that is why the preemptive and active intervention of intelligence and counter-intelligence troops with national and international jurisdiction is necessary in controlling movements and mass demonstrations”²⁸. In particular, Mini suggests an “intelligence organization oriented towards collaboration and international integration, the integration of police forces in normative and organized unitary context, the integration of police and intelligence forces in an operative unitary context, the constant and coordinated action of all national (Armed Forces) and local (city police, national guards, and voluntary organizations for the security) security forces in the active control of the territory, and a specialized use of troops in the prevention and control intervention, the pursuit of prevention, that involves a total change in approach toward crime and mass demonstration control (from crowds in stadiums to protest demonstrations). Of course, this implies the specialization of small units in crowd controlling

27 Ibidem, p. 37.

28 Ibidem, p. 38.

techniques using monitoring technologies and early intervention, education and training of police troops in the means of symbol, psychological, and information warfare and the acquisition of technologically advanced means of crowd control: from audio and video systems to air and earth identification systems and the identification of violence and weapon focus, to physical and phlegmatic deterrents (high pressure hydrants, foam generators, chemical, tear, urticating and temporarily incapacitating agents) to non-lethal weapons”²⁹.

In summary, using the remarks of Nativi and Mini, intelligence agencies should carry out proper counter-measures when facing these actors. Starting from the observation that the content and strategies of antagonist movement emerge very clearly from open sources (internet websites, periodic and aperiodic publications, essays, and so on), the best counter-measures would be: 1) improving (where extremely necessary) the intelligence and counter-intelligence apparatus that must be the first defensive line in any serious counter-measure program; 2) integration between

29 Ibidem, pp. 38-39.

police and intelligence; 3) widespread control of the territory through planned and permanent collaboration between military institutions and local police; 4) the creation of specialized forces able to move on different levels (psywarfare, informatics warfare and cyberwarfare) similar to Special Forces; 5) the use of non-lethal weapons against mass violence or small groups promoting violence; 6) the creation of an international database to interpolate data; 7) the creation of specific training centers which would collaborate with officials from the Defense and the Ministry of the Interior; 8) avoiding the organization of international events which give credibility to activists and to their motivations; 9) stimulating self discipline in the mass media (even through evident or concealed institutional pressure); 10) planning that dissolves the artificial distinction between homeland and foreign security that masks the global nature of non-conventional conflict; 11) intelligence control that moves on horizontal level and invests different social contexts; 12) contrasting actions kept in secrecy whenever necessary; 13) it would be fundamental to modify criminal law; 14) the use of misinformation and

the infiltration of provocative agents for control and sabotage; 15) the control of funding sources and freezing when necessary; 16) the exploitation thanks to infiltrators of rivalries between similar organizations; 17) the creation of supranational alliances among intelligences to contrast potential national and international directors (such as the World Social Forum) and 18) the discretionary use of retaliation when necessary if unlikely when regeneration towards guerrilla or terrorism arises (such as the degeneration achieved by the movements in the 60s or the protests in Seattle or the G8 in Genoa). The institutions involved in this massive offensive could use a whole set of counter-measures theorized and applied both by the American counter-insurgency school and by the French school of revolutionary warfare.

The Social Network, the alter-globalization movement, and counter-forums

Introduction

An attentive analysis of the ways in which the alter-globalization galaxy enacts its antagonism to the system, especially in regard to national and transnational political, economic and military institutions, reveals both how the alter-globalization movement implements its antagonistic demands above all through *social networks* and *counter-forums* and the extent to which it is capable of mobilizing non-homogeneous groups, often by exerting substantial influence on the choices made by political decision-makers on one hand, and capable of implementing vast and widespread disinformation campaigns on the other. Like all technological instruments, also social networks can cut both ways: like two-faced Janus, they can incite terrorist violence or contribute to the consolidation of antagonist ideologies by catalyzing discontent or just as equally consolidate consensus around national and super-national political and/or military institutions. Attempts at

censure in today's democracy would be destined to fail because the web offers such a wide variety of technological solutions that any type of shutdown imposed could be bypassed. Even if the manipulation of information is not only possible but desirable in a context of information warfare between institutions and movements or between national institutions themselves, in fact, the web offers the possibility to provide counter-information also through film footage and photos taken by cell phones and transmitted via Youtube. As regards the role played by information in the contexts of both sociology and social psychology, the domination of a particular piece of information and the ability to spread it can have such profound effect on civil society that Gen. Sullivan, ex-Chief of General Staff of the US Army, once claimed that information is the equivalent of a victory on the battlefield. On the other hand, as aptly noted by Luther Blisset, theoretician of anti-establishment media warfare, it is necessary to act within the mass media communication system and fight the power structure using its own arms. In light of these considerations, the definition of war as “...*a struggle of opposing wills between organizations*

that use any violent or coercive means (armed conflict, cold war, evident and occult coercion) available to impose their own best interests or point of view” provided by Gen. Fabio Mini appears more appropriate than ever. The relevance of this definition depends on the absence of the adjective “military” and the presence of the expression “any struggle” between organizations. This means that the previous limit on the participants in traditional war – opposing nations – disappears and gives way to an opposition between nations and economic or social groups and/or political and other types of organization. In this light, also the definition provided of *netwar* by Arquilla and Ronfeldt is extremely interesting because it amounts to the aggregate of activities conducted for the purpose of disturbing, damaging or modifying what a determined population knows or thinks it knows about itself and its surroundings. In other words, what the antagonists have promoted and continue to promote through the social network may be considered warfare strategy in the Minian sense of the term, and more exactly, in information warfare, and therefore in propaganda and deception or altered, deceitful and/or misleading information.

As correctly observed by Capt. Alfonso Montagnose, the *Social Media* are instruments of mass communication and relation whose utilization takes place in *cyberspace* using *hardware* (Internet, cell phones, pc, etc.) and *software* (Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, LinkedIn, YouTube, etc.). Compared to traditional media channels, social media users can interact and overcome geographic limits in real-time. Yet when social networks are used in an asymmetric context of conflict (with a governmental institution or a national or multinational industry one on side with a group of alter-globalization activists on the other, for example), the opposition takes form alternately in psychological warfare (through disinformation and propaganda) and antagonistic mobilization with the expenditure of reduced resources. The political and cultural subjects that have enacted asymmetric-type oppositions can largely be grouped as national subversive groups (Marxist-Leninist groups, anarchical-insurrectionist groups); antagonist movements/extra-parliamentary powers (anti-global, environmental protection, anti-nuclear power groups, xenophobe groups, organized sports hooligans, right-wing extremist groups); non-profit

associations/foundations; religious groups, and trade union/political party groups. Appropriately, Capt. Montagnese mentions the comments of Gen. Francesco Lombardi, Ce.Mi.S.S. Military Sociology Department vice-Director and Head, who emphasizes how the protest movements of the future will still manifest themselves through physical conflict, the illegal occupation of public space, demonstrations, and rioting, and as in the past will still have antagonistic ends, but will differ from those of the past in the interaction between the demonstrators themselves, between the demonstrators and the power against them, and between the demonstrators and the world at large.

Strategic *warning* must certainly be included among the counter-measures to be enacted, and *horizon scanning* is extremely important because as noted by Montagnese it permits threat trends to be monitored in the mid- and long-term, the orientation of opponent force to be identified, and their evolution to be predicted. Specifically, national security institutes must draft a *Social Media Strategy* capable of alternating offensive activity through influence, *deception*, and propaganda with defensive activities like counter-

propaganda, counter-interference, and the *early warning* conducted through the direct or indirect use of *Social Media*.

The Social Network and alter-globalization

In the context of the antagonism of the alter-globalization movements, the independent networks developed by civil society in the wake of Seattle (such as Indymedia, for example) have proven to be fundamentally important in globalizing the antagonism and making it more widespread and efficacious; these activists have made use of independent networks to convey clearly defined ideological content: ecologist, pacifist, anti-militarist, anti-capitalistic. In such regard, the promoters of these networks, whether consciously or unconsciously, have adopted as reference at the levels of both topic and mobilization technique the protest movements of the '60s, '70s and '80s in their implementation of both virtual and operative activism. The structure of these networks is naturally horizontal and this affords a greater degree of freedom in the flow of information while precluding every form of hierarchy similar

to those of traditional political organizations. At the base of these networks lies the conviction of the existence of a universal right to knowledge and networking and that this right is an essential component in the exercise of the rights of citizenship in the context of participative democracy. It is enough to consider in this regard the networks of *hacker movements* that trace their roots to the social movements of '70s, the cyberpunk/artistic avant-garde, internationalism, and the self-managed social centers in general. Specifically, during an encounter in Naples in March 2001 against the Global forum, the Italian *hacker movement* implemented a technique known as *netstrike* designed to jam institutional internet sites. Again in 2001, but this time in Genoa, the independent networks were able to create a media center capable of efficacious counter-information for the purpose of de-legitimizing the work of the law enforcement system. In Italy, the *Isola nella rete* – the most significant entity inside the independent network is undoubtedly important. Founded as an association in the mid-'90s with the purpose of placing communication and mobilization tools at the disposal of social

movements, through an extensive network of links, the association has constructed an authentic virtual community of the antagonists. It is enough to consider that a dossier entitled “Under Accusation” that documents the violations of individual rights during the Genoa demonstration has been created in the *Isole nella rete* and that the new media sociologists use the expression *controversial* political communication to define this new communication vehicle, intending the combination of techniques or repertory of communication actions adopted to de-legitimize national, transnational and/or determined representatives of the same as an expansion of democracy. This new approach in communication has opened representative democracy to alternating direct and indirect criticism of increasingly wider scope. Another expression employed by mass-media sociologists is “*counter-democracy*”, which is used to emphasize the increasingly important role played by alter-globalization movements in monitoring and criticizing the institutions that hold political and economy power in blogs, forums, on-line campaigns, and mailing lists as tools that coordinate the activities of different groups. In this

sense, *Facebook* becomes a fundamentally important instrument of counter-information because when it is used in an antagonist context, it can transform the consumption of news articles into a participative and antagonist process at both virtual and physical level. In this regard, the experience of the *Popolo viola* bears much significance. Using Facebook, it has proven capable of organizing at national level a campaign such as the one entitled *No Berlusconi day* with great visibility. Another example of political aggregation with antagonist ends in mind is provided by *Beppe Grillo's blog*, which has now become a new place of meeting, encounter, and political interaction among citizens. This blog succeeds in attracting fairly constantly a considerable participation of around 200,000 visits a day and over 1000 comments on every single posted entry; beyond that, the blog has led to the birth of around 400 local groups in over 200 cities under the name *Amici di Beppe Grillo* (Friends of Beppe Grillo). The blog's operative efficacy is demonstrated by the fact that between 2007 and 2008 it proved capable of collecting from a minimum of 350,000 to a maximum of 1,350,000

signatures for a law proposal made at popular demand. At international level, another successful example of popular mobilization is certainly the American movement known as *MoveOn.org*, which even if it cannot be considered unequivocally a part of the alter-globalization movement has, in any case, dealt with similar questions and adopts similar operating methods. In the context of new media sociology, this organization is known as a *meta organization*, meaning that it is radically decentralized and possesses a number of specific characteristics, including that of consisting of an organizational core of limited dimensions that serves as both facilitator and producer of organizational processes. First of all, it has smaller size than traditional organizations because its nucleus oscillates between 20-30 people; secondly this organization does not have a physical office and therefore has no administration costs. In other words, in legal terms, *MoveOn.org* resembles a cross-linked non-profit organization. This organization has a mailing list of 5 million members and is currently the most authoritative pressure group on the US political scene at network level. Its significance is demonstrated by its role in

a promotional campaign for Obama that raised 88 million dollars in 2008 and provided the future president with 933,000 volunteers. Back on the Italian scene, much of the alter-globalization movement has used freeware software to create its own websites on the basis of precise assumptions: a common struggle against multinationals and their influence, and the establishment of an alternative society to the current one based on the freedom of information and spontaneous self-organization. Above and beyond the purely idealistic motivation, it is evident that the use of freeware gives anti-global movements an undeniable economic advantage. It is no coincidence that during the 2005 World Social Forum held in Porto Alegre, Brazilian President Lula committed his nation to both freeware and open-source software. One of the most important characteristics of the anti-global organizations that use the telematic network is certainly the promotion of alternative information that lets the public participate firsthand in the management of certain aspects of communication, provides additional documentation to sympathizers of determined movements like the peace movement or the

antagonistic left. Another extremely important aspect is the need to integrate information with widespread work in the territory by creating, for example, local branches that collect all the most pertinent information on the issues under consideration. Another alternative communication tool is certainly TeleStreet, or in other words, “street television” that is closely linked to the local dimension. In purely technical terms, street television is born in a neighborhood or some other small center of inhabitation. Historically speaking, street tv was born with the 1977 movement and more precisely in the free radio movement. One particularly important event regarding street tv occurred in 2003, the year when numerous Italian tv activists promoted the widespread flying of rainbow-colored peace flags in their towns. The public addressed by Italian anti-global movements – prevalently the people who use Internet through websites and mailing lists – is a global and therefore heterogeneous one. The websites *Indymedia*, *ControllArmi* and *Peacelink* are undoubtedly particularly significant in the context of alter-globalization movements. *ControllArmi*, for example, is nothing but a website that runs by

the *Rete Italiana per il Disarmo* (Italian Disarmament Network) set up in March 2004. This network has proven capable of mobilizing its resources to report the amendments made to Law No. 185 regulating arms exports; in particular, ControllArmi was born precisely to defend Law No. 185 and obtained an impressive and significant success after applying pressure to certain influential representatives of parliamentary institutions. The establishment of ControllArmi arose from the need to exert short-term control over arms sales on one hand and general disarmament in the long-term on the other. The presence of a number of important alter-global movements such as Rete Lilluput, Attac, Arci, Acli, Fiom-Cgil, Fiom-Cisl, Pax Christi, Un ponte per..., and Emergency in the organization is significant. The study of arms and the general disarmament desired in the future can be seen in the organization's detailed analysis of every aspect of the world of arms, starting from small arms and covering international arms brokers, nuclear arms, depleted uranium, and the economic and political problems linked to the legal and otherwise exportation of arms. Also extremely interesting are the organization's bonds

with *Iansa* – the global small arms control movement founded in England – and with *Safer World* set up to monitor and study armaments; equally significant is the pressure exerted on the European Parliament – together with Safer World – in the defense of Law No. 185.

