

**MACKENZIE PRESBYTERIAN UNIVERSITY**

LUIS HENRIQUE BEUST

EINSTEIN AND FREUD:  
WAR AND PEACE  
IN AN INTERDISCIPLINARY DIALOGUE

São Paulo

2006

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Dissertation submitted to Mackenzie Presbyterian University as part of the requirements for the granting of the title of Master in Education, Art and History of Culture.

TUTOR: PROF DR MARTIN CEZAR FEIJÓ

São Paulo  
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Accepted in March 2006.

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To Ginus, who always said it was possible. And for so much, so much more.

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<sup>1</sup> QUINO, 1998, page 383. Translation: As we can't make ourselves love each other, why don't we try making the others love each one of us?

Let not a man glory in that he loves his country; let him rather glory in this, that he loves his kind.

The world is just one country, and mankind its citizens.<sup>2</sup>

So powerful is the light of unity that it can illuminate the whole earth.<sup>3</sup>

Bahá'u'lláh

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<sup>2</sup> BAHÁ'U'LLÁH, 1977, page 158.

<sup>3</sup> BAHÁ'U'LLÁH, 1977, page 181.

## **The War Has Started**

*For the Behrouzi Family*

The War has started  
But life goes on:  
(This conclusion is pathetic and painful,  
Yet so, so true...)

Life goes on for those that live,  
(But especially for those who die!)  
Life continues to be pathetic and painful,  
Yet so, so true.

The War has started  
And fresh blood is spilling  
From shattered men and women,  
From shattered children,  
From human beings, broken and smashed,  
Like jars of jam tumbling off the shelf:  
Lie on the floor, bloody and incurable;  
Lie painful and in putrid form,  
Yet so, so true...

The War has started, and the world groans.  
And the world dances and sings.  
The world has fun, buying and selling,  
And life rolls on, pathetic,  
Painful.

Only God understands this pain! Only He groans!  
The pain of His image and semblance  
Decimating His image and semblance.  
And so many images and semblances lying there,  
Shattered,  
Broken,  
Bloody.

Only God understands the silent scream  
Of infant corpses.  
Alas! A painful lack of groans,  
The terrible lack of sobbing,  
A devastating silence...  
(And then: the shovels digging graves.)

And life goes on  
Shattered,  
Splintered,  
Bloody.  
Putrid like hate in the hearts.  
Pathetic like vain words.  
Like vain rhetoric, that in itself kills.

The War has started,  
But life goes on.  
It carries on, without a purpose,  
Each time more without a purpose.  
Like silent corpses.  
Like smoking ruins.  
Like hearts without God.

Luis Henrique Beust<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> BEUST, 1996, page 123.

## **ABSTRACT**

The present work makes a case for the relevance of Albert Einstein and Sigmund Freud's exchange on war and peace for current efforts towards establishing a Culture of Peace as designated by the UN/UNESCO International Decade for a Culture of Peace (2001-2010). Two open letters exchanged between Einstein and Freud in 1932 served as the principle source for this investigation. In these letters — exchanged under the auspices of the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation of the League of Nations — Einstein and Freud describe their rationale regarding the causes of war and the possible paths which might lead to the establishment of a lasting peace between the Nations. This paper analyses the perspectives of Einstein and Freud in relation to war and peace in light of the theoretical framework given by Norberto Bobbio's characterization of the contemporary modes of pacifism ("paths to peace"). In spite of the fact that seventy years have passed since Einstein and Freud discussed their views on war and peace and notwithstanding the fact that some of Freud's thinking has been challenged since, the author concludes by suggesting that the exchange between Einstein and Freud is directly in line with, and contributes towards, current efforts to promote a Culture of Peace — particularly regarding their shared view that war is not intrinsic to human nature and therefore can be eliminated. In retrospect, the contribution that Einstein and Freud can make towards the goal of establishing a Culture of Peace stems as much from their exchange as it does from the fact that these two thinkers have become icon figures of the 20th century.

Key Words: Einstein. Freud. War. Peace. Culture of Peace. Peace Education.

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

The technical and cultural development of humanity during the 20<sup>th</sup> Century has raised the issue of world peace to a new level of responsibility, with the penalty of wars leading to the destruction of civilisation – and even of life on this Earth – as we know it<sup>5</sup>. Despite the unimaginable threat that hangs over the fate of humanity, awareness of the need for definite world peace and rallying round to fulfil this goal still seem well out of touch with modern priorities. In 1984, Norberto Bobbio, noted with sadness that “the steps taken towards an atomic awareness<sup>6</sup> were very slow, and certainly slower than the increase in the lethal power of weapons”<sup>7</sup>.

Since the first concerns about the risk of destruction by nuclear weapons back in the 1950s, the situation has only got worse. Not only has the number of countries with nuclear warheads increased from five to seven, with India and Pakistan having joined the nuclear club in 1998, but also the risk of the use of nuclear weapons by small nations or terrorist organisations has risen at an alarming rate<sup>8</sup>. In spite of all the treaties and world conventions against the proliferation of nuclear weapons, it is estimated that even today there are some 30,000 nuclear warheads ready to be used<sup>9</sup> (compared with 70,000 at the height of the Cold War, in 1985)<sup>10</sup>.

One of the most worrying aspects of this race to arms is that fact that in a way, and against all evidence, an atomic war is now considered a feasible possibility. In 1991, Norberto Bobbio commented that, on top of the fact that the “atomic awareness” did not arise with the force and publicity that had been imagined, there had also been the advent of a “kind of adaptation or resignation in the light of a possible catastrophe”<sup>11</sup>. This view, showing the plausibility of the nuclear destruction of the world has now even made inroads into fiction literature and also the cinema and TV screens. Dozens of films, generally about a grim hypothetical future “after a nuclear war”, have exploited this tragic possibility of total war, right from Stanley Kubrick’s classic “Dr Fantasic” (1964), through the Mad Max series<sup>12</sup> — which catapulted Mel Gibson to stardom — culminating with “The Day After”, launched for television (1983).

Among the several factors that may help to breed a complacent attitude to war, the main such factor may be the belief that bellicose activity is part of human nature, which would mean that is impossible to stamp out<sup>13</sup>. Research conducted among students in Finland (1985) and in the United States (1985 and 1986) suggests that a significant part of the

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<sup>5</sup> English historian Arnold Toynbee, reflecting on the characteristics of the new condition of bellicose activity, back in the 1970s, wrote that “the atom bomb and our countless other lethal weapons are able to exterminate, in a future war, not only the belligerent parties but the whole human race” (TOYNBEE, 1976, p.35).

<sup>6</sup> Norberto Bobbio gives the name of *atomic conscience* to “the awareness of the absolute novelty of a nuclear war compared with all the wars of the past”. (BOBBIO, 2003, p. 26.)

<sup>7</sup> BOBBIO, 2003, p. 26.

<sup>8</sup> In 1968 the Treaty for Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (TNP, or TNPN) limited to five the number of countries that could be considered “militarily nuclear states”: the United States, Russia (then the USSR), the United Kingdom, France and China. These were, indeed, all the countries that had conducted nuclear tests before 1 January 1967. However, there were many countries who did not sign the Treaty (France and China only signed the document in 1992, and Brazil in 1998). North Korea has already admitted to possess nuclear weapons, while Iran has been accused of possession. Israel and South Africa probably have nuclear weapons, while countries such as Ukraine, Belarus and Kazakhstan used to have arsenals of nuclear weapons when part of the former USSR. Nothing is known for certain about where these weapons are or may have gone. (See NUCLEARFILES.ORG-timeline.)

<sup>9</sup> UN – GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 2002.

<sup>10</sup> NUCLEARFILES.ORG-Arms Control?

<sup>11</sup> BOBBIO, 2002, p. 20.

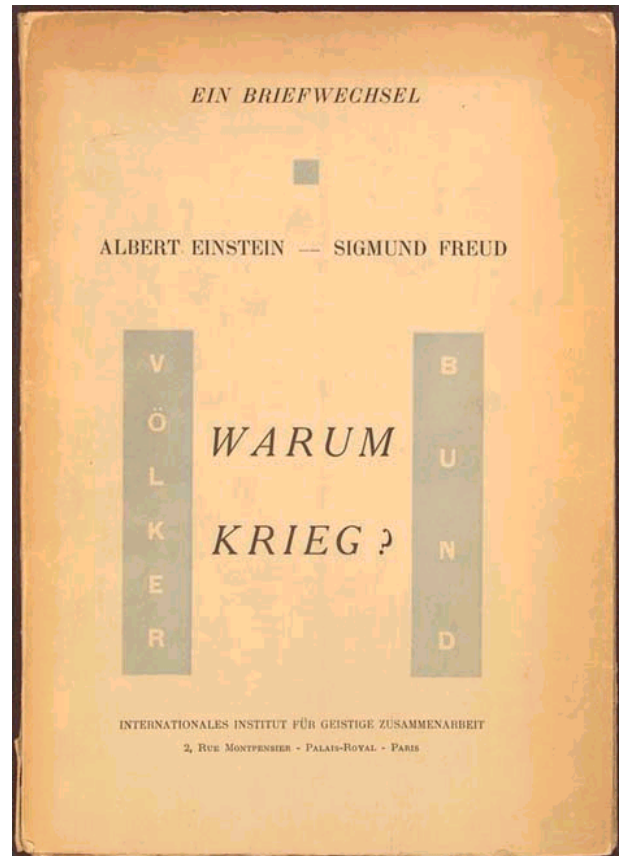
<sup>12</sup> Mad Max 2, de 1982, and “Mad Max: Beyond the Thunder’s Group”, of 1985.

<sup>13</sup> This is a core issue in the correspondence between Einstein and Freud, which we shall analyse.

interviewees (52% in Finland and 44% in the USA) believed that “war is a natural part of human nature”<sup>14</sup>. David Adams, one of the leading researchers and peace activists, clearly states that “The myth that war is indeed a part of human nature is apparently widely publicised and very insidious”<sup>15</sup>.

In the light of these and other issues, and also the compliance with his request to “preserve the future generations from the catastrophe of war”<sup>16</sup>, the United Nations has declared that the decade running from 2001 to 2010 should be the International Decade for a Culture of Peace.<sup>17</sup> Among the challenges of the decade is the drawing up and the implementation of *programmes for education towards the Culture of Peace*<sup>18</sup>. In the Declaration about Culture of Peace, the General Assembly of the UN makes it clear that “Education, at all levels, is one of the fundamental means of building a Culture of Peace”<sup>19</sup>. The preparation of educational content to be used in such programmes for peace is one of the main contemporary efforts within the International Decade for a Culture of Peace<sup>20</sup>, and this work seeks to collaborate with this effort.

In 1932, Albert Einstein and Sigmund Freud exchanged letters about war and peace, analysing, from their respective points of view, the causes of war between nations and also the possibilities of establishing definite world peace. The booklet containing these open letters, under the title of *Warum Krieg?*<sup>21</sup> in the German original, was published in 1933 by the League of Nations. Soon after this correspondence was exchanged between Einstein and Freud, the situation in Europe and in the world quickly worsened, with



Cover of the German edition of the correspondence between Einstein and Freud about war and peace (1933)

<sup>14</sup> ADAMS, 1987, p. 3.

<sup>15</sup> ADAMS, 1987, p. 3.

<sup>16</sup> United Nations, (1945).

<sup>17</sup> The full name is International Decade for a Culture for Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World.

<sup>18</sup> United Nations, 1999.

<sup>19</sup> United Nations, 1999.

<sup>20</sup> The United Nations defines a Peace Culture as follows: “A Peace Culture is a set of values, attitudes, traditions, behaviours and life styles based: a) On respect for life, the end of violence, and the promotion and practice of non-violence through education, dialogue and co-operation; b) On full respect for the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of the member states, without interference in their affairs which are essentially domestic jurisdiction of States, in accordance with the UN Charter and international law; c) On full and complete respect for all human rights and fundamental liberties; d) On a commitment to a pacific solution of any present and future conflicts; e) On efforts to satisfy development needs and also protect the environment for present and future generations; f) On respect for, and promotion of, the right to development; g) On the respect for, and nurturing of, the equality of opportunities and rights between women and men; h) On the respect for, and nurturing of, the right of all people to freedom of speech, opinion and information; i) On adhesion to the principles of liberty, justice, democracy, tolerance, solidarity, co-operation, pluralism, cultural diversity, dialogue and understanding at all levels of society and between nations, encouraged by a national and international atmosphere that favours peace. United Nations, 1999.

<sup>21</sup> *Why War?*, in English.



Hitler taking power in Germany in 1933 and the start of the Second World War in 1939. With the world deeply submerged in war, it became socially reproachable to talk about peace, as if it were almost a subversive act, and thus the correspondence was never given the wide disclosure that was intended.

With the end of the Second World War in 1945, the exhausted and disillusioned world just wanted to rebuild from the rubble. However, there had been a transformation in the post-war world. Something different had come out of chaos. Indeed, the phoenix that arose from the ashes was of another species. Eric Hobsbawm commented that “This was a qualitatively different world”<sup>22</sup>. The world of post-modernity started to rehearse its expression of disenchantment with big narratives, while the masses were thinking more about shopping centres, supermarkets and TV serials than about changing the world<sup>23</sup>. In this “post-moralist” era in which we live<sup>24</sup>, duties can only be expressed in milder form, as “the supermarkets, marketing and the leisure paradise have, as it were, buried the religion of obligations.”<sup>25</sup>

In addition, there was the development of a contradictory reality: the idealism of world peace, which had been so visible after Hiroshima, started to peter out just as the real need for peace increased<sup>26</sup>. The prospects of co-operation with the Soviet Union, that had been raised by American president Franklin Delano Roosevelt and his Vice-President, Henry Wallace, were crushed by the confrontational stance taken by Henry Truman when he took office<sup>27</sup>. Even though there had been some development of pacifism just after the War in other parts of the world<sup>28</sup>, this idealism seemed doomed to die a tragic and solitary death. In 1984, Norberto Bobbio wrote that at the expressions of pacifism, “in places where they occur, the audience, even when it is more numerous, [...] is by no means comparable with those people that watch a football match on a Sunday”.<sup>29</sup>

Pacifist idealism, probably scythed down by a feeling of impotence, fizzled out considerably and started to be seen as unrealistic. As Hobsbawm points out, as a consequence of the “catastrophe”<sup>30</sup> of the Second World War, “the human race learnt to live in a world where slaughter, torture and mass exile were daily experiences that we no longer notice”<sup>31</sup>. Also according to Hobsbawm<sup>32</sup>, “the moral and social crisis”<sup>33</sup> was “even more obvious than the uncertainties of world politics and global economics”<sup>34</sup>. It represented “a crisis of beliefs and suppositions atop which the modern society found support”<sup>35</sup>, a crisis “of rationalist and humanist theories covered both by liberal capitalism and by communism”<sup>36</sup>. The whizzing and oft naïve internationalism of the period between the two Great Wars was poisoned by the

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<sup>22</sup> HOBBSAWM, 2000, p. 23.

<sup>23</sup> Gilles Lipovetsky mentions that, along the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, the logic of mass consumerism created “a culture in which happiness superimposes itself on moral order” (LIPOVETSKY, 2005, p. 29).

<sup>24</sup> LIPOVETSKY, 2005, p. 29.

<sup>25</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 29.

<sup>26</sup> In the United States, according to David Adams, “The American pacifist movement was almost completely destroyed by the anti-communist feeling of the fifties” (ADAMS, 1985, p. 12).

<sup>27</sup> Wallace was Roosevelt’s Vice-President until 1944, when he was replaced by Henry Truman. With the death of Roosevelt, some weeks before the German surrender in 1945, Truman took over the Presidency and was then re-elected in the electoral campaign of 1948, defeating Wallace who, on a pacifist ticket, could not muster more than a million votes. Truman succession to Roosevelt triggered off the atom bombs at Hiroshima and Nagasaki, while his victory in 1948 “would warm up the Cold War” (ADAMS, 1985, p. 11).

<sup>28</sup> Especially in Europe, as from 1950, with the creation of the World Peace Council, in Warsaw.

<sup>29</sup> BOBBIO, 2003, p. 26.

<sup>30</sup> HOBBSAWM, 2000, p. 58.

<sup>31</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 58.

<sup>32</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 20.

<sup>33</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 20.

<sup>34</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 20.

<sup>35</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 20.

<sup>36</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 20.

Cold War, imperialism and globalisation.

Thus, more than seven decades after their publication, the ideas presented by Einstein and Freud in *Warum Krieg?* seem to have been frozen in time, never having had the wide disclosure that was the original intention of the League of Nations. Despite the differences in the respective *Weltanschauungen*<sup>37</sup> in relation to war and peace, Einstein and Freud put forward powerful ideas and arguments that need to be investigated, both individually and also in their reciprocal relationship. However, their names – which shall always be remembered among those that changed the course of human understanding of the Universe and of themselves — are practically forgotten when the issue is pacifist thinking and actions in the present day.

With the recent uptake in systematic efforts for construction of a Culture for Peace based on educational efforts for peace, under the auspices of the United Nations and UNESCO, hundreds of institutions and universities from throughout the world have started undergraduate or graduate courses (some at doctorate level) in Peace Studies and education for Peace<sup>38</sup>. A quick search on the Internet<sup>39</sup> for the term “peace studies”<sup>40</sup> brings up about 1,780,000 documents, while “peace education”<sup>41</sup> produces 893,000 pages, and “Culture of Peace”<sup>42</sup> has 985,000 results produced. In Google Brazil, a similar search brings up 30,400 documents, with hundreds of institutions offering courses<sup>43</sup>.

Therefore I bring up the hypothesis, that I plan to test in this work, that the analyses made and the conclusions presented by Einstein and Freud in 1932 — both at the height of maturity of their lives and theories — still have a lot to say to the contemporary efforts working towards an education for a Culture of Peace. The Master’s Programme in Education, Art and History of Culture from Mackenzie Presbyterian University seemed to offer us an interdisciplinary environment suitable for a research assignment that, by virtue of its very theme and object, is interdisciplinary in itself. I believe that the analysis of the postulates on war and peace proposed by Einstein and Freud can make a great contribution to this interdisciplinary space where the history of culture created explicit interfaces with the contemporary efforts of an education aimed at the construction of a Culture for Peace.

Over the last 20 years, the issue of peace and of a Culture for Peace has been a loyal companion within the way I think and also in my personal trail. In several activities of a personal or professional nature<sup>44</sup>, I have had the opportunity of poring over the issue of violence and war within a variety of cultural environments, in over thirty countries. And, on

<sup>37</sup> *Weltanschauung*, plural *Weltanschauungen*, is a term in German which has already become part of erudite tradition in other languages. It is the combination of two words, as is often the case in German, for the expression of a shade of meaning that extends beyond both words. First, we have the word *Welt*, which means *world*. On the other hand, we also have the word *Anschauung*, which may be translated as view, outlook, vision; perspective, panorama, contemplation; perception, understanding; opinion, point of view; intuition, conviction, conclusion, idea... Thus one can understand *Weltanschauung* as a concept of the Universe and of the relation of the human species with it, especially a concept that has been prepared based on a specific point of view, be it individual or collective. Sometimes, we have seen this term translated as *cosmovision* or *worldvision*.

<sup>38</sup> Google provides a list of the main universities and institutions that offer courses in Education for Peace in its directory about Peace Studies. This list is available at [http://www.google.com/Top/Society/Issues/Peace/Peace\\_Studies/](http://www.google.com/Top/Society/Issues/Peace/Peace_Studies/). (Access made on 12 December 2005). In Brazil, the Federal University of Sergipe offers a Master’s programme in Education for Peace, in collaboration with the Peace University, in Austria.

<sup>39</sup> Made on 18 November 2005, based on Google.

<sup>40</sup> Peace Studies.

<sup>41</sup> Education for Peace.

<sup>42</sup> Culture for peace.

<sup>43</sup> Access on 10 December 2005.

<sup>44</sup> Mainly with the Bahá’í Community ([www.bahai.org](http://www.bahai.org); [www.bahai.org.br](http://www.bahai.org.br)), as a consultant of the United Nations and the Brazilian Ministry for Education and Culture, and as a member of several non-governmental initiatives for peace, such as Redepaz (Peace Network) ([www.redepaz.org](http://www.redepaz.org)), the Council for Global Education ([www.globoaleducation.org](http://www.globoaleducation.org)) and the Anima Mundi Institute ([www.animamundi.org.br](http://www.animamundi.org.br)).

almost all occasions, it was necessary to resort to one or more of the ideas presented by Einstein and Freud back in their letters of 1932.

The objective of my research is to make a comparison between the ideas on war and peace presented by Einstein and by Freud in *Warum Krieg?*, using as an analytical framework the division into categories used by Norberto Bobbio for different kinds of pacifism in the contemporary world. The question I now seek to answer is that of if the ideas about war and peace held by Einstein and Freud are still relevant, after 70 years, for contemporary educational efforts towards the creation of a Culture for Peace.

Using the division of “peace paths” into categories prepared by Bobbio, we can see if and how the propositions of Einstein and Freud could still fit into a contemporary scheme of efforts for peace. In the body of this work, I shall take up a posture which is at the same time expositive (seeking to show the material researched about the object of the research) and argumentative (showing my own positions, with their evidence and reasons). I have tried to look at the ideas of these two great men by comparison and contrast between their ideas, following an analytic movement “from the inside out”, inductive, that is: from the particular of each of their postulates to the generalisation in relation to their ideas within the context of their *Weltanschauungen*.

Among the steps that have been assumed to be necessary for this investigation, I could list the following:

1. To translate into Portuguese, directly from the German original – with all the risks this entails – the letters written by Einstein and Freud, seeking to correct possible mistakes in previous translations;
2. Narrate the origins and the unfolding of the correspondence about war and peace, written between Einstein and Freud in 1932, unfolding the conditions in which this took place;
3. Look into how war and peace have become evident in the *Weltanschauungen* of Einstein and Freud, based on their letters of 1932 and other pieces of writing that are relevant to the research.
4. Analyse agreements, contrasts and the synergy between the postulates made by Einstein and by Freud, in the light of an interdisciplinary context that is naturally contained within an exchange of missives between a physicist and a psychologist about war and peace.
5. Stress fundamental aspects, shown by the letters, that may, even today, contribute towards international efforts to build a Culture for Peace.

With the publication of this work, I hope to inspire further research into the issue of a Culture for Peace, as also bring back the fertility and the representativity of the thoughts of Einstein and Freud for the scenario of investigation and references in the field of Education for Peace. Above all, I hope to make a contribution to the sincere, courageous, persistent and loving efforts of all those who are really dedicated to the construction of a Culture for Peace, where bellicose violence can be wiped off the face of the earth, for once and for all, and where other forms of violence may be tamed by intelligence and love.

War is fun – so the demo thinks.

All that is eccentric turns up in times of war...

... If everyone picked up a gun, and then fire in a circle, one against the other, then the world would come to an end...

João Guimarães Rosa<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> One genius of Brazilian Literature. *Grande Sertão: Veredas*, p. 45, 151-2, 177.

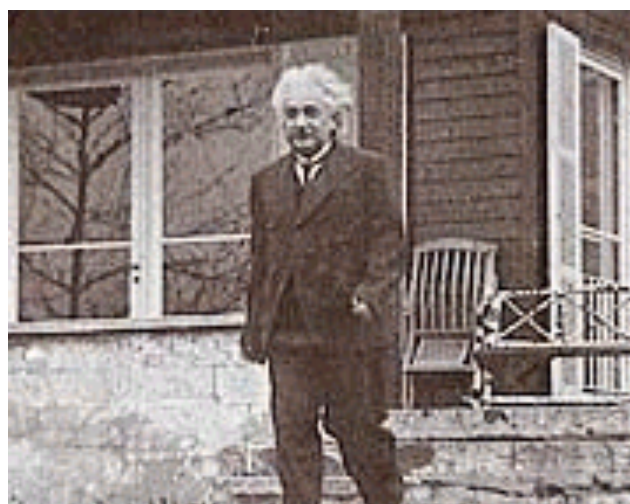
## 2 WARUM KRIEG?: WHY WAR?

### 2.1 An interdisciplinary dialogue between Einstein and Freud

Between July and September 1932, two of the greatest names of 20<sup>th</sup> Century science – Albert Einstein and Sigmund Freud — exchanged letters about the causes of war and the paths to be followed in order to stamp it out. One year before, the already influential Nazi Party had won the backing of some of the country's largest fortunes. Just one year later, Hitler would be in power. Everything was set for the start of the largest armed conflict in history. Between 1937 and 1945, some 60 million people lost their lives<sup>46</sup>, through the most brutal and most terrible forms of extermination ever seen.

In the twenty-eight paragraphs of their public correspondence, Einstein and Freud provide deep insight into the possibility of peace between nations and also intriguing perceptions of the obstacles that hinder the fulfilment of this goal.

At the moment of exchanging the letters later published under the title of *Warum Krieg?*<sup>47</sup>, both Einstein (then 53 years old) and Freud (then 76) had already reached the prime of their lives, and the maturity of their intellectual thoughts about these and other issues. Their main theories and investigations, in Physics and Psychology respectively, were already well established and recognised around the world. The analysis, the arguments and the pieces of wisdom that both proposed in their letters about war and peace are works of maturity.



Einstein in his summer house, in Caputh, near Potsdam, Germany. This was where he wrote the letter to Freud, in 1932.

Ten years previously, in 1921, Einstein had been awarded the Nobel Prize for Physics and, since then, had become one of the world's best-known faces. On the other hand, Freud had already consolidated the movement of Psychoanalysis, and his theories had become part of the daily lives of all cultured people, and were not completely unknown by the masses. Although he had never been awarded the Nobel Prize, in 1930 he had received the prestigious Goethe Prize, for his literary production.

Ever since the First World War, Einstein had been making efforts towards the elimination of war. This had made him famous not only in the world of science but also in the cultural and social spheres. At the height of summer in that year (1932) marred by signs of threats to world peace, Einstein wrote an open letter to Freud. In this letter, he explained his opinions about the causes of war and suggested the political mechanisms that he deemed necessary to wipe it off the world scenario. However, he also showed perplexity. How, he would ask, could the mechanisms of the dominant classes, like the Church, education and the press, “be so efficient in inflaming men with this mad enthusiasm and the sacrifice of their

<sup>46</sup> US Department of Energy.

<sup>47</sup> In German. Translation: “Why War?”.

very own lives?”<sup>48</sup>. Only one explanation seemed possible: “because man has, in his very self, a need for hatred and destruction”<sup>49</sup>.

Einstein said that in Freud he saw the “great knower” of “human impulses”, and believed that he would be able to come up with answers for this issue, that was, in his view, “the crux of the matter”<sup>50</sup>. Freud sent a reply to Einstein in September of that same year of 1932, also through public correspondence. In his 76 years, he also enjoyed world fame like that of Einstein, as a scientist whose ideas and whose face had extended beyond the restricted realms of the academy and the laboratory. In spite of this, his fame was somewhat more sombre than that of Einstein. While the discoverer of the Theory of Relativity had appeared to the world through dealing with the lights of the Universe, the Father of Psychoanalysis became famous for dealing with the darkness of human motivations. Even though he had been nominated for the Nobel Prize on several occasions – some of them, ironically, for his literary style rather than his studies on Psychoanalysis — Freud never actually won this prize<sup>51</sup>. In addition, throughout his life he was far from being universally accepted like Einstein. However, in spite of everything, the “mythology”<sup>52</sup> (as he himself referred to Psychoanalysis) created by Freud was very handy for him to try to understand everything new that arose in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century<sup>53</sup>.



Freud at the time  
of the letter (1932)

Even though he did indeed agree to this exchange of letters with Einstein, Freud did not know what they were going to discuss beforehand, and was taken by surprise by the issue proposed by Einstein. In the letter, Freud describes himself as “baffled”<sup>54</sup> when thinking about his incompetence in talking about war and peace. However, once this first impression had died down, Freud felt encouraged by the fact that he was not being asked to make practical suggestions, but to “explain how the issue of prevention of war is regarded by a psychologist”<sup>55</sup>.

At the end of the letter, Freud signs off with his typical tone of self-depreciation<sup>56</sup>, begging Einstein to “accept his sincere apologies”<sup>57</sup> should his explanations cause disappointment. Even before starting the epistle, on talking to the League of Nations employee who had been the go-between in his contact with Einstein, Freud had already expressed a feeling that what he would have to say would not be very encouraging<sup>58</sup>. He

<sup>48</sup> EINSTEIN, 1932, paragraph 6. Henceforth we shall make reference to these paragraphs by using the code §E1 or §F1, where “E” indicates paragraphs of the letter written by Einstein, and “F” those of Freud. The number after the initial letters of the two authors shows the paragraph numbers, excluding the salutation of both letters, as shown in full in chapter 3.

<sup>49</sup> §E6.

<sup>50</sup> §E6.

<sup>51</sup> GAY, 2004, p. 415-6;

<sup>52</sup> §F12 e §F14.

<sup>53</sup> As British historian J.M. Roberts put it, Freud “deserves a place in the History of Culture beside the likes of Newton or Darwin, as he changed the way in which cultured people see themselves” (ROBERTS, 1993, p. 757).

<sup>54</sup> §F1.

<sup>55</sup> §F1.

<sup>56</sup> MAX SCHUR, a doctor and a biographer of Freud, says that this trait is evidence of the “position that writing occupied in his mental system”. See SCHUR, 1972, p. 416.

<sup>57</sup> §F19.

<sup>58</sup> NATHAN and NORDEN, 1981, p. 191.

thought it very unlikely that his “pessimistic reply”<sup>59</sup> to Einstein’s letter would be published.

Despite this excess of self-criticism, neither did Einstein feel disappointed at the reply, nor could its content be deemed pessimistic. On the contrary, Freud takes on a balanced realism – an equidistant posture that does not deny the possible difficulties in implementing peace within a world context marked by conflicting interests, and neither renege on the hopes that one day humanity shall be able to live without the misery that wars bring and enforce. As he says, even though the propensity for war may arise from a destructive impulse<sup>60</sup>, against it “we have its opponent, Eros, to help us”<sup>61</sup>. And Freud also says, in a tone that could be seen as hopeful and optimistic: “Anything that produces ties of affection between people can be an antidote of war”<sup>62</sup>.

## **2.2 Preceding Events: the Intellectual Co-operation Institute of the League of Nations**

The correspondence exchange between Einstein and Freud about the issue of war and peace was the initiative of Einstein, and took place under the auspices of the International Intellectual Co-operation Institute of the League of Nations, to which Einstein had been associated ever since its creation in 1926<sup>63</sup>. The Institute, in turn, had been created to be the executive arm of the Intellectual Co-operation Committee of the League, set up in 1922 and made up by world-famous personalities, like famous physicist Marie Curie and the well-known French philosopher Henri Bergson<sup>64</sup>.

The Intellectual Co-operation Institute of the League of Nations was officially opened on 16 January 1926, in Paris. In 1928, after much difficulty, the National Intellectual Co-operation Committee was set up in Germany by the German government itself, which also appointed its members, including Einstein. After that, he only turned up at International Committee meetings once more, in Geneva in 1930.

## **2.3 The materialisation of the Einstein-Freud correspondence about peace**

Over the years, Einstein kept alive the idea that intellectuals and scientists – at least those who nurtured ideas of peace – could have a significant participation in the rallying round of the masses and Governments for the elimination of war<sup>65</sup>. The years of activism together with the League of Nations Committee<sup>66</sup> seem to have instilled in Einstein three concepts that would be directly linked to the open correspondence to Freud. On the one hand, he believed in the effect and influence that the ideas and positions of pacifist intellectuals would have on public opinion and, quite often, also on political decisions. Secondly, he knew that the fact that someone was a great intellectual, artist or scientist in no way meant exemption from the passions that lead to war. And, finally, he did not think that a political action for peace could take place within the context of political institutions, needing a totally

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<sup>59</sup> Id. Ibid, p. 191.

<sup>60</sup> §F14.

<sup>61</sup> §F14.

<sup>62</sup> §F14.

<sup>63</sup> NATHAN and NORDEN, 1981, chapters 3 e 8.

<sup>64</sup> Even though Einstein readily accepted the invitation to be part of this famous group of intellectuals in 1922, his participation met with ups and downs, including a period of disassociation between March 1923 and July 1924, due to the fact that he did not believe that the League of Nations could stave off war. However, Einstein had the belief that the Committee could in some way have a bearing on culture and politics, steering them towards the peace cause, and with this he started to give greater and greater value to the work of the Committee (NATHAN and NORDEN, 1981, p. 65).

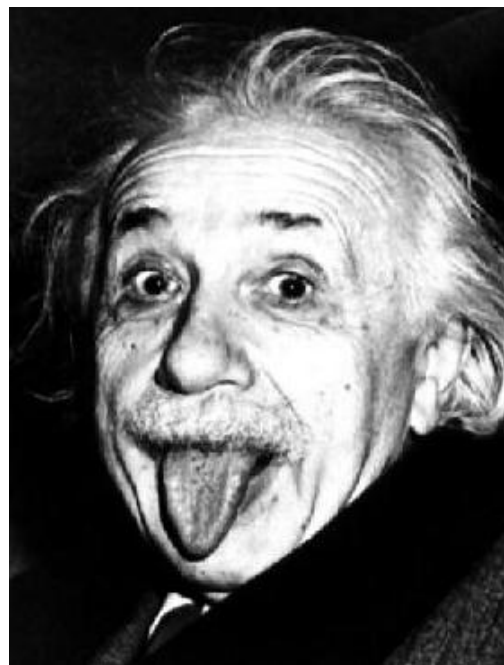
<sup>65</sup> Einstein wrote that “the best way of serving the cause of peace is by creating a militant pacifist organisation made up of famous artists and scholars”, and imagined that such a group “no doubt would have great influence” (Apud. NATHAN and NORDEN, 1981, p. 183). In several other pieces of correspondence and also statements, Einstein would return to this idea (See especially NATHAN and NORDEN, 1981, p. 183-4).

<sup>66</sup> 1922-1930.

independent forum, exempt from nationalistic or ideological hues. Even though Einstein had promoted initiatives for the setting up of an association of pacifist intellectuals, the project never got off the ground.<sup>67</sup>

The conviction that an exchange of epistles between great intellectual figures could have a positive influence on the development of civilisation was a belief that lay at the very roots of the Intellectual Co-operation Committee, set up by the League of Nations in 1922<sup>68</sup>. A first volume, under the title of *A League of Minds*, had already been published. In the autumn of 1931, Mr Steinig, a League of Nations employee, travelled to Berlin to get Einstein's collaboration for preparation of a second volume<sup>69</sup>. The theme had been left open, although some possibilities had been raised in Geneva. Einstein showed great interest in the idea, and soon went over some points of the plan with Mr Steinig. At the start, it was decided that Einstein would write two letters, to two different recipients, covering some theme connected to Education.

One of the letters would be addressed to Paul Langevin<sup>70</sup>, a French physicist who was one of Einstein's closest friends, and the other to Sigmund Freud. Ever since the distant past, in 1912, the names of Einstein and Freud had met in support of a series of public demonstrations in favour of peace and understanding between nations<sup>71</sup>, a fact that was to repeat itself on 12 October 1930, in a demonstration against mandatory military service and the military training of the young<sup>72</sup>. Seeing such an initiative supported by Freud must have given Einstein even more motivation for considering his name not only as a member of this intended international pacifist association, but also for the exchange of correspondence that the League of Nations invited him to start<sup>73</sup>. At this time, the social situation in Europe was already clearly explosive. The Fascist military and paramilitary movements had already taken to the streets, bedecked in their uniforms, with their parades,



Einstein's best known photograph

<sup>67</sup> NATHAN and NORDEN, 1981, p. 183-4.

<sup>68</sup> Soon after its formation, the Committee had received from the League the responsibility of "encouraging an exchange of letters between leaders of thought, like always happened at the great moments of European history; choose the most appropriate issues to meet the common needs of the League of Nations and the intellectual life of humanity, and to get this correspondence published once in a while" (Apud. CLARK, 1972, p. 441-2).

<sup>69</sup> CLARK, 1972, p. 442

<sup>70</sup> However, the correspondence with Langevin never materialised.

<sup>71</sup> CLARK, 1972, p. 197.

<sup>72</sup> NATHAN and NORDEN, 1981, p. 112.

<sup>73</sup> Another interesting circumstance is reported by Ronald Clark. According to him, the idea of initiating a closer relationship with Freud must have been "seeded some time earlier", after one of the meetings of the Committee for International Cooperation. At a dinner, Dr. Ernst Jackh, former director of the *Hochschule für Politik* (Superior School of Politics) in Berlin, according to his report, asked Einstein whether he "would agree that it is no mere coincidence that his Theory of Relativity, the Psychoanalysis of Professor Freud, the League of Nations and its World Court, and other developments of our time have all happened together: that they are all manifestations of the same revolutionary phase in which the present world is passing?" Einstein at the time, commented that "This vision thus synthetic is very new to me", and asked for time to think. Dr. Jackh then writes: "Watching him during dinner, I realized he did not eat or drink anything, but kept staring the void in front of him, meditating. After dinner he came to me and said: *You're quite right: I agree with your Holism*" (Quote: Apud. CLARK, 1972, p. 443).

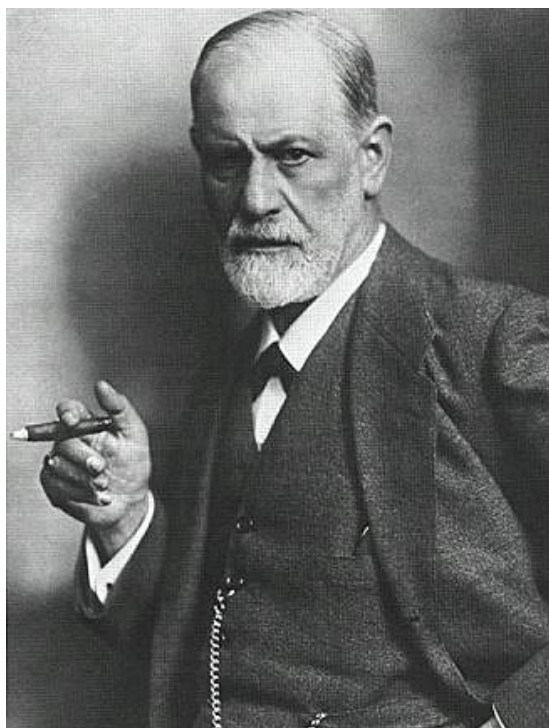


banners, and demonstration of animosity based on racial features, nationality and religion. The times demanded desperate measures on the part of those who opposed this kind of development.

The correspondence between Einstein and Freud got to be published in Paris by the League of Nations, in 1933, under the title of *Warum Krieg? (Why War?)*. A reasonably small number of copies (2,000) were published in German, French and English. In Germany, the work was immediately outlawed by the Nazi Government and no kind of publicity of this work was allowed<sup>74</sup>. At this point, Hitler was already in power, the social and political situation in Europe was swiftly deteriorating, and therefore the letters never got the publicity that was due to them.

#### **2.4 The mutual knowledge between Einstein and Freud**

In 1932, which was the year of this exchange of letters about war and peace, Einstein and Freud had known about each other for a long time, and followed their respective careers with interest, albeit at a distance. In the role of distinguished people of their time, both being Jewish and German-speaking (despite the fact that Freud was Austrian while Einstein hailed from Germany), it was only natural that they were well informed about each other. After the First World War,, especially, their careers and fame spread round the world, in an extraordinary way<sup>75</sup>.



The classical pose.

Over the 20 years that elapsed between the moment of their joint signatures to the initiative of setting up a scientific association “with extremely empirical and positivist points of view”<sup>76</sup>, in 1912, to their official correspondence about peace, in 1932, Einstein and Freud had the opportunity to keep in touch on several occasions<sup>77</sup> and were able to meet at least twice<sup>78</sup>, in Berlin, when Freud

<sup>74</sup> CLARK, 1972, p. 445-446.

<sup>75</sup> For Einstein, great international fame really came in November 1919, when the Royal Society of London announced that measurements and calculations made during the solar eclipse of 29 May of that year had confirmed the predictions made by Einstein in his General Theory of Relativity, about the curvature of light when crossing a strong gravitational field. In 1921, Einstein received the Nobel Prize for Physics. At the same time, Freud became more and more mentioned and accepted, even by those intellectuals who had opposed his ideas. His theories had come across a highly welcoming scenario in the post-war era, as they largely explained the irrationality of the destruction caused by war. As historian J. M. Roberts puts it, he “gave the 20<sup>th</sup> Century a language” (ROBERTS, 1993, p. 757).

<sup>76</sup> Apud. CLARK, 1972, p. 197.

<sup>77</sup> Aside from these public letters about war and peace, the correspondence between the two, as far as we know, was largely limited to the exchange of “interesting messages on birthdays and other special occasions” (NATHAN and NORDEN, 1981, p. 185). However, the longest comment about Zionism, on Freud’s part, lies exactly in a letter that he wrote to Einstein, on 26 February 1930. Apparently, Einstein asked Freud to make a public declaration about the issue, but he did not accept, alleging that “Who wants to influence people must have something interesting and enthusiastic to say, and my sober assessment of Zionism does not permit this” (Apud. GAY, 2004, p. 541, note).

<sup>78</sup> The first of the two personal meetings that are certainly recorded took place in the European winter of 1926/1927. Freud and his wife had travelled to Berlin for Christmas, returning to Vienna on 2 January. The purpose of the trip was to visit two of their children and the four grandchildren living in Berlin. Freud and Martha were staying with their youngest son Ernst, and were visited by Einstein and his second wife Elsa. This meeting took about two hours and seems to have been pleasant

made visits to the city where Einstein then lived.

Einstein showed sympathy towards the works of Freud, but his feelings were not entirely favourable. He mainly admired Freud for his style and rhetorical capacity, and his effort in working on scientific research, more than for his ideas about the origins of the subconscious and sexual origins of psychic problems<sup>79</sup>. Between 1928 and 1930, a young German psychoanalyst, Dr Heinrich Meng, organised a campaign in favour of awarding Freud the Nobel Prize, but Einstein was among those who did not feel able to second his candidacy.<sup>80</sup>

On Freud's seventy-fifth birthday, in 1931, Einstein sent him a highly complimentary note, saying that every Tuesday he and a friend would read the works of Freud, and that he felt overwhelmed by the "beauty and clarity" of the texts. He said that "except for Schopenhauer, for me there is nobody who is, or has been, capable of writing like this". However, he confessed that, being "not very sensitive" to issues of psychology, he wavered between "belief and disbelief"<sup>81</sup> of Freud's theories.

In 1936, on Freud's eightieth birthday, Einstein was one of the first to send him a letter of congratulations<sup>82</sup>. In this letter, Einstein said that until recently "he was only able to distinguish the theoretical power of his line of thought, together with their enormous influence on the *Weltanschauung*<sup>83</sup> of the current age", but without the ability to "form a clear opinion about the measure of truth contained within". However, he would say to Freud that, a short time previously, he had become aware of some cases which, in his opinion, "did not allow any kind of interpretation other than that offered by the repression theory", and he declared himself to be "just thrilled on becoming aware of them, as it is always thrilling when a large and beautiful idea is proved to be in line with reality"<sup>84</sup>.

Freud replied to the letter immediately, three days before his birthday, on 3 May 1936, expressing his satisfaction on finding out about the change (or start of a change) in the judgement of Einstein. He said that he had always known that Einstein admired him out of courtesy, and that he had "very little faith" in any of his doctrines. However, now he could

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for both (JONES, 1963, v. 3, p. 131). In a letter to George Sylvester Viereck, on 6 November 1929, Freud mentions that "Many years ago I had a long conversation with him [Einstein], during which it was funny to see that he knows no more psychology than I do mathematics" (Apud. NATHAN and NORDEN, 1981, p. 185). It is quite probable that Freud was referring to this meeting of 1926-1927.

<sup>79</sup> Edward (1910-1965), known as *Tete*, Einstein's youngest son, different from his father, was a great admirer of Freud. He showed the same passion for psychology that his mother Mileva, Einstein's first wife, had shown in her youth. At the age of about 15, Tete would enthusiastically explain the Freudian theories to his friends. He kept a photo of his hero over his bed and considered him one of those great geniuses who managed, in a few words, "to expose deep truths that invited hours of thought" (Apud. HIGHFIELD and CARTER, 1994, p. 233.). However, when Tete, in 1929, went to read medicine at the University of Zürich, with the clear intention of becoming a psychiatrist, Einstein disapproved of his son's intentions, saying that "he had read the works of Freud, but had not convinced himself, and believed that his methods were doubtful, and even misleading" (Apud. Id. Ibid., 1994, p. 233.). That same year of 1929, in an interview published on 26 October, Einstein commented that he "was not prepared to accept all his [Freud's] conclusions, but I consider his work to be an immensely valuable contribution to the science of human behaviour" (Apud. CALAPRICE, 2005, p. 78-9).

<sup>80</sup> Writing to Meng on 15 February 1928, he said that he was not able to issue any reliable opinion about the truthfulness of Freud's doctrine, "let alone offer a verdict that would have some degree of authority on others". In addition, Einstein warned that it seemed unlikely that a psychologist like Freud could be eligible for the Nobel Prize for Medicine, "which, I suppose, is the only one that could be considered" (Apud. GAY, 2004, p. 416n.). The great German novelist, Thomas Mann, had also set conditions on his support for Freud's nomination for the medicine prize. Ironically, this was a category where nomination would be impossible, because the expert psychiatrist consulted had disregarded Freud as a trickster and a "threat" (GAY, 2004, p. 416n.). For this reason, the only category left would be Literature. As we know, Freud passed away without having his name raised to the pantheon of Nobel winners, even though he did receive the prestigious Goethe Prize, in Germany, for his literary skill.

<sup>81</sup> All quotations are apud. GAY, 2004, p. 520.

<sup>82</sup> SCHUR, 1972, p. 479.

<sup>83</sup> Cosmvision, worldvision.

<sup>84</sup> Quotations apud. JONES, 1963, p. 203; FREUD, E., 1964, p. 428.

have a hope of “having him as a ‘disciple’ when he reaches my age”. And he came to the following conclusion: “As at that time I shall not know this, I bring forward to the present time the satisfaction that this gives me”<sup>85</sup>. Despite these encouraging words from Einstein, which meant so much to Freud, the fact is that, up to the end of this life, Einstein would remain largely sceptical about Freud’s teachings.<sup>86</sup>

Thus, in spite of dealing with widely different fields of knowledge, and the existing reservations on Einstein’s part with regard to Psychoanalysis, the correspondence that Einstein and Freud exchanged in 1932 about war and peace offers an extraordinary moment of “meeting” between them both. From the prime of their lives, the two were able to show some of the deepest and most persistent challenges for the elimination of war, as also to express some of the strongest hopes of peace, as we shall see in the full texts of the letters, which are presented in the next chapter.

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<sup>85</sup> Quotations apud. JONES, 1963, v. 3, p. 203-204.

<sup>86</sup> In a letter to A. Bacharach, dated 25 July 1949, Einstein said that “the old man [...] had good insight; no illusion would win him round, except for an exaggerated belief in his own ideas”. And, less than a year and a half before he died, he would speak to a friend, Johanna Fantova and say: “Freud was brilliant, but much of his theory is foolish, and this is why I do not agree with you undergoing psychoanalysis” (Quotations apud. CALAPRICE, 2005, p. 79).

Deine Zauber binden wieder,  
Was die Mode streng geteilt;  
Alle Menschen werden Brüder,  
Wo dein sanfter Flügel weilt.<sup>87</sup>

Friedrich Schiller

Peace is not the absence of war, but rather a virtue, a spiritual state, a will to see benevolence, trust and justice.<sup>88</sup>

Baruch Spinoza

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<sup>87</sup> Your magic connects us/ Where customs separate / All men become brothers / Under your generous wings. The translation is mine. This is part of the poem *An die Freude*, by Schiller, used by Beethoven as the words of the fourth movement of his Ninth Symphony.

<sup>88</sup> Apud. [www.Quotationaspage.com/peace/spinoza](http://www.Quotationaspage.com/peace/spinoza). Accessed on 12/7/05.

### 3 THE CORRESPONDENCE IN FULL

#### 3.1 Einstein's Letter<sup>89</sup>

Caputh, near Potsdam, 30 July 1932.

Dear Mr Freud:

(§E1)<sup>90</sup> The League of Nations and its International Institute of Intellectual Cooperation, have encouraged me to invite someone of my choice with whom I could establish a frank exchange of ideas about any problem which I may select, and I am happy as this has given me a unique opportunity to conferring with you about an issue which, in the present circumstances, seems to be the most urgent problem which civilisation has been facing: is there a way to free humanity from the menace of war? It is well known that the advancement of technology has made this issue a real matter of life or death for the whole world, as so far all efforts for its solution have met with alarming failure.

(§E2) I also believe that the people responsible in dealing with the problem by professional encumbrance of practice are more and more aware of their impotence in this regard, and would like to know the prospects of scientific people, that have the necessary distance therefrom to be able to appraise this issue. As far as I am concerned, the normal aims of my thinking do not give me access to the depths of the feelings and desires of the human race. In this way, in the exchange of views as proposed here, what I can do is just try to shed light on the question, and, on opening up the path through the more obvious attempts at a solution, try to shed on the problem the beam of light arising from your profound knowledge about the impulsive life<sup>91</sup> of the human being. There are some psychological stumbling blocks that could be envisaged within psychology, but whose inter-relations and nuances are totally ignored. I really believe that you shall be able to suggest educational paths, outside the scope of politics, that can manage to eliminate these psychological obstacles.

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<sup>89</sup> Both the letter from Einstein and the one from Freud are here being translated directly from the German, with reference to translations into English and Spanish that are currently available. It's already a long time since I became aware, through the work by Bruno Bettelheim published in English under the title of *Freud & Man's Soul*, of 1982, of the translation problems in of Freud's works into English, a version which was the starting point for the Portuguese translation of the Standard Edition of Freud's Complete Works. Therefore, if one cannot base oneself on the English edition with due trust, neither can one use the Portuguese version obtained from it. Einstein's letter can be found in Portuguese in some versions on the Internet (we have not found it in any of the books available in Portuguese), but they have translation flaws similar to those that I would like to correct within the translations of Freud. On top of that, the fact that there are no translations of the letters of Freud and Einstein by one same translator means that there are natural disparities of translation criteria, which in turn brings doubts about the concepts that both have expressed. In this way, if one takes the existing translations, one would already start out with an undesirable asymmetry. For these reasons, I felt that it would be necessary to translate both letters based on the German originals, in spite of the risks attached to this task. The fact that I have a technical background in translation and interpretation, with several years of experience in the field and with several books already translated made me pluck up enough courage to take on this daunting task. The translation errors we now seek to correct are based mainly on the arguments of Bruno Bettelheim (the famous psychologist was fluent in German), and Luiz Alberto Hanns, responsible for excellent studies and new versions of texts written by Freud in Portuguese. For a deeper analysis of this issue, refer to BETTELHEIM, 2002 and HANNS, 1996, 2004a, 2004b.

<sup>90</sup> The numbering of the paragraphs is my idea, with the aim of making reference easier. I have used the scheme of (§E1 or §F1) at the start of each paragraph, where the "E" identifies the paragraphs of the letter written by Einstein and "F" those of the letter by Freud. The number following the initials of the two authors identifies the paragraph, excluding the salutation of both letters. Thus a footnote showing §F12, for example, refers to paragraph 12 of the letter by Freud, while §E4 indicates the fourth paragraph of the letter by Einstein.

<sup>91</sup> *Trieb*lebens. We can not agree with the translation of *Trieb*lebens as "instinctive life" (NATHAN and NORDEN, 1981, p. 188), or as mentioned by some of the translations based on the standard version of Freud's works in English. Throughout the translation we shall always be translating *Trieb* as "impulse", rather than "instinct", as then more carefully devised contemporary translations do. This is because the concept of instinct includes the impossibility of conscious control, while the idea of impulse does not. In German, *Trieb* is a term that associates an unconscious force to a conscientious decision by the subject, thus taking on a complex concept in terms of origin and effect. See BETTELHEIM, 2002, and HANNS, 1996, 2004a, 2004b.

(§E3) As I myself am a person free from national prejudice, I see a simple way to deal with the apparent aspect — in other words, organisational — of the problem: the acknowledgement, by the National States, of a legislative and judiciary authority that could solve all the conflicts between them. All countries do therefore commit themselves to acquiesce to the decisions made by this legislative body, and request their decision in all disputes, accepting their judgement without reservations and to put into practice any measures considered necessary to implement the verdict. The problem that presents itself, from the outset, is that a court is also a human institution that just has authority to the extent that it has the power to implement their decisions, without which they are frustrated by extrajudicial pressures. This is a fact that needs to be accepted: law and power invariably go together, and the verdicts of a legislative body are more like the ideal justice sought by the community — in whose name and interests they are pronounced — just to the extent that the community has the real power to request obedience to their ideal of justice. But, at the present time [1932], we are far from having a supranational body with the competence to enforce verdicts of undisputed authority and to request absolute submission to the implementation of their decisions. I am thus led to my first conclusion: the path to international security requests that all nations, to a certain extent, abdicate from their freedom to act<sup>92</sup> — or, in other words, their sovereignty — and it is certain that no other path may lead to this security.

(§E4) The failure of all sincere efforts in this direction, over the last decade [1922-1932], has made us admit that powerful psychological forces have acted in the stoppage of such initiatives. Some of these forces are not hard to identify. The governing classes' hunger for power, within each nation, is hostile to any limitation of national sovereignty. This thirst for political power is generally supported by a struggle for material and economic power from another group. I particularly think of that small yet determined group that, in all nations, consists of individuals who — regardless of any consideration or social restriction — consider war and the production and commercialisation of weapons just as an instrument to ensure their personal interests and to boost personal power.

(§E5) However, the recognition of this obvious fact is just the first step towards understanding this situation. Another issue that immediately surfaces is the following: how can this minority manipulate, for their own ambitions, the wishes of the majority who, after all, loses and suffers with war? (When I talk about the masses of the people, I do not exclude any kind of soldiers, as they chose war as their chosen profession believing that they were serving the best interests of the people and also the conviction that the best form of defence is normally attack.) An obvious answer would be that this minority, which is the dominant class, has in their hands the schools and the press, and normally religious institutions as well. Through these means, they manage to dominate and govern emotions of the masses in general, to manipulate them to their heart's content.

(§E6) However, this answer does not fully explain the context. Another question then arises: how can such tricks be so efficient in inflaming people with this mad enthusiasm and the very sacrifice of life? Here, only one answer is possible: this is because the human species brings within itself a need for hate and destruction. In normal times, this is a latent tendency which surfaces only in exceptional circumstances, but it is quite easy to trigger it off and rally people round at the level of mass psychosis. This could be the crux of the matter for all the complex factors that we consider, a matter that only those who know about human impulses in depth may solve.

(§E7) From there stems one last issue: would it be possible to guide the psychic development of the human being towards overcoming the psychosis of hate and destruction?

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<sup>92</sup> *Handlungsfreiheit*. Freedom to act; in the case of States, sovereignty.

In relation to this point, I am not thinking just about the uneducated masses. My experience has shown that it is the so-called *intelligentsia* that has the greatest tendency to give in to these disastrous group suggestions, as the true intellectual does not have direct contact with concrete life, but lives it in the easiest and most synthetic form: the printed page.

(§E8) To close: so far I have just talked about war between nations, what we call international conflict. But I am well aware that human aggression also operates in other ways and in other circumstances (for example, civil war – that in the past derived from religious causes, and now from social causes – and persecution of national minorities). However, I deliberately spent more time on that which is the most cruel and savage form of conflict between human beings, because in this way maybe we can find ways to stop all bellicose conflicts.

(§E9) I am sure that in your writings one can find, both implicitly and explicitly, answers to all your questions about this urgent and engaging problem. However, it would be a great help to all if you could address the problem of world peace in the light of your most recent discoveries, as such a presentation could indeed open the way for new and more fruitful ways of acting.

(§E10) With my most cordial regards,

Yours, A. Einstein

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### 3.2 Freud's Letter

Vienna, September [1932]

Dear Mr Einstein!

(§F1) When I found out about your intention to invite me to an exchange of views about an issue that not only interested you personally but also warranted public interest, I readily agreed. I expected you to choose a problem on the fringes of current knowledge, an issue each of us, physicist and psychologist, could address, each from his own standpoint, moving towards a common view. Because of this, the question that you suggested – how to free mankind from the menace of war – took me by surprise. I then felt dumbstruck on thinking about my (I almost wrote *our*) incompetence to discuss this theme, as for me it seems to be an issue of practical politics, worthy of a statesman's study. However, I then realised that you were not asking the question in your role as a physicist or scientist, but rather as a lover of mankind, who answered the call from the League of Nations just like Fridtjof Nansen, the Polar explorer, took on the daunting task of rescuing the homeless and famished victims of the First World War. And, then, I realised that I myself was not being asked to give practical suggestions, but to explain how the issue of war prevention is perceived by a psychologist.

(§F2) However, even so, I feel that you have already said the key points about this issue. You have taken the wind out of my sails, but I follow in your wake with pleasure, contenting myself with the endorsement of all your conclusions, limiting myself to expanding them in the light of the best of my knowledge or surmise.

(§F3) You begin with the relationship between right and power. This is, indeed, the correct starting point when pursuing this investigation. However, instead of the term *power* I would use a stronger and tougher word: *violence*. There is an antagonism between right and violence, but we can easily prove that one was bred from the other. When we go back to the origins and look at the primitive conditions, the problem becomes clear enough. Please accept

my apologies if I refer to facts that are already well-known and accepted as if they were something new, but the context requires that I act in this way.

(§F4) Conflicts of interest between humans are often solved by resorting to violence. The same goes for the whole of the animal kingdom, from which the human species can not extricate itself; however, humans also have conflicts of opinion, which sometimes reach out to the highest spheres of abstract thought, and which seem to require another method of solution. However, this is a complication that arises later on. To begin with, in the small primitive human hordes, it was greater muscular strength that decided issues concerning ownership or imposition of will. Physical strength was then expanded and replaced by the use of several instruments; the winner was the person with the best weapon, or the one who could handle it better. Now, for the first time, the power of the intellect started to oust the power of brute force. However, the purpose of the fight remained the same: to force one of the sides, through damage inflicted on it, or its weakening, to give up on a demand or a refusal. This purpose was more efficiently achieved when the might of the enemy was definitely defeated, on the defeated party being killed. This procedure has two advantages: firstly, the enemy can not renew hostilities and, in addition, its fate deters others from following his example. Moreover, the death of the enemy is satisfaction of an impulsive drive — a point we shall return to later on. However, another consideration may be made about this intention to kill: the possibility of using the enemy as a slave on sparing his life and slaughtering his spirit. Here violence finds a form of expression not in slaughter but in submission. This is where the process of feeling mercy for the enemy started. However, the victorious party, then having to deal with a feeling of revenge from their victim, loses part of their own personal security.

(§F5) Therefore, in primitive conditions, the dominating party is the one wielding the most power, supported by the strength of muscles or intellect. We well know that, through the process of evolution, this state of things was modified, with the opening of a path towards legal rights, but how? I think that this is all due to just one factor: the fact that the greater physical strength of one man can be overwhelmed by the joining forces of several weaklings, or, in other words *L'union fait la force*<sup>93</sup>. Force is thus crushed by unity, the united strength of several individuals in enforcing their rights, against the strength of one isolated giant. We therefore see that legal right is the power of a community. But this is nothing more than the use of force, swift in attacking anything that comes up as an obstacle, using the same methods, but with an important difference: it is no longer the strength of an individual that imposes itself, but rather the strength of a community. However, for this transition from the kingdom of power to that of legal right to actually take place, a certain psychological condition must first be established. The union of the majority must be both stable and long-lasting. If it just seeks to defeat a conceited individual, to then disappear after his or her fall, then it will do no good. Some other individual, knowing that he or she is stronger, shall seek to bring back the reign of strength, and the cycle would then repeat itself endlessly. This means that the union between different people must be permanent and well organised; it should establish rules for handling the risk of possible uprisings, an organisational structure that makes sure that the rules agree are complied with and that those acts of power enforced by the law are duly carried out. This recognition of a community of interests produces, among the members of the group, a feeling of unity and brotherly solidarity, and this is where its true force lies.

(§F6) So I think that the most important point has already been mentioned: the suppression of force by the transfer of power to a larger unit, based on the communion of feelings among its members. All the rest is just repetition and commentary. This procedure is

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<sup>93</sup> “Union makes strength”. In French in the original.



quite simple when the community consists only of a certain number of individuals with equal power. The laws governing such a coalition may set down to what extent the individual may forsake his or her personal liberty – his or her right to use physical strength as an instrument of power – to assure the security of the group. However, this situation is only possible in theory. In practice, things always get more complicated due to the fact that, right from the outset, the community consists of elements with unequal power: men and women, old people and children, and then – a result of war and conquest – also victors and the vanquished, which means slaveowners and slaves. The legislation of the community shall take this difference of power into account within their medium: laws are made by those that govern, in their benefit, while the subordinate masses have less rights. From then on, within the community we have two sources for the instability of the law, but also for its evolution. Firstly, the attempts by the members of the governing class to remain above the restrictions applicable to all – in a return from the kingdom of law to that of strength – and, secondly, the constant efforts of the oppressed to seize more power and to see these changes incorporated into the law, replacing the inequalities by more equitable laws for all. The second of these trends shall be particularly significant when there is a genuine change in the balance of power within the community, which is the common result of certain historical conditions. In such cases, the Law may be gradually adjusted to the new circumstances of the division of power, or, more frequently, the dominant class does not show interest in making these changes in the Law, which gives rise to uprisings and civil war, a period in which the Law is put on hold and where a new balance of power is experienced, after which there shall be a new legal regime. There is also another form of judicial change, which comes out in a far more pacific manner, and that takes place through the cultural transformation of the members of the community, but this factor is a circumstance that we can deal with later on.

(§F7) We see, therefore, that, even within one same community, adjustment by force can not be avoided when there are conflicts of interest at stake. But needs and habits shared by those who live united in one same land tend to provide a solution for these fights and, this being the case, the possibility of a pacific solution shows continuous progress. However, a quick glance at the history of the world shows an endless sequence of conflicts between communities, between groups, between larger and smaller units, between cities, countries, races, tribes and kingdoms, these normally being solved through the mediation of the forces present in war. These wars end – either with pillaging or conquest and its consequences – with the fall of the defeated party. All these wars of conquest, however, may not be grouped together. Some, like the war between the Mongols and the Turks, only brought misery, while others actually sped up the transition from strength to Law, as they created larger social units, within the limits of which it was forbidden to resort to brute strength, and where a new legal regime solved any disputes. In this way, the Roman Conquest brought a real bonanza, the *pax romana*, to the shores and lands of the Mediterranean. The thirst for grandeur on the part of the French kings helped to form a new France, in which peace and unity flourished. This, however contradictory it may seem, we must admit that war can actually be a means of achieving that perpetual peace that we yearn for, as war has built several empires inside which war has been outlawed by a strong central government. In practice, however, this objective is not reached, as the fruits of victory do not last long. In general, the recently created units split up again, because there can not be true cohesion between parties that were joined together by violence. In addition, such conquests have only produced unifications that, despite their dimensions, were only partial, with disputes between such units that could only be solved by using weapons. For humanity in general, the only result of these military campaigns has been the fact that, instead of frequent, or even constant, small wars, the people now had to face wars on a larger scale that, despite being less frequent, were a lot more destructive.

(§F8) In relation to the world of today, the same conclusion can be reached, and you have already arrived at it, but by taking a shorter route. There is really only one sure way of eliminating war, which is the voluntary establishment of a central power that has the last word in all conflicts of interest. For this to happen, two things are necessary: firstly, that such a Supreme Court be established, and secondly, that it has sufficient executive power. Unless this latter requirement is met, the first will be of no use. It is obvious that the League of Nations, in the role of a Supreme Court, meets the first condition but not the second. It does not have power of its own, and can only get such power when the members of the new institution, the constituent States, provide it. And, the way things are going, this is a forlorn hope. However, we would be very shortsighted with regard to the League of Nations if we were to ignore the fact that it represents an experiment that very rarely — never, maybe, on such a scale — has been tried in history. This is an effort to conquer authority — in other words, influence through coercion — that until now had lain exclusively with the possession of power, through the invoking of certain idealist principles. As we can see, there are two factors that could keep a community united: the compulsion of force or the close ties of feelings — in technical terms: ties of identification — between its members. If one of these factors becomes inoperative, the other may still be enough to keep the group together. It is evident, however, that notions like these are only significant when they express a deep sense of unity shared by all. The question is therefore that of how strong they are. History has shown that they have indeed been efficient on certain occasions. For example, the Pan-Hellenic concept, the Greek idea of their superiority over their Barbarian neighbours, shown in the Amphitheatres, in oracles and games, was sufficiently strong to humanise the methods of war between the Greeks, even though they have always failed to prevent conflict between the different elements of the Hellenic people, or even to deter a city, or group of cities, from joining forces with their enemies to overcome a rival. The Christian solidarity in the Renaissance was no more effective, despite its vast authority, in stopping Christian nations, be they large or small, from begging for help from the Sultan. Similarly, in our time we can not find a nation whose unifying authority is indubitable. It is quite clear that nationalist ideas, so common today within the people, clearly operate in the opposite direction. Some defend the idea that the Bolshevik ideas could bring war to an end, but, the way things stand at the moment, this goal is still a long way off and may possibly only be achieved with the explosion of total and brutal civil war. This means that it seems that any effort to replace concrete power with the power of ideas is, in current conditions, doomed to fail. Our reasoning would be mistaken if we admitted the fact that right arises from brute force, and that even nowadays it can not survive without strength.

(§F9) Now I would like to comment on another of your questions. You say you are astonished with the fact that it is so easy to win men over to the cause of war, and conjecture that there should be, inside them, an impulse for hate and destruction, that is activated by this stimulus. Here, once again, I could not agree with you more. We believe that there is indeed such an impulse and over the last years we have dedicated ourselves to the study of its manifestations. Please let me share with you a small part of this awareness of impulses, which we, in Psychoanalysis, only acquire after much hesitation. We believe that there are two types of impulse in humans: one that preserves and joins — which we call erotic, this term in the sense of Eros in Plato's dialogues, or sexual, in the constant expansion of the popular concept of sexuality — and the other that seeks destruction and death, that we harness together with the impulse of aggression or the impulse of destruction. These are, as you can notice, just the theoretical transformations of those well-known opposites, Love and Hate, which may be another aspect of the eternal polarities of attraction and repulsion, that play such an important part in your field of study. However, we must take care not to move too quickly towards the values of Good and Evil. Each of these impulses is just as essential as the other, and all the

phenomena of life derive from their activity, whether they act in opposition or together. It seems that an impulse of one of the categories rarely acts alone, but tends to be mixed — soldered, as we say — with a certain dose of the other one, that changes the intention and, in certain circumstances, can be an essential condition for achieving their purpose. Thus, the impulse of self-preservation is surely of the erotic kind, but to reach the set goals this same impulse needs aggressive action. Similarly, the impulse of love, when aimed at a specific object, requires a mixture with the impulse of ownership, if it really wishes to enter into an effective relationship with that object. It was the difficulty to isolate the expressions of the two impulses that had prevented us from knowing about them, for such a long time.

(§F10) If you could follow me a bit longer down this path, you will see that human actions get more complicated because of yet another factor. Only in exceptional circumstances does an action stem from the stimulus of one single impulse, while on general there is a need for a blend between Eros and destructiveness. As a rule, a combination of different yet similar constitution motives is made to produce the action. This fact was correctly visualised by a colleague of yours, Professor G. C. Lichtenberg, who was at one time a Professor of Physics at the University of Göttingen; and was probably better known as a psychologist than as a physicist. He developed the notion of a weather vane of motivation and wrote that: “The reasons that make a person act can be classified as the thirty-two winds and can be described in the same way, as for example, bread-bread-glory or glory-glory-bread.” Thus, when people are called to war, a vast range of human motives is drummed into them through this appeal — some of them noble, others less so; some that are discussed openly, others which instil silence. We are unable to present them all to you on this occasion. The desire for aggression and destruction is certainly among them; the countless acts of cruelty recorded in the annals of History and in the daily lives of humans confirm its existence and its strength. The stimulus to these destructive tendencies<sup>94</sup> through appeals to other aspects of idealist and erotic type surely makes satisfaction easier. If we pore over the atrocities that have been recorded through the pages of History, we realise that the idealist motivation has repeatedly been a camouflaged appeal for the appetite of destruction, some times, like in the case of the cruelties committed during the Inquisition, and we think that while idealist motivations took up the façade of conscience, they would extract their strength from the destructive motivations submerged in the subconscious mind. Both interpretations are possible.

(§F11) I know that you are interested in the prevention of war and not in our theories. In spite of this, I would like to talk a bit more about this destructive impulse, as it rarely gets the attention it deserves. Even with little speculation, we are led to believe that this impulse works within all living things, seeking their ruin, in order to make life go back to its primitive state of inert matter. In reality, it can be, seriously, seen as an impulse of death, while the erotic impulses represent the fight for life. The death impulse turns into an impulse of destruction when, with the help of other organs, it aims its action outside, against outside objects. The living beings, putting it like this, defend their very existence through the destruction of strangers. However, a part of the impulse of death remains active within the living being, and we make the effort to associate a series of natural and pathological phenomena to this introversion of the impulse of destruction. We even commit the heresy of explaining the origin of human conscience as being one of these introversions of aggression.

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<sup>94</sup> *Strebungen*. I have translated this term as *tendencies*, or *propensities*, rather than *impulses*, as the term *impulse* has a connotation of being sudden and uncontrollable, while such ideas do not exist in the German original, and are contrary to the intentions of Freud himself, that permeate his whole letter, of showing that the aggressive tendencies may and should be controlled (although they may not be eliminated). See detailed comments in BETTELHEIM, 2002 and HANNS, 1996, in the respective entry.

Evidently, when this process operates excessively we have a truly morbid situation, while the liberation of these impulsive forces of destruction towards the outside world should have a pleasing effect. Here, therefore, are the biological justifications of all those ugly and dangerous propensities against which we constantly fight. We must admit that they are closer to Nature than our aversion to them, a fact that we must also clear up.

(§F12) You may get the impression that our theories are a kind of mythology, and one that is not very promising. But, after all, don't you think that all natural sciences lead to this same point, a kind of mythology? Nowadays, is this not the case with your Physics?

(§F13) As a corollary of such observations, with regard to the issue at hand, we see that there seems to be no possibility of doing away with the aggressive tendencies of humans. They say that in some happy regions of the world, where nature abundantly provides all that men need, there are flourishing races whose lives proceed gently, without awareness of coercion or aggression. This is something I can hardly believe, and I would need to know further details about this happy group of people. In the same manner, the Bolsheviks seek to eliminate human aggression through the satisfaction of material needs and by the establishment of equality between men and women. As I see it, this is an illusion. In the meantime, they meticulously go about this, with their hatred of strangers not being the lesser of their forms of internal cohesion. In all cases, as you mentioned yourself, what is at stake is not the total suppression of human aggressive tendencies, but rather how to divert them to forms of expression other than war.

(§F14) From our mythological lessons of impulses, we can easily deduce a simple formula presenting an indirect path to the elimination of war. If the propensity for war comes from the destructive impulse, close by we have its enemy, Eros, to help us. All that produces ties of affection between humans can be used as an antidote against war. Such ties may be of two kinds. Firstly, those connected with an object of love, albeit without any sexual content. The psychologist does not need to blush when talking about love here, in the same form of language as used by religion: love thy neighbour as you love yourself. This is easy to say, but difficult to put into practice. The other kind of emotional tie is that achieved through identification. Anything that makes evident the significant similarities between members of the human race activates this community feeling, identification. This is the foundation on which much of the building of human society is constructed.

(§F15) In one of your criticisms about abuse of authority, I see a second point for making an indirect attack on the propensity to war. The fact that humans are divided into leaders and the led is just another form of expression of the innate and incurable inequality. The second class of human beings is the immense majority, and these need an authority figure that makes decisions on their behalf, to which they are normally submissive, without contesting. In this context, we could say that we would have to make a much greater effort than in the past, to create a superior class of independent thinkers, immune to intimidation and really steadfast in their search for the truth, whose function would be to guide the masses who depend on their leadership. There is no need to mention how much the interference of state forces and then prohibition of freedom of thought on the part of the Church discourages such development. The ideal conditions would obviously be found in a community where each man or woman would place his or her impulse life in subordination to the rules of reason. Nothing less than this could create such a complete and long-lasting union of mankind, thus ensuring that the emotional ties between them hold fast. However, this is probably a Utopian hope. The other paths that could indirectly prevent war are more feasible, but without quick results. They invoke the unpleasant thought of mills that mill so slowly that, before the flour is ready, the men and women have already died of hunger.

(§F16) As you can see, we can not find out much about urgent and practical issues when you talk to a theorist distant from the world. It would be better to deal with each successive crisis with the means that we already have in our hands. However, I would still like to touch on an issue that interests me greatly, even though it has not been raised in your letter. Why do we both, and so many others, show such strong revolt against war, rather than simply accepting it as just another of the most painful disgraces in life? After all, it really seems to be something natural, fully based on biological reasoning and thus well-nigh inevitable. Do not be surprised with what I have said. For the better conduction of an investigation, it may be better to use a mask of false indifference. The answer could be the following: because every human has the right to decide about his or her own life, and war destroys lives full of promise. It forces the person into situations that humiliate his or her nature, forcing them to kill their peers against their will. It destroys material amenities, the fruit of human effort, and everything else. In addition, wars, as they are now conducted, do not offer any space for acts or heroism, like the former ideals set out, and, due to the high sophistication of modern weapons, nowadays war represents the total extermination of one of the combatants, if not both. This is so true and obvious that one can not understand how the practice of war has not been outlawed through a group decision taken by humanity. Certainly, here both point raised can be questioned. One can ask if the community does not have a right over the individual life of each member therein. In addition, not all forms of war can be equally condemned. While nations and empires remain, each one insensitively prepared to wipe out its rival, all need to be armed for war. However, we shall not delve into any of these problems; they are not part of the scope of the debate that you have invited me to participate in. I now move on to another issue; I think the main reason why we revolt against war is that we have no other choice. We are pacifist because we have to be for organic reasons. And it is for this reason that it easy to come up with arguments in favour of our point of view.