Counter-forums and the alter-globalization movement

According to the alter-globalization movements, only diplomats or government representatives who were never publicly elected usually take part in the world's decision-making summits, but this, on the contrary, reflects a balance of power between nations. In other words, the alter-globalization movements lay claim to a logic of direct democracy that would enable civil society movements to become key players on the international scene. The counter-forums are characterized as unofficial meetings that deal with the same problems as traditional forums but with a deeply critical stance in regard to the choices made by governments and even those of neo-liberal companies on one hand, and on the other, the counter-forums utilize operative methods far different from those used by traditional ones (including counter-information, civil disobedience, etc.). From the historical point of view, counter-forums first came into existence in the '60s with the Tribunal against war crimes in Vietnam created in 1967 and then in the Permanent Peoples' Tribunal founded in Algiers in 1976 and

instituted in definitive form in 1979. Naturally enough the composition of these tribunals – far from being impartial and unbiased – reflects world views with a strong ideological slant: in favor of the under-developed world, anti-capitalist and anti-militarist. Another historical root of the counter-forums that Mario Pianta identifies lies in the Peace movements that developed during the '80s. Experts on alter-global movements explicitly acknowledge the extent to which experiences in the leftist and ecologist movements of the '70s and '80s were fundamentally important because a large part of the activists on these fronts continued their activities in alter-globalization movements. As regards the risk posed to national and transnational military institutes, it must be remembered that some of these counter-forums have questioned the need for the existence of NATO and demanded the democratization of the UN, intending by such term the widespread presence of alter-globalization organizations in UN decision-making processes. From the historical point of view, the first counter-forum undoubtedly took place in Seattle (1999) and was organized alternately by structured and unstructured groups and an articulated organization

that succeeded in bringing 60,000 people to the city. The media impact created by the counter-forum was such to raise hopes of a grass-roots globalization to be achieved precisely through such counter-forums. The Davos counter-forum of 2000, the counter-forum held in April in Washington, the one held in May, 2000 in New York called the Millennium Forum with 1200 participants must also be remembered in this sense. The apogee of such counter-forums was certainly the one held in Porto Alegre in January 2000, the fruit of an alliance between the Brazilian Workers' Party, the trade unions, and the Sem Terra and Attac movements. This event with worldwide media coverage featured the participation of 20,000 activists from every continent and was the launching pad for the counter-forum to the G8 meeting in Genoa held in July, 2001. Naturally enough, one of the reasons for which these counter-forums developed is to pose a challenge to the nation-state system and the neo-Liberalist economy on the political and economic levels. The strategy pursued by the exponents of these counter-forums was – to use Mario Pianta's expression – alternately reformist (this approach centers its

attention on procedural change and specific political choices and is a strategy developed by the NGOs for the purpose of implementing integration with inter-governmental organizations wherever possible), radical alternative (an approach that places existing concentrations of power in serious doubt and indicates new models of collective actions such as new democratic structures as alternatives to neo-Liberalist structures), and lastly the strategy of resistance, which has been particularly developed in the undeveloped world for the purpose of implementing coordinated antagonistic action at national and international level. The strategy pursued so far by institutions – above and beyond the legitimate repression of manifestations of violence – has consisted in enacting surface level modifications in their political plans on one hand and in integration through co-opting whenever possible, on the other. The UN has chosen to accept some of the demands made by civil society and to acknowledge the validity of certain anti-Liberalist choices made by numerous NGOs, permitting these latter in this way to increase the gap between transnational institutions and intensify – for example – the

contrast between decisions made by NATO and those made by the UN. At any rate, it is clear that the long-term strategy pursued by the counter-forums is to implement real and therefore structural change in the system. In this sense, it is well worth analyzing certain aspects of the document issued by the **Assembly of Young People's UN** in Perugia, Italy, in September 1995. Firstly, it is clear that the alter-global movement wishes to convey all transnational institutions into the United Nations system, and that member nations must abandon thinking in terms of national security as the first step towards real disarmament (and the conversion of national military institutions in an international police force under the authority or command of the United Nations). It also emerges that nations must create an unarmed, non-violent force in replacement of today's military, and lastly, that education in peace and human rights must be initiated in public schools and training institutes. The considerations made in the *Tavola della pace* (The Peace Table) in the *Documents of the Assembly of the People's UN* drafted in Perugia between 1995 and 1999 are particularly interesting. First of all, the authors of this document express

the need to bring institutions like the World Monetary Fund and the World Bank under the control of the United Nations; they also expound the concept that member nations must abandon thinking in terms of national security once and for all; thirdly – and consequently – the pacifism theorized in the document implies disarmament, the cessation of the international arms trade, the conversion of national military institutions in an international police force under the authority or command of the United Nations, and above all the creation of an unarmed, non-violent force in gradual replacement of today's military. In light of these proposals, the refusal of the document's authors to legitimize rightful warfare or interference on humanitarian grounds is clearly evident; on the other hand, the authors express the need to internationalize penal law through international courts, to condemn neo-Liberalism, and above all, emphasize the determinant role that must be played by organizations coming from civil society if a positive change is to be made, organizations that play – and can play – a determinant role in the establishment of world peace, a fair economy enhanced by solidarity, the promotion of human

rights and democracy. Equally significant is the idea of education that emerges clearly from the document: the authors of the Tavola della pace also emphasize the need to promote education in the principles of world peace, human rights, and non-violence in the curricula of public schools. These proposals formulated at the Tavola della pace are democratic in nature but a more careful reading – especially one capable of identifying the operative implications of these proposals – clearly reveals their substantially antagonistic nature, and therefore one of radical rupture with the existing order. The proposals that the Tavola della Pace intends to achieve are as follows: first of all the dismantling of international trade organizations and the gaining of access to the nerve centers of transnational power by first gaining credit at the institutional level at UN level, the substitution of existing institutions for the purpose of planning an international policy and economics completely opposed to the one in existence. Secondly, the Tavola della pace aims at the elimination of the existing national and transnational military institutions and their substitution with non-violent armed force. The unswerving and radical rejection

of neo-Liberalism – the third aspect – induces the document's authors to identify in fair trade and solidarity organizations – such as alternative banks such as the ethical or sustainable banks – the only feasible alternatives capable of dismantling the current commercial organizations founded on the principle of mere capitalistic profit. Lastly, the fourth aspect, the emphasis posed on educating young people in the principles of peace at school and university level, really aims at systematic psychological warfare through widespread disinformation to induce them to reject the legitimacy of military institutions, which are portrayed only as illegitimate and immoral institutions. In short, the program formulated by the Tavola della pace is to every effect a political program – and one wide in scope, to be sure – that aims at taking power – even with the use of non-violent instruments (and therefore rejecting the traditional techniques or military overthrow, terrorism or guerilla warfare) and replacing the existing military and economic institutions with others controlled by delegates from lay and religious organizations of pacifist and alter-globalization origin.

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Disinformation and subversive agitation in the alterglobal movement

Overview

The analysis and study of the operating methods of social movements and the ideological content linked to the same, can easily be traced on the basis of open sources, which after adequate reinterpretation using the methodological approach to sociology of social movements, and the French school of psychological warfare, those of Géré and Pisano in particular, reveal the significant role that alterglobal movements play in the social destabilization of political (both local and national), military (national, NATO, and USA), economic (nationals and super-national), and training (public schools and universities) institutions.

In demonstration of the above, **Part 1** of this essay will focus on a number of highly significant Italian alterglobal movements with an initial analysis of the No Dal Molin movement using the sociological approach to social movements, and in particular, the analyses made by Gianni Piazza and Loris Caruso (partially considered in previous articles).

Our attention will then be directed to an analysis of the military infrastructures developed by the Comitato Pace e Disarmo (Peace and Disarmament Committee) originating from a study group of the Rete Lilliput network in Italy's Campania region. We will then consider the sociological analysis of the No TAV Movement made by Donatella Della Porta, the leading Italian expert on alterglobal movements. Lastly, we will analyze the Onda (Wave) movement in light of the thought of social movement sociologist Loris Caruso. **Part 2** of this essay will concentrate on the role played by disinformation in the context of the alterglobal movement and a number of highly significant alterglobal movement documents through an analysis of the same using Géré's approach, on one hand, and using Pisano's interpretative grid to contextualizing the operating methods of the alterglobal movement, on the other.

Part 1

1

According to the sociologist Gianni Piazza:

“the first demands of No Dal Molin movement were mainly focused on health and environmental issues due to the increase of pollution (air, water, noise, electromagnetic and radioactive pollution), which the enlargement of the American base would cause, besides the negative economic impact on the residents’ business; yet, the entry of other players in the network of the protest (environmental association, pacifist movements, anarchic groups and more radicals opponents such as social centers and trade unions) widened the interpretative patterns to other themes: from the rights of local communities to decide on the use of their territories, to repudiation of war, of Us and NATO bases and of the militarization of the territory. The No Dal Molin mobilization goes past the *Nimby* principle, not only because the players involved are not just local people (citizens committees), but also groups and associations with universalist identities (ecologists, trade unions, far left and extraparliamentary parties); but also because those who protest are concerned both with local and global issues, turning it into a NOPE mobilization, with heavy pacifist and antimilitarist features (local people do not want military bases

neither in their ‘backyard’, nor in someone else’s), investing directly the national and supranational level of government”³⁰. Once detected the reasons, not less important are the protests carried out by the society and antagonist movements: “No Dal Molin diversifies the protests: from the occupation of Vicenza’s railway station, to the permanent garrison in front of the disputed airport; from the sit-in in front of Montecitorio to the organization of the national demonstration of February 17th, which involved around 200,000 people across the streets of Vicenza. (...) In the meantime, once the works of construction have begun, the mobilization goes on with many initiatives, among which the occupation of the prefecture (...), of the railway tracks, the occupation of the site of the civilian airport and the roadblocks”³¹. In few words – to emphasize the national and supranational impact of these demonstrations – quoting Piazza would be sufficient. Regarding the Italian scene, Piazza observes: “No Dal

30 Francesca Longo – Antonello Mangano – Gianni Piazza – Pietro Saitta, *Come i problemi globali diventano locali*, Edizioni terrelibere.org, 2009.

31 Ibidem, pp. 24-25.

Molin mobilization hardly affected the national government as well, influencing the decision of the newborn Democratic Party to break its alliance with the far left wing (Sinistra Arcobaleno) at the latest political elections”³²; and concerning the international front: “despite the change of the Us administration from Bush to Obama, American and Italian politics regarding Camp Ederle does not change, as recently stated the national security vice-president of the Congress, Loretta Sanchez: ‘We will discuss the Dal Molin case at the G8 as well, but (...) there will not be any reassessments. All the decisions have already been taken by both governments. The plan and the budget have been voted by the Congress’ (Mancassola in www.ilgiornaledivicenza.it 16/04/09). Nevertheless, the protest of Vicenza is still affecting the decisions of the Us government, bringing the Pentagon to considering the idea of moving the F16 based in Aviano (Udine) to Poland, due to the increasing ‘hostility’ towards American installations which started with the extension of the base in Vicenza.”³³ The protest against the Dal Molin military airbase

32 Ibidem, pp. 26-27.

33 Ibidem, pp. 27-30.

in Vicenza began in 2006 and was organized by the *Coordinamento dei comitati cittadini* and the *Osservatorio contro le servitù militare*. The ideological composition of the first organization – Caruso points out – has Catholic and trade union origins (as assessed by Caruso), while the second, born in 2006, was developed by activist social centers, Emergency, Ya Basta!, the CGIL national trade union, the Verdi/Green party and the ARCI Italian Recreation and Cultural Association (which among other initiatives, this organization had promoted events against both the European Gendarmerie and the Carabinieri Peace-keeping Training Center). The reasons behind the protest lie in the little or entire lack of use of instruments of democracy in the decision-making process that led to the Italian government's consent to the expansion of the US military airbase in Vicenza, in its radical critique of the moderation and opportunism of the moderate Left led by Romano Prodi, in its rejection of political parties as institutions and of representative democracy in general, in the profoundly anti-military pacifism that was both Catholic and non-sectarian at the same time, in its refusal of consumerism and capitalism, and lastly,

in the policy of power politics dictated by political realism. The operating methods enacted include – using Pisano’s expression – the techniques typical of subversive action: the **collection of signatures to petitions** – supported by both the Lega Ambiente Environmental Defense League and the Rete Lilliput network –, the **legal action** (appeal to the TAR Regional Administrative Court through the Codacons Consumer Defense Association), the **torchlight procession**, the **occupation** of the square in front of City Hall, the **Argentine practice of beating pots and pans as drums**, the **unauthorized entry** into the Vicenza Prefecture and City Council meeting, the **occupation** of the Basilica built by Palladio and Vicenza Airport, **roadblocks** outside the airbase and **obstructing the laying** of optical fibre in the airbase area. Statistics show as many as 42 protest demonstrations in 2007. The efficacy and numbers of these demonstrations gradually decreased in the following years, however: “they are having more and more trouble involving in the protest the ample sectors of the local population that they had succeeded in involving in previous years. The definitive groundbreaking of construction

work eroded the basis for the sense of efficacy of protest actions. (...) It may be said that the opposition to the new airbase was defeated.”³⁴. The Yes to Dal Molin movement – in other words, the citizens in favor of the expansion of the airbase – was composed primarily by centrist-rightwing coalitions in the Vicenza City Council, Confindustria, the Association of Italian Industries, Confcommercio, the General Commerce Confederation, Confartigianato, the craft sector’s labor organization, and Confagricoltura, the Italian Farmer’s Confederation, a coalition that did not prove capable of obtaining significant consensus with the public or effectively contrasting the protest movement, however. Despite their wavering and ambiguous stance, there is no doubt that the RC Renewed Communist Party, the PCDI Italian Communist Party, the Verdi/Green party and the CGIL national trade union provided significant support, at least at the outset. Thanks to support from organizations of this kind, the number of people who took part in the demonstration against

34 Loris Caruso, *Il territorio della politica. La nuova partecipazione di massa nei movimenti No Tav e No Dal Molin*, Franco Angeli, 2011, p. 86.

the expansion of the military airbase eventually reached 15,000 participants. Catholic organizations like Famiglie per la Pace (Families for Peace), the previously mentioned Rete Lilliput network, ACLI, the Italian Catholic Workers' Association, the Beati costruttori di pace, and AGESCI, the Italian Boy Scouts and Girl Guides Association were particularly significant in their opposition to the expansion of the airbase. Internal divisions in the center-leftwing coalition (the support given by Prodi and Parisi to the expansion of the airbase contrasted with the opposition of the radical left) had a profound political significance: "The Dal Molin question contributed to the fall of the Prodi government. Two senators – Rossi and Turigliatto – nearly became local heroes in both Vicenza and Val di Susa because they were considered counter-examples to the existing model of politician"³⁵ characterized by opportunism and double-crossing. In other words, we cannot fail to note, first of all, the determinant role played by the activist social centers and the local trade unions; secondly, the significance of Catholicism (the ACLI, the Beati i costruttori di pace, the Rete Lilliput network, and

35 Ibidem, p. 79.

AGESCI); thirdly, as occurred during the war in Kosovo, also this case revealed the ambiguous role of the antagonist left – and particularly the RC Renewed Communist Party and the PCDI Italian Communist Party – who were more interested in using this public dissent to expand their own electoral base than in meeting the real needs of the population; fourthly, despite the complex articulation of these demonstrations and their wide consensus, their objectives were not obtained also due to the strong bonds between Italy and the United States of America. In conclusion, above and beyond the ideological differences and the different choices of operating methods that distinguished the Catholic coalition and the antagonistic left in their opposition to the Dal Molin airbase, it is undeniable that these organizations composed and continue to compose the centre of gravity of the Italian alterglobal movement. At the end of his book, Caruso draws analogies between these antagonist movements and the 1968 movement (in the criticism by both of representative democracy and traditional leftwing parties) with their anti-Americanism, radical anti-Militarism, and the combat techniques that demonstrate the extreme

threat to national security posed by the No Global movement.