(§F17) This point, however, needs explanation. This is how I see this issue. The cultural development of humanity (some, I well know, prefer to call it civilisation) has been in progress since the ancient period. To this process, we owe the best there is in us, but also a lot of what makes us suffer. Its origins and causes are obscure, its result is uncertain, but some of its characteristics are easy to perceive. It could easily lead to the extermination of the human species, as it is bad for the sexual function in more than one way, and even today the uncivilised races and the backward classes of all nations multiply more quickly than do the segments endowed with culture. This process may be comparable to the effects of domestication of certain animals — it certainly produces change in the physical structure — but the view that cultural development is an organic process of this nature has not yet become familiar. The psychic changes that come with this process are noteworthy and unmistakable. They consist of a progressive rejection of impulsive goals and also a decline in the impulsive reactions. Sensations that delighted our forefathers have either become neutral or unbearable to us, and, if our ethical and aesthetic ideals have been changed, then the causes of such changes are ultimately organic. In relation to the psychological aspect of culture, two of the most important phenomena are, first, a strengthening of the intellect, which tends to command our impulsive life, and, secondly, an introversion of aggressive tendencies, with all the resulting benefits and perils that it brings. War goes emphatically against the psychic adjustment imposed on us by the cultural process, and this is why we necessarily oppose it, and consider it utterly intolerable. For pacifists like us, this is not just a case of intellectual or affective aversion, but a constitutional intolerance, an idiosyncrasy of the more radical variety. And it also seems that this repugnance is caused almost as much by the aesthetic indignation of war as by its atrocities.

(§F18) How long shall it take before the whole of humanity becomes pacifist? It is

impossible to say, but we still have real hopes that these two factors – cultural adjustment and a well-grounded fear as to the form of future wars – can wipe out wars in a not-too-distant future. However, we can not say exactly how this will happen, along what paths or deviations. In the meantime, we can be sure that everything that promotes cultural development works at the same time, against war.

(§F19) I cordially greet you, and would like to apologise should my letter have caused you disappointment.

Yours,

Sigmund Freud

In the next chapter, we shall be analysing the ideas of Einstein and Freud about war and peace, based on the central corpus provided by these two letters 1932.

On 12 June 1812, the Western Armies crossed the borders into Russia and started a war, in other words, a happening contrary to reason and human nature. Millions of men went to commit more crimes against each other – lies, betrayal, theft, issue of false currency, pillages, arson and murder – than there have been for centuries on the criminal files throughout the world, although during this period the men who were guilty of these crimes did not see themselves as such.<sup>95</sup>

Leon Tolstoy

The golden route is to make peace with everyone in the world, and consider the whole human family as one large family.<sup>96</sup>

Mahatma Gandhi

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<sup>95</sup> War and Peace, Book III, First Part, I.

<sup>96</sup> GANDHI, 1968, p. 155. .

## 4 FRAME BY FRAME: WAR AND PEACE IN EINSTEIN AND FREUD

In the analysis that follows, we compare the ideas of Einstein and Freud about the causes of war and the chances of peace, as expressed in *Warum Krieg?*, taking, as categories for analysis, the central postulates of each of them in their correspondence of 1932. At the same time, we contrast their ideas with the analytical structure offered by the contemporary categorisation proposed by Norberto Bobbio<sup>97</sup> for different kinds of pacifism, of, in his own words, the “paths of peace”. In this way, we test the currency of the thoughts expressed by Einstein and Freud in their correspondence and, as a result, its relevance for the contemporary efforts for education for the Culture of Peace.

The ten central ideas that I have identified in *Warum Krieg?* and that I shall be using as categories of analysis are the following: 1) the concept of war and peace, 2) the idea of a supranational world state, 3) the issue of the justification of war, 4) the issue of war and peace in its relation to social change, 5) the notion of qualitative differences of war in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, 6) the relation between aggressive impulse and war, 7) the links of feelings, unity and fraternity that could act as an antidote to war, 8) the relationship between civilisation and culture and war and peace, 9) the Freudian issue of cultural development as an organic process, and 10) the relationship between social leadership and the possibilities of peace.

We therefore move on to the analysis itself.

### 4.1 Concepts of War and Peace

Right at the start of his letter, Einstein asks Freud that crucial question: “is there any way of releasing humanity from the threat of war?”<sup>98</sup> In his reply, Einstein limits the field of investigation that he is proposing to Freud<sup>99</sup>. Even though he admits that “human aggressiveness”<sup>100</sup> also operates under many other forms and circumstances, such as civil wars and the persecution of national minorities<sup>101</sup>, Einstein suggests to Freud that the theme of the discussion should focus on war between nations, as this is “the most typical, most cruel and most uncontrolled form of conflict between humans”<sup>102</sup>.

Norberto Bobbio argues that, in general, the term *peace* has two well-defined fields of meaning: *internal peace*, and *external peace*<sup>103</sup>. In the more general meaning of the term, peace means absence (or cessation, solution, etc.) of a conflict.. The term *internal peace* [or interior peace] means the absence (or cessation, etc.) of an internal conflict, where the term *internal* is understood as a conflict between behaviours or attitudes of one same player<sup>104</sup>. In contrast, *external peace*, this is the absence (or cessation, etc.) of an external conflict, where the word *external* refers to a conflict between different individuals or groups<sup>105</sup>.

When Einstein asked this question to Freud, therefore, he limits the concept even further: he is not addressing the peace that comes from the termination of war between human

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<sup>97</sup> BOBBIO, 2003.

<sup>98</sup> EINSTEIN, 1932, §E1. The translation is mine. All the quotations from Einstein and Freud with regard to *Warum Krieg?*, shown by the classification of paragraphs adopted in this work, are my own translations, as presented in sections 3.1 and 3.2 above. For this reason, I shall just refer to the paragraphs, without repeating the phrase “The translation is mine” with each and every reference quotation, as would be the standard procedure.

<sup>99</sup> This limitation proposed by Einstein is both interesting and important. Norberto Bobbio, when talking about the idea of peace and pacifism, fairly establishes that “In a general discourse about peace, the problems to be tackled are essentially two: definition (of peace) and the assessment” (BOBBIO, 2003, p. 137).

<sup>100</sup> §E8.

<sup>101</sup> §E8.

<sup>102</sup> §E8.

<sup>103</sup> BOBBIO, 2003, p. 137.

<sup>104</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 138.

<sup>105</sup> Id. Ibid., p.138.



groups of any nature, such as civil war or commercial war. He refers specifically to the kind of peace that puts an end to that particular type of conflict that is war between independent and sovereign states.

Norberto Bobbio calls attention to the concepts of *negative* and *positive* in relation to peace, stressing the importance, in this modern age, of adopting the positive concept, rather than just the negative one. The negative concept defines peace as *non-war*, while the positive concept, according to Bobbio, is based on two main lines of thought: a) technical and judicial, and b) theological and philosophical. In the technical and judicial aspect, positive peace is the one that considers the formal conditions based on which a war may be brought to an end in stable fashion. However, this definition “does not contain anything that allows one to make a distinction between a fair and an unfair type of peace”<sup>106</sup>. The importance of the theological and philosophical definition of positive peace is that “only peace with justice really deserves to be called peace; while unfair peace is only a simulation of peace, an apparent peace, but not true peace”<sup>107</sup>.

Bobbio also presents an analysis of the different forms or types of peace that may be recorded through history or contextualised by those that pore over the issue<sup>108</sup>, but this is restricted to the analysis of the classification proposed by Raymond Aron, making some adjustments and corrections. Chart 1, below, seeks to sum up such analyses.

Type of Peace	Subtypes	Type of Relationship	Notes
Powerful Peace <sup>109</sup>	Equilibrium Peace	Equality	
	Hegemonic Peace	Prevalence	The USA in relation to America as a whole.
	Imperial Peace	Domination	<i>Pax Romana</i>
	Extermination Peace	Extermination	
	Confederative Peace	Equality	Has closer links than those of equilibrium peace.
Impotence Peace		Potential for mutual and total destruction <sup>110</sup>	An external form of equilibrium peace (Bobbio).
Satisfaction Peace		Mutuality	Europe after World War II

Chart 1 – Types of Peace, according to Raymond Aron and Norberto Bobbio<sup>111</sup>

This classification provides us with an analytical tool to look at some of the points raised in the letters by Einstein and Freud. For example, when Einstein writes about peace guaranteed by a Court of Justice, over a group of nations or a population (§E3), he is, albeit

<sup>106</sup> BOBBIO, 2003, p. 145.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid., p. 145.

<sup>108</sup> BOBBIO, 2003, p. 155.

<sup>109</sup> Obtained in relationships between sovereign states.

<sup>110</sup> This type of peace refers to the “balance of terror”, or “détente”, a situation specifically created by the possibility of mutual annihilation through the use of nuclear weapons. Bobbio argues that, instead of “impotence peace”, it would be better to talk about “superpower peace” (BOBBIO, 2003, p. 154).

<sup>111</sup> In his classification, Raymond Aron does not mention extermination peace nor confederative peace, which are mentioned by Bobbio. In addition, Bobbio considers “impotence peace”, as proposed by Aron, to be a bit exaggerated. I believe that this chart is self-explanatory, without the need to go into great details about each of the definitions, as this is not our focus here. See BOBBIO, 2003, p. 155.

indirectly, referring to the concept of positive peace as a form of justice. It is evident that, in his concept, it was implicit that the form of peace to be sought would not be of any form other than a fair form of peace. In the scheme presented by Bobbio, this type of peace would be either *equilibrium peace* or *confederative peace*, within the types of powerful peace, or it could also be a kind of *satisfaction peace*.

Freud, on the other hand, mentions that “we can not place all these wars of conquest within one same category”<sup>112</sup>. Here, it is implicit that not all kinds of peace can be put in the same category. And thus, in inverse fashion, in the comments made by Freud we find not only the ideal of fair peace but also the recognition of other types of peace, that comes quite close to the categorisation proposed by Bobbio. For example, Freud says that “the war between the Mongols and the Turks only brought misery”<sup>113</sup>, whereas “the Roman Conquest brought that great bonanza — the *pax romana* — to the lands of the Mediterranean”. Here we could see a case of “extermination peace”, in the case of the Turks and the Mongols, and “Imperial peace” in the case of Rome. Freud points to the inadequacy of such paths to peace that are not accompanied by justice, when he mentions that “As a rule, the recently created units become fragmented again, because there can never be true cohesion between parts that have been joined together by violence”<sup>114</sup>.

This having been said, we shall now move on to one of the most significant points within the ideas of peace presented in the *Weltanschauung* of Einstein, and its resonance in Freud.

## 4.2 A supranational state

The idea of a World Government was, for Einstein, one of his most permanent ideas over more than forty years of pacifist activism<sup>115</sup>. Soon after the First World War, he already defended this idea that would become one of his most significant characteristics. Despite all the reservations he had with regard to its efficiency, it seemed to him that the League of Nations was the first step in this direction. In 1946 Einstein wrote that the solution of the real problem of war “depended exclusively on an agreement on a large scale”<sup>116</sup> between the United States and Russia, and that this agreement should be made working towards a world government, given that “these two countries alone would be capable of making other nations forsake their sovereignty as much as necessary for the implementation of military security for all”<sup>117</sup>.

Therefore, when Einstein, in his correspondence with Freud, calls this “the simple path” that only deals with “apparent” aspects<sup>118</sup> of the problem of war, he is not ignoring it. Indeed, he took it as basic, essential and crucial. But, at the same time, he realised that such political paths were not enough<sup>119</sup>, and that “powerful psychological forces”<sup>120</sup> were acting against the apparently logical political unity of the peoples of the world.

Throughout his life, Einstein was often criticised, and even ridiculed, because of these ideas about a supranational government, but he “accepted this situation as a natural part of the game”<sup>121</sup>. Let us imagine the reactions to the constant proposals for a world government,

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<sup>112</sup> §F7.

<sup>113</sup> Probably Freud is referring to the invasions of the Persian Empire by the Turks (10<sup>th</sup> Century) and the Mongols (13<sup>th</sup> Century), and long period of decline that followed in former Mesopotamia.

<sup>114</sup> §F7.

<sup>115</sup> CLARK, 1972, p. 427 et seq.

<sup>116</sup> EINSTEIN, 1994, p. 148.

<sup>117</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 148.

<sup>118</sup> Both quotations from §E3.

<sup>119</sup> §E4.

<sup>120</sup> §E4.

<sup>121</sup> FRANK, 2002, p. 147.

always put across with passion and not always with tact, within the nationalism-laden environment of Germany in 1920, or the United States in 1946!

Freud agrees that “There is only one sure way to eliminate war”<sup>122</sup> in the contemporary world”, and this is the voluntary establishment of a central power that has the final word in all conflicts of interest”<sup>123</sup>. But for this central power to be able to carry out this supreme task, “two things are necessary: first, this Supreme Court must be established, and secondly, it must have the appropriate executive power”<sup>124</sup>. As a stumbling block in this case, as we have already seen, Einstein denounced the “thirst for power on the part of the governing classes”<sup>125</sup> and that, reaping benefits out of war, “in any nation they are hostile to any limitation on national sovereignty”<sup>126</sup>.

Similarly, already in 1915, Freud realised that “the educational factor of external moral coercion, that we have seen acting so efficiently on the individual”<sup>127</sup> is also “a negligent factor”<sup>128</sup> in the control of mutual relationships between nations within the contemporary world. As Freud said to Einstein in *Warum Krieg?*, “there are two factors that could keep a community together: the compulsion of force or the ties of feelings – in technical terms, identification ties — between its members”<sup>129</sup>. Due to the immaturity of nations with regard to recognising the principles of international justice and submission to the compulsion of a judicial order far higher than that of the Nation State, Freud felt that “any effort to replace concrete power by the power of ideas is, under current conditions, doomed to failure”<sup>130</sup>, and this is because “right is born of brute force”<sup>131</sup> and, even in modern times, it can not exist without the use of force”<sup>132</sup>.

About an international force that could have the coercion power to keep the world unity of nations, Freud had commented, also in 1915, that “You would expect that the great community of interests generated by the production and by commercial activities would be the start of such a coercion”<sup>133</sup>. However, he continues that “it seems to be the case that, for the time being, the people obey their passions much more than their interests. And more: they make use of their interests to rationalise their passions, and put their interests first to give reasons for the satisfaction of their passions”<sup>134</sup>. Maybe because of this type of reasoning, Freud reaches the conclusion, years later on, that the “community of interests” that brings humans together in common targets and purposes is not able to produce “a permanent limitation on narcissism” that always threatens the social group with disintegration. In this type of group, thought Freud, “tolerance would only last as long as the immediate use produced by collaboration with others were to continue”<sup>135</sup>. For this, for the construction of a real community of humans that could get over “the psychosis of hate and destruction”, Freud felt that it was vital to establish ties of love, or identification, between different peoples, because “In the development of humanity, as also in that of the individual, love has shown itself to be the main factor within civilisation, who knows, possibly even the only one,

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<sup>122</sup> §F8.

<sup>123</sup> §F8.

<sup>124</sup> *Erforderliche Macht*.

<sup>125</sup> §E4.

<sup>126</sup> §E4.

<sup>127</sup> FREUD, [1915b], p. 2109-2110.

<sup>128</sup> *Id. Ibid.*, p. 2109-2110.

<sup>129</sup> §F8.

<sup>130</sup> §F8.

<sup>131</sup> §F8.

<sup>132</sup> §F8.

<sup>133</sup> FREUD, [1915b], p. 2109-2110.

<sup>134</sup> FREUD, [1915b], p. 2109-2110.

<sup>135</sup> FREUD, 1996, v. 3, p. 2584.

establishing the transition from egoism to altruism”<sup>136</sup>.

In 1915 Freud still felt that it was “somewhat enigmatic”<sup>137</sup> to see the reason why “group individualities and nations hate, mock and antagonise with each other, even in times of peace”<sup>138</sup>. However, in 1927, in *The Future is an Illusion*, he was already able to give a clear explanation:

The narcissistic satisfaction, extracted from the cultural ideals, is one of the powers that most successfully acts against the hostility driven against civilisation, within each civilised segment. Not only the better-off that enjoy the benefits of the civilisation concerned, but also the oppressed take part in this satisfaction, as the right bestowed on them, of ignoring all those who do not belong to their civilisation compensates for the limitations that are imposed.<sup>139</sup>

This explanation of the needs of the “Other” as a motivational factor for the unity of the masses within each culture can be understood within the context of “narcissism of small differences”<sup>140</sup> that Freud would describe three years later, in *The Ill-Feeling of Civilisation*. Freud stressed the importance of the arts in the creation of this feeling of social unity which surpasses the class and social stratum limits of society. This is because “The creation of the arts intensifies the feelings of identification, on which every civilised sector does of course depend so much, providing occasions for high feelings to be experienced on a group basis”<sup>141</sup>.

This institutional way towards peace through a world superstate, even today, sounds eminently Utopian to many. Norberto Bobbio, however, in his analysis about the most efficient forms of pacifism, after looking at several issues concerning the problem<sup>142</sup>, reaches the conclusion that this would be the best path to take, and “the only believable pacifism”<sup>143</sup>.

Bobbio starts his investigation and analysis about the “roads to peace”, or, in other words, the paths to be trailed towards the elimination of war between nations, stating that there are two broad types of pacifism: a) passive pacifism and b) active pacifism. As he sees it, passive pacifism is “based on a scientific theory or presumed as such”<sup>144</sup>. Three important points of these theories<sup>145</sup> were the most influential philosophies in history that dominated the 19<sup>th</sup> Century: Illuminism, positivism and Marxism<sup>146</sup>. Although they differed in many ways, the important point in our study is that they agree with regard to the inevitability of world peace<sup>147</sup>. Thus, based on these theories of inevitable peace, passive pacifism became

<sup>136</sup> Id. Ibid., v. 3, p. 2584.

<sup>137</sup> FREUD, [1915b], p. 2109-10.

<sup>138</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 2109-10.

<sup>139</sup> FREUD, [1927], p. 334; [1927a], p. 2966.

<sup>140</sup> FREUD, [1930], p. 474; [1930a], p. 3048.

<sup>141</sup> FREUD, [1927], p. 335; [1927a], p. 2967.

<sup>142</sup> BOBBIO, 2003, p. 93-115.

<sup>143</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 22.

<sup>144</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 75.

<sup>145</sup> Of course there are other philosophies in History, such as the religious schools of thought (Christian, Jewish, etc.), or the forms of idealism (Hegel, Fichte), but we must remember that both Einstein and Freud (Einstein more so) were influenced, in their backgrounds (*Bildungen*), not by religious or romantic concepts, but rather by rationalist schools of thought, lay and scientific, which had in Illuminism, Positivism and Marxism their most important representatives. Peter Gay talks about how Freud was closely tied to “positivist aspirations” of those who had been his masters, and how “he sought to materialise” their “hopes and fantasies”, this being the reason why he had “never forgotten his ambition of founding a line of scientific philosophy”. (GAY, 2004, p. 88). Ronald Clark (1972, p. 34) stresses how Einstein, when only 13 years old, enjoyed Kant, and the way “Kant became Albert [Einstein]’s favourite philosopher”. (The translation is mine).

<sup>146</sup> BOBBIO, 2003, p. 161.

<sup>147</sup> According to Bobbio, Illuminism, positivism and Marxism agreed to “consider that peace is the inevitable result of the historical process, and consider this process as a form of progress, and that it includes the results necessary for transition to a society in which perpetual peace shall reign supreme, albeit for different reasons” (BOBBIO, 2003, p. 162-163. The translation is mine).

constructed as an observer of the world. Just wait, and peace will come...<sup>148</sup> This is a position much more characteristic of Freud rather than Einstein, as Freud thought that peace would eventually come through an “cultural adjustment and a well-grounded fear of the form of future wars”<sup>149</sup>.

In contrast, active pacifism “assumes a form of ethics”<sup>150</sup>. It is not happy with just understanding and explaining the routes to peace, but “is an act of taking a stance that personal engages, like with any taking of a stance regarding moral position, the person who takes it on”<sup>151</sup>. Its basic intellectual procedure is that of “showing that things should (or should not) occur as they are indeed occurring”<sup>152</sup>. Active pacifism assumes that there is a criticism of the justifications of war: “we must propose to show not only that war is unnecessary, but also that it is not good”<sup>153</sup>. Einstein, much more than Freud, acted within the references of active pacifism. He was not only a pacifist, but also a “*renowned* pacifist”<sup>154</sup>, who felt the need to do something towards the construction of peace.

However, with regard to the paths that Einstein and Freud<sup>155</sup> defended for peace, through a world superstate — with the power of coercion to avoid war between nations —, both follow the scenario described by Bobbio for *active pacifism*. And their thoughts find a highly specific nook within this theoretical reference. Let’s see.

Bobbio mentions three different forms of active pacifism<sup>156</sup>:

1. *Instrumental* active pacifism: seeks peace acting upon the means<sup>157</sup>.
2. *Institutional* active pacifism: seeks peace acting upon the institutions.
3. *Ethical and Purpose* active pacifism: seeks peace acting upon humanity.

According to Bobbio, these three types are in growing order of complexity and depth<sup>158</sup>. The first lies on the more superficial plane of techniques (building peace by eliminating the weapons that cause war); the second moves from the technique plan to an intermediate plan of social organisation (construction of peace by eliminating or redoing the institutions that cause war); and the third descends to the depth of the human soul, which is the inventor and the user of the techniques and the different forms of social organisation (build peace by eliminating or changing the impulses that cause war, within the human soul)<sup>159</sup>.

As these three forms of pacifism are “means that serve everyone, for the attainment of one same target”<sup>160</sup>, Bobbio says that the problem is one of rational choice, as none is necessarily better than the other. Based on this understanding, he proposes two criteria for

<sup>148</sup> As Bobbio mentions, the typical intellectual procedure that is a feature of passive pacifism is “the explanation and the interpretation of facts”, seeking, above all, “to understand the way people understand how things happen”. For this reason, passive pacifism “finishes its task when it manages to prove that war is no longer necessary” (Quotations de BOBBIO, 2003, p. 75).

<sup>149</sup> §F18.

<sup>150</sup> BOBBIO, 2003, p. 75.

<sup>151</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 75.

<sup>152</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 75.

<sup>153</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 75.

<sup>154</sup> EINSTEIN, 2005, p. 161. The emphasis is by the author.

<sup>155</sup> As shown in the letter by Freud, he confirms the central idea stated by Einstein, saying that “In relation to today’s world [1932], there is *only one safe way of eliminating war*: the voluntary establishment of a um central power that has the final word in the event of disputes between nations” (§F8. The emphasis is mine).

<sup>156</sup> EINSTEIN, 2005, p. 93-115.

<sup>157</sup> Weapons.

<sup>158</sup> These three forms of pacifism, or routes towards peace, using Eco’s fortunate expression, are evidently not mutually exclusive. On the contrary: institutional pacifism requires instrumental pacifism, or the disarmament policy; and encourages, and even requires, ethical pacifism (BOBBIO, 2003, p. 22).

<sup>159</sup> BOBBIO, 2003, p. 108.

<sup>160</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 108.

judgement and choice, taking into consideration: a) larger or smaller effectibility<sup>161</sup> and b) the greater or lesser efficiency<sup>162</sup> for each of these possible “paths to peace”<sup>163</sup> between nations. Following this criterion, we discover a paradox by which the first is the most effective but the last efficient; the third would be the most efficient, were it to be effectable, at least within a reasonably short period, not so long that they could not avoid universal death; the second is more difficult to achieve than the first but, at the same time, less efficient than the third.<sup>164</sup> The confirmation of this paradox leads to the conclusion that “in the current situation of humanity, none of the routes considered up to now is, at the same time, fully executable and efficient”<sup>165</sup>.

Putting this on a chart, for easier understanding, we would have:

FORM OF ACTIVE PACIFISM	Executability	Efficiency
<b>1. Instrumental pacifism</b> (acts upon means)	++	--
<b>2. Institutional pacifism</b> (acts upon institutions)	+-	+-
<b>3. Ethical pacifism</b> (acts upon mankind)	--	++

Chart 2

Forms of active pacifism with executability and efficiency, according to Norberto Bobbio

Going deeper into this systematic classification, Bobbio presents another two forms of logical subdivision for institutional active pacifism and for ethical pacifism, as shown below:

FORM OF PACIFISM	SUBDIVISIONS
<b>Institutional pacifism</b>	Legal: seeks peace through the Law – A SUPERSTATE.
	Social: seeks peace through social transformation.
<b>Ethical pacifism</b>	Ethico-Religious: with spiritualist foundations.
	Therapeutic: materialist basis.

Chart 3

Subdivisions of institutional pacifism and ethical pacifism, according to Norberto Bobbio

As a result of this difference in the understanding of the origin of evil (war), these two ways to promote peace suggest different routes: a) judicial pacifism finds the remedy within the institution of a superstate, or world state — a State above all states — in the exact format as described by Einstein and Freud in their letters; b) social pacifism believes that the remedy is not in the supersession of the national state in itself, but rather in the supersession of a kind of national state that specifically promotes war: the one that, internally, supports itself on the oppression of the non-leader social classes and that, in their external relations, believe in imperialist expansion. The national states that cause war would, therefore, be those based on domestic and international violence. Bobbio holds the view that judicial pacifism is more

<sup>161</sup> The possibility and ease of implementation.

<sup>162</sup> Power to get the expected results.

<sup>163</sup> BOBBIO, 2003, p. 112.

<sup>164</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 21.

<sup>165</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 112.

executable, but less efficient than the social form; in contrast, the social type is more efficient than judicial pacifism, but less executable.

Judicial pacifism sees war as a tool that the states have to solve international conflict within a community of nations. In contrast, social pacifism understands it as a result of the conflicts that exist within some kinds of state.

Einstein makes a reference, albeit indirectly, to social pacifism social, when he says that wars are caused by the “governing classes” that “in each nation are hostile to any limitation of national sovereignty”<sup>166</sup> and that “they manage to dominate and govern the feelings of the masses in general” through schools, the press and religious organisations, “to manipulate them at their will.”<sup>167</sup> It seems evident that Einstein, in these comments, is thinking about that kind of state whose transformation is the end target of institutional social pacifism.

We have already seen that, according to the classification proposed by Bobbio, the ethical form of pacifism acts upon humanity itself. He bases himself on the following reasoning: if weapons (instrumental pacifism) and the institutions (institutional pacifism) are made by humankind, then we should not act on the means or the institutions used to make war, but on its ultimate cause: the interior motives within the human being that provoke the violence of the one against the other. The ethical form of pacifism does not seek to sort out the problem of weapons or society — but to sort out the human species, “in the depths of human feelings and desires”<sup>168</sup>, as Einstein says to Freud.

It is easy to see, therefore, that when Einstein realises that the failure of the efforts to build a supranational society of nations<sup>169</sup> is due to “powerful psychological forces that act in the paralysis of such initiatives”<sup>170</sup>, he is just seeking for the *maximum efficiency* of ethical and target-based media, a way of boosting the *executability* of his project of judicial pacifism through a *state of states*.

Therefore, when Einstein envisages “certain psychological obstacles”<sup>171</sup> that hinder peace, and invites Freud, to point to the educational paths that manage to eliminate these obstacles<sup>172</sup>, he is moving from the sphere of institutional judicial pacifism to the sphere of ethical and target-based pacifism.

In chart 2 we see that Norberto Bobbio shows two types of ethical target-based pacifism: a) ethico-religious and b) therapeutic. These two forms of pacifism are based on two opposing metaphysical concepts. While the ethico-religious form of pacifism is based on spiritualism, the therapeutic form of pacifism is based on materialism<sup>173</sup>. According to Bobbio, these are two unethical and antagonistic paths<sup>174</sup>.

Ethico-religious pacifism feels that the cause of war lies in a moral defect of mankind. On the other hand, therapeutic pacifism finds it in an internal psychological flaw, something that can only be explained in psychological and sociological terms. For ethico-religious pacifism, the problem of war and peace has to do with *conversion*. For the therapeutic line, it has to do with *cure*. The former relies on education, believing that mankind can be rescued

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<sup>166</sup> §E4.

<sup>167</sup> §E5.

<sup>168</sup> §E2.

<sup>169</sup> §E4.

<sup>170</sup> §E2.

<sup>171</sup> §E2.

<sup>172</sup> §E2.

<sup>173</sup> These are two “traditionally recurring and contrapositioned ways of seeing the nature of mankind, and just to make understanding easier we shall call them spiritualism and materialism” (BOBBIO, 2003, p. 106).

<sup>174</sup> BOBBIO, 2003, p. 106.

from war by persuasion and edification<sup>175</sup>. The latter trusts therapy<sup>176</sup>. Among the forms of therapeutic pacifisms, as one could soon guess, Bobbio includes psychoanalysis.

Well, in this context of analysis of the *path to peace* that is represented by a world supergovernment, it is significant to notice that, sixty years after Einstein and Freud defended this very idea, Norberto Bobbio had reached the same conclusion, that the “only realistic proposal” for peace between nations is “the one that aims to invent new institutions and new instruments for action, that allow the solution social conflicts, whose solution had traditionally been put down to violent actions, without the need to resort to any form of individual or group violence”<sup>177</sup>.

Bobbio works with the advantage of having a perspective vision of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century before him, while Einstein and Freud, in 1932, did not even know about the Second World War. In his analysis, Bobbio puts all his capacity of perception and assessment, expected of a philosopher of law and political science, as also a historian of political thought, while both Einstein and Freud were laypeople in this subject.

### 4.3 Justification of War

In his letter to Freud, despite not having explicitly addressed this issue, it is clear that Einstein starts from the assumption that any type of war is absolutely undesirable. The way in which he proposes the issue for his epistolar dialogue with Freud does not open any space for a discussion of the justification of war. We know that, at the time of writing the letter, Einstein was still a radical pacifist, for whom no form of war could be justified<sup>178</sup>. This element of his *Weltanschauung* would change, even though reluctantly, after the rise of Nazism to power and the Second World War.

At the time of the First World War and subsequent years, Einstein was “an unconditional pacifist”<sup>179</sup>, who believed in the uprising of the people against military service and in the need to depose all weapons. In 1928, on refusing an invitation to participate in a conference of the *International Women’s League for Peace and Liberty*<sup>180</sup>, whose main theme was the use of poisonous gases in bellicose activity, Einstein argued that “it was an utterly useless task to propose rules and limitations on any bellicose activity”<sup>181</sup> and that what was really needed was for the people to get organised, in peacetime, to “categorically refuse military service”<sup>182</sup>. In the same way, at a lecture within a students’ meeting in favour of disarmament, in 1930, Einstein said that “war is not like a ball game where all the participants have to abide by the rules”<sup>183</sup> and that “Only the full opposition to all wars can be of any use in this situation”<sup>184</sup>.

Freud, on the other hand, justifies war at several moments within his letter. In the seventh paragraph, he says that “We can not place all wars of conquest in one same basket”, and that, while some “have only brought misery”, others “present the transition from force to the power of the Law”. And he adds that “we must admit that war could be a path towards that peace we want so much, as war constructs several empires within whose borders all wars

<sup>175</sup> It is also necessary to point out that ethical-religious pacifism is by no means based exclusively on religious standpoints. It can also be explained by the conceptual models of a naturalist or rationalist form of ethics. In other words, the ethical-religious form of pacifism does not necessarily assume a religious form of ethics, but can also be expressed in lay terms, nearly always with an idealist nature.

<sup>176</sup> BOBBIO, 2003, p. 106.

<sup>177</sup> BOBBIO, 2003, p. 22.

<sup>178</sup> CLARK, 1972, p. 446.

<sup>179</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 446.

<sup>180</sup> Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom.

<sup>181</sup> Einstein, apud. CLARK, 1972, p. 446-7.

<sup>182</sup> Einstein, apud. CLARK, 1972,

<sup>183</sup> EINSTEIN, 1954, p. 94.

<sup>184</sup> Id. Ibid.



are prohibited, through the presence of a strong central power”<sup>185</sup>.

Although Freud’s arguments are austere and well constructed within the scope of his *Weltanschauung*, it is surely placed as a potential target of the most scathing attacks on the part of radical pacifists, among which Einstein included himself at the time of the letters<sup>186</sup>. Through all the decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, until the moment when the letters were exchanged, this was probably the strongest evidence of a contrast in relation to war, in the *Weltanschauungen* of Einstein and Freud. While Einstein rejected war in all its forms and justifications, Freud found, in some wars, an instrument for human development and even an instrument for peace.

According to Bobbio, in relation to the way in which war was justified (or unjustified), we can distinguish three groups of theories, each group having its specific features. For the sake of brevity, this is shown in Chart 4, below. Here, there are some comments that should be made for better clarity: for the *providentialist bellicist model* war is an *apparent evil*; it is a form of evil that *hides* something good.<sup>187</sup> In the *theologising version* history is seen as a divine attribution<sup>188</sup>. In the *rationalising version* history appears as a responsibility of *Nature*, or the *Spirit of the World*, or *Reason*.<sup>189</sup>

Theories of History <sup>190</sup>	Subdivisions			Remarks
1. Bellicist Theories: tend to justify all wars.	Providentialist Model	Theologising Version		Joseph de Maistre.
		Rationalising Version		Kant, in the <i>Critique of Judgement</i> <sup>191</sup> .
	Finalist Model: war is a <i>necessary evil</i> , from which something good <i>derives</i>	<i>Philosophies of History</i> of the 19 <sup>th</sup> Century	Idea of <i>progress</i> .	War serves <i>moral progress</i> .
				War serves <i>civil progress</i> .
				War serves <i>technical progress</i> .
		<i>Sociology</i> of the 19 <sup>th</sup> Century	Idea of <i>evolution</i> .	Nihilism. <sup>192</sup>
				Realist Sociology. <sup>193</sup>
2. Pacifist Theories: tend not to justify any wars.	Generate the three forms of <i>active pacifism</i> . <sup>194</sup>	<i>Instrumental</i> : acts upon the means.		Focuses mainly on weapon control and war techniques.
		<i>Institutional</i> : acts upon the institutions.		Judicial: peace through law.
		<i>Ethico-finalist</i> : acts upon the human being.		Social: peace through social transformation.
				Spiritualist (ethico-religious).
				Materialist (therapeutic).
3. Theories of <i>just war</i> : approve of some wars but not others.	War as a judicial process: based on the principle of reestablishment of order and justice.			At the limit, only defence wars would be justified, as all the others “give reason to the winner” instead of “making the person who is right win”. Defence wars can be <i>reactive</i> or <i>preventive</i> . <sup>195</sup>
	War as a revolution: for the revoking of an old order and the installation of a new one.			

<sup>185</sup> All quotations are from §F7.

<sup>186</sup> Ronald Clark says that, at the moment of the correspondence with Freud, “The idea of peace through the threat of terror was not well regarded by Einstein” (CLARK, 1972, p. 445. The translation is mine).

<sup>187</sup> BOBBIO, 2003, p. 86.

<sup>188</sup> With Joseph de Maistre (1753-1821) as their main representative, especially in the passages about war in the *Nights of St Petersburg* (1821). BOBBIO, Id. Ibid., p. 86-87.

<sup>189</sup> BOBBIO, 2003, p. 87.

<sup>190</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 76

<sup>191</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 87-88.

<sup>192</sup> The main representatives here are: Nietzsche and Georges Sorel (1847-1922). BOBBIO, 2003, p. 93.

<sup>193</sup> Or *demystifying sociology*. Main representatives: Gumpłowicz (1838-1909) and Pareto (1848-1923). BOBBIO, 2003, p. 93.

<sup>194</sup> For Bobbio (2003), active pacifism coincides with the rise of atomic awareness (p. 95), and presents itself in the form of instrumental pacifism (p. 97-101); institutional (p. 101-104) and ethical-finalist (p. 104-108). Further details about the forms of active pacifism can be seen in Charts 2 and 3 above.

## Chart 4

Historical Theories for the manner of justification of war, according to Norberto Bobbio

The *bellicist-finalist* model is characteristic of the philosophies of history of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, whether idealist or positivist. Such philosophies were eminently dualist: they would separate nature from culture, nature from history, each being understood with its own laws and characteristics structures<sup>196</sup>. All these philosophies were based on the idea of progress, that history moves forward, and always going towards the *best*<sup>197</sup>. For the *finalist model* of philosophy of history, war is a *necessary evil* (war is something bad, out of which something good *derives*), it is an *obligatory passageway* to the best<sup>198</sup>. It is a *means* to achieve a necessary *end*<sup>199</sup>.

Sociology replaced the philosophy of history as the intellectual reference that prevailed at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century<sup>200</sup>. The sociological lines of thought that arose on the conveyor belts of the philosophies of history are connected to a predominantly “monist and naturalistic concept of reality”<sup>201</sup>. The niche of *social Darwinism* was the climax of this sociology based on the idea of evolution. One of the pillars of their interpretation of progress was the fight for existence and war as a means of survival of the fittest. For Bobbio, the concept of social Darwinism “provided arguments and precedents for the most irresponsible exaltations of war that have ever been made”<sup>202</sup>.

On seeking to understand how the ideas of Einstein and Freud fit into this theoretical model, we realise that there is no easy solution, but we can say that Einstein and Freud took opposite routes to reach more or less the same point. Let’s take a look.

If we base ourselves on the position at the outset of the First World War, in 1914, we see that the *Weltanschauung* of Einstein initially showed itself to be impregnated with those old characteristic values of pacifist theories, in the classification presented by Bobbio, and most especially that of institutional pacifism. Einstein opposed war as soon as the First World War broke out, and was shocked and horrified with the initiatives of other scientists and intellectuals that supported the German war effort<sup>203</sup>.

<sup>195</sup> BOBBIO, 2003, p. 79-80.

<sup>196</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 89.

<sup>197</sup> BOBBIO, 2003, p. 89-90.

<sup>198</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 86.

<sup>199</sup> According to Bobbio (2003, p. 90-92), the main representatives of the defence of war for moral progress are: Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767-1835), Hegel (1770-1831) and Nietzsche (1844-1900). Among those that defended war as something necessary for civil progress are Carlo Cattaneo (1801-1869) and Victor Cousin (1792-1867). The line of thought by which war is an instrument necessary for the technical progress has its main representative in Herbert Spencer (1820-1903).

<sup>200</sup> BOBBIO, 2003, p. 93.

<sup>201</sup> In other words, history or culture are seen as an extension of nature, based on the fundamental laws that guide the historical and cultural development. BOBBIO, 2003, p. 93.

<sup>202</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 93.

<sup>203</sup> When the bellicist *Fulda Manifesto*, also known as the “Manifesto to the Civilised World” or “Plea to the World of Culture”, was published in October 1914, soon after the War broke out, Einstein refused to sign it. This was a leaflet-type text that sought to breed doubt as to the horrifying news of war (such as the destruction of the Leuven Library, in Belgium, by the German forces) and place intellectuality on the side of German military activities. The *Fulda Manifesto* was signed by 93 German intellectuals, many of them famous scientists. The document said that “German science should serve the country and its Armed Forces”. In a diametrically opposite movement, Georg Friedrich Nicolai, a famous pacifist and doctor at the University of Berlin, drew up, some days after the publication of the *Fulda Manifesto*, a counter-manifesto, under the title of “Internationalism and Peace” or “Manifesto to the Europeans”. In this document, he called up the educated leaders in Europe — specifically scientists and artists — to give up any “nationalistic passion” in benefit of the common good of the European culture and a transnational alliance<sup>203</sup>. In the heavy environment of the start of the First World War, so well illustrated by the terms of the *Fulda Manifesto*, the initiative taken by Nicolai was truly dangerous. Only three men had the conviction and the courage to sign the document: Nicolai himself, F. W. Förster and Albert Einstein. Nathan and Norden comment that this can be considered the first political document signed by Einstein. (NATHAN and NORDEN, 1981, p. 4)

Until 1928, it is certain that Einstein's position on war was one of absolute opposition<sup>204</sup>. Indeed, the only path he saw for peace was the "revolutionary route"<sup>205</sup> of radical fighting against any war effort. In a message to the "No More Wars"<sup>206</sup>, that year, Einstein wrote that all conscientious people with good intentions should take on "the solemn and unconditional commitment not to participate in any war, for whatever reason, and not to offer any kind of support, be it direct or indirect"<sup>207</sup>.

However, in less than one year, Einstein would also be defending the "legal path" of opposition to war, which was "the offering of alternative services (in preference to military conscription) not only as a privilege of a select few, but as a right for all"<sup>208</sup>. Despite the disapproval from several pacifist leaders<sup>209</sup> and the efforts to make Einstein change his mind, he remained convinced that "both routes [the revolutionary and the legal] are important and that certain circumstances that would justify one of them, and other circumstances, the other"<sup>210</sup>.

In this way, even though Einstein proclaimed himself to be "not just a pacifist, but a militant pacifist"<sup>211</sup>, the fact is that he did not put political or ideological positions above the cause for peace<sup>212</sup>. Indeed, for this very reason, he could be considered by many as an inconsistent pacifist, as for him it was difficult to work together with pacifist institutions, normally of a more radical line<sup>213</sup>. Even though the overall position held by Einstein in relation to peace remained unchanged through the decades<sup>214</sup>, the world structure in which peace could, indeed, occur changed radically between 1920 and 1930<sup>215</sup>. For this reason, for Einstein it did not seem impossible to defend a radical and static form of pacifism, without any chance of reaching peace. This position held by Einstein with regard to pacifism shows, first and foremost, a high degree of historical coherence.

The deepest conviction held by Einstein defended, first and foremost, a "peace of equality" or "confederative peace" or "satisfaction peace", in the scheme presented by Norberto Bobbio (see chart 1), rejecting any peace based on the use of strength or violence. However, this position taken up by Einstein was in fact a limit position. He understood that until it could actually be achieved, less ideal stages would have to be conquered. With the rise of Nazism to power in Germany, in January 1933, Einstein realised that active pacifism would simply not have a chance of bringing peace "through understanding"<sup>216</sup>. The only form of peace that could result from the Nazi advance was the "empire peace", or "extermination peace"<sup>217</sup>, which, in Einstein's view, were not in any way *peace*.

For this reason, he felt that peace could only be born again when the Nazi threat was cast away, and this would never be achieved without resorting to weapons. Thus, around 1932, when he exchanged letters with Freud, Einstein *had placed the issue of peace as more important than the issue of pacifism*. It was by no means easy for him to face most pacifist

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<sup>204</sup> CLARK, 1972, p. 446.

<sup>205</sup> Lord Brockway. Apud. CLARK, 1972, p. 448, e EINSTEIN, 2005, p. 157.

<sup>206</sup> No More War movement.

<sup>207</sup> Einstein. Apud. CLARK, 1972, p. 447.

<sup>208</sup> Einstein, quoted by Lord Brockway. Apud. CLARK, 1972, p. 448, and EINSTEIN, 2005, p. 157.

<sup>209</sup> CLARK, 1972, p. 447.

<sup>210</sup> Einstein, quoted by Lord Brockway. Apud. CLARK, 1972, p. 448, and EINSTEIN, 2005, p. 157.

<sup>211</sup> EINSTEIN, 2005, p. 158.

<sup>212</sup> According to Roland Clark (1972, p. 448), it is possible to understand this evolution in Einstein's pacifist thought because, as he himself says, "maybe in the realms of pacifism, like in space, there should be nothing absolute".

<sup>213</sup> FRANK, 2002, p. 154.

<sup>214</sup> CLARK, 1972, p. 446.

<sup>215</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 446.

<sup>216</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 158.

<sup>217</sup> See chart number 1.

movements who did not realise the historic reality and kept tied to ideas that were sublime yet impracticable. Over the next few years, Einstein stood by this position with a lot of clarity and in a more and more explicit fashion<sup>218</sup>. On 30 December 1941, in an interview given to the New York Times, Einstein made the following statement:

In the twenties, when there were no dictatorships, I defended the idea that the refusal to go to war would make war improbable. But, as soon as situations of coercion appeared in some nations, I felt that such a position would in fact weaken the less aggressive countries, in relation to the more aggressive ones.<sup>219</sup>

In two letters written to Japanese pacifist Seiei Shinohara, in 1953, Einstein said that he was “a *renowned* pacifist but not an *unconditional* pacifist”<sup>220</sup>, and mentioned that he believed there were circumstances in which “the use of strength would be appropriate — specifically when fighting against an enemy that is unconditionally seeking to destroy myself and my people”<sup>221</sup>, and that he was “contrary to the use of force in all circumstances, except when in confrontation with an enemy seeking the destruction of life as *an end in itself*”<sup>222</sup>.

The history of Einstein’s participation in the American quest for the production of the atom bomb is full of intriguing twists, described in detail by Roland Clark in his biography of Einstein<sup>223</sup>, and reflect this position to which Einstein was led by the circumstances of history. Due to space constraints, here we are not able to go into details about all the actions taken by Einstein and the Roosevelt and Truman Governments in relation to the production of the nuclear bomb, but we must mention here that Einstein never refused to carry out a “uniquely dramatic” role<sup>224</sup> in the promotion of the American effort to produce the atom bomb, as from the year of 1939. Even though the first letter from Einstein to President Roosevelt, in August 1939, is the most famous, the fact is that Einstein actually signed three letters, and Roland Clark feels that, out of these, “the third, which helped to trigger the setting up of the Manhattan Project”<sup>225</sup>, could be the most important<sup>226</sup>.

It was probably during the Second World War, especially with the evidence of aggressive Nazi expansionism, that Einstein consolidated his position as a pacifist feeling that war is justifiable when in defence. Einstein kept this lucid posture until the end of his days<sup>227</sup>.

It could seem that the only exception opened by Einstein to the principle of non-aggression was that of a war in defence. He stresses that violence can only be justified

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<sup>218</sup> NATHAN e NORDEN, 1981, p.252-253. On 14 July 1941, in a letter to a student at the University of Missouri, Einstein wrote that “Organised power can only be tackled with organised power. However sorry I may feel about this, there is no other way out” (Einstein, apud. NATHAN e NORDEN, 1981, p. 319. The translation is mine).

<sup>219</sup> EINSTEIN, 2005, p. 158-159.

<sup>220</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 161. The emphasis is the author’s.

<sup>221</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 161. The emphasis is the author’s.

<sup>222</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 161. The emphasis is the author’s.

<sup>223</sup> CLARK, 1972, p. 659-710.

<sup>224</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 667.

<sup>225</sup> The Manhattan Project, in the Northern Hemisphere Autumn of 1942, took control of all research into nuclear fission that had been conducted in the USA since 1939. The research, which until then had been based in several different universities, were taken over by the American Government, with the collaboration of the United Kingdom and Canada. In three short years, the Manhattan Project managed to ensure the design, production and explosion of three nuclear bombs in 1945: one tested in the desert of New Mexico and two dropped on Japan. At its peak, in 1945, the Manhattan Project employed more than 130,000 people at a cost of two billion dollars, equivalent to 20 billion dollars in 2004 values.

<sup>226</sup> CLARK, 1972, p. 667.

<sup>227</sup> On 18 May 1954, one year before his death, he would write to H. Herbert Fox: “I have always been a pacifist, which means that I have always refused to recognise brute force as a means of solving international conflict. In spite of this, the unconditional attachment to this principle does not seem reasonable. One necessary exception must be made when a hostile power threatens the mass destruction of the group to which one belongs” (EINSTEIN, 2005, p. 161-162. The translation is mine).

“specifically when there is confrontation with an enemy who is unconditionally decided to destroy *myself and my people*”<sup>228</sup>, when “a hostile power threatens with the mass destruction of the *group to which they belong*”<sup>229</sup>. However, the historical developments that unfolded during the Second World War led Einstein to rethink his beliefs about the principle of non-interference with internal affairs of other countries. In line with the harsh reality of the genocide implemented by the Nazis, Einstein firmly defended the principle that “no government has the right to conduct a systematic campaign for the physical destruction of any segment of the population that resides within their borders”<sup>230</sup>, and that “In this issue we do not recognise any principle of non-interference”<sup>231</sup>. Einstein kept this position in a stronger and stronger manner<sup>232</sup>.

We therefore see that, throughout his life, the *Weltanschauung* of Einstein, with regard to pacifism, moved from an absolute form of pacifism towards a relative pacifism. In the scheme presented by Norberto Bobbio, this means that Einstein left the reference circle for the *pacifist theories*<sup>233</sup>, which do not give justification for any wars, to enter the roll of theories of *justified war*<sup>234</sup>, which justify some types of war. In this movement, Einstein went beyond the simple justification of *war in defence*, a type traditionally fought by nations under attack from inveterate enemies; he also justified war in *defence* of weaker nations by a third party that is military capable and morally responsible. This justification of war comes within the sphere of *justified war* that Bobbio compares to a “legal case”, when war is waged to re-establish a fair world order that lost through the expansionist greed of a bellicist government, like in the case of Nazi Germany between 1933 and 1945.

If the movement made by Einstein goes from unconditional pacifism to the justification of wars in defence and, at a later stage, the justification of wars of interference that are waged by third powers so that “the lives of innocent people shall be respected and not tampered with, everywhere”<sup>235</sup>, the movement made by Freud, to reach more or less the same point, started from the opposite pole: the justification of all wars.

Freud, different from Einstein, does not restrict the justification of war to the defence of self or others, but also manages to justify the “wars of conquest”<sup>236</sup>. As a corollary of this perspective, Freud argues that, however much of a paradox this may seem, “we must admit the fact that war could be a path towards that perpetual peace that we want so much”<sup>237</sup>, and this because “war constructs vast empires within whose frontiers all wars are banned by a strong central power”<sup>238</sup>. In these words of Freud, we can see an approximation to those

<sup>228</sup> EINSTEIN, 2005, p. 161. The translation and the emphasis are mine.

<sup>229</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 161-162. The translation and the emphasis are mine.

<sup>230</sup> Einstein, apud. NATHAN e NORDEN, 1981, p. 278-9.

<sup>231</sup> Einstein, apud. Id. Ibid., p. 278-9. A translation and the emphasis are mine.

<sup>232</sup> In a meeting sent to a peace rally at the *Madison Square Garden* on 5 April 1938, he wrote: “Many Americans, even those who are pacifists, are thinking and saying: “let Europe fall; this is what it deserves; we should stay away and not get involved”. I feel that such an attitude would not only be unworthy of the Americans, but also shortsighted. It is not worthy of a great nation to cross their arms while small countries from the Great Culture are being destroyed, in a cynical disregard for justice. Such an attitude is shortsighted even from the standpoint of American interests, if this is seen in an enlightened way. The triumph of barbarianism and lack of humanity could only lead to a world situation where America is forced to fight, and in conditions that are much more unfavourable as those that most people can imagine these days” (Einstein, apud. NATHAN and NORDEN, 1981, p. 279. The translation is mine).

<sup>233</sup> BOBBIO, 2003, p. 76.

<sup>234</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 76.

<sup>235</sup> Einstein, apud. NATHAN and NORDEN, 1981, p. 278-279.

<sup>236</sup> According to his view, some of the expansionist wars “speeded up the transition from power to law, as they created larger social units, within whose limits the use of power was prohibited, and a new legal regime solving the disputes”. Thus, Freud managed to see a “bonanza” in the *pax romana*, and sees the origin of “a new France, that flourished in peace and unity” in the “thirst for grandeur shown by French kings”. (Quotations of §F7.)

<sup>237</sup> §F7.

<sup>238</sup> §F7.

philosophies of history that, according to Bobbio “tend to justify all wars”. The postulates proposed by Freud are somewhere among the models of a *providentialist bellicism*, in its *rationalising* version, and a *purpose-guided bellicism*<sup>239</sup>.

However, Freud also argues that the unity built by war does not last<sup>240</sup>, and that, “For humanity in general, the only result of these military campaigns has been that, instead of frequent – not to say incessant – small wars, the people now had to face larger wars that, even though they are not so frequent, they are much more destructive” (§F7).

Within this ambiguity with which Freud deals with the issue of war in his letter to Einstein we find, however, a significant movement towards a region which is more dominated by pacifism than by bellicism. This is because, as we should remember, and differently from Einstein,, Freud, like most Europeans, had hailed the start of the First World War *with enthusiasm*<sup>241</sup>.

Due to the fact that they did not know the real meaning of war, the people and Governments of Europe entered the First World War with a juvenile enthusiasm<sup>242</sup> that, in the contemporary perspective, borders on the pathetic, if not insanity<sup>243</sup>. Hobsbawm writes that “In 1914, the peoples of Europe happily went to massacre and be massacred”<sup>244</sup>. Most intellectuals welcomed the war as a “suitable climax for decades of irritation against what they and their ancestors at the forefront liked to denounce as a bourgeois culture, obtuse, secure and vulgar”<sup>245</sup>. In a sovereign yet alienated attitude, these intellectuals “summed up in themselves a jocose, sophisticated and irresponsible passion for purification, lack of reason, and death”<sup>246</sup>.

Freud was one of these thousands of illuded intellectuals<sup>247</sup>, and based himself on the idealised images of war that dominated European culture<sup>248</sup>. During the first years of the war, Freud said that he was “living on a close German victory”<sup>249</sup>, and, during a certain period of time, “also submitted himself to party credulity”<sup>250</sup>, being “invaded by an unexpected fit of patriotism”<sup>251</sup>. As Freud said about himself, “All my libido”<sup>252</sup> has been handed over to the Austro-Hungarian Empire”<sup>253</sup>. Ernest Jones, the loyal biographer and disciple, also mentions

<sup>239</sup> See Chart 4 and corresponding text.

<sup>240</sup> §F7.

<sup>241</sup> GAY, 2004, p. 324; BREGER, 2002, p. 238.

<sup>242</sup> Until 1914, says Eric Hobsbawm, “peace was the normal situation and that expected by European lives. Since 1815, there had been no war involving European powers” (HOBSBAWM, 2005, p. 418). For this reason, “the belief that a world war could not really happen was deeply rooted in the tissue of life” (Id. Ibid., p. 450).

<sup>243</sup> Louis Breger (2002, p.234) comments that “scenes of joy were the norm in the capitals of the belligerent nations” and that, within this feeling of burning patriotism, “even pacifists and socialists, who had been opposed to war and to the European arms race, joined the chorus of widespread expressions of patriotism” (Id. Ibid., p.234. The translation is mine).

<sup>244</sup> HOBSBAWM, 2005, p. 450.

<sup>245</sup> GAY, 2004, p. 323.

<sup>246</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 323.

<sup>247</sup> Even though he did not give himself entirely up “to the irrational praise, of religious nature, of a Rilke or a Mann” (GAY, 2004, p. 324), Freud also saw in war “a tempest” that would free Austro-Hungary from its unhealthy “miasmas” (BREGER, 2000, p. 236. The translation is mine). On 26 July 1914, Freud wrote to his friend Karl Abraham saying that “for the first time in thirty years I really feel like an Austrian, and I am thinking of giving this unimpressive Empire one more chance. The general spirit, everywhere, is excellent!” (Freud, apud. ROAZEN, 1971, p. 26; SCHUR, 1972, p. 289. The translation is mine).

<sup>248</sup> BREGER, 2000, p. 236; GAY, 2004, p. 323; HOBSBAWM, 2005, p. 448-449.

<sup>249</sup> Freud, apud. BREGER, 2002, p. 237.

<sup>250</sup> GAY, 2004, p. 324.

<sup>251</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 320.

<sup>252</sup> In Freud’s view, libido is the life energy or impulsive force, which is essentially sexual in nature. Gustav Jung, a disciple and later a dissident to Freud, gave the term a wider meaning, understanding libido as being a psychic, free and creative form of energy which each person should use in his or her process of self-development. For Freud, the libido which is contained in the unconscious mind of the “it” (in earlier translations, “id”) may enter into conflict with the conventions taken up by civilised society, from whence come the tensions and disturbances that affect both the individual and the society as a whole.

<sup>253</sup> Freud, apud. BREGER, 2000, p. 234; JONES, 1963, p. 171.

the enthusiastic welcome that Freud gave to the war:

Freud's immediate response to the declaration of war was unexpected. It would be natural to imagine that a *savanti* pacifist<sup>254</sup> of fifty-eight years of age would treat the war with a feeling of horror, as many others did. But, on the contrary, his first reaction was that of juvenile enthusiasm, apparently a reawakening of the military ardour of his boyhood.<sup>255</sup>

However, this aseptic view of war would soon come to nought, with the unimaginable scenes of horror that took place during the First World War, in which 20 million people would lose their lives in the most brutal ways possible<sup>256</sup>. The First World War made Freud, as also several other European intellectuals, substantially rethink their assumptions and ideas about war.

Thus, along this intellectual and emotional path, Freud comes to the year 1932, when he wrote the letter to Einstein, at a point which is very different from where he had started back in 1914. Even though he would still justify, in an evidently ambiguous manner, the possible benefits of some conquest wars, and assume that war “could be a path towards that perpetual peace that we want so much”<sup>257</sup>, Freud closes the letter to Einstein by writing, in pungent form, that “war destroys lives full of promise”, that it “forces the individual into situations that humiliate their very nature”, and that “it destroys the material amenities, the results of human efforts, and a lot more besides”<sup>258</sup>.

What a great reformation had befallen the *Weltanschauung* of the old *savant*! Different from the enthusiast of the *purifying* powers of war in 1914, in 1932 we have a Freud that, faced with the horrors and slaughter of the bellicose conflicts, does not understand “how the practice of war has not been banned through a group decision by humanity”<sup>259</sup>.

Therefore, at the time when they wrote their letters in *Warum Krieg?* (1932), we find Einstein and Freud converging to a sort of common frontier, far from the radically opposite territories that they had occupied before the First World War. Freud, from the depths of a significantly bellicist philosophy, comes towards a zone in which he can only justify, with great reluctance, some wars, but not all. Einstein, in turn, moved from the realms of absolute pacifism to the same region with acceptance of “fair wars”, especially during the period of the Second World War.

#### 4.4 War and social change

Einstein and Freud, in *Warum Krieg?*, dedicate themselves to the analysis, although not extensively, of some of the core elements within the perspective of *institutional social pacifism*, the kind that seeks peace through social revolution (Chart 4). Einstein, on the other hand, shows some social forces that seem evidently linked to the causes of war, saying that they are “not difficult to identify”<sup>260</sup>: the governing classes, and those who profit from the production and commercialisation of weapons<sup>261</sup>. And this because the dominant classes “have in their hands the schools and the press, and also generally all the religious organisations”<sup>262</sup>, and, through these means, “manages to dominate and govern the emotions

<sup>254</sup> Erudite, wise. In French in the original.

<sup>255</sup> JONES, 1963, v. 2, p. 171.

<sup>256</sup> HOBSBAWM, 2005, p. 449.

<sup>257</sup> §F7.

<sup>258</sup> §F16.

<sup>259</sup> §F16.

<sup>260</sup> §E4.

<sup>261</sup> §E4.

<sup>262</sup> §E5.

of the masses in general, to manipulate them at their will”<sup>263</sup>.

In his brief explanation of the institutional and social elements which are behind bellicose activity, Einstein stresses that the manipulation that has been obtained by the governing classes does not “in any way act only on the so-called uncultured masses”<sup>264</sup>, but that it is the “so-called *intelligentsia* that cows in to these disastrous suggestions most often”<sup>265</sup>. Even though Einstein intentionally restricted his considerations to war between nations<sup>266</sup>, Freud expands the field of investigation to beyond these limits, with the objective of showing the roots of this manipulative behaviour so typical of the dominant classes, which, according to Einstein, is one of the elements that lead to wars.

Freud sees the origin of the social order as lying within a group decision to transfer the empire of individual force to that of collectivity. Freud thus shows that “the law system”<sup>267</sup> that governs human societies<sup>268</sup> instead of force, is nothing more than “the power of a community”<sup>269</sup>, and that this state of the empire of legal right “is nothing else than the use of force”<sup>270</sup>, subject to a condition that “it is no longer the force of an individual that is the dominant factor, but that of the community”<sup>271</sup>.

In Freud’s view, the only way in which a society could stay together despite its diversity would be through the Empire of the Law. He thinks that “the legislation of the community shall take into account this difference of power within”<sup>272</sup> and shall try to deal with it. However, the problem is that “the laws are made by those who govern and in their own benefit, while the submissive masses have fewer rights”<sup>273</sup>. It is here that Freud, as also Einstein, finds the elements of social instability that lead to wars, within the perspectives of a *social* institutional pacifism, according to Bobbio.

In *Warum Krieg?*, Freud, more than Einstein, gets into the dynamics of this social transformation that is necessary to overcome the conflicts inherent to the wide disparity of rights and privileges within society. Although Freud guides his analysis towards the social units “within whose frontiers every war is prohibited by a strong central power”<sup>274</sup>, his analysis is also useful to understand the dynamics of those conflicts which are internal to the States, such as civil wars.

Freud mentions that “within the community there are two sources that cause the instability and the evolution of the law”<sup>275</sup>, which are: “the attempts, on the part of the members of the governing classes, to keep above the restrictions that apply to all”<sup>276</sup>, and “the continued efforts of the oppressed to seize more power and to see these changes incorporated into the Law”<sup>277</sup>. This conflict of interests, as Freud sees it, has its dynamics changed through

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<sup>263</sup> §E5.

<sup>264</sup> §E7.

<sup>265</sup> §E7.

<sup>266</sup> §E8.

<sup>267</sup> §F5.

<sup>268</sup> Here we understand society as being a “group of people who live within a certain time and space band, following common rules and standards, and who are united by a group feeling”, or “a group of individuals that live, at their own free will, under common rules”, according to definitions arising from sociology and shown by the Houaiss Dictionary of the Portuguese Language.

<sup>269</sup> §F5.

<sup>270</sup> §F5.

<sup>271</sup> §F5.

<sup>272</sup> §F6.

<sup>273</sup> §F6.

<sup>274</sup> §F7.

<sup>275</sup> §F6.

<sup>276</sup> §F6.

<sup>277</sup> §F6.



those social changes linked to “certain historical conditions”<sup>278</sup>, when there is a “genuine change in the balance of power within the community”<sup>279,280</sup>. When this change in balance of power does indeed occur — generally due to the rise of a new social segment into the economic élite — there are two paths that Freud envisages, through which the judicial changes take place.

Firstly, if the new social actors that enter the economic élite also have access to the political decisions, then, “In such cases, the Law may be gradually adjusted to the new circumstances of division of power”<sup>281</sup>. However, if the hegemonic class does not make room for the new actors that have gained power through social progress, and “shows no will to make these changes within the realm of the Law”<sup>282</sup>, then the social order loses stability, with “uprisings and civil wars, a period in which the Law is suspended and a new balance of power is tried out, for a new legal regime to later arise”<sup>283</sup>.

It is also important to see how this analysis made by Freud does not condemn the conflict arising from the injustice with which the Law treats certain social strata. On the contrary, it is understood and justified. Similarly, there is no condemnation of the violence arising from the refusal of the hegemonic classes to proceed with judicial changes that contemplate the new “balance of power”. Freud understands that these conflicts of interests are both a factor of “legal instability”<sup>284</sup>, as also a factor that causes “its evolution”<sup>285</sup>.

Such an understanding inserted into the *Weltanschauung* of Freud is clearly aligned, in the scheme proposed by Bobbio, with the perspective of *institutional pacifism*, both in its *judicial* side — peace through changes in the Law —, as also the *social* side — peace through social revolution<sup>286</sup>. Similarly, in 1931 Einstein made such an understanding clear when he said that:

There are two ways of opposing war: the legal route and the revolutionary route. The legal route involves offering alternative services (to recruitment) not only as a privilege but as a right for all. The revolutionary path involves unconditional resistance, in order to break the power of militarism in times of peace, or state resources in times of war.<sup>287</sup>

Here, it seems evident that Einstein and Freud, in 1932, were already working with the understanding which Lederach and other people studying the paths to peace would, in the 1980s and 1990s, define as *transformation of conflicts*<sup>288</sup>, as also pointed to the concept of

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<sup>278</sup> §F6.

<sup>279</sup> §F6.

<sup>280</sup> Here, Freud is obviously referring to those periods of social revolution, mentioned by Marx in *On the Criticism of Political Economics*, when he wrote: “At a certain stage of development, the material productive forces of society enter into contradiction with current relationships of production or – that which is nothing less than their judicial expression –, with the relationships of property within which they had moved until then. From forms of development of productive forces, these relations are transformed into their prisons. *Thence comes a kind of social revolution.* With the transformation of the economic base, all the enormous superstructure transforms with greater or lesser speed...”. (MARX, [1859], p. 530-531).

<sup>281</sup> §F6.

<sup>282</sup> §F6.

<sup>283</sup> §F6.

<sup>284</sup> §F6.

<sup>285</sup> §F6.

<sup>286</sup> BOBBIO, 2003, p. 101-104.

<sup>287</sup> Einstein, quoted by Lord Brockway. Apud. CLARK, 1972, p. 448, and EINSTEIN, 2005, p. 157.

<sup>288</sup> LEDERACH, 1996, 2003. According to the author, “The transformation of conflicts is to *view the flow and backflow of social conflict — acting as a consequence of it — as stimulating opportunities for the creation of processes of constructive change that bring down violence and raise justice both within direct relationships as also within social structures*, and that are sensitive to the problems in *human relations* in real life” (LEDERACH, 2003, p. 14. The emphasis is that of the author).

*structural violence*, of Galtung<sup>289</sup>, on denouncing the favouritism of the law towards the dominant classes<sup>290</sup>.

In the *Weltanschauung* of Freud, this approach involving the transformation of conflict extends to relations between countries, which was the core focus of the discussion with Einstein in 1932. Freud argues that some wars “speed up the transition from power to the Law, as they created larger social units, within whose limits the use of force was prohibited and a new regime based on the Law would solve any disputes”<sup>291</sup>. Even though he considered that, as a rule, such conquests tend to be highly unstable, as “there can not be a real cohesion between parts united by the use of violence”<sup>292</sup>, the argument used by Freud to understand peace as a result of a transformation of conflicts between nations is here clearly applied to relationships between the countries themselves.

In 1915, in his treatise *Thoughts for the Times on War and Death*, Freud argued that “wars may never end while the peoples of the world live in conditions of existence that are so widely different”<sup>293</sup>, and that “while the conditions of existence of the peoples of the world are so diverse, and while the aversions between them are so violent, there shall always be wars”<sup>294</sup>. Therefore, Freud does not talk about the impossibility of war, but rather of a process in which peace comes from an adjustment between countries — which, in essence, means a *transformation of conflicts* — in the same way that the internal peace within the countries depends on an adjustment between the different social actors that are active within them.

For Einstein, the person who is opposed to war as a matter of conscience would have to be “a revolutionary”<sup>295</sup>, someone who “on disobeying the Law, sacrifices their personal interests to work towards the greater cause of improvement of society”<sup>296</sup>. Just like Freud, therefore, Einstein also considered the need both of legal routes and of mobilisation and social revolution for the conquest of peace, even though he restricted his comments about this issue in the pages of *Warum Krieg?*.

Both Einstein and Freud incorporated into their views of peace the idea that it could not come from the artificial elimination of *explicit violence*, but rather through the overcoming of the several forms of *structural violence*. Thus, they agree with the opinion of Johan Galtung, that, many times, the conquest of peace requires an active struggle, including

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<sup>289</sup> Johan Galtung, considered the “father” of studies on the construction of peace, defines violence as “*the avoidable damage caused to basic human necessities* or, to place it in a more general context, the damage to *human* life, that reduces the degree to which someone is capable of satisfying their needs below that which would otherwise be possible. The *threat* of violence is also a form of violence in itself” (GALTUNG, 1993, p. 106. The translation is mine). The basic division proposed by Galtung is that between *direct violence* and *structural violence*. While direct violence is that caused by the damaging action of individuals of social groups that can be clearly identified, structural violence is born from the features within social structure, which means that its perpetrators can not be identified. Nevertheless, bearing in mind the definition of violence as something “avoidable” that harms human life, Galtung argues that structural violence is also avoidable, as society can be structured in another way, to avoid the structural damage to life. According to Galtung, structural violence is impregnated in the social system and is expressed through the unequal distribution of power and, as a result, that of opportunities, such as, for example, access to education, jobs, housing and so forth. In this regard, the definition of *structural violence* as proposed by Galtung is a synonym of *social injustice*.

<sup>290</sup> In 1935, Einstein (2005, p. 159) stressed that pacifism would not get anywhere if it did not “tackle head on the economic causes of war”. In 1952, he said that, even though he was almost completely identified with the stands taken by Gandhi with regard to the construction of peace, he “would resist with violence (individual and group) against any attempt to kill myself or my people, or stripping us of basic means of subsistence” (Id. Ibid., p. 160). Here it is obvious that “the economic causes of wars” and the stripping of “basic means of subsistence” are elements of *structural violence* as shown by Galtung, which may only avoid war through a process of conflict transformation. (The translation of the quotations is mine.)

<sup>291</sup> §F7.

<sup>292</sup> §F7.

<sup>293</sup> FREUD, [1915], p. 2101.

<sup>294</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 2117.

<sup>295</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 160.

<sup>296</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 160.

that of a revolutionary nature, against the social structures that provide a base for *structural violence*. Therefore, they did not propose, in the light of the analysis made by Jean Paul Lederach<sup>297</sup>, something along the lines of “solving of conflicts” or the “administration of conflict”, but rather were aligned with a view of “transformation of conflicts”, in which *the worthwhile peace* (based on justice) which emerges, most often, from the very dynamics of conflicts, more than from a precocious and artificial elimination that, according to the scheme of Bobbio, representing a *hegemonic peace*, or *imperial peace*, or *extermination peace*, but never a *balance* or *satisfaction peace*<sup>298</sup>.

#### 4.5 The qualitative difference of war in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century

Another point of agreement between Einstein and Freud in the letters refers to the qualitative difference between contemporary war and the wars of the past. Both take this stand, as forerunners of that type of conscience that Norberto Bobbio calls “atomic awareness”<sup>299</sup>, or, in other words, the conscience that the technological advances have led the bellicose activities to a degree of radicality which makes it either totally unfeasible or unjustifiable, due to the magnitude of the risks and losses that this causes<sup>300</sup>. It is obvious that in 1932, Einstein and Freud could not decide about the limits that are imposed on war by the atomic weapons, as these were not even being studied. The only reference they had was the technology existing in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. And this, in their eyes, was enough to indicate war as a blocked path<sup>301</sup>, as a human institution whose time had already run out, in the sense that “each time not only has its truth, but also its institutions”<sup>302</sup>.

When in 1932, Einstein wrote about the “advance of technology”<sup>303</sup> that made “war a matter of life or death for the civilised world”<sup>304</sup>, and when Freud, in his answer, talked about “the well-grounded fear about the form of future wars”<sup>305</sup> neither could have had the slightest idea of how this could come true only thirteen summers later. When on 6 August 1945 the atomic bomb went off over Hiroshima, this did not only represent the death of more than 120,000 innocent people in the space of a few seconds, but a whole era also died. The nuclear bomb heralded an age in which all the threats of the Apocalypse – even for an atheist like Freud – stopped being just a myth and moved into the realm of reality. On 12 June 1953, in a joint statement published by the *New York Times*, Einstein would say, together with the other signatories, that “The first atomic bomb destroyed more than just the city of Hiroshima. It also exploded the obsolete political ideas that we inherited”<sup>306</sup>.

To the reporter of the *New York Times* who went to his house to give the news of the

<sup>297</sup> LEDERACH, 1996, 2003.

<sup>298</sup> See Chart 1 and subsequent analyses.

<sup>299</sup> Norberto Bobbio (2003, p. 26.) defines *atomic conscience* as “awareness of the absolute novelty of nuclear war, compared with all the wars of the past”.

<sup>300</sup> BOBBIO, 2003, p. 53-62.

<sup>301</sup> Bobbio (2003, p. 53) defines a “blocked path” in historical development as a “road without an exit, that does not lead to the proposed target and which therefore should be abandoned”. Such a notion of a blocked historical path, such as the slave trade, for example, does not express a concept, but rather an approximate image, as human history “is so complicated that, not being able to express it through concepts, we must make do with approximate images” (Id. Ibid., p. 53), but aware of the difference between an image and a concept. The acceptance of the fact that History does indeed have blocked paths, faced with which humanity had to, or wanted to, interrupt their path to seek another better path, as in a maze, implies the acceptance of two hypotheses “both unproven and [not] probable” (Id. Ibid., p. 55): a) that the trail of history is an ongoing process and b) that this process is irreversible. The different historicist philosophies (Illuminist, Romantic, Positivist, Marxist and others) accept this view. In opposition, there are those philosophies that see history as an absolute contingency, without a purpose or aim other than the simple succession of facts (Id. Ibid., p. 55). It is clear that both Einstein and Freud have historicism as part of their respective *Weltanschauungen*.

<sup>302</sup> BOBBIO, 2003, p. 54.

<sup>303</sup> §E1.

<sup>304</sup> §E1.

<sup>305</sup> §F18.