The book issued instead by the *Comitato pace e disarmo* on NATO and USA military bases in Italy is extremely important for our purposes especially due to the proposals and the critical observations it contains. On the whole, the book is characterized by its explicit advocacy of radical pacifism. The first part of the book is particularly interesting for the statements made by the Bishop of Caserta Monsignor Raffaele Nogaro, who believes that the production of arms is an absolute evil in itself and that humanitarian operations in the form of warfare export only violence, and that the so-called peace-keeping missions are nothing but armed invasions. From the purely institutional point of view – the prelate points out – the Catholic Church should explicitly condemn the increase of Italy's military expenditure. As regards the ideological advent of the *Comitato pace e disarmo* (Peace and Disarmament Committee), the editor states that it was the creation of a Rete Lilliput study group on the presence of military bases in Italy: in particular, Angelica Romano sanctions the complete

legitimacy of the use of physical **obstruction**, telephone **obstruction**, unauthorized **occupation**, **popular protest laws** and **permanent garrisons** as legitimate means of non-violent protest. A large part of the book is dedicated to a detailed analysis of the US infrastructure in Italian territory and its cost. Particularly significant are the authors' highly critical observations of the increasingly closer bonds between universities and the military and defense industry institutions in Napoli, forms of cooperation perceived as the militarization of both the territory and the university world. The feasible alternatives are provided towards the end of the book, and may be easily summarized as follows: the NATO and US military bases must be eliminated or converted for civilian use, unarmed, non-violent civilian defense must be pursued, and lastly, conscientious objection by the scientists involved in the development and construction of arms must be promoted.

2

In the essay by Donatella della Porta and Gianni Piazza, both the objectives and the methods of anti-TAV protest movement by both local communities

and other social and cultural elements (coming from the worlds of trade unions, pacifism, anarchy, environmental defense, etc.) are interpreted in terms of social movement sociology. As is commonly known, the protest against high-speed trains was started in 1990 through the coordination of various environmental protection associations, which together with other associations effectively mobilized in 1991 against a convention organized by Confindustria, Fiat, the FS National Railways and the Regional authorities, promoted in support of the validity of the principles behind the TAV. The associations involved in the mobilization were particularly significant Gruppo Habitat, founded by Lega Ambiente, the WWF, and Prenatura. These organizations were subsequently joined by local associations, trade unions, and the lower Val di Susa mountain communities. In this phase lasting from 1995 to 1997, the protest campaign was constructed to both defend the territory and support the rights of local populations to decide their own destiny. Starting in 2003 – thanks also to the involvement of similar French associations – the protest began taking form in direct action, and more specifically, through **occupation**,

roadblocks on the motorway, and **counter-cultural and counter-informational events** that culminated in the peaceful **protest march** in 2003 by 20,000 people. The importance of the motives for protest was such to drive the COBAS local trade unions, the Verdi/Green party, and the RC and PCDI political parties to support the claims of the citizens. An important role was also played by the activist social centers, especially in the creation of the so-called anti-TAV protest campgrounds. The scale of the citizen's protest brought persons of unquestionable popularity and credibility on the Italian religious pacifism panorama – Padre Zanutelli, first, and then also Don Vitaliano della Sala – to make their own contribution to the protest, which intensified further in 2005 when the associations above were joined by various student unions, the FIOM-CGIL national trade unions, the ARCI, the World Social Forum, and numerous smaller anarchist movements. The essay's authors ascribe particular interest to the role played by the activist social centers, their widespread **counter-information activity**, and all the experience and skill in organizing protest activity they brought to the local protest movement. Another important

antagonist is the trade union, and there is no doubt that alongside the COBAS locals also the FIOM national union played an important role. The authors naturally focus their attention on the protester's most urgent issues: firstly, the defense of public health and value of the territory endangered by irrational objectives of economic development (the development of tumors linked to the use of asbestos and uranium), secondly, the economic uselessness of the TAV and its extraordinarily high cost (a project they define as exorbitant and unnecessary, a mega-project of environmental destruction and waste of precious natural resources); thirdly, the need for the protection of the territory and the intrinsic incompatibility of the project, an idea that comes from the awareness of Lega Ambiente and the Verdi/Green party of the need to limit the waste of energy and the need to implement an alternative model of development, combined with the awareness that this public work is the work of speculators and profiteers; fourth of all, the need to improve local public transport, healthcare and social services instead of dedicating such enormous resources to a project that brings such little benefit to the local population; and fifth

of all, the need for self-determination, or in other words, the use of democratic consultation in the context of participative democracy. In terms of protest method or protest repertoires – defined by the sociology of social movements as a resource for those without power because protesters rely for success on the activation of other groups in the political arena rather than the direct use of power – the authors start from the concept of widespread information, in other words, from the awareness of the protest committees that the real information on the costs and damages of this project has intentionally been withheld. In other words, only a counter-information campaign would be capable of defining on a scientific basis both the real damage to the environment and human health on one hand, and any feasible alternative strategies on the other (as also documented by the study commissioned by the Association of Mountain Communities). Alongside the world of information, **non-violent action** represented the most common form of protest together with the **presìdi** – which soon became authentic political laboratories, above all together with the activist social centers – **protest campgrounds**, the use

of antagonistic legal action (appeals to the TAR, the hearings of the commission for the petitions submitted to the European Union), **the theatrical performances**, the gigantic banners, the **hunger strikes**, **the candlelight vigils**, **the boycotting of the banks** funding the TAV project, and **counter-information** through Internet and therefore through the construction of web pages for both logistic-organizational and public awareness purposes (in addition to symbolic and protest effect). In the opinion of the authors, the response provided by political institutions both centrist-right and centrist-left consisted in: 1) passive exclusion strategies (by failing to inform the citizens and involve them in significant decisions, for example); 2) attempts at economic compensation proposals; 3) the militarization of the territory, and lastly, 4) attempts to divide and separate the protesters through selective cooptation.

3

The analysis made by Loris Caruso of the Onda (Wave) movement – an important Italian student movement that arose between 2008 and 2009 – places initial attention on its protagonists: the

students, teachers, and workers who protested by **occupying** university and high school structures, the **strikes**, the **demonstrations**, and **counter-information in paper and computerized form**. At the national panorama level, despite wavering and, all things considered, the opportunism and exploitation by certain parties of the radical left like the PRC and PDCI, these parties certainly played an important role together with the Students Union inked to the PD; even if also the Sinistra Critica (Critical Left) and the Post-operaismo area (post-factory worker faction), the latter two components present primarily in Rome, also undoubtedly played significant roles. In the context of computerized counter-information, Retescuola (The School Network) contributed to the development of the infrastructure of the Onda (Wave) movement between 2008 and 2009. Caruso points out the important contributions to the Onda movement made by the No-TAV movement and the movements against the construction of the bridge over the Strait of Messina and the expansion of the US airbase in Vicenza. The degree of complexity of the Onda movement was such to involve the nation's leading provincial capitals, from Rome to

Torino, Milano, Bologna, Pisa, Palermo, Catania, and Firenze. The Onda movement was formed of an authentic network capable of creating social and political protagonists around determined issues. Concentrating his attention on the Onda movement in the Milano area, the author emphasizes that among the various social forces that played significant roles in the Milanese mobilization against university reform, the self-managed activist social centers must certainly be included, together with the trade unions and the various student unions. On the other hand, especially in Milano, the student movement was able to rely on strong support from the parliamentary and extra-parliamentary left. Trade union support came primarily from the CGIL national trade union and local trade unions, and was predictably expressed through the strikes that began in October, 2008. The nerve centers of the **strikes** were located at the Faculty of Political Science, the Brera Academy, the Politecnico, and the Bicocca. Together with the strikes, student demonstrations and assemblies offered another vehicle for encounter and communication, in addition to instruments like manifestos, handbills, banners,

and **counter-information via Internet**, and even a new method of protest: lessons in open air. The essay appropriately mentions that the world of training and education provides a significant basin for mobilization, noting how the Onda movement was able to count on support from a number of protagonists in the alterglobal movement. In Milano as in Rome, the Onda movement openly manifested its distrust in the representative democracy of the political parties and staked a claim to a more participative democracy and an expanded democracy, in the same way as during the protests against the expansion of the military airbase in Vicenza and the TAV high-speed railway line in Val di Susa.

Part 2

1

According to Gèrè – President of the French Strategic Analysis Institute – disinformation consists in *the processing and deliberate communication of false information that has been explicitly masked and manipulated in order*

to present every appearance of authenticity. It is therefore clear that the line between disinformation and propaganda is fine indeed, to the point that disinformation can be referred to as “black” propaganda. The difference lies in the means of transmission and intentions. As regards the alterglobal movement and the USA’s war against terrorism in particular, the position that the alterglobal movement in its entirety has assumed following the 9-11 attacks can be easily summarized in a dichotomy typical of a cognitive approach to the history of disinformation: war is an intrinsic evil because it is not an instrument suited to the settlement of conflicts between nations. Combating terrorism through the instrument of warfare is entirely unacceptable: the roots of Islamic terrorism lie in the injustice created by neo-Liberal globalization. The alterglobal movement sees in US policy and its choices an evil that is just as bad as Islamic terrorism on one hand, while indicating its own choices the only possible course of action and delegitimizing existing military and political institutions, on the other. In order to illustrate the disinformation procedure being enacted by the alterglobal movement, its fundamental documents

must be considered. The **first** is undoubtedly the *Statement on Globalization* issued by the *World Social Forum* held in Beirut in November 2001, whose authors believe that the USA's war against terrorism is merely an excuse to increase its worldwide hegemony and increase the gap between rich and poor nations. The **second**, with a similar dichotomy in interpretation, was drafted by *the Assembly of the People's* UN spokesman Flavio Lotti in Autumn 2001, and portrays a world afflicted by a shocking number of wars and attacks against the planet's biosphere and natural resources promoted intentionally by neo-Liberalism on one hand, with the alterglobal movement as the only political entity capable of offering a realistically feasible political and economic alternative, the only entity capable of opposing the war against terrorism and the world's current injustice and disorder, on the other. The **third** document to be taken into consideration was produced by one of the leading Italian Catholic pacifist associations, the *Rete Lilliput* network, in 2006, and states that it is useless to hide the merciless logic of war behind expressions like "humanitarian intervention" or "exportation of democracy" because wars are

merely a consequence of a neo-Liberal economic system and are never an acceptable alternative. In this regard, a large part of the alterglobal movement claims that the vast majority of military campaigns waged by nations, particularly those by the USA and Israel, are on the same level as their avowed enemies: Islamic terrorism. Terrorism and the war against terror are the two sides of the same coin.

A document issued in 2002 by the *World Social Forum* in Porto Alegre – the **fourth** document to be considered – states that the war against terrorism has struck down civil and political rights, that the war against Afghanistan was waged using terrorist methods, and that its primary scope is the preservation of US dominion. Equally significant are the concepts, expressed in the **fifth** document to consider, issued by the *Attac Italia* movement: the war(s) started by the US serve only to expand the nation's military dominance and proceed hand in hand with the process of neo-Liberal globalization, in the context of which NATO becomes globalization's armed right hand (this is the definition provided in most of the documents issued by Western Communist parties during the

Cold War and in the documents signed by exponents of the Far-left from '68 through '77). One of the leading Italian representatives of the alterglobal movement, Attilio Agnoletto, expressed himself in the same way: the world today has no choice but to take the side of either neo-Liberalism or the alterglobal movement, a statement produced by a Manichean vision of the world. Also in regard to the Middle Eastern question, the position assumed by most of the alterglobal movement is quite clear and consists in an absolute refusal of the wall built by Israel in defense against terrorist attacks, in acknowledging the subjugation of European political powers, Italy, in particular, to the US and Israel, and in legitimizing the Palestinian people's right to self-defense. Of similar interest are the thoughts of Mao Valpiana, director of the most prestigious Italian pacifism magazine, *Azione non violenta* (Non-violent action) founded by Aldo Capitini in 1964. The article by Valpiana we now consider was published as an introduction in celebration of one of the most important media events in the history of Italian pacifism: the Perugia-Assisi March held in November, 2011. The author's thoughts can be easily organized around

two central issues. The first is fairly obviously and attempts to provide readers with some idea of the dramatic proportions of the world situation: *the world is becoming more and more insecure due to poverty and starvation, climate change, unemployment, mafias and organized crime. (...) Over one billion people suffer from malnutrition and lack drinking water; (...) the struggle against the unemployment of young people must become a national priority*³⁶. The second issue is summarized in a presentation of the solutions to be applied: *we must stop making war and shift from military security to human security, from national security to common security; (...) against the perverse logic of national interests, away from a profit-based market and global competition; (...) and away from the financial speculation that is creating a political crisis in Europe while creating a dramatic increase in poverty*³⁷. Valpiana's remarks must be reformulated in order to understand their real meaning through a simple

36 Mao Valpiana, "Appello per la pace e per la fratellanza dei popoli" 25 settembre 2011, *Azione Non violenta*, novembre, 2011, p. 4.