<sup>306</sup> EINSTEIN, 2005, p. 174.

explosion of the bomb in Hiroshima, Einstein said: “The world is not ready for this yet!”<sup>307</sup> In 1930, assessing the existing war weapons, Einstein said that the “development of the mechanical means of bellicose combat is so strong that human life shall become intolerable if people do not soon discover, in the near future, a way of preventing wars”<sup>308</sup>.

Norberto Bobbio suggests three metaphors, three approximate models that correspond to “three different ways of seeing the meaning of history”<sup>309</sup> and that of war within history, which we have sought to summarise in Chart 5 below.

Metaphor of War	Situation described	The role of the philosopher	Notes
“Fly in the bottle” <sup>310</sup>	There is a way out, but humanity (the fly) does not see it.	The philosopher is an external observer. He or she sees the exit and guides the fly (humanity).	Philosophy under the cover of rational knowledge.
“Fish in the net”	There is no way out – and when the way out exists, it is death.	The philosopher is an external observer, and there is no way out. He or she seeks to comfort the fish (humanity) about destiny.	Philosophy in the clothes of wisdom.
“Maze”	There are blocked paths <sup>311</sup> , but there is a way out. However, no-one knows where it is, which means that there is a need to find it by trials and successive approximations.	All are within the maze, including the philosophers. They teach the co-ordination of efforts, the avoidance of activism and inactivity, the making of rational choices, intermediate targets, so as to correct the path, adapting the means to the ends, to recognise the wrong paths and abandon them.	The blocked paths are those which do not make a better future for all feasible, such as nuclear warfare.

Chart 5  
Metaphors of three ways of seeing the meaning of war in history, according to Norberto Bobbio

As can be easily seen in this chart, the task of the philosopher in the maze metaphor is “more modest when compared to the first situation [that of the fly in the bottle, where the philosopher is almost omniscient] and less sublime when compared to the second [that of fish in the net, where the philosopher advocates resignation and non-disturbability]”<sup>312</sup>.

The historical philosophies that fit in with the metaphor of the fish in the bottle are those which tend to justify all wars, as already analysed in the previous section (7.3). For these, war is a *necessary path*. Humanity is the fish which is trapped in the net of war. There is no way out. War, like the net, is an inevitable and incurable fact. Any agitation or attempt at escape only tightens the mesh of the netting around the prisoners.

The philosophies that fit the metaphor of the fly in the bottle are those that justify

<sup>307</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 174.

<sup>308</sup> EINSTEIN, 1954, p. 94.

<sup>309</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 51. The author stresses that these three metaphors correspond to “three different typical philosophies of history” (Ibid. p. 51), but that “Naturally, they are not the only ones” (Ibid. p. 51). Bobbio therefore leaves out “at one end and the other” the “religious, or better, the Christian conception of History, for which the solution [for war] does exist, but is outside the scope of History, and the only spectator is God; and the radical pessimist concept (*patragism*), for which not only is there not a final solution, as there are not even partial solutions, and there is no condition other than useless suffering, neither any possible attitude other than indifference or desperation; and, given that there is a spectator, this latter party is either inattentive or impotent” (Ibid. p. 51).

<sup>310</sup> Bobbio (2003, p. 49) gets this image from Wittgenstein, for whom “the task of philosophy is to teach the fly to come out of the bottle”.

<sup>311</sup> Bobbio states that nuclear war is one of the blocked paths of history. Others would include slavery and, in the West, the institutionalised inferiority of the woman.

<sup>312</sup> BOBBIO, 2003, p. 50.

some wars and condemn others, the *philosophies of fair war*. The philosopher would seek to guide human actions in each case.

In contrast, the maze metaphor applies to those philosophies that see modern war, especially atomic war, as a *blocked path*, an obsolete institution in demand of extinction. The role of the philosopher is to help humanity to recognise this fact and to seek a feasible path towards the outside of the maze, as the path of war has shown itself to be either impossible or unjustifiable.

A significant change in the way in which Einstein and Freud conceived the role of war in human history and the role of the philosopher — or the wise man — in relation to this issue also took place throughout their lives. As from the First World War, during the decades that followed, Einstein, always a staunch pacifist, slowly gave up his activities within the model known as *fly in the bottle*, starting to act in the *maze* references. In the metaphor of the *fly in the bottle*, which Norberto Bobbio borrows from Wittgenstein, the philosopher is someone who sees, from the outside, the dilemmas faced by the fly when leaving the bottle. He or she also sees the way out and, in a far superior position, seeks to guide the fly towards the way out. Einstein behaved in this way for a long time. He thought that in international pacifism, and especially in the idea of a supranational Government, he had found the final solution and a “simple path”<sup>313</sup> to deal with the problem of war. For Einstein, “Everything was as clear as daylight”<sup>314</sup>.

Being “a person free of national prejudice”<sup>315</sup>, Einstein seemed not to understand the magnitude and the complexity of the political, economic, cultural and emotional transformations involved in the idea of a world supragovernment, and naïvely insisted on the same key, to the extent that he generated discomfort and antagonism to his opinions and ideas – if not to his person.<sup>316</sup>

There are many examples that show just how naïve Einstein was in political matters, but one of the most significant may have been the opinion that he stated, in the Northern summer of 1946, with regard to an international security force – serving the ever-present world government –, a bit like what would later become the peace force of the United Nations. Einstein suggested that “it would be great if we could have the Russians working for this world organisation based in the United States, and the Americans based in Russia”. Just imagine the repercussion of such ideas: an American army based in Russia and a Russian army based in the United States! The ideas proposed by Einstein were, of course, rejected with equal strength in the United States and also in the Soviet Union<sup>317</sup>.

For this and other reasons, along his pacifist path, Einstein started to take up a lighter and less grandiloquent tone, even though he remained a staunch advocate of the idea of a world government up to the end of his days. However, in a way he stopped expressing his ideas, as if he were the wise omniscient being that, from outside the bottle, showed humanity the way out. Gradually his stance got used to the idea of having someone else in the maze, in the image created by Norberto Bobbio.

His mission was no longer to show the path that only he could see, but also search, together with the others, new paths that nobody knew about. This seems to be the reason why he wrote to Freud, as philosopher outside the bottle would have done, stating that “the normal

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<sup>313</sup> §E3.

<sup>314</sup> CLARK, 1972, p. 713.

<sup>315</sup> §E3.

<sup>316</sup> As Denis Brian puts it, “As from 1919, he [Einstein] was, without any doubt, the most famous and well-known scientist in the world, the most loved and the most hated” (BRIAN, 1996, p. 104. The translation is mine).

<sup>317</sup> CLARK, 1972, p. 716.

objectives of my line of thought do not provide me with access to the depths of human feelings and desires”<sup>318</sup>. And he felt the need to ask other people, equally lost within the maze, but who may have different and more suitable perspectives and experience, for guidance as to the paths to be followed. And, hence, ask Freud that key question: “would it be possible to guide the psychological development of mankind to help people get over the psychosis of hate and destruction?”<sup>319</sup>.

If the movement made by Einstein was from the *fly in the bottle* model to the model of the *maze*, that of Freud, to reach the *maze* set out from the *fish in the net*. As in the metaphor of the fish in the net, Freud appeared as an external observer who considered human beings struggling within the network of uncontrollable impulses, the ties of culture and civilised life, for which there was no way out. Human being, like the fish trapped in the nets, struggled to find a way out, to break free of the ties that trapped and strangled them. For Freud, psychoanalysis was the instrument that enabled the identification of the network, its size, its mesh, and the reality of their destiny of fish-humans netted there. And he, from the pinnacle of his psychoanalytical knowledge, invited humanity to struggle.

However, this identification and this conscience provided by psychoanalysis did not lead to liberation. At most, they offered the prisoners a more lucid view of their destiny, so that they would not struggle with so much vigour, as this would only add unnecessary wounds to their cruel destiny. The message of the psychoanalytical observer for the fish inside the net was that of a tragic realism. A message that forced the acceptance of a harsh reality and the forsaking of illusions; not a guide to escape. The same thing would apply to war.

In 1915, in his article *Current Comments on War and Death*<sup>320</sup>, the most that Freud could offer was disconsolation: for him, all the bitterness and disappointment in relation to war “is not strictly justified, as it comes from the dismantling of an illusion”<sup>321</sup>. The suffering would be better, Freud argued, if we faced the reality head on, or then “we should accept things without feeling sorry” when our illusions “smash against reality and break into pieces”<sup>322</sup>. In relation to the abominable behaviour of people during war, Freud argues that “In reality, such people did not fall as low as we had feared, because they hadn’t risen as much as we had thought”<sup>323</sup>. Taking on the typical role of a philosopher who advises the fish in the net to accept their fate, Freud “recommended stoic action”<sup>324</sup>.

However, the stoic and sovereign distance of the philosopher who contemplates the fish bundled together in the net would soon have to be cast aside. Freud would be placed within the *maze* very soon. Peter Gay argues that “the main reason why Freud’s enthusiasm for his country soon started to peter out was the fact that war came to his doorstep right from the outset”<sup>325</sup>, with his sons being sent to the battle front, and with his clinical work almost stopped due to the eruption of the hostilities of the First World War.

Even though, at the start of the First World War, Freud “saw no reason to question his militarist values”<sup>326</sup>, he would soon be forced to change his ideas<sup>327</sup>. In his article *Current*

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<sup>318</sup> §E2.

<sup>319</sup> §E7.

<sup>320</sup> *Zeitgemässes über Krieg und Tod*. FREUD, [1915b], 1996, v. 2, p. 2101-2117. The article was an expansion of the lecture that Freud had given on 16 February 1915 at the Jewish association, B’nai B’rith (BREGER, 2002, p. 240).

<sup>321</sup> FREUD, 1996, v.2, p. 2104.

<sup>322</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 2104.

<sup>323</sup> FREUD, 1996, v.2, p. 2107.

<sup>324</sup> BREGER, 2002, p. 242.

<sup>325</sup> GAY, 2004, p. 324.

<sup>326</sup> BREGER, 2002, p. 234.

*Comments on War and Death*<sup>328</sup>. Freud said that people could understand and expect wars “between primitive and civilised people, between races distinguished by the colour of their skin, and even between the less developed and undeveloped peoples of Europe”<sup>329</sup>, but that it was unimaginable and horrifying that “the great nations of the white race”<sup>330</sup>, Lords of the World, and which were like the guides of humanity<sup>331</sup> were not able to “solve their differences and conflicts of interests in another way”<sup>332</sup>.

The shock of the vile spectacle of war in Europe represented, for Freud, then almost sixty years old, the passage of a *Weltanschauung* based on the metaphor of the *fish in the net*, to one based on the image of the *maze*. War was no longer just something that happened “outside”, among the “primitive” and “less developed” *fish* who struggled to break free from the net of their inferiority. It was happening there and then, in a vile and cowardly slaughter, *within the maze*. And it was within this new facet of his *Weltanschauung* that Freud pores over the *blocked path* of war in his articles of 1915 and, particularly, in his 1932 letter to Einstein. He starts to think as someone directly involved in the impasses suffered by modern civilisation, rather than just as a distant and untouchable observer. Thus abandoning any consideration of a hypothetical inevitability of war, Freud, *within the maze*, expresses to Einstein his cautious optimism that it would be possible “to do away with war in the not too distant future”<sup>333</sup>.

#### 4.6 The impulses of aggression and war

“Is there any way of setting humanity free from the threat of war?”<sup>334</sup> This question, which was asked to Freud by Einstein in the very first paragraph of his letter, may be the most fundamental of all the issues addressed by Einstein and Freud in *Warum Krieg?* In other words, the fundamental question, that permeates the whole exchange of letters, is if war may or may not be avoided, and if it can or can not be remedied. And, taking it to the limit, the proposed question is that of if war is, or is not, part of human nature.

As we have already been able to analyse, on entering this arena, both Einstein and Freud enter into those reasonings and arguments that are a feature of the form of active pacifism that Norberto Bobbio classifies as “ethico-finalist”, whose aim is to obtain peace through actions on human beings, who are, in essence, considered to be the real cause of bellicose conflict, more than institutions or weapons. Freud, who makes most of the concepts and opinions about this issue in *Warum Krieg?*, in turn, takes on a posture that Bobbio classifies as “*therapeutic ethico-finalist pacifism*”<sup>335</sup>, materialist in nature, based exclusively on the evidence and conclusions of the realm of science, without any consideration of metaphysical or religious nature.

Freud mentions this issue in the ninth paragraph of his letter, and soon makes a point of saying that he agrees with Einstein about the existence, within the intimate personality of men, of an impulse “that seeks destruction and death”, and that could be easily used in favour

<sup>327</sup> As Berger puts it, “Total war had the potential to undermine a line of thought which had bucked him up and which was at the very core of his identity” (BREGER, 2002, p. 240), leading to the rise of “a new conscience” (Id. Ibid., p. 238) in Freud. (The translations of the quotations are mine.)

<sup>328</sup> FREUD, [1915b], 1996, v. 2, p. 2101-2117.

<sup>329</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 2102.

<sup>330</sup> Nowadays, much discomfort is caused by the openness with which Freud talks about the superiority of the white race and European culture, but we must remember that this was an integral part of the *Weltanschauung* of most thinkers at the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. The idea of *cultural relativism*, as from Franz Boas, would be restricted to academia during much of the 1920s and 1930s. The concept of *multiculturalism* would only establish itself as from the 1970s.

<sup>331</sup> FREUD, 1996, v. 2, p. 2102.

<sup>332</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 2102.

<sup>333</sup> §F18.

<sup>334</sup> §E1.

<sup>335</sup> BOBBIO, 2003, p. 104-106.

of organised, and that coexists with that other impulse “that preserves and joins”<sup>336</sup>. Freud also makes it clear that such impulses are “simply the theoretical transfigurations of those well-known opposites, Love and Hate”<sup>337</sup>, but which should not be judged in terms of “good” or “evil”, as “Each of these impulses is as essential as the other one, and all life phenomena arise from their activity, when they act jointly or in opposition”<sup>338</sup>.

Even though nowadays the word “erotic” has clear sexual overtones, it is interesting that in the original language used by Freud this was not the case<sup>339</sup>. For Freud, the “erotic” was much more a matter of “love” than “sex”<sup>340</sup>. Therefore, it would be a serious mistake to expect Freud just to defend a fundamental part of sex as the impulse “that preserves and joins”<sup>341</sup>. Much to the contrary. On describing the “two species” of links that the erotic impulses produces among people, Freud states, “Firstly, those relationships with an object of love, although lacking in *sexual content*”<sup>342</sup>. Freud even says that in this regard, instead of talking about an “erotic impulse”, or “sexual impulse”, a psychologist would not need to be ashamed of talking about love, in the same language used by religion”<sup>343</sup>. The second kind of sentimental ties that Freud identifies is that that occurs “through identification”<sup>344</sup>. And he also says that “Everything that makes more evident the significant similarities between humans helps to fuel this community feeling, identification”<sup>345</sup>.

Based on the dynamics of impulses, Freud says it is quite easy to rally people round for the cause of war, as the “stimulus to these destructive tendencies”<sup>346</sup> takes place in a sweetened form “through resorting to other propensities of idealist and erotic nature”<sup>347</sup>. In this way, the bitter pill of the impulse of hate and destruction may be enwrapped in the golden paper of the most noble of motivations, that “would certainly be conducive to the satisfaction thereof”<sup>348</sup>.

Freud also enters into an analysis of the *death impulse*, which, as he sees it, “works within all living things, seeking their ruin, in order to make life go back to its primitive state of inert matter”<sup>349</sup>. Freud had originally developed this idea in his book *Beyond the Principles of Pleasure*, of 1920<sup>350</sup>, and kept by it until the end of his life<sup>351</sup>. Freud held the belief that every animic structure was essentially “dualist”, permeated by a permanent conflict between *Eros* (the impulse of life) and *Tanathos* (the death impulse). In the letter to Einstein, he briefly explains his theory about the “death impulse”, and argues that the “death impulse becomes the impulse of destruction when, with the help of other parties, it steers its actions outside, against external objects”<sup>352</sup>.

Even though Freud, in his letter to Einstein, based “all justification of those ugly and

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<sup>336</sup> §F9.

<sup>337</sup> §F9.

<sup>338</sup> §F9.

<sup>339</sup> See BETTELHEIM, 2002.

<sup>340</sup> He tells Einstein that he uses the term *erotic impulse* “in the meaning related to Eros in Plato’s Dialogues” (§F9), in which Eros was much more than just sexual attraction. The synonym *sexual impulse* is shown, according to Freud, “in a conscientious extension of the popular meaning of sexuality” (§F9).

<sup>341</sup> §F9.

<sup>342</sup> §F14. The emphasis is mine.

<sup>343</sup> §F14.

<sup>344</sup> §F14.

<sup>345</sup> §F14.

<sup>346</sup> §F10.

<sup>347</sup> §F10.

<sup>348</sup> §F10.

<sup>349</sup> §F11.

<sup>350</sup> GAY, 2004, p. 362-370.

<sup>351</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 368-369.

<sup>352</sup> §F11.



dangerous propensities against which we fight” on the death impulse<sup>353</sup>, we are not too interested in it at this point, for two main reasons. Firstly, because the hypothesis that “the aim of all life is death”<sup>354</sup> and that in all living organisms there is an impulse “to return to the inorganic state”<sup>355</sup>, Freud, in 1920, launched as “pure speculation”<sup>356</sup>, and, also in 1935, just four years before his death, Freud mentioned the idea of a “tentative speculation until we have something better”<sup>357 358</sup>. Secondly, this argument was not central to the issues concerning the possibilities of peace. As Freud himself said to Einstein, he was just dealing with the “mythological lessons of impulses”<sup>359</sup>, and knew that Einstein was “interested in the prevention of war” rather than in its “theories”<sup>360</sup>.

What is really important, after all, in the whole of Freud’s long analysis, is not the almost unsustainable idea of the *death impulse*, but rather the thoughts about the undeniable *impulses of aggression, hate and destruction*. In relation to these, Freud reaches a clear conclusion that “there seems to be no possibility of doing away with the aggressive tendencies of humans”<sup>361 362</sup>.

In 1915, in his essay *Current Comments on War and Death*<sup>363</sup>, Freud made bitter comments about the aggressive impulses in humans. In his view, the emphasis that all cultures have placed on the commandment “Thou shalt not kill” is exactly what “offers us security in that we descend from a very long series of generations of murderers, which felt pleasure in killing, as we many still have, our very selves, running deep in our veins”<sup>364</sup>.

For Freud, the reality is that, despite all the technical and spiritual refinement brought by culture and civilisation “there is not an extermination of evil”<sup>365</sup> in most humans. What we should be tackling is the sad reality that the force of impulses in mankind that are aimed at selfishness and aggression are just stored, in most people, through the requirements of social life, but have not undergone a transmutation into positive inclinations. Submitted to the

<sup>353</sup> §F11.

<sup>354</sup> FREUD, [1920], p. 2526.

<sup>355</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 2526.

<sup>356</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 2517.

<sup>357</sup> Freud, to Ernest Jones, apud. GAY, 2004, p. 369. However, Freud never did develop “something better”, and then dedicated himself to his dualism, Eros versus Tanathos, “with all the energy he had available” (Id. Ibid., p. 369), even emphatically defending it against the resistance of his analyst peers (Id. Ibid., p. 369). The problem is that Freud, in *Beyond the Principle of Pleasure* showed himself to be “less willing to present clinical materials than in most of his other texts” (Id. Ibid., p. 367), and Peter Gay comments on how “disconcerting are the flights of imagination to which Freud has dedicated himself” (Id. Ibid., p. 366). Max Schur himself, who “may not be accused of reading Freud in an unfavourable manner” (Id. Ibid., p. 366. Footnote), wrote that the conclusions reached by Freud about the death impulse “are an example of *ad hoc* rationalization to prove a pre-conceived hypothesis” (Max Schur, apud. GAY, 2004, p. 366, footnote). Louis Breger, in a contemporary psychoanalytical look on the death impulse theory, shows the several “theoretical leaps” (BREGER, 2000, p. 266. The translation is mine) given by Freud in *Beyond the Principle of Pleasure*, to the extent of revealing “a myriad of logical and factual difficulties” (Id. Ibid., p. 266. The translation is mine), so that his proposition that “aggression derives from a death impulse simply does not work” (Id. Ibid., p. 267. The translation is mine). Frank Sulloway makes a retrospective study of the criticism made by several authors over the years, and says that Ernest Becker summarises the contemporary consensus about this issue, on stating that “The tortuous statements made by Freud about the death impulse may now be definitely relegated to the litter bin of history” (SULLOWAY, 1979, p. 393-394. The translation is mine).

<sup>358</sup> For Peter Gay (2004, p. 364) and Louis Breger (2000, p. 267) the main reason why Freud presented so radical an idea as that of the death impulse seems to have been, in truth, of a personal nature. As some psychoanalysts including Sabina Spielrein and Alfred Adler had already presented the idea of an aggressive impulse innate to human beings, Freud did not wish to accept a secondary role in the development of the concepts associated to an impulse of destruction and, for this reason, “needed to base his theory on something that had the appearance of being a *scientific and biological principle*” (Id. Ibid., p. 267. The translation is mine).

<sup>359</sup> *Mytologischen Trieblehre*. §F14.

<sup>360</sup> §F11.

<sup>361</sup> §F13.

<sup>362</sup> As Paul Roazen comments, “Freud was opposed to the denial of the inevitability of egocentrism and the legitimacy of aggression” (ROAZEN, 1971, p. 24. The translation is mine).

<sup>363</sup> FREUD, [1915b], p. 2104-17.

<sup>364</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 2114.

<sup>365</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 2105.

requirements of social life, the individual could actually get as far as “deciding to behave well, in the cultural sense”<sup>366</sup>, but this is done “without having complied with making the impulses more noble in nature, a mutation from selfish tendencies into social ones”<sup>367</sup>. For this reason, the individual lives “psychologically speaking, much above their means, and may be classed, objectively, as a hypocrite”<sup>368</sup>.

While a few humans “always act in a good way because their impulsive inclinations require it”<sup>369</sup>, the large majority is only good “because this cultural conduct brings advantages to their egotist aims”<sup>370</sup>. For this reason, most of the good which is shown in society is not actually good, but rather evil disguised as good<sup>371</sup>. And Freud reached the sad conclusion that “There are, therefore, many more hypocrites of culture than there are really civilised human beings”<sup>372</sup>, and that “also our very selves, if judged by our impulses, are just like primitive men, a horde of murderers”<sup>373</sup>.

Even though some people, like Roland Clark, feel that Freud’s letter to Einstein presented “a depressing prognosis”<sup>374</sup> in relation to the possibility of peace between men, offering at most “a slim hope”<sup>375</sup> of the elimination of war, we believe that a more detailed reading of the arguments raised by Freud, in the light of some of his other works, could give us a more optimistic outlook. In *Current Comments on War and Death* (1915), Freud, despite the sombre tone, said that we could not raise doubts about “the power and importance” of the “ethical ambitions of mankind”<sup>376</sup>. Freud considered that such ethical ambitions “are a recent acquisition made by human history and would soon, unfortunately, become a highly variable measure, a property inherited from today’s humanity”<sup>377</sup>. He also considered that currently the aggressive impulses of human beings are much milder than they were in the primitive past<sup>378</sup>.

Berger’s view that Freud, in his essays of 1915, said that war could not be abolished<sup>379</sup> does not justify the context in which Freud had mentioned this point, being somewhat misleading. In fact, Freud writes that “Nevertheless, to wipe out war is impossible, as long as the living conditions of the people are so distinct, and as long as the aversions between them are so violent, there shall always be war”<sup>380</sup>. Therefore, Freud clearly puts this statement into context: war can not be abolished *as long as* there is a great disparity in living conditions of different peoples and as long as the aversions between them are violent. This is not, however, a definite prophecy showing lack of hope. Freud always addressed the issue of war in a conditional form, even though he unconditionally assumed the aggression impulses that were behind it. In the article of 1915 he already made this distinction when he wrote that: “We could easily admit the biological and psychological need for suffering for saving human life and, even so, condemn war, its means and purposes, and fight for its cessation”<sup>381</sup>.

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<sup>366</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 2106-2107.

<sup>367</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 2106-2107.

<sup>368</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 2107.

<sup>369</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 2107.

<sup>370</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 2107.

<sup>371</sup> Freud warns that “the impulsive forces are not, in themselves, neither good or bad. We classify them in this way, as also the manifestations thereof, according to their relationship with the needs and requirements of the human community” (FREUD, [1915b], p. 2105. The translation is mine).

<sup>372</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 2107.

<sup>373</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 2115.

<sup>374</sup> CLARK, 1972, p. 445.

<sup>375</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 445.

<sup>376</sup> FREUD, [1915b], p. 2114.

<sup>377</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 2114.

<sup>378</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 2115.

<sup>379</sup> BREGER, 2002, p. 242.

<sup>380</sup> FREUD, [1915b], p. 2117.

<sup>381</sup> FREUD, [1915b], p. 2101.

In his letter to Einstein, Freud once again plays the same key, on saying that “the total suppression of aggressive tendencies in humans is not the point here, but rather how this can be channelled to expressions other than”<sup>382</sup>. As Freud wrote in the *Comments*, the theory of the dual nature of human impulses — Eros *versus* Thanatos, love *versus* hate; construction *versus* destruction — does not “mean the depreciation of the feelings of love, and neither, in any way, has this consequence”<sup>383</sup>. For Freud,

It is true that both our intelligence and our feelings are resistant to this form of alliance between love and hate; but Nature, working with this pair of antagonistic elements, manages to keep love always vigilant and renewed, protecting it against hate that always gets on its back. It can even be said that the most beautiful blooms of our love lives are due to this reaction against the hostile impulses that we all feel inside us.<sup>384</sup>

In the letter to Einstein, Freud says that “If the propensity to war stems from the destructive impulse, then very close by we have its enemy Eros [Love], to help us”<sup>385</sup>. Therefore, Freud did not share, as many wanted to believe, a completely sombre view of the nature of human impulses. The picture that emerges from his thoughts over the conflict between the impulses of love and hate, especially with regard to war, is complex, dramatic, epic – but in no way funereal.

What Freud made a point of stressing, ever since the essay of 1915, is that the aggressive impulses existed subconsciously within human beings and, unless they are duly recognised and worked on, they are able to show themselves in the most violent and disastrous ways<sup>386</sup>. Freud wanted to stress not only that humans have an incurable violence within them (especially against other men), but also that aggressive impulses need to be recognised so that they may then be adequately channelled<sup>387</sup>. And, for Freud, this was something that the European culture had not managed to do, because it ignored the forces of the subconscious<sup>388</sup>.

These conclusions made by Freud about the existence of primitive aggressive impulses that are behind all human violence, including war, were, as we have already seen, also defended by Einstein at the time of the letter, in 1932. Denis Brian, in his biography of Einstein, commented that later on Einstein would have changed his mind, after some talks with anthropologist and humanist Ashley Montagu<sup>389</sup>, in 1949<sup>390</sup>. According to Montagu, “I

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<sup>382</sup> §F13.

<sup>383</sup> FREUD, [1915b], p. 2116.

<sup>384</sup> Id. *Ibid.*, p. 2116.

<sup>385</sup> §F14.

<sup>386</sup> FREUD, [1915b], p. 2105.

<sup>387</sup> Freud holds that these primitive impulses “go through a long evolutive path before they are expressed in an adult human being” (FREUD, [1915b], p. 2105). They may be “inhibited, aimed at other aims and fields, as also they mix together, change their aims and even, to a certain extent, revert back to the owner” (FREUD, [1915c], p. 147). Due to this long and complex genesis and maturation of primitive impulses, Freud concludes that “Rarely is a human bring only good or only bad, normally they tend to be *good* with regard to one thing and *bad* in relation to something else, or *good* under certain external circumstances and decidedly *bad* in others” (FREUD, [1915b], p. 2105. The emphasis is made by the author). (The translation of the Quotations is mine.)

<sup>388</sup> NATHAN and NORDEN, 1981, p. 377-391.

<sup>389</sup> 1905-1999.

<sup>390</sup> However, in Montagu’s whole report there seems to be a series of distortions and misunderstandings. Firstly, different from what Montagu says, Einstein was not led to believe in an aggression impulse in mankind by Freud’s influence; on the contrary, it was he who, in his letter to Freud, mentioned the possibility that, faced with the insanity of war, the only explanation is that humans have inside themselves impulses aimed at hate and destruction (§E6). Secondly, at no moment does either Freud or Einstein talk about human *instincts*, but rather human *impulses*. This difference in concept between these two terms seems to have escaped Montagu, as the translations of Freud’s works into English made this mistake (See BETTELHEIM, 2002; HANNS, 1996, 2004a, 2004b).

finally managed to convince him [Einstein] that he was wrong, that there is not an aggressive impulse. This, of course, pleased him enough, as the defender of peace that he is”<sup>391</sup>. The editors of the work *The New Quotable Einstein*<sup>392</sup>, published in commemoration of the one hundredth anniversary of the Special Theory of Relativity, in 2005, seem to agree with the idea that “Einstein was finally persuaded that the doctrine of innate evil in man did not have good grounds”<sup>393</sup>, such a change in opinion being put down to the influence of Montagu.

However, a more detailed look at the opinions mentioned by Einstein both in years before the letters and also after the meeting with, clearly show that this did not take place. In 1915, Einstein had said that “The psychological roots of war, in my opinion, are based on the aggressive features of the male sex”<sup>394</sup>, and in his letter to Freud, in 1932, he had mentioned the “need for hate and destruction” that was present within mankind and that could be used in war. The report we have about the arguments raised by Montagu that apparently convinced Einstein that there is no aggressive impulse in human beings is dated either 1946 or 1949<sup>395</sup>. Several statements made by Einstein in the following years show how, up to the end of his life, he remained convinced that men had, within themselves, an atavic force that led them towards violence<sup>396</sup>.

In a message to the General Conference of the Methodist Church, on 27 April 1952, Einstein commented that the people who do not succeed in committing themselves with the efforts towards peace, which are the large majority, are not allowed to do this because “the atavic passions” inside themselves “are obviously more powerful than their desire to serve those efforts that all of us, in moments of serene contemplation, know are going in the right direction”<sup>397</sup>. In the same way, to a friend in Italy in September 1952, Einstein wrote that: “The nations still fall in the same trap [of war] because the *atavic impulses are more powerful than reason or the acquired convictions*”<sup>398</sup>. On 12 January 1953, two years before his death, Einstein wrote to the Queen Mother of Belgium saying that “people make each other’s lives so terribly difficult not for any particular reason, but because of their *unchangeable heritage*”<sup>399</sup>.

Although it is obviously evident that Einstein never changed his mind with regard to the impulses of aggression, these comments do not mean, however, that Einstein gave up his trust in the possibility of peace. Like Freud, he only realised that the elimination of war would go through less obvious and more atavic paths than most people were willing to admit. In an interview to the *Survey Graphic* magazine, in August 1935, Einstein, in reply to the question “Shall we ever be able to abolish war?”, gave the following answer:

<sup>391</sup> Ashley Montagu, apud. BRIAN, 1996, p. 377.

<sup>392</sup> EINSTEIN, 2005.

<sup>393</sup> Editorial note, in: EINSTEIN, 2005, p. 165.

<sup>394</sup> EINSTEIN, 2005, p. 165.

<sup>395</sup> BRIAN, 1996, p. 377-378. The publishers of *The New Quotable Einstein* (EINSTEIN, 2005) put this hypothetical opinion shift by Einstein to talks with Montagu in the year of 1946, while Denis Brian places it at 1949.

<sup>396</sup> In a letter dated February 1946, Einstein wrote that “In fact, I have no doubt that the causes of war are deeply ingrained in human nature. It can be said, without exaggerating, that war is a normal function in the lives of primitive peoples” (Einstein, apud. NATHAN and NORDEN, 1981, p. 369). In February 1948, while answering a series of questions that had been asked by a Hungarian journalist, Einstein reinforced his belief in the need for a World Government and that, if the appropriate measures against war are not taken, then “human nature, being what it is, may always have a tendency towards war” (Einstein, apud. Id. Ibid., p. 467). In a long letter to a correspondent in New York, on 8 July 1951, Einstein said the interlocutor did not have “the slightest idea of how people really work” (Einstein, apud. Id. Ibid., p. 556-557) and that “They are governed by passions, among which hate and short-sighted egoism are dominant” (Einstein, apud. Id. Ibid., p. 556-557). And he wrapped it up by saying that, although people have fear of war, “the fact is that, due to their innate psychological structure, they can easily be led to commit an act of madness” (Einstein, apud. Id. Ibid., p. 556-557) (The translation of the quotations is mine).

<sup>397</sup> Einstein, apud. NATHAN and NORDEN, 1981, p. 566.

<sup>398</sup> Einstein, apud. NATHAN e NORDEN, 1981, p. 568. The translation and the emphasis are mine..

<sup>399</sup> Einstein, apud. Id. Ibid., p. 591. The translation and the emphasis are mine..

Yes, I believe so. Indeed, I am sure of this. Our hope lies in the education of the young, towards a saner view of life [...] The greatest ambition of the human being, and also their biggest joy, is to being beauty and fraternity to life. This shall be conquered not through fear, but rather by challenging the best there is in human nature.<sup>400</sup>

On 28 May 1946, the *Columbia Broadcasting System* showed a special programme about atomic energy. In this programme, Einstein said that human nature “that causes war is like a river” and that it is “impossible, within geological time, to change the course of the river”. However, Einstein also says that “the ability to think is also a part of human nature”, and that “in the same way that we use our powers of reasoning to build a dam that can hold back the river, we also need to build institutions that are able to put the brakes on the fears and suspicions, and greed, that are what move the peoples and their leaders”. He reaches the conclusion that “we need to remind ourselves that if the animal part of human nature is our enemy, then the rational part is our ally” and that “We do not have to wait a million years to make use of our reasoning skills”<sup>401</sup>.

It is therefore evident that both Einstein and Freud understood human nature as having being dual, with what can be called “positive” and “negative” aspects. Indeed, this means that human nature contains love as well as hate, aggression as well as kindness, the possibility of war as well as that of constructing peace. It was because of this understanding that their pacifist positions were active rather than passive. They understood that something had to be done, so that the destructive impulses within human nature — aimed, through the element of hate, at war between men — could be restricted, controlled and contained.

For this to be successful, according to Einstein, we had to be supported by the *friendly* part of human nature: our reasoning. According to Freud, we had “everything that produces affection between humans”<sup>402</sup> to serve as an “antidote for war”<sup>403</sup>. Even though they did indeed recognise that there are aggressive impulses in the human being, both Einstein and Freud believed that war could be permanently eliminated from human experience on this planet<sup>404</sup>.

#### 4.7 Ties of affection, feeling of unity and brotherly solidarity

Even though Denis Brian, in his famous biography of Einstein, wrote that the letter from Freud “did not answer Einstein’s question”<sup>405</sup> — about “would it be possible to guide the psychic development of mankind towards overcoming the psychosis of hate and destruction?”<sup>406</sup> —, a more in-depth reading of Freud’s letter makes it evident that he not only answered the query made by Einstein but also sought to stress, in several different forms, what he thought about this possibility.

The first time that Freud addresses this problem in his letter to Einstein is in paragraph five. There, Freud states that “for there to be this transition from the realm of force to that of right, there must first be the establishment of *a certain psychological condition*”<sup>407</sup>. This

<sup>400</sup> Einstein, apud. Id. Ibid., p. 261. The translation and the emphasis are mine..

<sup>401</sup> All the quotations in this paragraph are by Einstein, apud. NATHAN and NORDEN, 1981, p. 377-379.

<sup>402</sup> §F14.

<sup>403</sup> §F14.

<sup>404</sup> Einstein, in his text *Why Socialism?* (1949) writes: “This is something on which those who are fighting to improve the luck of humanity may base their hopes: human beings are not condemned, due to their biological constitution, to annihilate each other or to remain at the mercy of a self-inflicted cruel end” (EINSTEIN, c. 1954, p. 127. The emphasis is from the author).

<sup>405</sup> BRIAN, 1996, p. 233.

<sup>406</sup> §E7.

<sup>407</sup> §F5. The emphasis is mine.

psychological condition is the “*recognition of a community of interests*”<sup>408</sup> among the members of a group, so that between them may be produced “*a feeling of unity and brotherly solidarity*”<sup>409</sup>. Freud also emphasises that it is evident that the community of interests that is thus created, so that the kingdom of the Law may be implemented instead of the Empire of Force, needs to count on the forces of organisation and institutionalisation<sup>410</sup>. For Freud, the essential thing so that peace may be born, guided by the law, instead of war driven by nature, is that there is the “suppression of force through the transfer of power to a larger unit, based on the communion of feelings between its members”<sup>411</sup>. Freud considers that, this being said, “the essential points have already been made”<sup>412</sup>.

In the thoughts made by Freud, we can see the presentation of a succession of emotional processes linked to an expansion of the circles of human unity. Even though all these emotional processes have origins in the feelings of the libido<sup>413</sup>, the fact is that they are configured in different ways, leading to different human units:

1. Firstly, Freud identifies the unifying force of “genital love”<sup>414</sup>, the “fully sensual form of love”<sup>415,416</sup>, that produces the unity between men and women, leading to the appearance of the later family unit. This genital love is destined to spill over the “limits of the family”<sup>417</sup>, so as to establish “new links with people who were previously strangers”<sup>418</sup>, which would “lead to the establishment of new families”<sup>419</sup>;
2. Secondly, Freud presents the “love that is hindered by its target”<sup>420</sup>, which means love and affection<sup>421,422</sup>, that allows “positive feelings”<sup>423</sup> between parents and children, as also between siblings within a family”<sup>424</sup>;
3. Thirdly, there is an expanded circle of this love “hindered by its target”<sup>425,426</sup>, which also extends over the “limits of the family”<sup>427</sup> and establishes “new links with people who were previously strangers”<sup>428</sup>, leading to the establishment of “friendships”<sup>429</sup>;
4. Finally, Freud identifies a third psychic process which expands the ties of unity to much wider social structures, such as the city, the State, the country and — potentially — the whole of humanity. This process is the one that produces “ties of feelings — in technical terms: identification ties”<sup>430</sup> between

<sup>408</sup> §F5. The emphasis is mine.

<sup>409</sup> §F5. The emphasis is mine.

<sup>410</sup> §F5.

<sup>411</sup> §F6.

<sup>412</sup> §F6.

<sup>413</sup> FREUD, [1930], p. 481; [1930a], p. 3052; [1930b], p. 66.

<sup>414</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 461; [1930a], p. 3040.

<sup>415</sup> *Voll sinnliche Liebe*.

<sup>416</sup> FREUD, [1930], p. 461-462; [1930a], p. 3040-3041.

<sup>417</sup> FREUD, [1930], p. 461-462; [1930a], p. 3040-3041.

<sup>418</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 461-462; [1930a], p. 3040-3041.

<sup>419</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 461-462; [1930a], p. 3040-3041.

<sup>420</sup> *Zielgehemmte Liebe*.

<sup>421</sup> *Zärtlichkeit*.

<sup>422</sup> FREUD, [1930], p. 461-462; [1930a], p. 3040-3041.

<sup>423</sup> *Positiven Gefühle*.

<sup>424</sup> FREUD, [1930], p. 461-462; [1930a], p. 3040-3041.

<sup>425</sup> *Zielgehemmte Liebe*.

<sup>426</sup> FREUD, [1930], p. 461-462; [1930a], p. 3040-3041.

<sup>427</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 461-462; [1930a], p. 3040-3041.

<sup>428</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 461-462; [1930a], p. 3040-3041.

<sup>429</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 461-462; [1930a], p. 3040-3041.

<sup>430</sup> §F8.

people who do not even know each other personally.

Despite the impulsive forces of aggression and violence between mankind, Freud's view is that primitive man "discovered that it was literally in their own hands to improve their fate on the Earth through work"<sup>431</sup> and, for this reason, "they could not disregard the fact that the fellow human being is either working in their favour or against them"<sup>432</sup>. Based on this perception, that Freud takes as unquestionable in the opening of the awareness of primitive man, "their peers acquire, in their view, the status of collaborators with whom it was useful to live in community"<sup>433</sup>. In Freud's view, therefore, it becomes clear that "The group living of human beings had, therefore, a double foundation: the need to work on the one hand, enforced by external needs, and on the other hand the power of love"<sup>434</sup>. Thus, concludes Freud, "Eros and Ananke"<sup>435</sup> [Love and Need] have become the parents of human culture, whose first conquest was that of allowing more human beings to live in community"<sup>436</sup>.

Although Freud mentions the need to fight as a group against the oppression of Nature as one of the pillars of social life, he warns that this, taken alone, would not be able to do this. The love connection between human beings is essential, and without this society would crumble. Exploiting this issue in *The Ill Feeling in Civilisation*, Freud says that "As a result of this initial mutual hostility between humans, society based on culture"<sup>437</sup> is always under the threat of disintegration"<sup>438</sup>, and that "the interest in group work would not succeed in keeping it united"<sup>439</sup>, because "the impulsive passions"<sup>440</sup> are stronger than the rational interests"<sup>441,442</sup>. For this reason, Freud considered that "the power of love"<sup>443</sup> was one of the fundamental things in communal living, and that it is possible, albeit difficult, for a person to learn to love by "aiming his or her loving feelings at all human beings, in equal measure"<sup>444,445</sup> instead of applying it in a more restricted form, to only a few"<sup>446</sup>. Freud saw a natural path in the expansion of the feelings of love, arguing (in *The Ill Feeling of Civilisation*), that "[Culture] is a process at the service of Eros [Love], with the aim of grouping the isolated individuals together, then the families, races, peoples and nations, in one large unit: humanity"<sup>447</sup>.

In this way, Freud's answer to Einstein about the form of "guiding the psychic development of the human being to make him or her overcome the psychosis of hate and destruction"<sup>448</sup> is essentially a matter of resorting to the power of love, affection and fraternity between the human beings. As he says to Einstein, "Everything that produces ties of affection

<sup>431</sup> FREUD, [1930], p. 458; [1930a], p. 3038.

<sup>432</sup> FREUD, [1930], p. 458; [1930a], p. 3038.

<sup>433</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 458; [1930a], p. 3038.

<sup>434</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 460; [1930a], p. 3039.

<sup>435</sup> In Greek mythology, Ananke was the personification of inalterable fate, destiny and needs. In Roman mythology, it took the name of *Necessitas*, which means *Need*.

<sup>436</sup> FREUD, [1930], p. 460; [1930a], p. 3039.

<sup>437</sup> Kultargesellschaft. The translation as "civilised society", as some people prefer, could imply a connotation of added value, while what Freud says in German can be applied to any human group with collective relationships based on cultural values, such as ancestral traditions, religious principles and the like.

<sup>438</sup> FREUD, [1930], p. 471; [1930a], p. 3046.

<sup>439</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 471; [1930a], p. 3046.

<sup>440</sup> Triebhafte Leidenschaften.

<sup>441</sup> Vernünftige Interessen.

<sup>442</sup> FREUD, [1930], p. 471; [1930a], p. 3046.

<sup>443</sup> Macht der Liebe. FREUD, [1930], p. 460; [1930a], p. 3039.

<sup>444</sup> Indem sie ihre Liebe [...] in gleichem Masse auf alle Menschen richten.

<sup>445</sup> FREUD, [1930], p. 461; [1930a], p. 3040.

<sup>446</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 461; [1930a], p. 3040; [1930b], p. 56.

<sup>447</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 481; [1930a], p. 3052.

<sup>448</sup> §E7.

between human beings is an antidote of war”<sup>449</sup>, as if “the propensity to war comes from the impulse of destruction, very close by we have its opponent, Eros [Love], to help us”<sup>450</sup>.

Freud believed that, as sexual pleasure offered human beings “the most intense experiences of satisfaction”<sup>451,452</sup>, this is psychically established as “a prototype of happiness in general”<sup>453,454</sup>. For this reason, culture needs to apply, in collective living, all that enables the human being to sublimate the love forces, originally of sexual and genital nature, transforming them into a form of brotherly love<sup>455</sup>. Acting in this way, humans avoid the straying away “which the wise people of all times made a point of steering mankind away from”<sup>456</sup>, and, avoiding “the turmoil”<sup>457</sup> and disappointments<sup>458</sup> of genital love”<sup>459</sup>, reach a state of “ethereal and undisturbable tenderness”<sup>460,461</sup>, that already “does not seem like the agitated and tempestuous genital love life”<sup>462</sup>. Freud mentions the example of St Francis of Assisi, who in his opinion “may have been the single person who went furthest towards the use of love to achieve a feeling of interior happiness”<sup>463</sup>.

The “other type of emotional bond”<sup>464</sup>, mentioned by Freud is the one that occurs “through identification”<sup>465</sup>, when humans feel like brothers when they recognise themselves as peers. Of course, this is a bond of affection that extends well beyond a circle of friends or relationships, and could potentially encompass the whole of humanity. For this feeling of brotherhood to sprout up in the human heart, Freud considers it important to make use of “everything that could make the significant similarities between humans stand out”<sup>466</sup> — such as symbols, values, beliefs, objectives, etc. —, as the recognition of this common nature could bring out, in humans, this “feeling of community and identification”<sup>467</sup>.

For Freud, it was evident that these bonds of identification tend to be stronger when the social units are smaller, as “the needs and habits shared by those who live together on a same piece of land tend to provide an expedite solution”<sup>468</sup> for the conflicts between people, so that “the possibilities of pacific solutions continually progress”<sup>469</sup>. However, as Freud points out to Einstein, the history of humanity has shown an endless series of conflicts “between one community and another, or between one group and another, between larger and smaller units, between cities, countries, races, tribes and kingdom”<sup>470</sup>.

In *The Ill Feeling in Civilisation*, Freud addressed this issue, arguing that, as it is difficult for mankind to forsake their aggressive impulses, the structuring of smaller social

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<sup>449</sup> §F14.

<sup>450</sup> §F14.

<sup>451</sup> *Stärkste Befriedigungsgrebe.*

<sup>452</sup> FREUD, [1930], p. 460; [1930a], p. 3040.

<sup>453</sup> *Vorbild für alles Glück.*

<sup>454</sup> FREUD, [1930], p. 460; [1930a], p. 3040.

<sup>455</sup> Id. Ibid. p. 461; [1930a], p. 3040; [1930b], p. 56.

<sup>456</sup> Id. Ibid. p. 460-1; [1930a], p. 3040.

<sup>457</sup> *Schwankungen.*

<sup>458</sup> *Enttäuschungen.*

<sup>459</sup> FREUD, [1930], p. 461; [1930a], p. 3040.

<sup>460</sup> *Eines gleichschwebenden, unbeirraren, zärtlichen Empfindens.*

<sup>461</sup> FREUD, [1930], p. 461; [1930a], p. 3040.

<sup>462</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 461; [1930a], p. 3040.

<sup>463</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 461; [1930a], p. 3040.

<sup>464</sup> §F14.

<sup>465</sup> §F14.

<sup>466</sup> §F14.

<sup>467</sup> §F14.

<sup>468</sup> §F7.

<sup>469</sup> §F7.

<sup>470</sup> §F7.



units, because “a more restricted cultural circle<sup>471</sup> has the highly prized advantage of allowing the satisfaction of this impulse<sup>472</sup> through hostility against those who have been excluded from it”<sup>473</sup>. Freud would also make reference to an unusual psychic phenomenon that would be a barrier blocking the construction of wider social units, which he called “narcissism of small differences”<sup>474,475</sup>, through which “the neighbouring communities, and also those mutually related in other ways, are precisely the ones that despise and resent each other most, as, for example, the Spanish and the Portuguese, or the Germans from the North and the South of the country, the English and the Scots, and so on”<sup>476</sup>.

Einstein, on 26 November 1938, also had similar thoughts, when he wrote that “Shared convictions and goals, and similar interests in society, shall produce groups that, in a certain respect, act as if they were units. There shall always be some friction between these groups – the same type of aversion and rivalry that exists between individuals”<sup>477</sup>.

Freud had told Einstein that “It is absolutely clear that nationalist ideas, which now prevail among the people, operate in the opposite direction”<sup>478</sup> to the establishment of bonds of feelings or identification<sup>479</sup> between human beings that transcends the borders of the nation – bonds that could be an antidote to war. This perception of excessive nationalism as a stumbling block for peace, evidently, had not escaped the mind of Einstein<sup>480</sup>. In an interview published in the *Saturday Evening Post* on 26 October 1929, Einstein said that “Nationalism is a childhood disease, the measles of humanity”<sup>481</sup>.

Of course, all these considerations made by Freud about the expansion of the bonds of love and friendship in the human community are inserted in that segment of pacifism which, as we have already seen, Norberto Bobbio classifies as “ethico-finalist”. More specifically, they should be understood as investigations of *therapeutical* ethico-finalist pacifism, materialist in nature<sup>482</sup>.

Now we shall go into a bit more detail about how Freud saw the issue of cultural development and its relationship with peace.

#### 4.8 Civilisation and Culture

In *The Future of an Illusion* (1927), Freud defines culture as “everything in which human life has managed to surpass their zoological conditions and stand out from animal life”<sup>483</sup>. Pointing out that there he makes “no distinction between the concepts of culture and of civilisation”<sup>484</sup>, Freud says that culture has two key aspects: “On the one hand, it comprises all knowledge and power conquered by the human race, in order to dominate the forces of

<sup>471</sup> Kleineren Kulturkreises.

<sup>472</sup> Trieb.

<sup>473</sup> FREUD, [1930], p. 473; [1930a], p. 3047-3048].

<sup>474</sup> Narzissmus der kleinen Differenzen.

<sup>475</sup> FREUD, [1930], p. 474; [1930a], p. 3048.

<sup>476</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 473; [1930a], p. 3048.

<sup>477</sup> EINSTEIN, 2005, p. 116-117

<sup>478</sup> §F8.

<sup>479</sup> §F8.

<sup>480</sup> In his text of 1934 about *The Schools and the Peace Problem*, Einstein says that, in education, “The spirit of international solidarity should also be strengthened, while national chauvinism should be tackled as a harmful force that stops progress” (EINSTEIN, 1996, p. 208). On 3 October 1933, in a speech made at the Royal Albert Hall, in London, he said that “Nationalism, in my opinion, is nothing else than an idealist rationalising for militarism and aggression” (Id. Ibid., p. 181). Stressing the need to focus on the identification between human beings, beyond national frontiers, Einstein, in an interview published by the *Survey Graphic* in August 1935, said that “National loyalty is limited, humanity needs to be taught to think in world terms” (Id. ibid, p. 181). (The translation of the quotations is mine.)

<sup>481</sup> EINSTEIN, 1996, p. 180.

<sup>482</sup> See Chart 4.

<sup>483</sup> FREUD, [1927], p. 326; [1927a], p. 2961.

<sup>484</sup> Id. Ibid. p. 326; [1927a], p. 2961.

Nature and extract the natural resources that satisfy human needs”<sup>485</sup> and, on the other hand, also includes “all organisations that are necessary to regulate the relationships between humans and, particularly, the distribution of the available natural assets”<sup>486 487</sup>.

Einstein, in *Warum Krieg?*, working within this context of a culture that includes “all the organisations that are necessary to govern the relationships between humans”<sup>488</sup>, had teased Freud with several statements about the relationship between culture and peace. For example, when he proposes the need to get established, above nations, “a competent supernational organisation to impose verdicts of inconsistent authority and to demand absolute submission to the implementation of their decisions”<sup>489</sup>; or when they address the issue of the “demand for power by the governing classes in each nation”<sup>490</sup>, or the “struggle for material and economic power”<sup>491</sup> of the manufacturers and sellers of weapons. Or, indeed, when analysing how “the dominant classes have in their own hands institutions such as schools, the Press and also religious organisations in general”<sup>492</sup>, and how they manage, through these media, “to dominate and govern the very emotions of the masses in general, to manipulate them as they wish”<sup>493</sup>. In the same way, Einstein is talking about the issue of culture when he addresses the issue of the “so-called *intelligentsia*”<sup>494</sup>, which, in his experience, are “who most often give in to these disastrous group suggestions”<sup>495</sup> of hate and destruction.

Einstein invites Freud to an field of analysis in which the latter had made himself an expert. The psychoanalytic approach to culture had indeed taken up much of the investigations and passions shown by Freud, throughout his life, and had a special influence on this works of maturity, such as *Totem and Taboo* (1912-1913), *The Future of an Illusion* (1927) and *The Ill Feeling in Civilisation* (1930). Freud took advantage of the suggestion made by Einstein, to the full. In the few paragraphs of his letter to Einstein, he sums up the thoughts of a whole lifetime with regard to cultural development and its relationship with aggression, war and peace.

Within the theoretical scheme proposed by Norberto Bobbio, Einstein and Freud, on discussing the paths taken by culture, moving towards peace, the movement is taking place at the edges of *institutional pacifism*, both in its *judicial* line and also in its *social* form<sup>496</sup>. However, on delving into the relationship between culture and psychic transformation of the human being in the emotional sense — through external mechanisms such as education and the moral requirements of society, as also through internal psychic mechanisms such as the development of a moral conscience and the superego<sup>497</sup> — both establish a direct link between

<sup>485</sup> Id. Ibid. p. 326; [1927a], p. 2961.

<sup>486</sup> Id. Ibid. p. 326; [1927a], p. 2961.

<sup>487</sup> In *The Ill Feeling of Civilisation* (1930), Freud looks again at this definition, with words only slightly different. He says that “[...] the word *culture* represents the sum of all the conquests and institutions that push our lives away from those of our animal ancestors, and which serve two main purposes: to protect mankind against Nature and also to govern the relationships of humans among themselves” (FREUD, [1930], p. 448-449; [1930a], p. 3033. The translation is mine).

<sup>488</sup> FREUD, [1927], p. 326; [1927a], p. 2961.

<sup>489</sup> §E3.

<sup>490</sup> §E4.

<sup>491</sup> §E4.

<sup>492</sup> §E5.

<sup>493</sup> §E5.

<sup>494</sup> §E7.

<sup>495</sup> §E7.

<sup>496</sup> See Chart 4 and subsequent analyses.

<sup>497</sup> In Freud’s theoretical model about the psychic structure of human beings, lies his fundamental concepts of the I, the It and the Above-I. (In older translations, the ego, the id and the superego). It is a well-known fact that Freud sees the It as the region of the subconscious mind, the natural and congenital hub for the vital impulses of the human being. The It is governed by the *principle of pleasure*. From the It, arise two more psychic structures: the I and the Above-I. The I is seen as that dimension of the psyche responsible for rational thought and the search for the *principle of reality*. The Above-I, which

the interests and approaches of institutional pacifism and those of ethico-final pacifism. And it is right within this kaleidoscope of perceptions where lies the greatest richness and originality of thought of both, in relation to the possibilities for world peace.

In the sixth paragraph of his letter to Einstein, Freud dedicates himself to the analysis of the troubled manner in which judicial regulations governing society develop. However, Freud comments that “There is also another source of judicial change, which is expressed in a much more pacific manner, which occurs through the *cultural transformation* of the members of the community”<sup>498</sup>. Nevertheless, he leaves this issue open, saying that “this factor is a circumstance that can only be dealt with later on”.

Indeed, only in Paragraph 17 of his letter is it that Freud goes back to the issue of cultural development and its relationship with peace, saying that “We owe to this process the best we have in us, but also much of what makes us suffer”<sup>499</sup>. This negative aspect of culture<sup>500</sup>, according to Freud, consists mainly of a permanent feeling of guilt which the civilised human being feels<sup>501</sup>, due to the limits that culture imposes on their aggressive and sexual impulses<sup>502</sup>. Freud says that “Individual liberty is not an asset of culture, as it reached its maximum before the whole of culture”<sup>503</sup>, but also argues that this is a necessary burden to be paid for the significant gains obtained from life in society, which is responsible for “all the best there is in us”<sup>504</sup>. According to Freud, the individual is subjected to the collective forces of society and culture because he sees this as a need for survival<sup>505</sup>. Einstein, as also Freud, stresses the dependence of an individual on his or her social support. In his text *Why Socialism?* (1949), he writes that the individual “depends so much on society — in a physical, intellectual and emotional existence — that it is impossible to think about it, or understand it, outside a social structure”<sup>506</sup>.

Therefore we see that, for both Freud and Einstein, there were no doubts about the benefits presented by human life within culture and society. In *The Future of an Illusion* (1927), Freud wrote that “If culture is stamped out, all that remains shall be the natural state, which is much more difficult to stand”<sup>507</sup>. In his text *Society and Personality*, of 1934,

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judges and criticises the I, represents the ideals and standards that have been introjected by the individual, including the *ideal self* (that series of idealised representations that the self internalises and makes part of itself). As from 1923, with the publication of *The I and the It*, the ideal self was reconceptualised within a more complete whole, as the Above-I. See GAY, 2004, p. 373 and following.

<sup>498</sup> §F6. The emphasis is mine.

<sup>499</sup> §F17.

<sup>500</sup> The negative aspect of culture is something that has been exploited in detail by Freud in previous works, especially in *The Future of an Illusion* (1927) and *Civilisation and its Discontents* (which, in a more correct translation, should bear the name *Ill Feeling in Culture*), of 1930.

<sup>501</sup> Freud understands that “if someone has a feeling of guilt after having made a mistake, and for this very reason, this feeling should be more appropriately called *repentance*” (FREUD, [1930], p. 491; [1930a], p. 3058). For this repentance to exist, in any case, it is necessary that “previously there must be a will to feel guilty, which means a *moral conscience*” (Id. Ibid., p. 491; [1930a], p. 3059). However, Freud suggests that the *guilty feeling* itself, which is not a direct consequence of a mistake that has been made, but rather from a wide-scope perception of aggressive impulses within the individual and the demands for unity imposed by culture, has a quite different origin. Freud, as we may guess, ascribes this purifying force of moral conscience, through the feeling of guilt, in its social dimension, to the Oedipus Complex that has been passed culturally by philogenetic heritage. He says: “We may not avoid the supposition that the feeling of guilt in the human race comes from the Oedipus complex and was acquired when the [primitive] father was assassinated by the coalition between the brothers. At this moment, the aggression was not eliminated, but executed: the same aggression that, on being blocked, should bring out a feeling of guilt in the child” (Id. Ibid., p. 490-491; [1930a], p. 3058). And, thus, Freud gets to “clearly understand two things: the participation of love in the genesis of conscience, and the fatally inevitable nature of the feeling of guilt” (Id. Ibid., p. 492; [1930a], p. 3059). (All translations of the quotations are mine.)

<sup>502</sup> FREUD, [1930]; [1930a]; [1930b].

<sup>503</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 455; [1930a], p. 3037.

<sup>504</sup> §F17.

<sup>505</sup> FREUD, [1930], p. 660; [1930a], p. 3039; [1930b], p. 55.

<sup>506</sup> EINSTEIN, c. 1954, p. 126.

<sup>507</sup> FREUD, [1927], p. 336; [1927a], p. 2967.

Einstein wrote that “we owe the main advantage we have over animals to the fact that we live within a human society”<sup>508</sup>, and that each person is what he or she is “and has the value that he or she has not so much due to their individuality, but, first and foremost, for being a member of the large human community, which aims its material and spiritual existence from the cot to the grave”<sup>509</sup>.

Even if this point was certain to Freud, his aim was to try to shed light on why so many intellectuals would criticise culture as if it were an ill in itself, and why, despite its undeniable advantages for human life, many (or the majority) would feel uncomfortable within it.

In Chapter 3 of *Civilization and its Discontents*, Freud states that there are “three sources of human suffering: 1) the supremacy of Nature, 2) the fragility of our own bodies, and 3) the unsuitability of our methods to make adjustments to human relationships within the family, the State and society”<sup>510</sup>. Due to this perceivable unsuitability of the social institutions and means of social regulation<sup>511</sup>, some, instead of seeking more appropriate methods, start criticising human culture as being “responsible for the misery<sup>512</sup> that we suffer”<sup>513</sup>. For Freud, this was a “surprising statement”<sup>514</sup>, because, in his judgement, “regardless of the way in which we can define the concept of culture — it can not be denied that all the resources with which we seek to protect ourselves from the threatening forms of suffering arise from this very same culture”<sup>515</sup>.

Freud feels that “The civilised human being has changed part of his or her possible happiness for another part of security”<sup>516</sup>. He reaches the conclusion that, in the light of anthropological research carried out on primitive peoples, “the freedom they enjoy in their impulsive life is in no way enviable”<sup>517</sup>, as it is subject to restrictions of other types, maybe even more severe than those imposed on the modern civilised human being”<sup>518</sup>.

What Freud deemed necessary, or at least what he placed his hopes in, was that the cultural development of humanity could bring “modifications that better satisfy our needs and that escape the criticisms that are aimed at them”<sup>519</sup>, overcoming inappropriate arrangements, to reduce the degree of discomfort that mankind feels within civilisation. Freud shows the dilemma that is in play, saying that “the issue of the fate of the human species rests on if – and to what extent – the cultural development<sup>520</sup> may manage to dominate the disturbances of group living that are born from the impulses of aggression and self-destruction”<sup>521,522</sup>.

In *Warum Krieg?*, Freud tells Einstein that the “psychic changes”<sup>523</sup> that go along with

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<sup>508</sup> EINSTEIN, c. 1954, p. 13.

<sup>509</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 13.

<sup>510</sup> FREUD, [1930a], p. 3031.

<sup>511</sup> Here understood essentially as all ownership relationships, and also jurisprudence, laws and customs and also religious and moral requirements. That is, all that Marx considered to be elements of the “social superstructure”.

<sup>512</sup> *Elend.*

<sup>513</sup> FREUD, [1930], p. 445; [1930a], p. 3031.

<sup>514</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 445; [1930a], p. 3031.

<sup>515</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 445; [1930a], p. 3031.

<sup>516</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 474; [1930a], p. 3048.

<sup>517</sup> *Triblebens.*

<sup>518</sup> FREUD, [1930], p. 475; [1930a], p. 3048.

<sup>519</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 475; [1930a], p. 3048.

<sup>520</sup> *Kulturentwicklung.*

<sup>521</sup> *Aggressions und Selbstvernichtungstrieb.*

<sup>522</sup> FREUD, [1930], p. 506; [1930a], p. 3067. The Spanish edition of Freud’s Complete Works informs, in a footnote, that according to Strachey, this last phrase was written by Freud in 1931, at a moment when the threat posed by Hitler is made evident. (FREUD, [1930a], p. 3067)

<sup>523</sup> §F17.

the process of cultural evolution “are evident and unmistakable”<sup>524</sup>, and that they “consist of the progressive rejection of the impulse targets, with a decline in the impulsive reactions”<sup>525</sup>. This is why cultural evolution is a powerful ally in the elimination of violence and war, as “war goes emphatically against the psychic adjustment imposed on us by the cultural process”<sup>526</sup>. At a lecture on 27 February 1932, Einstein had expressed this same opinion, saying that “The fate of civilised humanity depends, more than ever, on the moral forces that they are able to generate”<sup>527</sup>. And this is also the case in a letter dated 1951, where he writes that “There is no salvation for humanity without an ‘ethical culture’”<sup>528</sup>.

As mentioned before, Freud felt that one of the strongest of human impulses was the impulse of aggression, and that, in a natural state (free from culture), this would lead humankind to be in a permanent state of aggression with mutual extermination. In *The Future of an Illusion*, Freud had looked at how, without the rules imposed by culture “there would be endless homicide, resulting in the mutual extermination of all humans”<sup>529</sup>. And in *Civilization and its Discontents*, he mentioned that “the natural aggressive instinct in mankind, the hostility of each one against all and all against one, is in opposition to this programme of culture”<sup>530</sup>.

In these analyses, as shown by Peter Gay, Freud closely follows the “political thoughts of Thomas Hobbes”<sup>531</sup>, for whom “man is the wolf of man”, an expression which Freud also uses to describe the natural relationship between humans, while in the “state of nature”<sup>532</sup>, or, in other words, without the regulations of institutions and the social standards which culture itself has created. For Hobbes<sup>533</sup>, as also for Freud, “humanity needs to be tamed by the institutions”<sup>534</sup>, or, as Freud says to Einstein, “by the transfer of power to a larger unit”<sup>535</sup>. Freud thought that civilised human relationships have only been possible through a social contract that granted a monopoly on coercion to the State, removing this right from the individual, and that “This replacement of individual power by the power of the community is a significant step towards”<sup>536</sup>.

Freud thought that only cultural development could free humanity from violence and war. On one occasion – expressing a truth through the finest irony that was one of his features – Freud said that the first man to have insulted his enemy, instead of a spear, was the real founder of civilisation!<sup>537</sup> In the letter to Einstein, Freud defends the point of view that “cultural adjustment”<sup>538</sup> is one of the factors that may “bring war to an end in the not-too-distant future”<sup>539</sup>. This is because, according to Freud, “War goes emphatically against the psychic adjustment which has been forced on us by the cultural process; this is why we have to oppose it, and consider it totally intolerable”<sup>540</sup>.

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<sup>524</sup> §F17.

<sup>525</sup> §F17.

<sup>526</sup> §F17.

<sup>527</sup> EINSTEIN, c. 1954, p. 94.

<sup>528</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 52. The emphasis is the author's.

<sup>529</sup> FREUD, [1927], p. 364; [1927a], p. 2983.

<sup>530</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 481; [1930a], p. 3052.

<sup>531</sup> GAY, 2005, p. 495.

<sup>532</sup> FREUD, [1930], p. 470-471; [1930a], p. 3046.

<sup>533</sup> Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679) in his classic work *Leviathan*<sup>533</sup>, described the relation between the lack of institutions guaranteeing social unity and the state of perpetual war, “a war which is that of all men against all men” (HOBBS, [1651], cap. XIII, p. 75-76).

<sup>534</sup> GAY, 2005, p. 495.

<sup>535</sup> §F6.

<sup>536</sup> FREUD, [1930], p. 454-455; [1930a], p. 3036.

<sup>537</sup> GAY, 2005, p. 495.

<sup>538</sup> §F18.

<sup>539</sup> §F18.

<sup>540</sup> §F17.

As we have already had the opportunity to address, for Freud cultural development “is a process serving Eros [Love], with the aim of bringing together the isolated human individuals, then families, races, peoples and the nations, all coming into one large unit: Humanity”<sup>541</sup>. This is the essential instrument used by Love, as one of the two essential forces of life, to avoid universal war.

In his investigation on the actions of culture for the restriction of violence and aggression, Freud describes two stages in the psychic development of the human being towards common good, or, considering our focus of investigation, towards peace. The first stage takes place when the human being forsakes aggression (or other impulsive targets), forced by an influence coming from without, the family, friends, religion, the Law... In this stage, there is the establishment of “an external and foreign influence, aimed at establishing what shall be taken as good or evil”<sup>542</sup>. In this stage, the motivation of the human being when being subjected to the rules of culture come from “the fear of losing love”<sup>543</sup>. As the human being is well aware of “his or her helplessness and dependency on others”<sup>544</sup>, he or she is subjected to the impositions of culture even without having been “led by their own sensitivity to such a discrimination”<sup>545</sup> between “right” and “wrong”.

Freud makes a comment that it is usual to call this stage of psychic development as “bad conscience”, but argues that this name is not appropriate, as “at this level the feelings of guilt, without a shadow of doubt, are nothing more than a fear of losing love, or, in other words, social ‘anguish’”<sup>546</sup>.

The superior stage in psychic development, according to Freud — towards an individual and group lifestyle closer to the “ideal” —, only takes place when “a fundamental change is produced”<sup>547</sup> in the assessment that the individual makes of his or her own acts. At this stage, “authority is internalised on establishment of the Above-I”<sup>548</sup>. This means that the phenomena of moral conscience are raised to new levels and, in principle, it is only at this point that we can really talk about moral conscience and feelings of guilt<sup>549</sup>. According to Freud, the importance of this stage is that here “authority is internalised”<sup>550</sup>, so that what acts on the conscience is no longer “the fear of being caught out”<sup>551</sup>, but rather an internal judgement made by the conscience, which makes a hazy distinction between “practising and wanting evil”<sup>552</sup>, as “nothing can be hidden from the Above-I, not even the thoughts”<sup>553</sup>. Only in these circumstances, when the human being introjects the social rules and values as the Above-I, can true morality come out, for the benefit of society and at the cost of some sacrifices on the part of the individual.

The thoughts of Einstein also come close to these aspects of the theories proposed by Freud, with regard to the limits on external coercion for the true human maturity in moral terms. In a letter dated 30 July 1947, Einstein wrote that “Nothing really valuable comes from ambition or a *mere sense of duty*; it comes, first and foremost, before love and devotion in

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<sup>541</sup> FREUD, [1930], p. 481; [1930a], p. 3052.

<sup>542</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 483; [1930a], p. 3054.

<sup>543</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 483; [1930a], p. 3054.

<sup>544</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 483; [1930a], p. 3054.

<sup>545</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 483; [1930a], p. 3054.

<sup>546</sup> FREUD, [1930], p. 484; [1930a], p. 3054. The emphasis is of the author.

<sup>547</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 484; [1930a], p. 3054.

<sup>548</sup> Older translations use the term “superego”.

<sup>549</sup> FREUD, [1930], p. 484; [1930a], p. 3054. The emphasis is of the author.

<sup>550</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 484; [1930a], p. 3054. The emphasis is of the author.

<sup>551</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 484; [1930a], p. 3054. The emphasis is of the author.

<sup>552</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 484; [1930a], p. 3054. The emphasis is of the author.

<sup>553</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 484; [1930a], p. 3054. The emphasis is of the author.

relation to human beings and objective things”<sup>554</sup>. This means that the mere sense of moral duty, for both Einstein and Freud, is not morality. The fundamental point is a internal dimension of “love and devotion” that rallies the human being around, towards good.

Einstein believed that the real distinction in terms of human nobility was not just in the intellectual or scientific conquest. In the same way that Freud would make a distinction of humans who “always act in the interests of good because their impulsive inclinations require it”<sup>555</sup>, Einstein thought that “The real value of a human being is defined essentially by the degree and the way in which he or she achieved his or her real liberation”<sup>556</sup>. Such humans are, to use Freud’s classification, “truly civilised human beings”<sup>557</sup>.

In 1927, in *The Future of an Illusion*, Freud said that “It is incorrect to say that the human soul”<sup>558</sup> has not made any progress at all since the remotest of days and that [...] it is now the same as at the beginning of History”<sup>559</sup>, and identified, as a feature of this evolution, the “constant transformation of external coercion”<sup>560</sup> into internal coercion, through the action of a psychic instance<sup>561</sup> which is particular to humans, the Above-I<sup>562</sup>. For Freud, “This strengthening of the Above-I is one of the most valuable cultural and psychological factors”<sup>563</sup>, so that the people “with whom this took place are no longer opponents of culture, becoming its strongest pillars of support”<sup>564</sup>.

Einstein, without as much of a theoretical framework as Freud, also expresses this idea, in a single and beautiful way, on writing that “Where there is love, there is no imposition”<sup>565</sup>. At a conference given at Princeton, on 19 September 1954, Einstein goes back to this issue of interior morality and the control of egoistic impulses, saying, in his own way, that “Human beings may attain a worthy and harmonious life only if they manage to break free, within the limits imposed by human nature, from the tendency to satisfy their needs arising from physical nature”<sup>566</sup>.

Freud shows a series of similarities between the individual Above-I and the group Above-I, stressing that “the cultural Above-I, similar to that of the individual, sets strict ideals whose infringement is punished by the “anguish of conscience”<sup>567,568</sup>. The problem, for Freud, occurs when the requirements made by the Above-I conflict with the possibility of being materialised by individuals<sup>569</sup>.

In spite of these well-based reservations made by Freud in relation to culture, they may not be taken as being a rejection, on his part, of the value of culture or the cultural Above-I. As a psychologist interested in the investigation and treatment of psychic pathologies, it is only natural that Freud would be particularly sensitive to the imbalances of individual or group living that may play a part in bringing about psychic suffering. Hence his warning, often repetitive, about the exaggeration made by cultural standards, because if the

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<sup>554</sup> EINSTEIN, 2005, p. 251.

<sup>555</sup> FREUD, [1915b], p. 2107.

<sup>556</sup> EINSTEIN, 2005, p. 115.

<sup>557</sup> FREUD, [1915b], p. 2107. The translation and the emphasis are mine..

<sup>558</sup> *Menschliche Seele*.

<sup>559</sup> FREUD, [1927], p. 332; [1930a], p. 2965.

<sup>560</sup> *Äusserer Zwang*.

<sup>561</sup> *Seelische Instanz*.

<sup>562</sup> FREUD, [1927], p. 332; [1930a], p. 2965. The emphasis is of the author.

<sup>563</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 332; [1930a], p. 2965. The emphasis is of the author.

<sup>564</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 332; [1930a], p. 2965.

<sup>565</sup> EINSTEIN, 2005, p. 270.

<sup>566</sup> Id. Ibid., 2005, p. 272.

<sup>567</sup> *Gewissenangst*.

<sup>568</sup> FREUD, [1930], p. 502; [1930a], p. 3065. The emphasis is of the author.

<sup>569</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 503; [1930a], p. 3066.

requirements of the cultural or the individual Above-I exceed “certain limits”<sup>570</sup> the result is that “it produces, in the individual, either a rebellion, or neurosis, or unhappiness”<sup>571</sup>. On the other hand, Freud, as we have already had the opportunity to see, defended the idea of culture as being that group process to which “we owe all of the best there is in us”<sup>572</sup>.