37 Ibidem, p. 5.

process of linguistic decoding. Military security, as known by one and all, is guaranteed by military institutions, and consequently the illegitimacy of military security means supporting the idea of dismantling existing military institutions and their related military industries; the rejection of the concept of national security substantially means rejecting the arrangement of political realism and therefore the rejection of the choices made by all the Western and other nations in the planning of their foreign policy. His unappealable condemnation of the market and global competition amounts to an immediate refusal of capitalism; likewise, the criticism of international finance is nothing but a radical refusal – if only implied in this article – of the international economic institutions and central banks. Also the author's guidelines for solution: *invest in solidarity and cooperation, implement a new policy of non-violence and a new non-violent political culture, spreading the culture of peace at schools, promote and defend human rights, invest in the prevention of conflicts, promote disarmament, introduce new green, non-polluting technologies and lifestyles that are not based on individualism or commoditization, strengthen responsible civil*

*society, and promote participative democracy*³⁸, must be clearly reformulated in order to reveal the author's true intentions: firstly, in complete agreement with the radical pacifism movement, the author emphasizes the need to transcend the *modus operandi* of current politics and to remodel it to the dictates of the pacifism outlined by Aldo Capitini. Secondly, he intends to use schools as vehicles for systematic propaganda campaigns against the military and capitalism, relying on cooperation from teaching staff and school directors; thirdly, his hypothesized investment in preventing conflicts essentially means that the management of conflicts (previously performed by State, foreign ministers, and defense ministers) must be coordinated by pacifist organizations. Fourthly, the promotion of disarmament clearly alludes to the need to dismantle existing military industries; as regards the introduction of green, non-polluting technologies – and this fourth aspect, this alternative indicated by Valpiana – aims at replacing the current industries based on oil or nuclear energy with other types of energy (solar, wind power, biomass) managed under

38 Ibidem, p. 6

monopoly by companies or industries controlled by the pacifist movement. Lastly, and this is the fifth aspect, the participative democracy indicated by the author is nothing but the replacement of the existing representative democracy with a form of democracy that gives space and real power to the alterglobal movements and its representatives, who would in this way come to replace the present directors of Western nation policy. In short, the path indicated by Valpiana is undoubtedly a wide-ranging political program that aspires at radical changing the Western world's political and economic configuration.

2

Utilizing the French methodological approach to psychological warfare – and that of Gèrè, in particular – we may easily interpret the *modus operandi* of the alterglobal movement in regard to the themes outlined above and in light of the following key concepts defined in the greatest clarity by Gèrè. Firstly, the alterglobal movement's intellectuals and political personages can be considered to every sense and effect **agitators**: “*The*

*use of this little laboratory instrument (mixers or stirrers) used by students when handling chemicals describes the activity of the individual assigned the name through metaphor remarkably well: he or she ‘agitates’ a determined environment. At the start, the term was fairly depreciatory. The ‘professional’ agitator ran the risk of being accused of being manipulated by foreign powers with the goal of destabilizing the nation and its social order. Soon, however, the term came to be adopted by revolutionary organizations who structured agit-prop as an working information structure. Can an agitator be a propagandist? Of course. And also a disinformant? Although the answer to that depends on the context, the objectives, and the methods chosen to influence public opinion, it goes without saying that an agitator will never refuse to disinform. Agitators conduct their political and strategic activity through manifestos and pamphlets that challenge established ideas and distort acquired ideas”³⁹ agitators who implement – through planned psychological action – **intoxication** “This procedure is nearly*

39 François Géré, *Dictionnaire de la désinformation*, Armand Colin, 2011, p. 109.

*identical to disinformation, and consists in the circulation of false news articles or generating an inverse conception of reality in a given individual. Practiced in times of both peace and war, the purpose of intoxication is to falsify the judgment of decision-makers and upset the activities of organisms”⁴⁰ and **the demonization** of the adversary “This disinformation technique has been widely used throughout history. A group or a government utilizes facts, stories and rumors to present the adversary as a power of evil that carries things to a higher level beyond the realm of reason and calibrated judgment in order to crystallize animosity according to purely moral criteria, even in regard to an entire people itself. The operation is based on the capacity of Manichean constructions to radicalize opinions in areas of conflict and preclude the use of rational critical judgment. Far from examining subtle distinctions and objectively evaluating the logic of the other,*

40 Ibidem, p. 218.

*this is the story of 'Might makes Right' and 'God is on our side'”*⁴¹. In the end, the alterglobal movement's delegitimization of existing military and political institutions in the eyes of world opinion aims at profoundly modifying its perception of reality – and especially civil society's political and cultural choices on one hand – and presenting itself as the only alternative entity capable of managing the world's political and economic power on the other.

3

The analyses of Pisano regarding non-conventional conflict that enable interpretation of the operating methods of alterglobal movements are equally interesting. His analyses theoretically classify the versatility of new wars with the denomination of *low intensity non-conventional conflict*. This conflict arises when two or more players

41 Ibidem, p. 172.

– might they be states or not – want to achieve subversive or violent aims using neither the rules of representative democracy nor conventional war ones. Especially, low intensity non-conventional conflict is carried out by subversive agitation, terrorism, onset, civil war, revolution, coup, the formation of illegal or semi-illegal networks or misinformation. Well, in order to have a strategic classification of antagonist movements, we will focus on subversive agitation, and onset or insurgency. **Subversive agitation**, carried out by individuals belonging to political parties, to parliamentary or extra-parliamentary movements, aims to achieve political, ideological or religious targets using misinformation, incitement to civil disobedience, passive resistance, occupation of buildings, criminal damages, infiltration in peaceful demonstrations and in national or non-national structures to get them out of hand and, in the end, to use means of communications for psychological warfare. The ideological context that feeds the subversive agitation can be inspired by Marxism, Leninism, anarchism, radical environmentalism, nationalism, theocracy and far right universe. In any case, at least at the ideological level, religious

and non-sectarian radical pacifism is a fundamental component in the alterglobal movement. **Onset or Insurgency** can follow the subversive agitation and implies partial or total territory control and national resources through illegal political organizations and paramilitary forces. Of course the onset involves armed fights and most of all implies significant operational planning skills that are carried out by guerrilla warfare and civil war as has occurred in Val di Susa.

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Green utopia between radical ecology and eco-terrorism

Introduction

This brief essay aims to illustrate the key features of 21st century radical ecology, showing the reader how the operative radicalization of antagonist ecology will inexorably lead to eco-terrorism. To be more precise, from an ideological point of view, there are no relevant differences between radical ecology and eco-terrorism. To this purpose, we will define both radical ecology and eco-terrorism, and we will adopt the methodological approach of Vittorfranco Pisano for the latter. Furthermore, the essay will take into consideration the analyses of eco-terrorism made by a number of leading governmental intelligence agencies and conclude with an analysis of Swiss Italian Marco Camenisch, eco-terrorism's most important representative.

1. Radical ecology

The schools of thought of contemporary eco-

terrorism are many, but those that use an antagonist theoretical-practical approach can be identified in deep ecology, feminist ecology, Marxist ecology, primitivism, degrowth ecology, the Slow Food movement, ecology, animalism (which together with vegetarianism is a logical consequence of radical ecology) and, finally, eco-terrorism. In this sense – beyond the often demagogic rhetoric – eco-terrorism does not differ from the above-mentioned schools of thought because of its ethical-philosophical assumptions but rather by the operative procedures through which its antagonism is carried out. Therefore, an ideological community exists, whether implicit or explicit, in the main schools of thoughts of ecology and eco-terrorism. These schools of thought, however, can be associated with the idea of radical ecology.

2. Definition of radical ecology

While continuing to take the complexity of current ecology into account, the expression “radical” is used to indicate extremely antagonist ecology, from Pinochet’s utilitarian conservationism, which was deeply anthropocentric and aimed

to rationalize the use of nature toward a lasting economic exploitation, to Haeckel's neo-Darwinian approach, Tansley's view, Lotka's trophic-network ecology, and finally, Odum's thermodynamic approach. Firstly, radical ecology comprises the holistic preservationism of Thoreau, Emerson, and Leopold, ecofeminism, political ecology, deep ecology, primitivism, social ecology, the degrowth movement, the Slow Food movement, eco-regionalism, animalism, and eco-terrorism. Secondly, although the list of the organizations is not complete, it is important to underline that the several "-isms" do not exclude the possibility of profitable contaminations among the different schools of thought. Thirdly, the epistemological, political and philosophical features shared by the above-mentioned schools of thought can be identified as follows:

1. they all support a structural modification of the current economic system and are against the supranational institutions that control global capitalism, in particular, the IMF, the WTO, and the World Bank;
2. they are in favor of the anti-globalization

- movement, and know its limits and potentials;
3. they share an eco-centric, bio-centric, anti-anthropocentric, holistic and sometimes organicistic perception of natural reality;
 4. they are against a mechanistic vision of reality such as Bacon's and Descartes', and are in favor of legal extensionism;
 5. they support a relevant extension of representative democracy or a radical exceeding of it in favor of an anarchic, neo-tribal society, or a participatory democracy;
 6. they share and develop apocalyptical and radical scenes of current society's environmental and economic condition;
 7. they advocate a change in the ethic of western civilization through an eco-pacifist reorientation carried out by counter-information;
 8. they are against military institutions and share a typical interpretation of irenic pacifism;
 9. they are against the use of biotechnologies in agriculture and the civil and military

- use of nuclear energy;
10. several members of radical ecology share a new interpretation of nature according to neo-romantic or oriental philosophies (such as Buddhism, Hinduism, Taoism and Zen philosophy);
 11. many scholars and activists belonging to radical ecology embrace animalistic and vegetarian views which they deem deeply coherent with an ecocentric vision of nature.
 12. Finally, several exponents of radical ecology refer to 1968 culture, and to underground American and tribal cultures.

In short, regarding the operative procedures carried out by the several schools of thought or radical ecology, we should point out the difference between non-violent and terroristic ones. There are three levels of antagonist procedure: a) non-violent practice strictly antagonist toward political and legal institutions; b) non-violent practice with an entryist political logic toward national and supranational political institutions; c) publically terroristic practice. We should, nevertheless,

underline the differences between positions a) and b) both of which are well-organized and opposing: the first clearly condemns the use of terroristic procedures, the second supports terrorist procedures – but without putting them into practice – and is therefore ambiguous.

3. The historical predecessors of radical ecology

According to **Livorsi**, the genesis of radical ecology can be easily traced from a historical point of view to the philosophical and religious interpretation of Bachofen and the Marxist psychoanalysis of Reich as well. The author of the “Canticle of the Sun” (“Cantico del Frate Sole”) not only asserts the sanctification of the world by God – in other words, the sun, the moon, and the animal world – but also refers to **Mother Earth**, anticipating the modern concept of “Gaia”⁴². Moreover the heterodox pantheism of Saint Francis implies a brotherhood between human beings and creatures according to an ecocentric and egalitarian view. The French philosopher **Rousseau**, in his “Discourse on the Origin and Basis of Inequality

42 Gaia, figure of Greek mythology, known also as Gea, a goddess that embodies the earth.

Among Men” (“Discours sur l’origine et les fondements de l’inégalité parmi les homes”), emphasized the goodness of the state of nature and the existential authenticity of the human being in this pre-civilized context, while condemning in the meantime private property and therefore civilization determined by technique. Moreover, unlike civilized society, tribal society conducted an ecocentric, egalitarian and communal style of life. **Bachofen**, in his reinterpretation of the history of civilization, emphasized the existence of a gynocratic, anti-patriarchal view in pre-Achaean society in which there was no private life, there was sexual freedom, nature was accepted as a living organism, and above all, the modus vivendi was built on egalitarian pacifism.

In short, regarding **Reich**, the rise of patriarchy brought about the triumph of capitalism, the closed family, and sexual repression. The natural and erotic man who struggles for a libertarian socialism has reemerged only rarely in history, such as in the Paris Commune in 1871, for example.

Definition of terrorism and eco-terrorism

According to Pisano, terrorism can be defined as a non-conventional form of conflict because it lies outside both democratic, organized and civil dispute and the traditional battlefield of war regulated by international law. Terrorism is characterized by three elements: a) physical and psychic criminal violence, b) political, religious political or social political movement, and c) the use of illegal structure. Traditional terrorism, as Pisano explains, together with neo-terrorism, coexist both as a threat and as a concrete aggression. Neo-terrorism is performed by dynamic and polymorphous schemes that can intertwine while preserving their methodological and operational autonomy at the same time. Pisano indicates ecologic terrorism, narco-terrorism, the NRBC, and cyber-terrorism as the most important. Ecologic terrorism (the topic of our research) is based on lay and/or religious *ideological ideas* and from an *organizational* point of view is carried out alternatively by cellular organizations with no hierarchies and by binary structures that

are cellular and propagandistic at the same time. Ecologic terrorism furthers its antagonism through several *operative procedures*: 1) obstructive human barriers (lock box), 2) machinery sabotage, 3) arson and explosive detonation, 4) legal instruments focused on reporting abuse by police, 5) assemblage and road blocks, 6) intrusion within military installations or scientific and university institutions, 7) wide use of misinformation through media, internet and magazines, and 8) instigation to tax evasion. The *enemies* or *targets* to strike are several in number as well: 1) national and supranational capitalism, 2) the state, which defends its interests and consolidates its power, 3) national and supranational military institutions, and 4) scientific and university laboratories. In a nutshell, eco-terrorism presents two fundamental trends: animal (such as ALF, ARM or JD) and environmental (e.g. Earth First!). In conclusion, Pisano suggests that the dangers of eco-terrorism are linked to the potential strengthening of its organizational power, creation of operative or ideological ties with traditional terrorism, and the consolidation of its relations with the anti-globalization movement (which we discussed in

the volume *Problemi e prospettive dei movimenti antagonisti del Novecento*).

Analysis of eco-terrorism

1. Eco-terrorism in the analysis of the Defense Intelligence Agency*

In the article by **Stefan H. Leader** – member of the US Defense Intelligence Agency’s Joint Intelligence Task Force-Combating Terrorism – entitled “The Earth Liberation Front and Environmental Terrorism”, the two most representative eco-terroristic movements are the Earth Liberation Front and the Animal Liberation Front. The author traces their historical genesis as follows: “The Earth Liberation Front was established in 1992 in Brighton, England and dedicated to saving the environment. It was founded by the more radical members of the activist environmental group, ‘Earth First!’ who believed criminal acts would better advance their environmentalist agenda than would legal protest. The American branch announced its creation in October 1996 with an arson attack on a US Forest Service truck in Oregon’s Willamette National Forest. The decoupling of ELF from Earth First! enabled the two organizations to focus on their

respective constituencies. Earth First! recruits those who believe in peaceful, non-violent protest. The ELF, in contrast, draws those who favor direct action and revolutionary violence. The goals of the two groups are similar. They differ primarily in the means to be employed. The Animal Liberation Front (ALF) was formed in Great Britain in the 1970s as an outgrowth of groups such as Greenpeace and the Sea Shepherds Conservation Society. It predates ELF and is predominantly concerned with animal rights issues. Over the years, ALF has become increasingly radical and violent. Traditionally, the agendas of the two groups have overlapped and, in an open 1993 communiqué, ELF declared solidarity with the ALF. Since then, increasingly, there has been a convergence of leadership, membership, agendas and funding.” The ELF organizational structure, which hinders easy penetration, is extremely relevant: “By operating in cells (small groups that consist of one to several people), the security of group members is maintained. Each cell is anonymous not only to the public but also to one another. This decentralized structure helps keep activists out of jail and free to continue

conducting actions.” This organizational choice is not random. “The use of loose networks of groups that share similar goals has made the work of law enforcement agencies and the intelligence services much more difficult. Without any formal chain of command, such groups are difficult to penetrate as the operational elements may draw from disparate organizations for a single operation, disbanding once the task has been completed.” The ideological content consists of two key concepts, biocentrism and deep ecology: “Two fundamental concepts motivate environmental terrorists: biocentrism and deep ecology. Biocentrism is the belief that all organisms on earth are equal and deserving of moral rights and considerations. They see biodiversity and wilderness as absolute goods. Believers in deep ecology favor a rollback of industrialization/civilization and return to a way of life seen as more consistent with preservation of the environment. Deep ecologists favor restoration to its imagined pristine state, of an environment they believe has been despoiled by the selfish actions of the human race. In practice, this would mean return to pre-industrial, subsistence agricultural communities.” In light of this orientation, it is easy to determine

which targets to hit: “Underlying the first guideline is a fundamental hostility to the US capitalist economic system and a belief that the system is a fundamental threat to global environment. ELF leaders, at the very least, appear to believe that the capitalist system must be destroyed. In interviews and public statements, spokesman Craig Rosebraugh has made his anticapitalist agenda quite clear. For example, the organization has targeted large corporations such as Monsanto as well as university offices and laboratories engaged in genetic engineering of crops, or related research. Competition for headlines may well drive ELF to carry out more spectacular and inherently more dangerous operations.” The author describes the techniques to achieve these aims both in websites and in actions: “ELF’s prime weapon is arson, which it views, as a legitimate act of political protest and correctly notes can be more destructive than explosives. The ELF web site contains a detailed instruction manual on creating incendiary devices of all kinds, using a wide variety of commonly available materials. As can be seen in Table 1, about a third of the ELF attacks carried out between 1996 and 2001, and certainly its

most destructive, were arson attacks. In addition, ELF relies on sabotage and vandalism, or what is known in the movement as ‘monkeywrenching’, which includes such activities as spraypainting slogans on buildings and vehicles, applying super glue to locks, breaking windows, destroying equipment and records, and other forms of property destruction.”

**Source: www.dia.mil*

2. US measures against eco-terrorism*

To prevent and at the same time suppress ecoterrorist activism, the American Congress passed the **Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act (AETA)**, approved by the US Senate on 29th September 2006 and signed by President George W. Bush on 27th November 2006. This law forbids anyone from using force, violence or threats to damage or interfere with the operations of an animal enterprise. It should be observed, however, that this Act does not interfere with the First Amendment because pickets and sit-ins are not forbidden by law. Compared to the previous law of 1992, the AETA grants legal instruments greater

power in promptly and appropriately responding to the threats posed by extremist animalistic movements and expands the meaning of “animal enterprise” to cover commercial or academic firms that sell animals or animal products. Moreover, it increases the existing sanctions applied to those who intentionally raise threats of death and serious bodily injury. Given its particular importance and the amount of opposition raised by animal organizations – such as PETA, in particular – we think it would be useful to publish the document in its full length.

This Act may be cited as the “Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act”.

SEC. 2. INCLUSION OF ECONOMIC DAMAGE TO ANIMAL ENTERPRISES AND THREATS OF DEATH AND SERIOUS BODILY INJURY TO ASSOCIATED PERSONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 43 of title 18, United States Code, is amended to read as follows: “§ 43. Force, violence, and threats involving animal enterprises

“(a) OFFENSE.—Whoever travels in interstate or foreign commerce, or uses or causes to be used

the mail or any facility of interstate or foreign commerce— “(1) for the purpose of damaging or interfering with the operations of an animal enterprise; and “(2) in connection with such purpose— “(A) intentionally damages or causes the loss of any real or personal property (including animals or records) used by an animal enterprise, or any real or personal property of a person or entity having a connection to, relationship with, or transactions with an animal enterprise; “(B) intentionally places a person in reasonable fear of the death of, or serious bodily injury to that person, a member of the immediate family (as defined in section 115) of that person, or a spouse or intimate partner of that person by a course of conduct involving threats, acts of vandalism, property damage, criminal trespass, harassment, or intimidation; or “(C) conspires or attempts to do so; shall be punished as provided for in subsection (b). “(b) PENALTIES.—The punishment for a violation of section (a) or an attempt or conspiracy to violate subsection (a) shall be— “(1) a fine under this title or imprisonment not more than 1 year, or both, if the offense does not instill in another the reasonable fear of serious bodily injury

or death and— §. 3880—2 “(A) the offense results in no economic damage or bodily injury; or “(B) the offense results in economic damage that does not exceed \$10,000; “(2) a fine under this title or imprisonment for not more than 5 years, or both, if no bodily injury occurs and— “(A) the offense results in economic damage exceeding \$10,000 but not exceeding \$100,000; or “(B) the offense instills in another the reasonable fear of serious bodily injury or death; “(3) a fine under this title or imprisonment for not more than 10 years, or both, if— “(A) the offense results in economic damage exceeding \$100,000; or “(B) the offense results in substantial bodily injury to another individual; “(4) a fine under this title or imprisonment for not more than 20 years, or both, if— “(A) the offense results in serious bodily injury to another individual; or “(B) the offense results in economic damage exceeding \$1,000,000; and “(5) imprisonment for life or for any terms of years, a fine under this title, or both, if the offense results in death of another individual. “(c) RESTITUTION.—An order of restitution under section 3663 or 3663A of this title with respect to a violation of this section may also include restitution— “(1) for the reasonable

cost of repeating any experimentation that was interrupted or invalidated as a result of the offense; “(2) for the loss of food production or farm income reasonably attributable to the offense; and “(3) for any other economic damage, including any losses or costs caused by economic disruption, resulting from the offense. “(d) DEFINITIONS.—As used in this section— “(1) the term ‘animal enterprise’ means— “(A) a commercial or academic enterprise that uses or sells animals or animal products for profit, food or fiber production, agriculture, education, research, or testing; “(B) a zoo, aquarium, animal shelter, pet store, breeder, furrier, circus, or rodeo, or other lawful competitive animal event; or “(C) any fair or similar event intended to advance agricultural arts and sciences; “(2) the term ‘course of conduct’ means a pattern of conduct composed of 2 or more acts, evidencing a continuity of purpose; “(3) the term ‘economic damage’— “(A) means the replacement costs of lost or damaged property or records, the costs of repeating an interrupted or invalidated experiment, the loss of profits, or increased costs, including losses and increased costs resulting from threats, acts or vandalism, property damage, trespass,

harassment, or intimidation taken against a person or entity on account of that person's or entity's connection S. 3880—3 to, relationship with, or transactions with the animal enterprise; but “(B) does not include any lawful economic disruption (including a lawful boycott) that results from lawful public, governmental, or business reaction to the disclosure of information about an animal enterprise; “(4) the term ‘serious bodily injury’ means— “(A) injury posing a substantial risk of death; “(B) extreme physical pain; “(C) protracted and obvious disfigurement; or “(D) protracted loss or impairment of the function of a bodily member, organ, or mental faculty; and “(5) the term ‘substantial bodily injury’ means— “(A) deep cuts and serious burns or abrasions; “(B) short-term or nonobvious disfigurement; “(C) fractured or dislocated bones, or torn members of the body; “(D) significant physical pain; “(E) illness; “(F) short-term loss or impairment of the function of a bodily member, organ, or mental faculty; or “(G) any other significant injury to the body. “(e) RULES OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed— “(1) to prohibit any expressive conduct (including peaceful picketing

or other peaceful demonstration) protected from legal prohibition by the First Amendment to the Constitution; “(2) to create new remedies for interference with activities protected by the free speech or free exercise clauses of the First Amendment to the Constitution, regardless of the point of view expressed, or to limit any existing legal remedies for such interference; or “(3) to provide exclusive criminal penalties or civil remedies with respect to the conduct prohibited by this action, or to preempt State or local laws that may provide such penalties or remedies.”

**Source: <http://www.govtrack.us/congress>*

3. Eco-terrorism in the FBI analysis*

The analysis of **James F. Jarboe**, in charge of FBI Domestic Terrorism Section, is extremely relevant in regard to both the definition of terrorism and the analysis of eco-terrorism. The methodological approach used by the FBI distinguishes two categories of terrorism: “The FBI divides the terrorist threat facing the United States into two broad categories, international and domestic. International terrorism involves violent acts or

acts dangerous to human life that are a violation of the criminal laws of the United States or any state, or that would be a criminal violation if committed within the jurisdiction of the United States or any state. Acts of international terrorism are intended to intimidate or coerce a civilian population, influence the policy of a government, or affect the conduct of a government. These acts transcend national boundaries in terms of the means by which they are accomplished, the persons they appear intended to intimidate, or the locale in which perpetrators operate.” Contrary to international terrorism: “Domestic terrorism is the unlawful use, or threatened use, of violence by a group or individual based and operating entirely within the United States (or its territories) without foreign direction, committed against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives.” The FBI makes a further distinction: “A terrorist incident is a violent act or an act dangerous to human life, in violation of the criminal laws of the United States, or of any state, to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof,

in furtherance of political, social objectives. A terrorism prevention is a documented instance in which a violent act by a known or suspected terrorist group or individual with the means and a proven propensity for violence is successfully interdicted through investigative activity”. The FBI has had to deal with the serious dangers of eco-terrorism: “During the past several years, special interest extremism, as characterized by the Animal Liberation Front (ALF) and the Earth Liberation Front (ELF), has emerged as a serious terrorist threat. Generally, extremist groups engage in much activity that is protected by constitutional guarantees of free speech and assembly. Law enforcement becomes involved when the volatile talk of these groups transgresses into unlawful action. The FBI estimates that the ALF/ELF have committed more than 600 criminal acts in the United States since 1996, resulting in damages in excess of 43 million dollars.” The main themes of the eco-terrorist message are: “the extreme fringes of animal rights, pro-life, environmental, anti-nuclear, and other movements. Some special interest extremists – most notably within the animal rights and environmental movements – have

turned increasingly toward vandalism and terrorist activity in attempts to further their causes.”

With these remarks in mind, FBI analysts decided to provide terrorism with a new definition and explicitly formulate the concept of eco-terrorism: “The FBI defines eco-terrorism as the use or threatened use of violence of a criminal nature against innocent victims or property by an environmentally-oriented, subnational group for environmental-political reasons, or aimed at an audience beyond the target, often of a symbolic nature.” ALF is extremely relevant in this sense, and the author provides an outline of its history. “The ALF, established in Great Britain in the mid-1970s, is a loosely organized movement committed to ending the abuse and exploitation of animals. The American branch of the ALF began its operations in the late 1970s. Individuals become members of the ALF not by filing paperwork or paying dues, but simply by engaging in ‘direct action’ against companies or individuals who utilize animals for research or economic gain. ‘Direct action’ generally occurs in the form of criminal activity to cause economic loss or to destroy the victims’ company operations. The ALF activists

have engaged in a steadily growing campaign of illegal activity against fur companies, mink farms, restaurants, and animal research laboratories.” The Earth First! movement is equally relevant: “Disaffected environmentalists, in 1980, formed a radical group called ‘Earth First!’ and engaged in a series of protests and civil disobedience events. In 1984, however, members introduced ‘tree spiking’ (insertion of metal or ceramic spikes in trees in an effort to damage saws) as a tactic to thwart logging. In 1992, the ELF was founded in Brighton, England, by Earth First! members who refused to abandon criminal acts as a tactic when others wished to mainstream Earth First!. In 1993, the ELF was listed for the first time along with the ALF in a communiqué declaring solidarity in actions between the two groups. This unity continues today with a crossover of leadership and membership.” One of the technical innovations invented by Elf is “monkeywreching”: “a euphemism for acts of sabotage and property destruction against industries and other entities perceived to be damaging to the natural environment. ‘Monkeywrenching’ includes tree spiking, arson, sabotage of logging or construction equipment, and other types of

property destruction”. The achievement of strong unity between these organizations comes as no surprise: “Jonathan Paul and Craig Rosebraugh at the 1998 National Animal Rights Conference held at the University of Oregon, promoted the unity of both the ELF and the ALF movements. The ELF posted information on the ALF website until it began its own website in January 2001, and is listed in the same underground activist publications as the ALF.”

The danger posed by this phenomenon induced the FBI to take specific action: “The FBI has developed a strong response to the threats posed by domestic and international terrorism. Between fiscal years 1993 and 2003, the number of Special Agents dedicated to the FBI’s counterterrorism programs grew by approximately 224 percent to 1,669 – nearly 16 percent of all FBI Special Agents. In recent years, the FBI has strengthened its counterterrorism program to enhance its abilities to carry out these objectives. Cooperation among law enforcement agencies at all levels represents an important component of a comprehensive response to terrorism. This cooperation assumes its most tangible operational

form in the Joint Terrorism Task Forces (JTTFs) that are established in 44 cities across the nation. These task forces are particularly well-suited to responding to terrorism because they combine the national and international investigative resources of the FBI with the street-level expertise of local law enforcement agencies.” This synergy of forces has produced excellent results: “The FBI and our law enforcement partners have made a number of arrests of individuals alleged to have perpetrated acts of eco-terrorism. Several of these individuals have been successfully prosecuted. Following the investigation of the Phoenix, Arizona, arsons noted earlier, Mark Warren Sands was indicted and arrested on 6/14/2001. On 11/07/2001, Sands pleaded guilty to ten counts of extortion and using fire in the commission of a federal felony.” The operation against EMETIC was extremely important: “Marc Leslie Davis, Margaret Katherine Millet, Marc Andre Baker, and Ilse Washington Asplund were all members of the self-proclaimed ‘Evan Mecham Eco-Terrorist International Conspiracy’ (EMETIC). EMETIC was formed to engage in eco-terrorism against nuclear power plants and ski resorts in the

southwestern United States. In November 1987, the group claimed responsibility for damage to a chairlift at the Fairfield Snow Bowl Ski Resort near Flagstaff, Arizona. Davis, Millet, and Baker were arrested in May 1989 on charges relating to the Fairfield Snow Bowl incident and planned incidents at the Central Arizona Project and Palo Verde nuclear generating stations in Arizona; the Diablo Canyon Nuclear Facility in California; and the Rocky Flats Nuclear Facility in Colorado. All pleaded guilty and were sentenced in September 1991. Davis was sentenced to six years in federal prison, and restitution to the Fairfield Snow Bowl Ski Resort in the amount of \$19,821. Millet was sentenced to three years in federal prison, and restitution to Fairfield in the amount of \$19,821. Baker was sentenced to one year in federal prison, five months probation, a \$5,000 fine, and 100 hours of community service. Asplund was also charged and was sentenced to one year in federal prison, five years probation, a \$2,000 fine, and 100 hours of community service.”