For Freud, what characterises the process of individual evolution is the dominance of the “principle of pleasure, or, in other words, the search for happiness”<sup>573</sup>, with the emphasis falling on the “tendency to egoism, or happiness”<sup>574</sup>. On the other hand, the process of collective evolution places its emphasis on the “desire to join the other members of the community, which we call altruism”<sup>575</sup>. In this way, although the individual seeks “inclusion in a human community and adaptation to it”<sup>576</sup>, this is done because this appears as an “almost inevitable requirement that needs to be met to achieve the target of happiness”<sup>577</sup>; but that it may be “much better if this condition could be eliminated”<sup>578</sup>. On the other hand, within cultural development, in an opposite movement, “individual happiness, although still subsisting, is relegated to secondary importance”<sup>579</sup>.

Along the same lines as these comments made by Freud, Einstein, in 1949, wrote that “The human being is, at the same time, a solitary being and a social animal”<sup>580</sup>, which, as a solitary individual, “seeks to protect his or her own existence and also those of the other people closest to him or her, satisfying personal desires and developing innate skills”<sup>581</sup>. In contrast, as a social being, “he or she seeks the acceptance and affection of other human beings, and wants to share their joys and comfort them in their sad moments, and improve their living conditions”<sup>582</sup>.

In his comments on the conflict between individual and group interests, Freud makes a point of stressing that “this fight between individuals and society is not the result of the almost irreconcilable antagonism between the protoimpulses, Eros and Death”<sup>583</sup>, but is rather a conflict which is inserted in the “very economics of the libido”<sup>584</sup>, a conflict which can be compared to the fight over the distribution of the libido between the self<sup>585</sup> and the objects”<sup>586</sup>. It is important that we understand this statement made by Freud: what he is telling us is that this dispute between individual and society is not waged between *two mortal enemies*, but rather between *two brothers that love each other*. The antagonism is not irreconcilable, neither in theory nor in practice<sup>587</sup>. Just like the way in which, in family meals, we seek to

<sup>570</sup> FREUD, [1930], p. 503; [1930a], p. 3066.

<sup>571</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 503; [1930a], p. 3066.

<sup>572</sup> §F17.

<sup>573</sup> FREUD, [1930], p. 500; [1930a], p. 3064.

<sup>574</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 500; [1930a], p. 3064. The emphasis is of the author.

<sup>575</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 500; [1930a], p. 3064. The emphasis is of the author.

<sup>576</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 500; [1930a], p. 3064.

<sup>577</sup> FREUD, [1930], p. 500; [1930a], p. 3064.

<sup>578</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 500; [1930a], p. 3064.

<sup>579</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 500; [1930a], p. 3064.

<sup>580</sup> EINSTEIN, c. 1954, p. 153.

<sup>581</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 153.

<sup>582</sup> EINSTEIN, c. 1954, p. 153.

<sup>583</sup> FREUD, [1930], p. 501; [1930a], p. 3065.

<sup>584</sup> For Freud, the libido is the life energy and impulsive force, essentially of a sexual or erotic characteristic, so much so that, in his writings, libido and sexual impulse may be considered as synonymous. Peter Gay said that “Freud considered that what brought together groups and multitudes, either in an ephemeral or stable form, were diffuse sexual emotions – the libido whose target ‘was inhibited’ – like the passions that bring families together” (GAY, 2005, p. 372).

<sup>585</sup> As in former translations, “ego”.

<sup>586</sup> FREUD, [1930], p. 501; [1930a], p. 3065.

<sup>587</sup> “For a long time, Freud insinuated, making it clear in 1910, the concept that human impulses can be divided into two categories: the impulses of the self [ego] and the sexual impulses [libido]. The former category is responsible for the self-preservation of the individual, and has nothing to do with the erotic aspect. The second group exerts pressure to obtain the erotic satisfaction and works for the preservation of the species” (GAY, 2005, p. 316). However, in 1914, when he published



share the food as equally as possible, in the same way the self needs to share the vital energy of the libido, between that used for the person himself or herself, and its aiming at other individuals, “objects” of their love. Due to the fact that, for Freud, love for oneself and love for others are only different “in their object, not in nature”<sup>588</sup>, its “distribution”<sup>589</sup> is a conflict only within the “economics of the libido”<sup>590</sup>.

It is for these reasons that Freud manages to show hope for the conflict between the natural *egoism* of the individual and the *altruism* that is a characteristic of culture. As this is a matter “of home economics”, in a way, in the same way as the conflict for the sharing of love admits “a final settlement in the individual”<sup>591</sup>, Freud also hopes that the same thing will happen “in the future of culture, no matter how much this culture may oppress the life of the individual”.

The “psychic adjustment”<sup>592</sup> about which Freud speaks to Einstein — the result of the “cultural process”<sup>593</sup> and necessary for a person to become a pacifist — is not, for Freud, a universal blessing which is in itself guaranteed by cultural development. Freud did not have the illusion that all Europeans, or all the Germans or Austrians could be naturally pacifist, even though their cultural conquests in other areas could be considered very noble<sup>594</sup>. And, in spite of his words in *The Future of an Illusion*, and an evident privilege which Freud gives to intellectuals and cultured people, he did not take intellectual development as a guarantee of moral development.

For Freud, pacifism, or the capacity for an individual to control his or her aggressive impulses, is a *specific form*, not generic, of cultural development. Pacifism in the individual is not necessarily a result of rationality or illustration, or of refinement in the arts, in science or in other cultural tasks. It belongs to another dimension, that of animic personal development within the bosom of culture, a dimension that separates the people who really have conscience with those who did not, between those with real morality and the “hypocrites of culture”<sup>595</sup>; between those that really have control over themselves and those enslaved by their primitive impulses. As Freud writes in *Current Comments on War and Death*, “the animic evolution is part of a peculiarity which is not found in any other process of evolution”<sup>596</sup>.

In the light of all this, especially the fact that cultural development itself does not necessarily lead to a high moral conscience, and expanding on the original question made by

the text about narcissism, Freud said that the self “could choose, and in fact does choose, itself as an erotic object, as much as choosing others. In short, there is a ‘libido of the self [I]’, as much as a ‘libido of the object’” (GAY, 2005, p. 315). In this new concept, that Freud developed based on his text about narcissism, “the fact is that love in itself is different only in its object, and not in nature” (GAY, 2005, p. 317).

<sup>588</sup> GAY, 2005, p. 317.

<sup>589</sup> FREUD, [1930], p. 501; [1930a], p. 3065.

<sup>590</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 501; [1930a], p. 3065.

<sup>591</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 501; [1930a], p. 3065.

<sup>592</sup> §F17.

<sup>593</sup> §F17.

<sup>594</sup> See, in particular, the arguments presented by Freud in *Current Comments on War and Death* (FREUD, [1915b]) pages 2101 and 2104.

<sup>595</sup> FREUD, [1915b], p. 2107.

<sup>596</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 2108. Freud also mentions this point in *Civilisation and its Discontents*, when he comments that one could only consider someone as being truly transformed by culture when this person internalises the ethical demands of civilisation in the form of an Above-I [superego]. “With this”, says Freud, “the phenomena of moral conscience is raised to a higher level, and in principle it is only then that one can talk about moral conscience and feelings of guilt” (FREUD, [1930], p. 484; [1930a], p. 3054). Freud comments that such truly moral individuals can be characterised by their “more vigilant moral conscience, and if the saints blame themselves as sinners, they do this for a reason, considering the temptation of satisfying their own impulses” (Id. Ibid., p. 485; [1930a], p. 3054). In the “second phase of evolution” of the moral conscience, Freud identifies “a particularity that was not present in the first phase”, and this is the more severe activity of the Above-I [superego] in the individual’s conscience. This characteristic “acts more severely and suspiciously, the more virtuous the person is, in such a way that, in the end, those that have gone furthest along the path to sanctity are those very same people that accuse themselves of greater sin” (Id. Ibid., p. 485; [1930a], p. 3054. The translations of the Quotations are mine).

Einstein to Freud, from “*will it be possible*” to “*how will it be possible*” to guide “the psychic development of the human being in order to make him or her overcome the psychosis of hate and destruction”<sup>597</sup>, in *Current Comments on War and Death*, of 1915, we have a clear answer to this question:

The transformation of bad impulses is the work of two factors that act together, one internal and one external. The interior factor is the influx that is exerted on bad impulses – egoistic – by eroticism, which is the human need for love in the widest sense. The combination of the erotic components transforms the erotic impulses into social ones. The person learns to add value to feeling loved, with an advantage through which they can renounce all others. The external factor is the cohibition of education, which represents the requirements of the surrounding culture and is soon followed by direct action in the civilised world. The civilisation was won by the work of forsaking the satisfaction of the person and requires that all new individuals repeat this forsaking.<sup>598</sup>

Einstein also understood that moral development was in a special category, and that, were it not side by side with the development of the intellect, the results would be disastrous. Einstein did not even have confidence in the “cultured men and women” or those who “worked with the intellect”. In his view, “even nobler minds may become victims of barbaric feelings”<sup>599</sup>, and he said that he could not believe that “the noblest of human attitudes could flourish even a bit more easily in the Universities and academic institutions rather than in the lodges of the unknown, silent and common folk”<sup>600</sup>.

In the light of everything presented above, we can understand why Freud closes his letter to Einstein saying that “we can be sure that everything that promotes cultural development works against war at the same time”<sup>601</sup>. We now understand which form of cultural development Freud is talking about: the one specifically involved in the process of enhancement of the moral conscience of individuals. This is why Freud also places hope in Eros, or Love, which is always close by “to help us”<sup>602</sup>. This is why Freud was able to say that “Everything that produces bonds of affection between human beings acts as an antidote to war”<sup>603</sup>. This is why Freud believes in the strength of “Everything that highlights the significant similarities between humans”<sup>604</sup>. All these factors, without any doubt, have rallied the unity between humans and those noble feelings of love and brotherhood that could prevent the “psychosis of hate and destruction”<sup>605</sup>.

#### 4.9 Cultural Development and Organic Development

In his letter to Einstein, within the scope of his comments about culture and peace, Freud makes another argument which is very curious and which has deserved many pages of analysis by several different authors. As he says, “the main reason why we revolt against war is that we have no other choice. We are pacifist because we have to be for *organic reasons*”<sup>606</sup>. Returning to the same statement in the following paragraph, Freud says that for

<sup>597</sup> §E7.

<sup>598</sup> FREUD, [1915b], p. 2106.

<sup>599</sup> Einstein, apud. NATHAN e NORDEN, 1981, p.82.

<sup>600</sup> Einstein, apud. Id. Ibid., p.82. For further statements by Einstein in this regard, See EINSTEIN, c. 1954, p. 3; NATHAN and NORDEN, 1981, p.77; EINSTEIN, 2005, p. 110, 113 and 266; §E6.

<sup>601</sup> §F18.

<sup>602</sup> §F14.

<sup>603</sup> §F14.

<sup>604</sup> §F14.

<sup>605</sup> §E7.

<sup>606</sup> §F16. The emphasis is mine.

pacifists such as himself<sup>607</sup> and Einstein<sup>608</sup>, the denial of war “is not just an intellectual or affective aversion, but a constitutional intolerance, an idiosyncrasy of the most radical type”<sup>609</sup>.

In essence, what Freud shows to Einstein is the argument that cultural development promotes “organic” and “constitutional” change, of a physiological nature, to those to which they are subjected. This idea does indeed sound a bit strange, not only for their very nature, but also as they were presented by Freud, who, in his great preparation of the idea of Psychoanalysis prided himself on having “deliberately” made his science distant from the “discoveries of Biology”<sup>610</sup>.

In the letter to Einstein, Freud says that the process of cultural development may be compared to the “effects of the domestication of certain animals”<sup>611</sup>, and says that “it certainly causes changes to the physical structure”<sup>612</sup>. Freud understands that, within the process of cultural evolution, “feelings that would have delighted our ancestors have become neutral, or even intolerable, to us”<sup>613</sup>, and that “if our ethical and aesthetic ideals have been changed, then the causes of such changes are ultimately organic”<sup>614</sup>.

The explanation that Freud gives does not lead to better understanding of the process. This is just another tautological restatement of the argument, rather than an explanation. Surely Freud felt that a detailed explanation would not fit within the scope of the letter, but this issue was so dear to him that he could not go without including it within the context of the letter to Einstein. It is also interesting, at this point, to mention a letter from Einstein to Paul Hutchinson, in July 1929, in which he said: “My pacifism is an instinctive feeling”<sup>615</sup>, a

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<sup>607</sup> However, Freud was far from being a “natural” pacifist like Einstein. In his childhood and youth, Freud got enthused with Army uniform, military parades, anthems, flags, and all the symbolic paraphernalia of patriotic exaltation, while Einstein, ever since he was a small boy, showed disdain for such patriotic expressions. In Freud, pacifism does not seem to have been anything “constitutional” or “organic”. His attitude in relation to war would only be transformed at the age of almost sixty. Until the First World War, he, like most intellectuals and popular masses of Europe, still displayed the gentlemanly ideals of war and an aseptic view of military slaughter. In Freud’s childhood, in his works and correspondence, the fantasies and military jargon were always present (BREGER, 2000, pp. 188, 192-193, 209, 210, 233-234, 238, 239). It was with patriotic enthusiasm and emotion that Freud followed the “virile” initial rallies of the First World War (JONES, 1963, v. 1, p. 23; BREGER, 2000, p. 234; GAY, 319-324). Like millions of Europeans — not only the popular masses, but also intellectuals, artists, writers, poets, scientists, composers and religious figures — Freud was bitten by the bug of ecstatic and rolling patriotism (BREGER, 2000, p. 233-251; GAY, 2004, p. 320-322). About Freud’s youth and his relationship with war, Ernest Jones reports: “The Franco-Prussian War, that broke out when he was 14 years old, awoke great interest in him. His sisters would mention how he would have a large map on his desk, and how he would keep up to date with the campaign in full detail, with the help of small flags. He [Freud] would give lectures to his sisters about war in general and about the importance of different operations of the combatants. His dreams of himself becoming a great general, however, gradually bit the dust” (JONES, 1963, v. 1, p. 23. The translation is mine).

<sup>608</sup> In sharp contrast to Freud in the First World War, Einstein, ever since the first signs of the possibility of conflict, had already taken action to make as many people aware of his fear. He and three more German intellectuals (even though a hundred had been invited to sign the document) were the only ones to have condemned the invasion of Belgium by the German forces on 3 August 1914, in a pacifist manifesto in opposition to the stand taken by 93 of the most famous German scientists who, in a previous manifesto, had defended the bellicose conflict.

<sup>609</sup> §F17.

<sup>610</sup> FREUD, apud. SULLOWAY, 1979, p. 421.

<sup>611</sup> §F17.

<sup>612</sup> §F17.

<sup>613</sup> §F17.

<sup>614</sup> §F17.

<sup>615</sup> About this “innate” pacifism shown by Einstein, Philipp Frank states “Ever since his childhood, Einstein used to get very depressed seeing people being trained to become automatons, either soldiers marching through the streets, or students taking Latin lessons at school. His aversion from “robotising” training was combined with extreme repulsion of any kind of violence, and he regarded war as the epitome of everything hateful: automated brutality” (FRANK, 2002, p. 153-154). Frank mentions an accompaniment of Einstein’s early childhood that is not only significant but also identifies a trait that would accompany him through his whole life: “When the soldiers would march through the streets of Munich, together with the sound of the drums and the strident whistle of the military flutes — a characteristic combination of the German Army, which gives music a joyful and captivating rhythm, with a wild tonal quality —, and when the pavement and the windows would shake with the rhythm of the horses’ hoofs, the children would happily take part in this parade and would try to march

feeling that has taken me over because the assassination of people is quite revolting. My attitude does not come from any intellectual theory, but is based on my most radical aversion from any form of cruelty or hate”<sup>616</sup>.

Even though they come as a surprise, these statements are not in total contradiction with the whole theoretical structure of Freud’s work, even though they may seem a bit odd. Indeed, Frank J. Sulloway dedicated a famous yet controversial<sup>617</sup> book to the investigation of this unique aspect of Freudian theory. In this book, over 518 pages, Sulloway is dedicated to proving the way in which the “[...] psychoanalytical theories of Freud became *more* biological, rather than less so, after the crucial discovery years (1895-1900), in the same way as they became more and more sophisticated in their psychological content”<sup>618</sup>.

It is well known that, throughout his life, Freud remained loyal to “several biogenetic<sup>619</sup> and psycho-Lamarckian suppositions<sup>620</sup>”, which, just like the death impulse, were not well received by Freud’s psychoanalytical heirs<sup>621</sup>. Peter Gay discusses this which is one of the “Freud’s most eccentric and least defensible intellectual engagements”<sup>622</sup>, and Louis Breger puts this down to the fact that Freud “did not keep up to date with the advances in other scientific fields”<sup>623</sup>, so that some obsolete ideas remain ingrained in his psychoanalytic theories.

This rock-hard belief by Freud, in the irreparable force of constitutional, physiological and other bases of human behaviour, even led him, at the end of his life, to doubt the therapeutical efficiency of the analytical process, believing that it was “severely limited by constitutional factors”<sup>624</sup>. Psychiatrist Ludwig Binswanger<sup>625</sup> reports on a dialogue he had with Freud in 1936, in which Freud, to his surprise, said that “The constitution is

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together with the soldiers. However, when little Albert, with his parents, participated in one of these parades, he would start to cry. In Munich, parents would often tell their children: ‘Some day, when you grow up, you shall also be able to take part in the military parade’, and most boys were encouraged to make better and more ambitious efforts because of this possibility. Albert, on the other hand, said to his parents: ‘When I grow up, I do not want to be one of these poor people’. While the majority would enjoy the rhythm of a happy movement, he would observe the coercion that was enforced on the soldiers; he saw the military parades as a movement of people who were being compelled to be machines” (FRANK, 2002, p. 8). (The translations are mine.)

<sup>616</sup> EINSTEIN, 2005, p. 156.

<sup>617</sup> The title of the work, which has never been translated into Portuguese, is highly revealing: *Freud: Biologist of the Mind*. Famous scientists have branded the work as “colossal” (Dr Donald Fleming, Harvard University), “extremely significant” (Robert R. Holt, of New York University), “extraordinarily original” (Edward O. Wilson, from Harvard University) and “distinguished and perspicacious” (Jerome Kagan, Harvard University). Donald Fleming goes as far as stating that “all the current literature about Freud has become obsolete [through the publication of this book]”. In spite of this, Sulloway was branded one of those researchers that, in more recent times and in contradiction of the psychoanalytical status quo, dedicated themselves to “Freud-bashing”. Where Freud is concerned, there is a trend towards radicalism both in attack and defence, both of his theories and of his person. A more neutral reading of the book by Sulloway, however, cannot but show a sincere quest for the understanding of the origin of many of the ambiguities and incorrections in the works of Freud. In my opinion, this is essential reading, and is a book with solid grounding and with elegantly presented arguments.

<sup>618</sup> SULLOWAY, 1979, p. 391. The emphasis is of the author.

<sup>619</sup> The biogenetic theory, or the laws of biogenetics, was proposed by German biologist Ernst Haeckel, who suggests that the development of human groups and “races” is something like the development of individuals, going from lesser to greater maturity. In this way, he defended the idea that the “primitive races” were in the infancy of their development and need “supervision” or “protection” on the part of more “mature” societies.

<sup>620</sup> In essence, the theories of Jean-Baptiste Lamarck (1744-1829) established that the features acquired by an organism may be transmitted to its offspring, and that experience, rather than just biology, may change and thus influence genetic transmission. The psychic-Lamarckian way of explaining the theory of evolution takes into account this last aspect: the psychic transformations suffered by the individuals, especially when the cognitive or emotional experience is traumatic or repetitive, end up settling as characteristics transmitted to future generations, and even as a psychic feature of the species.

<sup>621</sup> SULLOWAY, 1979, p. 414; GAY, 2005, p. 271, footnote; BREGER, 2000, 337.

<sup>622</sup> GAY, 2005, p. 271, footnote.

<sup>623</sup> BREGER, 2000, 337.

<sup>624</sup> ROAZEN, 1971, p. 171.

<sup>625</sup> 1881-1966, considered the father of existential psychology.

everything”<sup>626</sup>.

Freud sought the genesis of the main forms of psychic expression in humans, whether pathological or not, in two logical bases: the *ontogenetic development*, and *philogenetic development*<sup>627</sup>, ideas brought to light by the controversial German biologist and philosopher, Ernst Haeckel<sup>628</sup>. Ontogenetics, or ontogenesis, is the science which studies the development of an individual of any species from conception to adulthood; on the other hand, philogenetics studies the history of the evolution of a given species, or the evolutionary relationship between several groups of organisms (species, populations, etc.). Philogenetics treats a species as being a group of individuals who are connected through time, in their genetic lineage. Its focus is on the study of the origins and the development of a group of organisms, normally of the same species.

Freud understood that children would resort to this “this philogenetic experience when their personal experience is not enough”<sup>629</sup> and that all human beings “fill in the gaps of individual truth with the prehistorical truth, and replace their own experience with that of their forefathers”<sup>630</sup>. Freud thought that the Oedipus Complex<sup>631</sup> “which covers the relationship between a child and his or her parents, is the best known of these schemes”<sup>632</sup> and said that “where personal experiences are not adapted to the hereditary system, these started to be designed through fantasies”<sup>633</sup>.<sup>634</sup>

One consequence of this focus with biogenetic and pseudo-Lamarckian bases, as also the general context of the European culture in which he was raised and where he developed his work, is the same one that, in a contemporary perspective, could appear to be an unpleasant subtext of prejudice and ethnocentrism that permeates the last few paragraphs of his correspondence with Einstein. A somewhat bitter taste of what appears to be a psycho-

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<sup>626</sup> ROAZEN, 1971, p. 172. The interesting thing is that, as shown by Dr Jim Hopkins, of *King's College London*, Freud conceived such psychic structure as a “hypothetical neural structure”, or “a functional part of the mind”. “In general”, says Hopkins, “it seems that Freud saw the I [self], the Above-I [superego] and the It [id] as functional neural systems” (HOPKINS, 2004, p. 12. The translation is mine).

<sup>627</sup> SULLOWAY, 1979, p. 259.

<sup>628</sup> Ernst Heinrich Phillip August Haeckel (also von Haeckel) (1834-1919) was a famous German biologist and philosopher that made significant promotion of Darwin's works in Germany. Haeckel was a zoologist, but also a talented artist and illustrator. He was a University professor of Compared Anatomy, and was one of the first to see psychology as a branch of physiology. He coined several terms which are used in science to this day, such as “ontogenics”, “philogenics”, “philo” and “ecology”. His main field of interest was that of evolution, and the processes of development of life in general. Haeckel proposed the “recapitulationist theory”, in which he presented the hypothesis of a link between ontogenics (development of form) and philogenics (evolutionary descent), summed up in the famous adage “ontogenics is a recapitulation of philogenics”. Haeckel sought to base his theories on abundant drawings that showed the development of the embryo and how, in the evolution of the human embryo, for example, it goes through a phase that has gills and a tail. Even though the drawings have some mistakes and his theory in its original form is no longer accepted, accused of excessive simplification, most contemporary biologists see several connections between ontogenics and philogenics, and explain them through the theory of evolution. Haeckel is also well known for his biogenetic theory, or the Law of Biogenetics, already mentioned above, which suggests that the development of human groups and “races” is like the development of individuals, going from lesser to greater maturity: the human race being thus divided according to the level of “development” of its different groups and cultures, the “less mature” needing the tutelage of the “more advanced”.

<sup>629</sup> FREUD, 1996, v. 2, p. 1994.

<sup>630</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 1995.

<sup>631</sup> Freud chose this name as a reference to the Greek myth, so well dramatised by Sophocles in *Oedipus Rex*, in which Oedipus, without knowing, carries out the prophesy of the very oracle he was trying to escape from, and kills his father to later wed his mother. In a letter written by Freud to Wilhelm Fliess in October 1897 he writes “The Greek legend is based on a compulsion that all people accept because they feel that it exists in each and every one of them. Everyone, in fantasy, [...] has already been an Oedipus in bloom (Freud, apud. Brunner, 2000, p. 81. The translation is mine).

<sup>632</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 2007.

<sup>633</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 2007.

<sup>634</sup> For further information about these philogenetic arguments made by Freud, see his work *Stories of a Child Neurosis (The Case of the Wolf Man)*, of 1918 (FREUD, 1996, v. 2, p. 1994), his *Introductory Conferences on Psychoanalysis* (1916-1917) (FREUD, 1996, v.2, p. 2343-2344), and *Totems and Taboos* (1912-1913) (FREUD, [1912-1913], p. 1847.)

cultural form of *ufanismo* (an overly patriotic attitude) seems to tarnish many of the statements made by Freud in the letter.

Evidently, Freud could not benefit from the post-modern criticism and the cultural relativity that dominated much of the intellectual scene in the contemporary world. He was still a European that saw the acquisitions of European culture as naturally superior. As we have already seen, in his text about war written in 1915, certainly expressing a feeling that was also his own, he spoke about “great countries of the white race, lords of the world”<sup>635</sup>.

But there was more besides. Freud also thought that there was *another difference, beyond the material or intellectual culture*. This was a psycho-organic difference of moral nature, which placed human beings — even if belonging to one same culture of society — at different levels of evolution<sup>636</sup>. Those who had reached the higher stages in this differentiation were *naturally, organically and constitutionally pacifists*.<sup>637</sup>

On analysing the works of Freud in retrospect, especially regarding the assumptions of philogenics and biogenetics<sup>638</sup> and his theories about the Oedipus Complex, Peter Kramer, in an essay under the title of *Freud: Current Projections*<sup>639</sup>, says that “From a modern standpoint, Freud is quite simply wrong on several occasions”<sup>640</sup>. In spite of this fact, Kramer says that, removing all the errors and faults in his theories, “what is left of Freud is still psychology”<sup>641</sup>, and says, in friendly form, that, in spite of everything, “We are all Freudian in our daily thoughts”<sup>642</sup>. Taking our theme into account, I would say that we are more indebted to Freud in our efforts for the elimination of war and the conquest of peace among mankind.

In our efforts to identify just how the thoughts of Einstein and Freud fit into the theoretical scheme proposed by Norberto Bobbio about the contemporary efforts for peace, we could say that once again all these analyses, just like those of the previous section, deal with elements that relate to *institutional pacifism* — when they look at a culture — and also to *ethico-finalist pacifism*, when Freud investigates the hypothetical organic transformations that come with cultural development.

There is one last point arising from the arguments made by Einstein and Freud that remains to be addressed in the last section of this long chapter: the complex interaction between leaders and society, and its relationship with war and peace.

<sup>635</sup> FREUD, [1915b], p. 2102.

<sup>636</sup> See *The Future of an Illusion* (FREUD, [1927], p. 362; [1927a], p. 2982).

<sup>637</sup> Despite the statements made by Freud in *The Future of an Illusion* as mentioned above, and in spite of the tremendous value that he gives to the intellect, rationality and culture, he is still a long way from the conclusions reached by Einstein. In 1915, in his work *Current Comments on War and Death*, Freud argues that some people, subjected to the requirements of community living, may actually “behave well, in the cultural sense” (FREUD, [1915b], p. 2106-2107), but this is not done through internal convictions. Such an individual may behave well, or pacifically, “without having gone through an ennoblement of the impulses, a mutation of egoistic tendencies into social ones” (Id. Ibid., p. 2106-2107). Freud feels that “there is never an extermination of evil” (Id. Ibid., p. 2105) in most human beings that are inserted into culture. He feels that most human beings are only good “because such cultural behaviour brings advantages to their egoistic aims” (Id. Ibid., p. 2107). Freud calls these people the “hypocrites of culture” (Id. Ibid., p. 2107). In contrast, Freud identifies a minority of human beings that “always do good because this is what their impulses require” (Id. Ibid., p. 2107). Such people are the truly civilised men and women” (Id. Ibid., p. 2107). According to the comments in the letter to Einstein, these include those that fight against war with their hearts and their conscience. (All the translations of the quotations are mine)

<sup>638</sup> In spite of the contemporary discredit of psycho-Lamarckian development and the laws of biogenetics, it would be interesting to research how the philogenetic assumptions made by Freud would fit within the hypotheses of “Morphic Resonance” and “Morphogenetic Field”, as shown by biologist Rupert Sheldrake, of Cambridge and Harvard Universities. His main ideas can be found in the book *The Presence of the Past*, published in 1995 by Park Street Press, Rochester, Vermont.

<sup>639</sup> Prepared together with the exhibition *Freud: Conflict and Culture*, prepared by the Library of the American Congress.

<sup>640</sup> KRAMER, 2000, p. 202.

<sup>641</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 205.

<sup>642</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 205.

#### 4.10 Leaders and the masses

Throughout his letter, Einstein says that leaders of society are some of the main obstacles preventing the elimination of war. In paragraphs four and five, we makes a series of criticisms of the governing minority, who manipulate and use the people at their own free will. In addition, Einstein feels that the encouragement of war also comes from another minority, the “so-called *intelligentsia*”<sup>643</sup>, or, in other words, the erudite people and those who work with the intellect. Einstein believes that they are the people who “most often give into these disastrous group suggestions”<sup>644</sup> that cause “the psychosis of hate and destruction”<sup>645</sup> that leads to wars.

Freud finds, in the criticism made by Einstein “about abuse of authority”<sup>646</sup> a “second point for making an indirect attack on the propensity to war”<sup>647</sup>. For Freud, it is quite clear that “human beings can be divided into leaders and the led”<sup>648</sup> and that this “is just another form of expression of their innate and incurable inequality”<sup>649</sup>. This “second class of human beings”<sup>650</sup>, those who are led, is obviously “the vast majority”<sup>651</sup>. Freud is emphatic in saying that this human mass “needs an authority figure that makes the decisions for them, to which they generally show submission without contestation”<sup>652</sup>. Due to this significant and decisive influence exerted by the leaders on the behaviour of the masses, Freud saw, in the cultural and psychic development of leaders a possible path towards peace for all. He says to Einstein:

In this context, we could say that we would have to make a greater effort than in the past to create an upper class of independent thinkers, immune to intimidation and showing fervour in the search for the truth, whose prime function would be to guide the masses, so dependent on their leadership.<sup>653</sup>

In his 1921 text, *Psychology of the Masses and Analysis of the Self*, Freud dedicated himself to analysing the relationship between individuals and society and, particularly, between the leaders and the individuals who are led<sup>654</sup>. Freud proposes the hypothesis that “in the essence of the collective soul there are also amorous relationships (or, to use a more neutral expression, bonds of affection)”<sup>655</sup>. Such bonds of affection, even though they are born of primary sexual impulses, would undergo transformation, in order to become “on one side, the love of the individual for himself or herself, and, on the other side, the paternal and filial love, friendship and the love for humanity in general, concrete objects or abstract

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<sup>643</sup> §E7.

<sup>644</sup> §E7.

<sup>645</sup> §E7.

<sup>646</sup> §F15.

<sup>647</sup> §F15.

<sup>648</sup> §F15.

<sup>649</sup> §F15.

<sup>650</sup> §F15.

<sup>651</sup> §F15.

<sup>652</sup> §F15. Freud showed a characteristic position of extreme discredit in relation to the capacity of the masses to promote any kind of social advancement in the absence of a leader. In *The Future of an Illusion*, he writes that “The domination of the masses by a minority shall always show itself to be just as essential as the coercitive imposition of cultural work, as the masses are lazy and ignorant, not easily accepting the renouncement of the impulses, being useless any arguments that are shown to convince them of the inevitability of such a renouncement, and their members mutually supporting each other on the tolerance of their lack of restraint” (FREUD, [1927], p. 475; [1927a], p. 2963. The translation and the emphasis are mine.).

<sup>653</sup> §F15.

<sup>654</sup> Freud bases himself on the “fundamental fact that the individuals, when integrated into a multitude, is profoundly influenced by it, to the extent of experimenting with a modification, often deep, in their animic activities”. What happens to the individual lost within a human mass is that “their affection increases significantly” and, in compensation, “their intellectual activities are seriously limited”. These factors, however, may be “neutralised, at least in part, by a superior organisation of the masses” (All quotations from FREUD, 1996, v. 3, p. 2575. The translation is mine).

<sup>655</sup> FREUD, 1996, v. 3, p. 2577.

ideals”<sup>656</sup>.

Looking in depth at the Army and the Church, Freud reaches the conclusion that the fundamental agglutination factor of these masses are libidinous feelings (meaning bonds of love, taken in broadest sense) which are established between the members, and between members and the leader<sup>657</sup>. Thus, in artificial masses “the individual is doubly connected by libidinous connections, first to the boss<sup>658</sup> (Christ, or the general), and, in addition, to the other individuals within the collectivity”<sup>659 660</sup>.

Contradicting those who felt that the feelings of fear and panic were the factors responsible for their disintegration, Freud argues the exact opposite: it is when the libidinous ties weaken that panic sets in<sup>661</sup>. In other words, it is not panic that leads to disintegration of the masses, but rather the disintegration of the masses (felt subconsciously as a weakening or rupture of libidinous bonds that link the masses to their leader, or the individuals between themselves) which causes panic<sup>662</sup>.

Freud proposes the hypothesis that in the masses without leadership “the leader may have been replaced by an idea or abstraction”<sup>663</sup>, or by a “trend or desire which can be shared by a large number of people”<sup>664</sup>. In any case, Freud clearly points to the idea that the masses when steered by leaders are “the most primitive and perfect”<sup>665</sup>.

In Freud’s view, it is a fact that “no human being can stand an excessively intimate approach from the others”<sup>666</sup>, and that “almost all relationships of affection of any duration between two people — marriage, friendship, paternal and filial love — leave behind a deposit of hostile feelings<sup>667</sup>, that needs a process of repression, so as not to be noticed<sup>668,669</sup>. However, the behaviour of the human being within the masses undergoes significant change,

<sup>656</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 2577.

<sup>657</sup> Freud feels that in such “artificial masses, long lasting and highly organised”, what keeps people together is “the illusion of the visible or invisible presence of a leader (Christ, in the Catholic Church, and the commander-in-chief, in the case of the Army), who gives equal love to all members of the collectivity. It is on this illusion that everything depends, and its disappearance would bring the disintegration of the Church and the Army” (All quotations from FREUD, 1996, v. 3, p. 2578. The translation is mine).

<sup>658</sup> From the force of these bonds, Freud concludes “the importance of the leader for the psychology of the masses”. Freud argues that the influence of the leaders on the masses is so great that it may survive even without “ideas of country, national glory, etc., which are so important for the unity of the Army”. He states that “the examples of great captains, such as Caesar, Wallenstein and Napoleon show that such ideas are not essential for keeping an Army unit together” (All quotations from FREUD, 1996, v. 3, p. 2579. The translation is mine).

<sup>659</sup> FREUD, 1996, v. 3, p. 2579.

<sup>660</sup> Peter Gay points out that in *Psychology of the masses*, Freud, “on showing new ways to think of the mind in society, make suggestions that have not as yet been fully exploited. However, the incredible speed with which Freud addresses complex issues of social cohesion imparts an air of improvisation on the study” (GAY, 2004, p. 373). For Louis Breger, Freud lacked first-hand experience with the groups he was seeking to analyse, the Army and the Church (BREGER, 2000, p. 271). However, he did indeed have close experience with a group that could well have been used for his analyses: the psychoanalytic movement. However, Freud was unable, through his own neurotic resistance, to do this (Id. Ibid., p. 271). For this reason, Freud sought his explanations in the theories of philogenetic development of the Oedipus Complex and the libidinous bonds of primitive hordes.

<sup>661</sup> Freud gives the following image as an example: “In this parody, a warrior shouts: ‘The leader has been beheaded’, and all the Assyrians flee in escape. This, without any increase in danger, just with the loss of the leader – in any sense –, leading to panic. Together with the bond connecting them to the leader, the bonds between the individuals also normally disappear, and the mass crumbles in disintegration [...]” (FREUD, 1996, v. 3, p. 2581. The translation is mine).

<sup>662</sup> FREUD, 1996, v. 3, p. 2580.

<sup>663</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 2582.

<sup>664</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 2582.

<sup>665</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 2582.

<sup>666</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 2583.

<sup>667</sup> As we have already seen, Freud ascribes this “hostility” against the loved ones to the “affective ambivalence”, to an “elemental” predisposition for “hate and aggression” (FREUD, 1996, v. 3, p. 2583. The translation is mine).

<sup>668</sup> In Portuguese, “Verdrängung” was translated as “repression”, because they were made from the English version. But the term “recalque” is a better contemporary translation, as proposed by Luiz Alberto Hanns. See HANNS, 1996, p. 355-363.

<sup>669</sup> FREUD, 1996, v. 3, p. 2583.



as “this intolerance disappears, on either a temporary or a permanent basis, within the masses”<sup>670 671</sup>.

As we have already seen when discussing the issue of bonds of affection, Freud thought that the mere union of human beings in a “community of interests” is not able to produce “a permanent limitation of narcissism and that, in this type of group, “tolerance shall last for just as long as there is immediate benefit produced by the collaboration with the others”<sup>672</sup>. This leads Freud to reach an important and significant conclusion:

The libido gets support from the satisfaction of the great individual needs, and chooses, as the first objects [of affection] those people who it affects. Throughout the development of humanity, as that of the individual, love has proved to be the main factor of civilisation, possibly even the only one, establishing the passage from egoism to altruism. [...]