Equally important are the remarks contained in the **FBI report on terrorism of 2000/2001**.

In the first place, the agency notes that: “animal

rights and environmental extremists in the United States and elsewhere have increased in frequency and intensity” using: “arson, harassment, death threats, animal releases, and razor blade threat letters to intimidate individuals and businesses they perceive to be abusive to animals or destructive to the environment. The victims include, but are not limited to, fur farmers and retailers, research laboratories and personnel, circuses, zoos, fast food restaurants, forestry services, and large corporations”. The ideological roots of these actions may be easily traced: “These terrorist acts are committed by persons and groups who believe all animals and all parts of the ecosystem, no matter how small or seemingly inconsequential, have the right to exist, be respected, and be protected from destruction by humanity. The use of violent criminal means to achieve these goals represents a departure from the larger and more mainstream animal welfare and environmental movements, which support the humane treatment of animals and the protection of the environment and its resources, but operate within existing laws to promote these causes.” ALF has particularly deep roots in the USA: “The ALF’s ideology is one

of unwavering support for the liberation of captive animals by any means, including criminal activity. ALF activists in the United States have generally adhered to the movement's stated mandate of protecting human life during the course of its 'direct actions' while simultaneously causing severe economic damage to various retailers, fur farms, laboratories, and other animal enterprises. ALF activities in the United States during the past 25 years have included a wide variety of tactics with a broad range of sophistication. A review of the movement's literature, which includes a running tally of ALF activities nationally and internationally, indicates a significant level of criminal activity ranging from graffiti, broken windows, and other acts of petty vandalism to pipe-bombings, largescale mink releases, destruction of research documentation, and arson." Earth First! is no less dangerous: "According to ELF literature posted on the ALF Frontline News Service, the ELF movement is an "international underground organization consisting of autonomous groups of people who carry out direct action according to E.L.F. guidelines." The avowed purposes of the organization are clearly outlined in its website:

“These guidelines, posted on the ELF web site, are as follows: I. to inflict economic damage to those who profit from the destruction and exploitation of the natural environment; II. to reveal and educate the public on the atrocities committed against the environment and all the species which cohabitate in it; and III. to take all necessary precautions against harming any animal, human and non-human.” Effective action is possible only through a flexible and glocal offensive: “Given the increasing frequency and intensity in activity, law enforcement officials are increasingly faced with the challenge to respond to animal rights and ecoterrorism at the local, state, and national levels. Investigations of extremist acts perpetrated by the ALF and the ELF pose formidable challenges, given the focus of these movements on evidence destruction, secrecy, and operational security.”

**Source: www.fbi.gov*

4. Walter Laqueur’s analysis of eco-terrorism

According to this author, the passage from environmentalism to eco-terrorism can be explained on the basis of a simple thesis, “once it

is believed that the salvation of the planet depends on the destruction of civilization". This theory is based on certain assumptions clearly stated by radical ecology: 1) nature has been raped by human beings; 2) Christianity, in particular, has helped justify the uninhibited supremacy of men over nature; 3) as a consequence, radical ecology is closely linked to pagan cultures; 4) lastly, according to radical ecology, industrialized agriculture and technology in general has helped devastate the environment. (The author dates the origin of modern radical ecology to the counter-culture of 1970s in which holistic medicine was widely used and Eastern wisdom was being rediscovered. Together with these aspects, the rediscovery of Karl Marx was important in establishing the basis of radical ecology). In addition, the author points out that unlike environmentalism, radical ecology aspires to a radical, and not a gradual, change of society's structure. In any case, according to the author, American eco-terrorism began in 1980 with the Earth First! movement and especially with the writings of David Foreman. In England, it was started around 1970s by another important eco-terrorist movement, ALF, whose

representatives came mostly from the middle-class (the author announces with a hint of irony). The author's remarks on the importance of the cultural backgrounds are particularly relevant: "The scientifically inclined among them, having read a little Jacques Ellul, a bit of Kirkpatrick Sale, and a few pages of Lewis Mumford, may turn to radical Luddism, reacting against the horrors of science and technology" (*The New Terrorism*, p. 218). In conclusion: the ideological context of radical ecology and eco-terrorism is similar; their differences emerge in their operative choices.

5. Eco-terrorism analyzed by Canadian Intelligence*

According to **Smith**, the first three relevant events in eco-terrorist context for Canadian Intelligence occurred in 1993 and were promoted by ARM: "Three days into 1992, media reports of poisoned candy bars in Edmonton and Calgary interrupted pleasant holiday thoughts and revived lingering headaches. A previously unknown group calling itself the Animal Rights Militia (ARM) claimed to have injected 87 Cold Buster bars with

oven cleaner – an action taken because of alleged animal abuse in the development of the product. The bar’s designer, a physiologist at the University of Calgary, denied the allegations. One bar tested by police contained an alkaline substance ‘which could cause burning if eaten’. The distributor of the Cold Buster immediately recalled tens of thousands of the bars from some 250 outlets in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba, and the manufacturer halted production, forcing the temporary lay-off of 22 employees. Ten days later, a second letter from ARM arrived at the offices of The Edmonton Journal, confirming the contamination claim as a hoax. ‘The purpose behind (the) hoax was to cause economic damage to (the inventor), his co-financiers and those with a stake in the success of the Cold Buster Bar.’ The letter warned of further action by ARM, however, if animal exploitation continued, and threatened that ‘the next time action is taken, it will not be a hoax.’” Eco-terrorism traceable to ALF has intensified over the years: “During the past decade approximately 40 incidents of vandalism, arson and breaking-and-entering in Canada have been attributed to an organization known as the

Animal Liberation Front (ALF). An off-shoot of a British-based group of the same name, the ALF emerged in Canada in 1981 and began to undertake activities similar to those of its United Kingdom counterpart. Largely targeting furriers by means of protest demonstrations, activists also painted graffiti on buildings, poured glue in door-locks and smashed windows. The same tactics were used against meat and fish shops, although eventually in a more violent manner”. The danger of eco-terrorist movement is easily seen in its history, as explained briefly but effectively by the author: “The original ALF was formed in England in 1976, a splinter group of the Hunt Saboteurs Association (HSA) who regarded the HSA as not sufficiently militant. Since its inception, the ALF has gained a fearsome reputation in the United Kingdom – even to the extent of attempted murder: during 1990, two British scientists narrowly escaped death in the explosions of bombs attached to their cars. In the second attack, a 13-month-old baby in a nearby carriage was injured. The ALF’s reputation was established through a 10-year campaign of destruction. Raids on laboratories and kennels, involving damage to facilities and

the release of animals, coupled with spray-paint attacks on vehicles and the interiors and exteriors of buildings, were typical of the attacks. Scientists and their families were subjected to abusive telephone calls, their cars were doused with paint stripper, and leaflets were distributed at schools attended by their children. In January 1981, the ALF estimated that the group had caused more than \$2 million damage over the previous four years of its existence.” Despite the evident dangers, ALF counter-information capacity is such to reach broad consensus: “Animal welfare is a popular cause; few would appear so heartless, inhumane, or indifferent as to fail to espouse its general aims. For that reason there exists supportive consensus in many communities. Animal welfare has voter appeal, and currently a certain ‘chic’ atmosphere surrounds the movement, promising an exciting outlet for the trendy types bored with their tame lifestyle. In North America and the United Kingdom most militant members of the ALF are young and from middle-class backgrounds.” Only an accurate analysis of the links and the ideological foundation permits the comprehension of the anarchic-socialist structure of their program:

“But the movement also provides an avenue for militant extremists whose agenda exceeds that of the innocent cause they have allegedly espoused. Clothed securely in the guise of a popular issue such as animal rights, they are able to pursue their radical ideals surreptitiously and with impunity. The ALF, for example, was founded by Ronnie Lee – a declared anarchist who is still active in the organization. Many of the supporters of the ALF in Canada are also known to have extreme left-wing or anarchist views.” As dangerous eco-terrorism might be, it is not in the position to change the political-economic organization of Canada, because it is not able to trigger a revolutionary conflict: “It would be nonsense to suppose that the animal rights movement could seriously jeopardize the political, social or economic fabric of Canada, the United Kingdom or the USA. But the issue has high emotive potential, raising fundamental concerns in relation to economic well-being and the livelihood of numerous individuals. Animal rights protests have contributed to a serious slump in the fur industry in North America and overseas. The end of seal hunting on the east coast of Canada is believed to have contributed to the

marked reduction of cod stocks, with disastrous consequences for the fishing industry. It is now becoming evident that the militancy of the activists is beginning to initiate a backlash.” For this reason, the most effective approach consists of a series of preemptive measures: “Caution will be needed to avoid overreaction, and vigilance will be necessary to prevent the law being taken into the hands of those not authorized to maintain it. A properly balanced response can be achieved, however, by ensuring that the public, all levels of government, and the security authorities are kept aware and well-informed. Acts of vandalism, of whatever nature, must be clearly shown for what they represent – an affront to democratic principles and the rule of law.”

**Source: www.csis.-scrs.gc.ca*

6. Jacques Baud’s analysis of ecologic terrorism

The author places terrorist ecology in the field of one-cause-only terrorism (p. 681) in which a militant group forms on the basis of a specific idea that has, however, global consequences. It is

anything but rare – explains the author – to find the same members in other groups and the use of operative procedures that include civil disobedience techniques, vandalism, arson, and bomb attacks. The undeniably “noble” reasons such as protecting humanity against the atrocities of capitalism lead them to act against human life, considered as expendable. Consider, for example, species-ism, according to which humans and animals share equal rights, and therefore the use of violence in defense of animal life appears justifiable. The writer identifies the following as terrorism ecology organizations: ALF, ARM, HRS, MFA, and PETA, and EARTH FIRST!, EARTH NIGHT, EMETEC, THE DAVID ORGANIZATION and THE EARTH LIBERATION ARMY as the movements related to radical ecology in North America.

7. The AISI analysis of eco-terrorism*

The article published in the official AISI magazine, *Gnosis*, issue 3/ 2006 entitled “**Il movimento e il no alla TAV, alla scoperta della lotta dal basso**”, regarding no Tav antagonism is extremely important. It begins with a look at the

operative procedures: “The No Tav Protest in the Susa Valley in the Piedmont region conducted through demonstrations, barricades, road and railway blocks, strikes, and finally fights against police forces sent to protect the building sites where geotechnical drillings were to be performed as a preliminary phase of the building of high speed rails claimed national headlines in the final months of last year.” No less important is the role of antagonism: “an important role in the Susa Valley protest, with its inhabitants strongly opposing the Tav project, has been carried out by antagonist extremism, as shown in the reports for the disorders caused, in a high percentage, by protesters belonging to Autonomy and anarchic-insurrectionalism movements”. The way that these groups instrumentalized local discontent must be considered: “Disappointed by the negative evolution of the ‘revolutionary rupture’ strategy, of the most recent mass protest movements such as the anti-globalization movement, which after its first explosion was then absorbed by Social Forums, and the no war movement, which proved to be incapable of radicalizing anti-imperialist and anti-militarist campaigns, the anti-globalization

and no-war movements identified in a solid mobilization of a people determined to defend its own territory from the enemy, a population learning to developing a conflict that could switch from a local to a general dimension, and could shift from resistance to attack”. Despite observing the impossibility of taking such a specific struggle outside the territory, the author underlines the risk that “the influence of such movements can lead to a progressive legitimization of the radical conflict in the hearts of the people.” Apart from the specific case of Susa Valley eco-terrorism, the role of the anarchic movements in Toscana is also important, as shown in the article published in AISI magazine, *Gnosis*, Issue 3/2006 entitled “**Il magma anarchico in Toscana**”. Revolutionary Action, an important anarchic group was operative as early as the 1970s. The militants in the more extremist anarchic-libertarian area, recognizing the strengths of the Movement and considering the cultural developments of International Situationism and the RAF (Rote Armee Fraktion) are responsible for the birth of this type of organization. Its leaders are Gianfranco Faina and Salvatore Cirnieri. “Affinity groups” first theorized by Bonanno came into

existence “where traditional ties are substituted by deeply sympathetic relations, with a high level of intimacy, acquaintance and mutual trust among its members”. These affinity groups are similar to closed “Communes” and their modus vivendi can be compared to certain Mafia organizations – such as Sicilian families and the Calabrese “ndrine” in which the level of self-control is taken to the highest peak. Another organization is the Anarchic-Insurrectionalist Revolutionary Organization, whose genesis is explained by the Ros Police as follows: “the start is simple: the ‘affinity groups’ overcome in both structure and purpose the limits of the common association and organize themselves thanks to international ties as well. Once again, the name of Alfred Maria Bonanno comes up: he lived until 1995 in Bagno a Ripoli in a house that was the base of the anarchic journal ‘Cane Nero’, a primarily local publication that was above all an organ of discussion.” At the time, ‘Bu-Bu-Settete’ social center (a humorous nickname that conceals important anarchists) was active in Florence. Florence returned to the spotlight in May 1997, in the police report that reads as follows: “In Ciampi and San Mark

squares, stands were set up to distribute flyers against the so-called ‘Marini Investigation’ signed by ‘Anarchici a Firenze’ (Florence anarchists) and protest against the arrests made by the Carabinieri Corps between May 19-20, 1997 at the social center ‘La Baracca’ in Scandicci”, near Florence. The birth of Revolutionary Offensive Cells made the subversive context even more complex: “the first demands by the Revolutionary Offensive Cells date back to July 2003. The operative continuity of the Revolutionary Offensive Cells in Pisa, characterized by threatening subversive features and the publication of a clarifying document sent to certain newspapers last July strengthened the hypothesis of a certain course of action that develops gradually and illustrates the originality of a new plan for armed struggle and the conquest of the acknowledgement of independent space. The subversive impulse attempts to link different revolutionary groups in order to seize the opportunities offered by favorable conditions of conflict”. As emphasized by the author, the origins of eco-terrorism can be found in the demands made in the name of Camenisch: “it is no coincidence that in 2004 on January 21st,

Camenish's birthday, the cable car in Abetone was set on fire and the following message was written on the walls: "Burn the destroyers, free Marco". On the same day in Fossola (near Massa Carrara) an Abacom booster was blown up, even if the act seems to be happened the day before. On January 21st, however, a Wind telecommunications antenna in Pietrasanta was attacked and a similar message ("Free Camenisch") appeared. Another message was found at the local train station: "For Edo and Sole for Marco and Nicolo, burn the jails". Another attack was made on January 21st in Castiglioncello where two mobile phone antennas were damaged. Everything leads back to Camenisch and other relevant figures". The eco-anarchic group "Il Silvestre" also appears to be extremely important. In June 2004, Pisan public prosecutor Antonio di Bugno, who conducts the investigations of the Carabinieri Corps, authorized various searches of the premises of the anarchic members of "Il Silvestre": Francesco Gioia, Alessio Perondi and William Frediani. The investigations continued and Costantino Ragusa, Giuseppe Bonamici, Leonardo Landi, Benedetta Galante, Alice Motta, Gioacchino Somma, Federico Bonamici and

Francesco Finocchi were investigated. Since July 2003, according to the Carabinieri investigations, they intended to “perform acts of violence to subvert the democratic order, a program carried out by committing crimes, private damage and violence, letters containing bullet shells, illegally manufacturing and possessing explosives (tins of inflammable liquids, wicks and matches), and illegally possessing bullets for common weapons. All of these actions were to be directed against trade union offices and leaders (Cgl, Cisl, Uil,) and political parties like Alleanza Nazionale, Forza Italia, La Margherita, and L’Italia dei Valori, Carabinieri stations, journalists, temporary employment agencies, private companies and professionals”. Costantino Ragusa, one of the group’s leaders, is an important representative: “he is responsible for distributing more or less illegal magazines and manuals of subversion throughout Italy”. Ragusa’s political *iter* is clearly identifiable: born on 5th November, 1976, in Bergamo, according to the profile made by the detectives, Costantino Ragusa emerged as a member of the anarchic group “Macchia Nera”, before preferring political commitment more closely linked to ecologic and

animal defense theories. Ragusa, as a former activist of Bergamo's "Comitato di Liberazione Animale", is considered to be the leader of the anarchic-environmentalist group "Il Silvestre" in Pisa, and as explained by the detectives, takes part in various eco-environmental and anarchic-insurrectionalist initiatives, such as sit-ins and protests, often unannounced to support detained militants like Marco Camenisch.

**Source: www.sisde.it*

8. Eco-terrorism according to Vittorfranco Pisano

As we have already examined in detail in the volume *Problemi e prospettive dei movimenti antagonisti del Novecento*, according to Pisano non-conventional conflict with terroristic operative procedures is characterized by: 1. physical or psychic criminal violence; 2. political, religious or social-political motives; 3. adopting dynamic or illegal structures, 4. actions carried out by non-state or without state-support. According to the author, eco-terrorism is a degeneration of the environmentalist movement. His identification

of the reasons behind the choice of terrorism is particularly illuminating and the second aspect underlined by the author on page 67 appears to be highly significant “determining and identifying one or more radical and revolutionary subculture carriers of subversive and terroristic projects”. These subcultures are, in fact, inspired by ideologies of different schools of thought (right-wing, left-wing or anarchic). Moreover, the author explains how, in order to prevent terroristic actions, subversive agitation must be monitored “through the analysis of propaganda of radical publications together with protests against institutions”.

As regards eco-terrorism in particular, the author notes two main trends: the environmentalist trend and the animalistic trend; the former was born as a consequence of the degeneration of the movement for animal protection, the latter from the nature preservation movement. Animalism has its roots in bio-centric theories, whereas environmentalism is founded in eco-centric theories. It is nevertheless difficult to completely describe eco-terrorism due to its various affinities with the anti-militarist and anti-nuclear movements. At any rate, eco-terrorism strikes both people and infrastructures,

and intimidates and influences public opinion through the media. In addition, it is structured in the same way as illegal cells and/or independent horizontal structures and its actions are carried out through sabotage, arson, bomb attacks and threats.

Appendix

The eco-terrorism of Marco Camenisch

It is difficult to deny that the remarks of the most authoritative representative of Italian eco-terrorism are merely an operative interpretation of primitivism. The author's antagonism, in fact, follows a path similar to primitivism. First of all, the writer emphatically refuses capitalism and the justice of the bourgeoisie; secondly, he shares an ecocentric and animalistic vision and considers the destruction of hydroelectric power stations, nuclear plants, and all university and scientific facilities that promote breeding and vivisection necessary. Thirdly, the author condemns American and European colonialism and refuses patriarchy and monogamy; lastly, in addition to seconding the ideas of native peoples regarding lifestyle and conception of reality (those of nomadic people with little hierarchy), the author refuses parliamentary democracy, and national and international political and economic oligarchies, and defends liberation

struggles in Nicaragua, Cuba and Vietnam. Naturally enough, he also refutes European and American anti-terroristic laws, and the laws that demonstrate the repressive and eco-fascist intentions of all modern states. It comes as no surprise that Camenisch supports ALF and Earth First!, movements that in his opinion offer real hope in definitively dismantling current society. Apart from the numerous terrorist attacks carried out by Camenisch himself, the magazine “Terre Selvage” – promoted by the “Il Silvestre” group – represents a good example of incitement and promotion of terrorism. The editors, in fact, share the ideas of primitivism and explicitly defend the operative procedures and theories of Camenisch. Above and beyond the specific battles waged by the magazine (against animal testing, GMOs, the nuclear industry and others), the editors have a deep knowledge of and sympathy for the English ALF, whose they defend. Equally explicit is their praise for the activities of certain Italian anarchic groups – for instance “Crocenera Anarchica” – and their defense of the remarks of Bonanno and Porcu (well-known exponents of anarchic-insurrectionalism). In summary, the magazine

defends antagonist operative procedures that resemble direct interventionism and therefore the use of sabotage and bomb attacks in vivisection facilities.

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Non-conventional conflict and psychological warfare in the 1968 student movement

We will use the approach developed by Vittorfranco Pisano and the French school of psychological warfare in our attempt to methodologically contextualize the operative methods of the 1968 student movement, while noting that the explanation developed by these authors provides an efficacious key to the reading of both the operative methods of the 1968 student movement and the ends pursued by such movement. The analysis of Vittorfranco Pisano provides a theoretical picture of the protean form of the new conflicts under the name of low-intensity non-conventional conflict. This arises when two or more players – nations or otherwise – pursue subversive or violent ends without adopting either the rules of representative democracy or those of conventional warfare. In particular, low-intensity non-conventional conflict is developed through subversive agitation, terrorism, insurgency, civil

war, revolution, coup d'état, the formation of clandestine or semi-clandestine networks, and disinformation. For our limited purposes, only a few of these key concepts will be required for a methodological classification of the 1968 student movement.

The first method adopted by this movement was certainly subversive agitation, enacted by people belonging to political parties, parliamentary or extra-parliamentary movements for the purpose of achieving political and ideological objectives through the use of disinformation, the instigation of civil disobedience, passive resistance, the illegal occupation of property, acts of vandalism, the infiltration of peaceful demonstrations with the intention of triggering violence or the infiltration of national or other structures, and lastly, the use of media tools for psychological warfare. The ideological context that nourishes subversive agitation can be inspired – according to Pisano – by Marxism-Leninism or anarchy.

Insurgency can follow subversive agitation and requires the partial or total control of a nation's

territory and the resources through the use of illegal political organizations and paramilitary forces. Insurgency naturally entails armed conflict and above all implies a significant amount of operative planning to be implemented through urban guerilla warfare.

The constitution of networks aims at the erosion of individual states and even at geopolitical level. The case histories indicated by Pisano include fighting communist parties, the multinational activities of Soccorso Rosso, and various sympathy groups.

Disinformation is more a part of the wider context of pw because it aims at an alteration of the facts, the falsification of significant documents, the use of agents of influence, the release of underground news, and the creation of organizations to be used as fronts. Its impact on public opinion – Pisano notes – can most certainly be deleterious. The reflections of French strategist Loup Francart and the French school of pw on the whole are particularly relevant in regard to the concept of disinformation and a better understanding of the operative methods of non-conventional warfare

in the context of the antagonist movements that claimed public attention in the period around 1968.

In his essay *La Guerre du sens* (Economica 2000), the French expert contextualized disinformation as it regards mass information, observing it to be implemented through contributions from various subjects whose ends could only be propaganda and subversion. More specifically, disinformation aims at identifying our weaknesses and errors through proven manipulation techniques such as: 1) the negation of an item of information or part of it; 2) the denial of an item of real information; 3) omission; 4) compression; 5) the discrediting of facts and/or intentions; 6) the accrediting of false information. Propaganda, which aims at influencing the masses through the imposition of a monolithic view of reality while maintaining as its primary objective the weakening of the adversary while reinforcing its own real or potential allies, is certainly closely linked to disinformation. Totalitarian propaganda has been historically proven to be particularly effective in its ideation of a new form of man, its use of specific themes (such as anti-Semitism, for example), its exploitation of

semantic support of special symbolic value (such as evocative symbols, slogans, and watchwords), and techniques of manipulation that include simplification, insinuation, the frequent use of authoritative reasoning, the isolation of the adversary, and the creation of scapegoats. It is usually accompanied by indoctrination, which acts on habits and behavior in the attempt to impose its vision of reality to achieve psychological submission through ideology for the purpose of creating a new order through fanatical and widespread proselytism and may even end up in psychical or physical imprisonment. The next step is subversion, which is implemented through precise phases: the crystallization of discontent and the intimidation and agitation of the masses, followed by their militarization. There is no doubt – the Author notes – that in its entirety, subversion is a part of indirect strategy, and therefore one of the weapons used by the weak, and the cultural subversion aims initially at dissolving social bonds and consensus through moral and psychological destruction and subsequently at imposing a different order on society. In the political sphere, subversion attempts to paralyze public life, while

at social level it is expressed through the formation of armed groups composed in parallel structures oriented at insurrection.

Another significant approach begins from the reflections of Christian Harbulot, the Director of the *École du guerre économique*. The French school, unlike the American or Chinese schools, uses the expression “war of cognition” to indicate the polemical use of knowledge and awareness. The disciplines embraced include psychology, sociology, linguistics, and information science, while from the historical point of view, its most significant predecessors include Sun Tzu, Mao, the Comintern and Churchill. Modern theoreticians in the French school include the analysts Mucchielli (with his essay entitled *La Subversion*, CLC, 1976), Geré (with his book *La guerre psychologique*, Economica, 1999) and naturally, Harbulot, are considered the most authoritative representatives.

In strictly historical terms, the genesis of the war of cognition can be traced back to the thought of Chassin, Blanc, and above all, Larechoy, Nemo, and Trinquier following the war in Indochina and the extended conflict in Algeria. As regards

the strictly doctrinal dimension of the cognitive warfare and in light of Harbulot's interpretation, both pw and information warfare presuppose the planned and systematic use of intoxication, disinformation and propaganda, or in other words, the use of techniques finalized to discredit or neutralize the adversary through the manipulation of information. The use of information technology and the mass media has unquestionably amplified the effect and impact of cognitive warfare. Arising independently of Harbulot's approach, the reflections of Roger Mucchielli and Loup Francart on subversion provide a contribution of undoubted relevance to our attempt to rationally understand the operative methods of the antagonist movements of the period around 1968. According to the French social psychologist Mucchielli, in order to be implemented, subversion requires determined objective conditions similar to those of traditional popular revolts, even if the construction of a *pars costruens* is not necessarily implied in its enactment. Subversion is preparatory to the seizing of power, as is shown by the frequent resort to verbal violence by subversion in preparation for physical violence. In particular, subversion acts on

public opinion through both the demoralization of the nation for the destruction of the cohesion of its social groups and the discrediting of the authorities and the neutralization of the masses in order to obstruct any form of reaction by instilling apathy and inhibition. The vision of reality that subversion creates is substantially Manichean and is so radical that it transforms the illegal violence it fosters into legitimate and necessary violence. In this sense, the Author cites the justification used by Sartre, Marcuse, and Foucault on the legitimacy of revolutionary violence. If the press is an effective medium to be used for the widespread penetration of subversion requests, the specific techniques employed to delegitimize the adversary, such as the instrumentalization of the adversary's mistake to one's own advantage, fostering an oppressive and illegitimate image of the state and society as opposed to another socio-political organization, for example, are equally relevant. In Francart's opinion, subversion acts as a general infection with the objective of seizing power through its corrosion of the authorities. Francart re-interprets subversion indirect procedures in the light of Liddle Hart's view that positions indirect strategy alongside

traditional strategy. In any case, for both Francart and Mucchielli, subversion takes place through the demoralization and neutralization of civil society by passing through determined phases such as the cultural subversion that attacks society's values, political subversion that demystifies the image of power, and social subversion that avails of the use of violence and the formation of parallel structures.

Geographical extension

There is no doubt that the 1968 student movement had a global dimension such to involve Europe and North and South America, as well as Eastern Europe (e.g. Yugoslavia). Above and beyond the specific circumstances of each nation, as observed by Arendt (even while bearing in mind the pertinent observations made by Aron and Bauman on the ideological diversity in the Eastern and Western student movements), the student revolt had worldwide significance. The existence of an evident similarity in the shared non-violent actions employed in this non-conventional conflict demonstrates the existence of a common substrate that does not – as observed by Gerlach – contrast with the movement's polycentric and reticular

nature.

Overcoming traditional geopolitical logic

One of the constant that emerges with greater clarity from a comparative study of the various movements is undoubtedly their explicit refusal of typical geopolitical logic –e.g. the reflections of Carmichael and the anti-NATO slogans in Italy or the desire to extend the conflict in Vietnam around the world.

Diversity

One evident consequence of overcoming strictly national logic (such as the glorification of armed struggle in the Third World interpreted as another manifestation of the West) certainly drove more than a few movement leaders to radically criticize Western political systems and praise those of the Third World.

Anti-nationalism

Anti-nationalism was unquestionably widespread and generated by the following causes:

- a) the degeneration of nationalism into Fascism and Nazism;
- b) the fact that nationalism was a relevant ideology for determined institutions (such as political and military institutions);
- c) the fact that nationalism was an important instrument in legitimizing consensus;
- d) the fact that nationalism was undeniably responsible for instances of genocide;

Localism

The refusal of nationalism had the following consequences:

- a) elegies to independence and separatism (from the Barbagia mobilization to Ulster);
- b) the rediscovery of local dialects;
- c) the firm defense of local autonomy against centralized logic.

The generational orientation

The expression refers to the younger age of the activists (between 16 and 30) who made:

- 1) a rebellion against political authority interpreted as illegitimate and based on lies (an opposition that was not original in any way because it was mediated more or less consciously by the European and American anarchist movements) in contrast to praise for other types of democratic rule (the Paris Commune) with the use of:
 - a) irreverence towards traditions;
 - b) the element of playfulness brought to protest;
 - c) verbal violence;
 - d) intimidation and physical violence.

- 2) a protest against the alienating mechanics of the reality that programmed people's

lives;

- 3) ferocious criticism of the need to conform to reality.

They also stressed the need for areas of autonomy (such as communes, reserved neighborhoods), here as well recalling the anarchist experiments, also through the use of extremist methods such as subversive agitation.

Naturally enough, they were aware of the absolute need to refuse any form of integration or use of the logic of consumerism, as they were also conscious of the usefulness of evoking the past by praising the IWW workers union, the Spanish anarchist movement, the Nazi Resistance, spontaneous uprising, and the wisdom of adopting new graphic, musical and cinematographic forms of expression.

Criticizing training and education institutes

The refusal of training and education institutes began with:

1. the glorification of the political movement

- against bureaucratic obstructionism at such institutes;
2. the defense of mass education institutes as instruments of emancipation;
 3. the refusal that the university could become an integrated part of society;
 4. the refusal of preference on the basis of social class;
 5. the idea that only an alternative education might really emancipate an individual;
 6. the refusal of asymmetry between teacher and student;
 7. the creation of a highly politicized and intolerant cadre school;
 8. the scrapping of old university institutions (the Italian Goliard Student Movement);
 9. the refusal of traditional examination methods;
 10. the progressive dissolution of the barriers between town and gown (the world at large and the university);
 11. the refusal of the antiquated curricula that had little concern with current reality;
 12. the use of the political-cultural debate inside high-school and university

- classrooms;
13. the defense of collective self-teaching practices;
 14. the refusal of lessons by pontificating professors;
 15. the awareness of the impossibility for knowledge to be neutral;
 16. the usefulness of occupying classrooms with the operative methods of subversive agitation;
 17. a radical refusal of authoritarian indoctrination;
 18. the awareness of being an autonomous subject – such as a student mass – and the bearer of specific needs (in Italy through a strategy of alliances in the manner of the Third International Column) as demonstrated by documents from the University of Trento and thesis at the Sapienza University in Rome;
 19. the desire to transform the student into a revolutionary activist required to oppose capitalism at educational and training institute level;
 20. the need to overthrow the teacher through

- progressive operative methods ranging from non-violent to violent action;
21. the awareness accrued – only subsequently – of the irrelevancy of education as a vehicle of the revolution;
 22. the urgency to structurally modify and not merely reform educational institutes;
 23. the need to achieve real egalitarianism as opposed to the fictitious selection of “countercourses” through a critical education and a new political foundation of a leftwing movement further to the left of the one in parliament;
 24. the need to closely link knowledge with political action in order to achieve real awareness.

In fact, beyond the ephemeral dimension of many alternative proposals – starting with “countercourses” – the training and education institutes became a springboard for a new politic protagonism that culminated in extra-parliamentary practices, terrorism and traditional political institutions. Moreover, these institutes

were the perfect place to overcome political, social, economic and military institutions, through a reeducation characterized by intolerance and political fanaticism.

Alternative and critical knowledge

What new content emerged from the 1968 student movement?

First of all, the internationalization of ideas was one of the most evident characteristics, which was at least as evident as the innovation in the forms of internationalization itself. We refer to paperback and economic, pocket-sized books that gave students access to the classics in humanities and philosophy and created an authentic industry of culture that also documented the movement itself in confirmation of the natural capacity to transform any cultural goods into a product. This knowledge led to the criticism of the totem-book (which was the fruit of the blind assimilation of the Chinese Cultural revolution), a view that would reveal itself self-contradictory in the moment foundations were laid for the fetishism of Marxist, Stalinist, Maoist, and Che Guevara's texts that eventually reached

the level of a political-cultural fundamentalism that pronounced the only real culture to be leftist culture.

Secondly, the emphasis posed on the importance of political activity was soon transformed into a totally and profoundly intolerant politicization. Thirdly, the movement could not accept cultural inequality or accept the utilization of knowledge as an instrument in the hands of power (and political, economic and military power in particular). Fourth of all, the movement preached that the aggregate of knowledge was addressed to the repression and containment of dissent. In fifth place, the need to create alternative spaces proceeded hand in hand with the conviction that the institutions would have soon re-absorbed antagonism. Sixth of all, the refusal to believe in the neutrality of knowledge (determined by the belief that objectivity masked slavery to power) led the movement first to a politicization of science and then to the negation of its avowed objectivity. In seventh place, the 1968 student movement led to the popularity of the intellectual who was mercilessly critical of institutions, at pains of being considered not

intellectual at all but merely a lackey of the system. Eighth of all, the socialization of knowledge – the glorification of the community above all – led to a fanatical criticism of individual effort as being dangerously bourgeois. Ninth of all, the use of anti-psychiatry and reinterpreted psychoanalysis permitted the movement to destroy the identity of the ego (which was conceived as being solely fictitious) and declare the line between normality and pathology unclear, to culturally and politically re-assess psychic folly, validate alternative anti-monogamous sexual practices (unmasking false institutions such as matrimony) in the process and bring into the political arena sexuality with all its centrality in changing the world (the increase in foul language was finalized to unmasking the bigoted hypocrisy of bourgeois culture, even if it soon became a purely vulgar end in itself). Tenth of all, the movement was hoping for a radical renewal of humanity inspired by Socialist utopia, libertarian Socialism, and Maoist Leninist Socialism, the Socialism of Castro and Che Guevara. Eleventh of all, these plans for a new order were historically unoriginal, given that the 1968 student movement repeated and/or reprocessed aspects of early

Christianity, European anarchy of the 1600s and 1800s, Utopian Socialism, and the agendas of the English Levelers.

Parliamentary democracy was a re-edition of anarchical and community logic that soon changed into either leader-oriented authoritarianism or the ferocious opposition of points of view that rendered the achievement of shared conclusions impossible. Above all, parliamentary democracy – democracy in name only (as Rostagno observes) – provided an excellent launching pad and training ground for radiant political careers of the future (above and beyond the intellectual mystifications of Touraine and Morin). Twelfth of all, the movement structure – a structure that anticipated today's current anti-global movements – was a reticular structure.

The role of political parties

Generally speaking, the movement always manifested a highly critical position in regard to the political parties, which were seen as instruments of dominion and/or indoctrination that served to consolidate conformism and the subjugation to the rules of the dominating system.

On the other hand, the political party system – in most cases – accepted the reasons and operative methods of the student protest movement with hostility, to which the movement replied by constructively creating alternative media (e.g. the Liberation News Service or the New England Free Press) which especially in the USA vaunted a solid tradition and were inspired by semiotic theories of Dadaism, Futurism, and Surrealism. At the level of operative method, opposition took form also through economic boycott or illegal occupation (see the action typical of subversive agitation taken by the German SDS against Springer), through the creation of 16 mm films and documentaries on the demonstrations, the establishment of independent cinema networks or portable tape recorder networks up to the use of linguistic spontaneity far from the artifices of official demagogy. In short, the other characteristics of the new experimentation took place through:

- 1) the use of debates after showing;
- 2) the use of kitsch and pop culture;
- 3) the use of transgressive and foul mouthed anti-bourgeoisie terminology;

- 4) the creation of cinematographic productions of collective nature inspired by the thought of Vertov and Brecht;
- 5) the use of the film-documentary (such as *La reprise du travail aux usines Wonder*, dated June '68);
- 6) the use of essay films (like *La hora de los hornos*);
- 7) parodies of video clips.

In the end, the movement promoted counter-information intentionally construed as counter-information warfare or – in our terminology – psychological warfare that was soon absorbed by the dominant culture (e.g. sexual transgression became pornography).

Opposition to the system

Opposition to the system was supposed to be permanent (as emphasized by Dutschke) and as indicated by Mao, and consisted in the alternation of techniques of non-violent action (promoted by Thoreau and Gandhi) with more frequent – especially today – subversive agitation.

In this regard, the refusal to engage in conventional warfare – interpreted as a typical manifestation of Imperialism – was accompanied by the glorification (and practice) of the guerilla warfare practiced by Mao and Che Guevara. The condemnation of military institutions and technocracy was always so resolute and radical (at least as much as the anti-Americanism and the refusal of political realism as an interpretative underpinning of historical reality) as to permit its definition as radical anti-militarism. One of the most evident consequences is the theoretical opposition between the historical world connoted by opposition and authoritarianism and a revolutionary reality that often finds its preferred interlocutor in the Third World. On the other hand, politicization brought the activist to label any demonstration of thought or action as belonging to either the right or the left. Ideologically speaking, above and beyond the differences between Anglo-American antagonism and the new French, Italian, and German Left, Socialism (in all its forms, from authoritarian to libertarian) and anarchy (from the European to American anarchy) were undoubtedly the unavoidable historical points of reference. The relationship with Communist parties and

trade unions alternated between suspicion and collaboration. The historically unjustified use of the specific category Fascism to describe all conservative cultural phenomena was one of the consequences of a fanatically politicized interpretation of history that was often incapable of distinguishing between various types of political system (in Italy, for example, describing the various Christian Democrat governments as Fascist as certain Latin American regimes). This uninhibited and fallacious use of historical categories, among other things, is another characteristic of the anti-global movement.

The demonization of the adversary (the politician, the particularly scorn law enforcement agencies, the non-progressive magistracy) was one of the most commonly used ideological procedures, and as common as the obsessive fear of imminent military takeover and the use of hind-sightedness that perceived hidden powers (the secret services, in particular) as the root of all evil.

Equally radical will be the refusal of representative democracy and the political party, against which

the operative methods will be the alternation of direct action with steady attrition in alternation with violent revolution seen as a feasible objective thanks to which a new society and a new man might emerge (in this regard, how can the millenary dimension of this hope be denied?).

How can the role of violence interpreted alternatively as an instrument of attack or defense against repression by law enforcement agencies be ignored? How can the use of urban guerilla warfare in May 1968 in Paris that was to lead to an overall insurrection be under-estimated? At the end of 1968, military degeneration laid the basis – in both America and Europe – for armed struggle already present in the ideology of the movement. In this regard, the demonization of the law enforcement agencies was at least as radical as the feeling against NATO, which was perceived as the armed force of US Imperialism in Europe and therefore in accordance with Cold War propaganda (in the Soviet approach). Pan-politics – another characteristic of the 1968 student movement – led to the extreme politicization of the lawyers, magistracy, and the police. Alongside the mythicizing of the guerilla

and guerilla warfare (from Villa to Che Guevara, from Fanon to the Vietnamese), the factory worker and the factory were instrumentally deified to enhance the revolutionary function, as was the student with whom the worker was supposed to ally in the revolution. This was nothing but indoctrination used to turn the worker against the local factory owner and the capitalist system in its entirety, which was seen as the cradle of all evil, an economic system already considered similarly in the Socialist and Marxist tradition. Such evil had multiple faces, which included the prisons and the mental asylums which could not be accepted (the reformist approach was too emphatically bourgeoisie to be shared) and were as unacceptable as the military system (recovering the tired old values of anarchism and pacifism). The movement identified other potential revolutionaries, these outcasts in the prisons and mental hospitals.

Another aspect, far from being marginal, was the creation of communes in which this *modus vivendi* so unlike that of correct society could be freely experimented, an authentic lifestyle that could also imply the absence of violent opposition

or the presence of passive resistance, and even the non-participation in the dominant society. In short, these self-managed communities were planned inside existing institutions (factories, universities, cities) or outside on the basis of experience gained by Fourier and Proudhon before finally reaching the political-religious communities of the New Age.

Conclusion

Despite the various experiments, the rebirth inside the movement of more or less organized political groups invalidates both the utopian alternative proposed and the reassertion of the division between the intellectuals and the people. The antagonism between non-violent action and subversive agitation that had amply distinguished the entire movement was eventually turned in favor of armed struggle. The need to go beyond fictitious democracy – representative democracy, in other words – was transformed into the creation of highly centered and structured groups (such as the terrorist groups of the RAF and BR). The persistence in Italy of this movement alternates between connivance and the superficiality of the

political class and trade union power invalidate the excellent intelligence work performed by the Reserved Affairs Office (through first the DIGOS then the UCIGOS) and the Defense Ministry (from the Corps to the SID). In this regard, it is sufficient to recall the reaction of a large part of the Italian political class, which was incapable of understanding the real importance of the movement in terms of the stability of the institutions and public order despite the report submitted by Prefect Mazza who had clearly understood – as Miglio, Romeo, Montanelli and Matteucci in Italy and Aron in France had understood – the subversive drift of the movement and its explicit legitimization and coverage by certain university professors and intellectuals.

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Index

Information warfare as interpreted by Philippe Baumard pag. 2

Disinformation as interpreted by Vittoriofranco Pisano pag. 8

Information warfare as interpreted by Jacques Baud pag. 14

Problems and prospects for Anti-terrorism in Italy pag. 20

Aspects of military intelligence and psychological warfare during the war in Algeria as analyzed by Maurice Faivre pag. 26

Disinformation and propaganda in the thought of Loup Francart pag. 35

Reflections on revolutionary war by Colonel Charles Larechoy	pag. 41
The cognitive warfare: aspects of new strategic thinking	pag. 48
The new challengers to intelligence	pag. 55
The Social Network, the alter-globalization movement, and counter-forums	pag. 83
Counter-forums and the alter-globalization movement	pag. 98
Disinformation and subversive agitation in the alterglobal movement	pag. 107
Green utopia between radical ecology and eco-terrorism	pag. 141
Definition of terrorism and eco-terrorism	pag. 148
Analysis of eco-terrorism	pag. 151

Appendix - The eco-terrorism of Marco
Camenisch pag. 189

Non-conventional conflict and psychological
warfare in the 1968 student movement

pag. 195

Bibliography pag. 223

The CESTUDEC Association founded in 2011 is based in Como. The President is Prof. Giuseppe Gagliano; the Vice-President is Colonel Mario Pietrangeli. CESTUDEC is a non-profit association that promotes the greater acquisition of knowledge and public awareness of military history and strategic sciences through cooperation with government ministries, regional authorities, universities, other organizations and institutions, Italian and international research institutes, private companies, and civilians.

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