There having been the settlement of the view that the bonds that link human beings together with they are gathered in large collective groups are nothing more and nothing less than bonds of love, of different types<sup>673</sup>, Freud then presents a second psychic force that acts in this regard, which is the force of identification. Freud proposes that identification is “the expression that soon arises from a bond of affection with another person”<sup>674</sup>, and consists basically of the interest that the boy shows for his father, dreaming of being like him and making him an ideal or role model<sup>675</sup>. These elemental features of the Oedipus Complex, especially the introjection of the idealised father figure, become part of an *ideal-self*<sup>676</sup> in the child, and Freud sees the same thing happening in the collective development of human beings. “We suspect”, he says, “that the reciprocal bonding of individuals within a mass has the nature of an identification of this type, based on an ample affective community, and we may suppose that this community rests in the nature of the bond with the leader”<sup>677</sup>.

Although Freud mentions that these comments are far from ending the phenomenon of identification [idealisation of the leader] as a factor of cohesion of the masses, he reminds us that we are inside a process of *empathy* (*Einfuehlung*), a process on which depends “most of our understanding of the selves of other people”<sup>678</sup>. It is interesting to see that Einstein, even though he does not limit himself to such theoretical comments, also expresses these ideas or empathy and identification when he looks into the importance of bonds of unity between human beings. In his text written in 1951, *The Need for an Ethical Culture*, Einstein said that “Of course it is important to *understand* our peers. However, this understanding only becomes fruitful when it is backed up by friendly feelings, in happiness and in sadness”<sup>679</sup>.

Freud, in *Psychology of the Masses and Analysis of the Self*, also makes an important

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<sup>670</sup> FREUD, 1996, v. 3, p. 2583.

<sup>671</sup> Freud understood that “While the group formation is kept, the individuals behave as if prepared for one same pattern: they tolerate all particularities of others, consider themselves as equals, and do not feel any sign of aversion. According to our theories, such a restriction of narcissism may not be caused but by one factor: the libidinous link with other people. Egoism comes up against a barrier, which is love for others [...]” (FREUD, 1996, v. 3, p. 2583. The translation is mine).

<sup>672</sup> FREUD, 1996, v. 3, p. 2584.

<sup>673</sup> “Thus, when we see that there are restrictions to narcissism within the masses, non-existent outside them, then we must take this fact as a proof that the essence of group formation lies in the establishment of new libidinous bonds between the members” (FREUD, 1996, v. 3, p. 2584. The translation is mine).

<sup>674</sup> FREUD, 1996, v. 3, p. 2585.

<sup>675</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 2585.

<sup>676</sup> The *ideal-self*, as that series of idealised representations that the *self* internalises and makes part of itself, would be, as from 1923, with the publication of *The Self and the Id*, reconceptualised in a more complete whole, as the *Above-I* (*superego*). See GAY, 2004, p. 373 and pages following.

<sup>677</sup> FREUD, 1996, v. 3, p. 2587.

<sup>678</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 2587.

<sup>679</sup> EINSTEIN, c. 1954, p. 53.

distinction between the process of identification and that of “fascination”<sup>680</sup>, or “amorous servitude”<sup>681</sup>. While in the process of identification “the *self* gets enriched with the properties of the object”, having introjected it into the person himself or herself, in the case of “fascination”, the *self* gets poorer, being fully subservient to the object and replacing its most important constituent by the object<sup>682</sup>. Here, once again, we have a parallel with Einstein, when Einstein showed rejection of the idolatry that had been created by the masses, idolising leaders who manipulated group emotions. As Einstein wrote in 1955, “Political passions, fed everywhere, demand their victims”<sup>683</sup>.

Thus, Freud manages to detect, from the point of view of psychoanalysis, how it is possible to have an almost hypnotic form of domination that the leaders of society exert on the masses. Freud feels that the comments that have been made allow him to “establish the formula of the libidinal constitution of a human mass”<sup>684</sup>, particularly that “mass that has a leader, and that has not yet managed to operate according to the characteristics of an individual, due to a lack of a sufficiently perfect ‘organisation’”<sup>685</sup>. Freud also says:

This primary mass is a grouping of individuals who have replaced their *ideal-self* by one same object [the leader], as a result of which a general and reciprocal identification of the *self* was established between them.<sup>686</sup>

It is these complex emotional bonds of libidinous nature: between the individuals, and of the masses for the *idealised leader* — that come to replace the *self* and the *ideal-self* of each individual —, that explain “the lack of independence and initiative on the part of the individual, the similarity of reactions with those of the other members and his or her relegation, after all, to the category of a unit within a community”<sup>687</sup>. It is due to this confirmation of facts, in 1921, that Freud would say to Einstein, in 1932, that “The second class of human beings is the vast majority, and needs an authority figure that makes the decisions for the individual, who normally takes on a submissive role without any contestation”<sup>688 689</sup>.

However, in addition to this emotional dependence on the leader, the masses,

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<sup>680</sup> FREUD, 1996, v. 3, p. 2590.

<sup>681</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 2590.

<sup>682</sup> Freud explains that in the case of identification, “the object either disappears or is abandoned, to be soon reconstructed within the self, which is partially modified, according to the model of the object lost”. In the case of idolatry, or fascination, “the object”<sup>682</sup> persists, but the *self* grants it all the qualities, at its own cost”, or, in a better expressed statement, “the object”<sup>682</sup> takes the place of the *self* and the *ideal-self*” (All quotations from FREUD, 1996, v. 3, p. 2590. The translation is mine).

<sup>683</sup> EINSTEIN, 2005, p. 188.

<sup>684</sup> FREUD, 1996, v. 3, p. 2592.

<sup>685</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 2592.

<sup>686</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 2592.

<sup>687</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 2592.

<sup>688</sup> §F15.

<sup>689</sup> According to Louis Breger: “On discussing the power of leaders of the masses such as generals or Christ, Freud addresses the perennial desire of human beings for role models. This was a need that played a key role in his life, which can be confirmed by his detachment from his failed father in exchange for a series of male idols” (BREGER, 2000, p. 270). Breger thinks that this was also a powerful force within the psychoanalytic movement itself, where “younger colleagues would look at him [Freud] as a commander-in-chief”. However, in spite of this omnipresence of the feeling of search for ideal images, Freud “moved away from the human desire for ideal figures, and interpreted the relations between leaders and followers, almost entirely as power struggles motivated by envy and competition” (Id. Ibid., p. 271) Freud gave the whole issue of the psychology of the masses the explanation of the Oedipus Complex as philogenetically transmitted, since, as he says, “the masses present themselves to us, therefore, like a resurrection of the primitive horde” (FREUD, 1996, v. 3, p. 2596). For Breger, in this analysis of Freud about leaders and the masses, his own frustrations and traumas — in relation to his deprived infancy, the shame about his father, and the compensatory search for idealised heroes and intellectual and financial supporters, to the competition with his siblings for the love and care of his mother and, within a strict sense of self-criticism, that is, all these elements — prevented Freud from seeing aspects other than those explained by the Oedipus Complex. Berger also says that, as was characteristic, his report “also neglected mothers and the human need for close bonds and lasting relationships” (BREGER, 2000, p. 271). (The translation of the quotations is mine).

according to Freud, also suffer the “reciprocal suggestion”, mutual, of each individual over the others, so that a trend towards uniformity and conformism is inevitable<sup>690</sup>. According to Freud, in social living we see it in a situation where the “individual feelings and the personal intellectual act are too weak to assert themselves without the support and analogous affective and intellectual expressions of other individuals”<sup>691</sup>.

Such tendencies, according to Freud, arise from the primitive jealousy felt by the child when he or she is threatened with the loss of the love and attention of the parents, through the appearance of a “little brother”<sup>692</sup>. He or she then understands that “all those expressions of this kind that we later find in society — companionship<sup>693</sup>, *l’esprit de corps*, the feeling of team spirit, etc. — also stem, without any doubt, from primitive envy”<sup>694</sup>. It is for this reason that animic links between individuals within the mass society, just as in the early family unit<sup>695</sup>, that “no-one should wish to stand out, but rather all should be and get the same”<sup>696</sup>. For Freud, this is the birthplace of the feeling of social justice, which means “to refuse, for ourselves, many things, so that the others may also have to renounce them, or, that it makes no difference, we can not claim them”<sup>697</sup>. However, Freud stresses that “the request for equality” refers “just to the individuals that construct it, not to the commander or boss. Indeed, all individuals wish to be the same, but under the domination of a leader”<sup>698</sup>.

This image of a uniform and amorphous mass, perfect in its identification unit, is, howbeit, nothing more than a generalisation. In reality, depending on the extent to which each individual either keeps, or does not keep, the identification between his or her *self* and *ideal-self*, the effects of the domination by the leader could be distinct, going right from the identification with this figure, through to an idolatry thereof<sup>699</sup>. Freud then describes the phenomenon by which an individual, at some point in history, could “break away from the mass and take on the role of the [primeval] father. Who did this was the first epic poet, and the progress in this regard was not concluded, except in his fantasy”<sup>700</sup>. According to Freud:

This poet really transformed reality in the light of the meaning of their desires and thus invented the myth of the hero. The hero was the person who, alone, had killed his father, which still appears in the myth as a

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<sup>690</sup> FREUD, 1996, v. 3, p. 2592-2596.

<sup>691</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 2593.

<sup>692</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 2594-2595.

<sup>693</sup> *Gemeinsgeist*.

<sup>694</sup> FREUD, 1996, v. 3, p. 2595.

<sup>695</sup> In these dynamics of collective human life, Freud finds the first philogenetic expression of the primeval pact of the parricide brothers, who, after murdering and devouring their father, establish the fundamental law of fraternal equality. As Freud himself writes, “The mass presents itself to us, therefore, as a resurrection of the primitive horde. Just like the way in which the primitive human being survives in everyone, in the same way the whole human mass may recreate the primitive horde” (FREUD, 1996, v. 3, p. 2596). Here, once again, we find the omnipresent Oedipus Complex, in its social dimension, at the root of the explanations given by Freud for the dynamics of individual and collective psychism. The way in which he sums up this knowledge can also be found in *Psychology of the Masses and the Analysis of the Self*: “[...] the primitive father prevented his children from satisfying their direct sexual tendencies, enforcing abstinence and, as a result, the establishment of intimate bonds that firstly connected the children to the father, and then one to other. It can be deduced that he has imposed upon them the terms of collective psychology, which are, in the final analysis, nothing other than the product of his sexual jealousies and his intolerance” (Id. Ibid., p. 2597. The translation is mine) He then reaches the following conclusion: “The worrying and coercitive features of collective [human] formations, which is shown in its phenomena of [collective] suggestion, could be put down, therefore, to the affinity between the masses and primitive horde from which they descend. The leader is still the feared primitive father. The mass always wants to be dominated by a limitless power. Thirsty for authority, they have, according to the words of Gustave Le Bon, an inexhaustible desire for submission. The primitive father is the ideal of the masses, and this ideal dominates the individuals, replacing their *ideal-self*” (Id. Ibid., p. 2599). (The translation of the quotations is mine.)

<sup>696</sup> FREUD, 1996, v. 3, p. 2595.

<sup>697</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 2595.

<sup>698</sup> FREUD, 1996, v. 3, p. 2595.

<sup>699</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 2600-2601.

<sup>700</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 2604.

Totemic monster. Just as the father had been the first role model of the adolescent, the poet has now created the *ideal-self* with the hero that plans to replace the father.<sup>701</sup>

For Freud, “the myth is in fact the step through which the individual breaks away from collective psychology”<sup>702</sup>, as the poet tells the masses about the feats that his or her imagination puts down to a hero which he or she invented himself or herself, “a hero which, deep down, is nothing else than the person concerned”<sup>703</sup>.

Another important aspect of the analyses which Freud offers us about the relationships between leaders and the masses is connected with the factors of disintegration of the social order, based on the poor “social management” on the part of Rulers and the dominant classes. For Freud, “the first cultural requirement is justice, or, in other words, the guarantee that the judicial order, once established, shall never be again violated in favour of an individual”<sup>704</sup>. The dominant classes, despite their natural abuse of authority, may not take these privileges too far, otherwise they may lose their influence on the leaders of society<sup>705</sup>. Freud feels that the “ultimate development of cultural evolution seems to tend towards this right no longer being the expression of the wishes of a small group — caste, tribe, social class”<sup>706</sup> but rather being, more and more, the representative of the wishes and needs of society as a whole, so that “The final result must be the establishment of a judicial order in which everyone [...] has contributed with the sacrifice of his or her impulses, without leaving any of them [...] at the disposal of brute force”<sup>707</sup>.

In a similar way, Einstein says that justice is the fundamental base for social life, when he writes that “What makes a real republic stand out is not only the form of government, but also the deeply ingrained feelings of equal justice for all and respect for each and every person”<sup>708</sup>. In his text of 1937, *On Moral Decadence*, he wrote:

There is lack of the elementary reaction against injustice and in favour of justice — a reaction that, in the end, is the only protection of mankind against the return to barbarity. I am firmly convinced that the passionate desire for justice and for the truth has done much more for the enhancement of the human condition than the astute political sagacity which, in the end, just generates generalised suspicion. Who would question the fact that Moses was a better leader of humanity than Macchiavelli?<sup>709</sup>

As “The peoples are represented, to a certain extent, by the States that they occupy and these States, in turn, by the Governments that rule over them”<sup>710</sup>, Freud realises that the

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<sup>701</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 2604.

<sup>702</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 2605.

<sup>703</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 2604.

<sup>704</sup> FREUD, [19307], p. 455; [19307a], p. 3036-3037.

<sup>705</sup> Freud understands that the discredit of social leaderships may lead to a “fearsome danger that threatens culture”, that which he called “the psychological misery of the masses”. According to Freud, “This danger is more imminent when the social forces of cohesion are essentially the mutual identifications between the members of a group, while the leading characters do not take on the important role that they should fulfil in the formation of the mass”. In other words, when the amorous bonds that bring individuals together *horizontally* exceed the bonds that bring them together *vertically* with the leaders of society. In such cases, according to Freud, the social unit crumbles within the panic of an acephalous mass, just like the example of the Assyrian Army which defects when they see themselves without leadership (All quotations from FREUD, [1930], p. 475; [1930a], p. 3049. The translation is mine).

<sup>706</sup> FREUD, [19307], p. 455; [19307a], p. 3036-3037.

<sup>707</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 455; [19307a], p. 3036-3037.

<sup>708</sup> EINSTEIN, 2005, p. 181.

<sup>709</sup> EINSTEIN, 1996, p. 8.

<sup>710</sup> FREUD, [1915b], p. 2104.

masses of the population are definitely altered when they realise that the relationships of Governments and States between themselves do not follow the judicial rules to which all should conform<sup>711</sup>. In other words, the people who are led realise that their leaders are not obeying the supreme law of justice, a source of social unity and ordering. In these cases, Freud feels that the moral poverty spreads throughout society, starting out from a bad example of social leadership.<sup>712</sup>

Einstein also made reference to this phenomenon in a speech which was published on his sixtieth birthday, in 1939, when he wrote that “When people live in an era of maladjustment, when there is tension and imbalance, they also get imbalanced and may then follow an imbalanced leader”<sup>713</sup>. The final consequence of this lack of social justice, and the final judgement by Freud regarding this issue, are given to us in these words which he spoke in 1927: “It goes without saying that a culture that does not succeed in satisfying such a large number of participants and stirs them to rebellion, this will not last long, and neither is this deserved”<sup>714</sup>.

In spite of all these facts, Freud still envisages a hope, on writing that “These unfortunate circumstances shall be, who knows, changed by later developments”. This is because he feels that “the nations”, which he calls “collective individualities of humanity”, shall also go through processes of collective development, just like individuals, so that more is always expected of them in the future than in the past or the present. According to Freud, nations may “reproduce the development of individuals and show themselves to be, at present, in highly primitive states of organisation for the formation of superior units”. It is for this reason that they have not yet been able to submit themselves to a superior authority that brings them together, in line with the constant advice given by Einstein for the elimination of war. In any case, Freud thinks that “a bit more truth and sincerity in the relationships between human beings, and with those that govern them, should guide the path towards this transformation”<sup>715</sup>.

Finally, for Freud, as a result of the libidinous bonds and the identification that connects the masses and the governing classes, societies do not fragment themselves as easily as one would expect. Even though there is a limit on social injustice, through which the established order is transformed into a revolutionary tide, the fact is that societies tend to stay together despite many disparities and cases of social injustice. Why is it that we do not see

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<sup>711</sup> This disillusion of the people in relation to their governing group, that could bring about the “psychological poverty of the masses”, is basically triggered by the feeling that justice is not the same for all. Freud meditated about the First World War: “The citizen, as an individual, sees with amazement that in this war there is something that could already be seen in peacetime; it proves that the State has prohibited the individual from committing injustice not because it wanted to abolish it, but rather because it wished to have it as a monopoly [...] The belligerent State allows itself to commit all forms of injustice and all kinds of violence that would dishonour the individual”. The moral poverty of the individual and the bankruptcy of society come from this discredit that the State has self-inflicted through practising injustice. Freud continues his analysis: “The State requires that its citizens show the maximum possible obedience and abnegation, but also prevents them from achieving this by excessively covering up the truth and censoring intercommunications and the free expression of opinions, so that the people who are thus intellectually oppressed have their spirits indefensible, faced with every unfavourable situation and disastrous rumour. The State forsakes all guarantees and all agreements that they had entered into with other States and openly confesses their yearning and thirst for power, on which the individual needs to inflict sanctions, in the name of patriotism” (All quotations from FREUD, [1915b], p. 2104. ).

<sup>712</sup> In 1915, in the *Current Comments on War and Death*, he would write: “We must not even be surprised if the slackening of moral relations between the peoples may have had a bearing on the morality of the individual, as our conscience is not the incorruptible judge that the moralists suppose it is; it is just, in its origin, “social anguish”, nothing more. When the community forsakes all forms of censorship, the control of bad passions also ceases, and human beings then commit acts of cruelty, malice, betrayal and brutality whose possibility would be considered incompatible with their cultural level” (FREUD, [1915b], p. 2104. The translation is mine).

<sup>713</sup> EINSTEIN, 2005, p. 181.

<sup>714</sup> FREUD, [1927], p. 333; [1927a], p. 2966.

<sup>715</sup> All the quotations in this paragraph are from FREUD, [1915b], p. 2109-2110.

bloody revolutions at every moment?

Einstein felt that this social conformism was the result, mainly, of the social manipulation made by the governing classes, that managed “at the service of their ambitions”<sup>716</sup> to dominate “the wish of the majority, which after all are those who lose and suffer with war”<sup>717</sup>, by dominating the press, education and the Church. Freud, however, found even deeper reasons, that rest in the subconscious affective identification of the masses, with their leaders, without which reasonably stable social unity could not exist<sup>718</sup>.

Freud thought that the “ideal conditions” for the elimination of bellicose violence “would obviously be found in a community where each person would subordinate his or her impulsive life to the rules of reason”. Of course, here Freud was thinking of that second stage of moral development, which we have already analysed, which is the stage in which the human being, through an efficient *super-ego* operating within his or her soul, develops a moral conscience which keeps him or her apart from violence and from destructive impulses. Freud thinks that “Nothing less than this could create such a complete and long-lasting union between human beings, thus making sure of the presence of emotional ties between them”. However, Freud also felt that this strategy of educating and forming leaders of a “superior class of independent thinkers”, that were “immune to intimidation and fervorous in the search of the truth”, although highly desirable, “is probably a Utopian hope”<sup>719</sup>.

Einstein also had this perception of fragility of the masses and how they could be easily manipulated by their leaders<sup>720</sup>. In his text *Society and Personality*, he wrote, in 1934:

In two weeks, the human masses from any nation, just like a flock of lambs, may be persuaded by the newspapers into a state of unrest so furious that the human beings are willing to wear uniforms, to kill and die, just to meet the sordid aims of a few interested people.<sup>721</sup>

For this reason, Einstein felt, just like Freud, a need for individuals to be educated in a way that does not let them be led by the suggestions of the masses. For this reason, he defended the position of free-thinking. In 1950, writing to the *Italian Society for the Progress of Science*, Einstein said: “Even though it may be true that a person who is inherently free and scrupulous may be destroyed, such a person may never be enslaved or used as a blind instrument [by the State]”.<sup>722</sup>

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<sup>716</sup> §E5.

<sup>717</sup> §E5.

<sup>718</sup> In *The Future of an Illusion* (1927), he writes: “This identification among the oppressed with the class that exploits and oppresses them, however, is just a fragment of a wider whole, as, in addition, the oppressed can also feel they have bonds of affection with their oppressors and, despite their hostility, see in their lords their ideal. If such relationships did not exist, these being essentially satisfactory, one could not understand why certain civilisations have kept existing for so long, in spite of the justified hostility of large masses of human beings” (FREUD, [1927], p. 335; [1927a], p. 2966. The translation is mine).

<sup>719</sup> All the quotations in this paragraph are from §F15.

<sup>720</sup> On the occasion of his eightieth birthday, he said that “Only a few people are capable of expressing with equanimity some opinion that differs from the pre-conceptions of their social atmosphere. Most people, indeed, are really incapable of forming such opinions” (EINSTEIN, 2005, p. 120-121). Einstein thought that this behaviour of enslavement was particularly applicable to collective behaviour of the masses. For him, “Communities tend to be less guided by conscience and the sense of responsibility than individuals” (EINSTEIN, c. 1954, p. 54). (The translation of the quotations is mine.)

<sup>721</sup> EINSTEIN, c. 1954, p. 14-15.

<sup>722</sup> EINSTEIN, 2005, p. 266. Einstein felt that what is “truly valuable for the procession of human life is not the political state, but rather the creative and conscientious individual, the personality; only this can bring about the noble and the sublime, while the herd of cattle, as such, remains obtuse, within the realm of thinking and feelings” (Id. Ibid., p. 265). On several occasions, he encouraged his audience and correspondents to always take up a critical and independent posture with regard to the social reality and the cultural dogmas, especially those of a political nature. He advised them never to do anything “which would go against their conscience, even if this is required by the State” (Id. Ibid., p. 259). He said that “The unworthy passion for adaptive conformism, shown by many within our people, has always been very repulsive to me” (Id.

In a speech given to the *Disarmament Conference of 1932*, Einstein mentioned some “old sayings” that, in his view, had the force of eternal truth. “The State is made for the human being, and not the human being for the State [...] In other words, the State should be our servant, rather than we its slaves”<sup>723</sup>. As we have already seen, it is clear that for Einstein the State was not an amorphous and abstract institution, but rather a social institution mainly guided by the wishes and interests of the governing classes and “at the service of its ambitions”<sup>724</sup>. This connection between the people, the Government and the State was also very clear to Freud, who felt that “The peoples are represented, to a certain extent, by the States they constitute, and these States, in turn, are represented by the Governments that control them”<sup>725</sup>.

However, one important difference between the convictions of Freud and Einstein is that Freud had a tendency to side with the leaders of society<sup>726</sup>, while Einstein showed a clear preference for the common people. Peter Gay commented that “Freud, an old-style liberal and challenging the democratic nature of his time, established a clear distinction between the lower strata of the population<sup>727</sup> and the elite”<sup>728</sup>, and informed that this “demeaning epithet, *Gesindel*<sup>729</sup>, is often found in Freud’s works”<sup>730</sup>. Gay also says that Freud had “strong disdain for the masses”<sup>731 732</sup>.

While Freud saw the people just as a manipulation mass, Einstein insisted that they had capacity and, as a result, responsibility, with regard to the guidance of society<sup>733</sup>. In his

Ibid., p. 259). His view is that “*Blind faith in authority* is the worst enemy of the truth” (Id. Ibid., p. 253), and he also believed that “The health of society, therefore, depends on both the *independence of the constituent individuals* that compose the group, as also on an intense social cohesion between them” (EINSTEIN, c. 1954, p. 14).

<sup>723</sup> EINSTEIN, 2005, p. 180.

<sup>724</sup> §E5.

<sup>725</sup> FREUD, [1915b], p. 2104.

<sup>726</sup> Freud showed an important trait which is that of identification with, and sympathy for the ideas of, the bourgeois class and the aristocracy, in spite of his humble origins, or possibly because of them. According to several people who have written biographies of Freud, one consequence of the years in poverty and deprivation of Freud’s childhood and adolescence was that he sought refuge in the security and conservatism of bourgeois life, which he finally achieved in his mature years. Louis Breger points out that “Within the close family circle, Freud expressed values and tastes of a more patriarchal nature, common in the middle classes. These preferences came partly from his need to put things right with the poverty and the chaos of his first years...” (BREGER, 2000, p. 289). Paul Roazen writes that one of the many aspects of the Freud’s complex personality was that of being “a bourgeois gentleman with many of the pre-conceptions of his time” (ROAZEN, 1971, p. xix). (The translations of all quotations are mine.)

<sup>727</sup> Different from many European intellectuals, and even some friends and colleagues, who were in favour of the forces of social transformation of the first quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, such as socialism and feminism, Freud always remained a conservative, also in terms of social ascent and personal enrichment. Louis Breger makes a comment that: “The Freud family were successful Jews, with two paths open. They could either remain in contact with their own history and show sympathy for the working class and the poor, or have an identification with the upper classes. Freud’s reaction was quite complex; some of his comments showed a perception of the difficulties brought by the poverty of his youth and showed sympathy for the lower strata of society. However, such comments were rare; most of the time, he showed greater distance from those people who he often treated as *Gesindel* — *the worthless people, the masses, the scum* — and identified himself with those who he considered respectful and powerful. In 1917, he wrote to Lou Andréas-Salomé about *das blöde Volk* — *the imbecile people*” (BREGER, 2000, p. 292). (The translation of the quotations is mine.)

<sup>728</sup> GAY, 2004, p. 480.

<sup>729</sup> In German: scum, worthless people, poor people.

<sup>730</sup> GAY, 2004, p. 480.

<sup>731</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 480.

<sup>732</sup> According to Louis Breger, both Adler and Ferenczi, disciples, analyst colleagues, and later enemies of Freud “showed a special compassion for the poor, something notably absent in Freud’s own works” (BREGER, 2000, p. 340). An investigation of the social class of the patients treated by Adler and Freud makes this difference quite clear. While 74% of Freud’s patients were wealthy, 33% middle class and only 3% from the working class, in the case of Adler 25% were from the upper classes, 39% of the middle classes and 35% from the lower classes (Id. Ibid., p. 196). (The translations of the quotations are mine.)

<sup>733</sup> In 1944, writing about the heroes of the Warsaw Ghetto, for the Bulletin of the Society of Polish Jews, Einstein said: “The German people are responsible for these mass assassinations, while as a group of people they also need to be punished [...] Behind the Nazi Party are the German people themselves, who elected Hitler to power after he had made his disgraceful intentions quite clear, without any possibility of doubt, in his book and his speeches” (EINSTEIN, 2005, p. 109.). In 1931, in a text about the Disarmament Conference of the League of Nations, in 1932, Einstein always reminded his readers that “it is

work *Peace*, of 1932, Einstein, although accepting the powerful manipulation and influence of the leading groups in society, points out the essential responsibility of the people to make sure that their leaders follow paths leading to peace:

The powerful industrial groups involved in the production of weapons make their uttermost efforts, in all countries, to prevent the peaceful settlement of international disputes, and rulers may only achieve this great aim if they are sure that they have the vigorous support of most of their people. In these days of democratic government, *the destiny of nations lies in the hands of their own people; and each individual must always bear this in mind.*<sup>734</sup>

If the confidence that Freud had in the human masses, differently from Einstein, this was strangely negative, and we can see that this aspect of his *Weltanschauung* is closely linked to his *Bildung*<sup>735</sup>, his background, and particularly his upbringing within the context of childhood and youth, within a family and an environment where both the financial aspects and the interpersonal relationships were extremely complex and full of traumatic experiences<sup>736</sup>. According to Peter Gay, “the memories of the poverty of his family seem to have been painful for Freud”<sup>737</sup>. So much so that he created for himself a “family romance” (as he would later call the almost universal trend for people to fantasise their parents as being more prosperous or more famous than they actually are), as shown in a passage from a disguised autobiography of 1899, in which he says that his family has a non-existent lost fortune.

the duty of all intelligent and responsible people to make every effort to remind public opinion, many times, about the importance of the 1932 Conference. Only if the Governments may get support from a desire for peace by a decisive majority in their respective countries can this great aim actually be achieved, and, for the formation of such public opinion, each and every one of us is responsible for his or her words and acts” (EINSTEIN, c. 1954, p. 99). (All the translations and emphasis are mine.)

<sup>734</sup> EINSTEIN, 2005, p. 167. The translation and the emphasis are mine.

<sup>735</sup> *Bildung* is a key concept in the culture and the theory of German education. The word, as many within German philosophy and culture, lacks a precise and categorical definition. Klaus Prange says that “The term includes a wide range of connotations and applications which defy definition” (PRANGE, 2004, p. 501). Prange makes a long list of words that, in English and French, come close to the concept of *Bildung*: “training”, “growth”, “form”, “education”, “culture”; and also “higher education”, “superior culture”, “refinement”, “a good upbringing”; and, correspondingly in French: “*culture*”, “*civilisation*”, “*formation*”, “*façonnement*”, “*discipline intellectuelle*”. Victor Hell sums up the idea of *Bildung* as “intellectual, aesthetic and moral upbringing” (HELL, 1989, p. 70).

<sup>736</sup> Breger feels that the depreciative image of the “masses” that was a feature of the *Weltanschauung* of Freud had a negative effect on his analysis, as he saw them as a group of “creatures moved by their egoistic impulses” (BREGER, 2000, p. 271), who needed or even required “a strong leader who would keep them under control” (Id. Ibid., p. 271). In this analysis of the masses, Freud was influenced by the work of Gustave Le Bon, and talks about “his brilliantly executed picture of the collective mind” (Freud, apud. Id. Ibid., p. 271). However, Breger tells us that Le Bon was a “notorious misogynist and a racist” (Id. Ibid., p. 271). His other influence was his own work, *Totem and Taboo* (1913), in which he presented the “scientific myth” (Id. Ibid., p. 271) about the origin of human society — the primitive horde and the rebellion of the children against the primitive father, and its philogenetic repercussions (as we have already had the opportunity to mention several times). Breger states that “Even though Freud tried to disarm the reader by calling *Totem and Taboo* a ‘myth’, in later essays such as *Psychology of the Masses*, this myth becomes his own truth, used to explain things such as the relationships between soldiers or the bonds between members of religious organisations” (Id. Ibid., p. 271). José Brunner agrees with this analysis made by Breger and adds that “For Freud, all social relationships, both private and public, hide an Oedipian typicality that subjects its several forms of expression. He took this postulate from the Oedipian subconscious nucleus of social relationships as being the last reference point of social analysis, that could only be reached through a psychoanalytical investigation” (BRUNNER, 2000, p. 81-82). Louis Breger adds that: “History offers many examples of competition, envy and group violence, but the theories proposed by Freud and Le Bon have little to offer as an explanation for this phenomenon. The soldiers in the First World War were certainly not a ‘mass’ that loved their generals, or a multitude controlled by a leader, like the cases of the primitive horde which was supposedly commanded by a powerful father. In the same way, not everything can be explained in religion through the love that the blinded masses feel for holy figures or for God himself” (BREGER, 2000, p. 271). (The translation of the quotations is mine.)

<sup>737</sup> Gay, 2004, p. 25.



These significant differences between the personalities<sup>738</sup> of Einstein and Freud are, obviously, the results of their different *Bildungen*. While Einstein was brought up in a “happy, comfortable and cheerful home”<sup>739</sup>, Freud, as well says Max Schur, personal doctor and biographer, came from a family that “always lived a marginal existence, bordering on the highly precarious at times.”<sup>740</sup> While Einstein had a home full of music and with tender loving relationships, especially with his sister Maja, in the Freud family home was prohibited — because Sigmund, from when he was very small, could not stand it — and the fraternal relations were difficult. Over a period of ten years, Freud faced an endless sequence of brothers who would, throughout his childhood, steal the comfort of his mother’s presence that he needed so much<sup>741</sup>.

The infancy marked by relative and often severe deprivation and the “fear of poverty”<sup>742</sup>, left marks that would have an influence not only on the Freud’s personality but also on the theoretical, social and political development of psychoanalysis. One first consequence of the marks of poverty and the financial dependence on others was that, together with a “profound self-confidence”<sup>743</sup> that Ernest Jones saw in Freud, there were also “strange feelings of inferiority”<sup>744</sup> which covered it up. Even in adulthood, Freud was characterised by that which Paul Roazen<sup>745</sup> calls “a tendency to idolise heroes”<sup>746</sup>, and which

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<sup>738</sup> While Freud’s personal and public life was full of ceremony and circumspection, especially concerning speech and dress, that of Einstein, as expected, was more messy with regard to appearance, and not even concerned with fame and fortune. All photographs of Freud, even in the home environment, clearly show this air of careful elegance and refinement. As Peter Gay points out, “The Freud we know best, the one which always appears scowling in photographs, is far from being an illusion” (GAY, 2004, p. 158), and, for millions of people, the picture of Freud is that of “an old and austere gentleman, well dressed, with penetrating eyes and the ever-present cigar” (GAY, 2004, p. 158). In the same way, the pictures of Einstein conjure up the opposite. One can not imagine a picture of Freud like those we have of Einstein: the messy hair, clothes lacking elegance, the ridiculous beach sandals piled atop a bicycle, or — the most famous — showing his tongue! In relation to his personal appearance, two moments in Einstein’s life clearly show this attitude. Once, when his wife asked him to dress more smartly when going to his office at University, he replied: “Why should I? Everyone knows me there!”. On another occasion, when asked to come in smart dress for his first big conference, he replied: “Why should I? Nobody knows me there!” (EINSTEIN, 2005, p. 258. The translation is mine).

<sup>739</sup> CLARK, 1972, p. 33.

<sup>740</sup> SCHUR, 1972, p. 22.

<sup>741</sup> In Freiburg were born Julius (1857-1858) and Anna (1858-1955). Then, in Vienna, followed Rosa (1860-1942), Marie (1861-1942), Adolfine (1862-1942), Pauline (1863-1942) and Alexander (1866-1943). Julius, the second son of Jacob and Amalia, Freud’s parents, died of intestinal problems at the age of about seven months (Freud was two at the time) and was given the name of Amalia’s younger brother who had died at the age of twenty, one month before the birth of Freud’s little brother. Louis Breger points out that “The combination between his mother’s suffering with the death of her brother and her second son, and the apparently endless pregnancies together with the needs of the new babies, meant that young Freud could have very little of his mother’s time, attention and care” (BREGER, 2000, p. 14.). So, when Freud was less than two years old, the situation got even worse with birth of his sister Anna, in 1858. The feelings of jealousy and extreme rivalry were inevitable for Freud. As Ernest Jones wrote, “The experience seems to have had a lasting effect, as Freud never got to like this sister.” (JONES, 1963, v. 1, p. 10). (All the translations of the quotations are mine.)

<sup>742</sup> Freud to Fliess on 7/5/1900. Apud. GAY, 2004, p. 136.

<sup>743</sup> JONES, 1963, v. 2, p. 3.

<sup>744</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 3.

<sup>745</sup> ROAZEN, 1971, p. 70.

<sup>746</sup> Freud, due to “strange feelings of inferiority” (JONES, 1963, v. 2, p. 3), probably due to the request for good performance that was enforced by the family, together with the lack of cosiness in the home, tried to overcome his childhood marked by deprivations through identification with great military heroes, something that arose at a very early point in his life. In the analysis made by Louis Breger, this was only a natural consequence of the compensatory escape that Freud made from his poor and traumatic youth. As he puts it, “Like many other intelligent children in similar circumstances, he sought refuge in the world of his imagination” (BREGER, 2000, p. 2). In this compensatory escape to the world of heroes, it was very visible that Freud had a preference of identifying with military heroes: “The heroic figure that seduced him most was that of the conqueror, the general that would lead his Army to victory in battle. Alexander the Great; Napoleon and the Carthaginian general Hannibal, who crossed the Alps to attack the might of Rome, these were the man that would awaken his ardour” (BREGER, 2000, p. 3). Ernest Jones, the most praising of all Freud’s biographers, comments: “During his maturity period, Freud went through a phase of strong militarist tones, which he put down to the battles he had fought with his nephew in his early childhood. One of the first books to have come into his hands, after he learnt to read, was *Consulate and Empire*, by Thier [A. Thiers: *History of the Consulate and the French Empire under Napoleon*]. He [Freud] tells us how he used to stick small labels on the backs of his lead toy soldiers, with the names of Napoleon’s officers. His favourite was Masséna, who

Ernest Jones mentions as being “dependency and a corresponding excess of esteem for other people”<sup>747</sup>. Jones puts this tendency shown by Freud down to a projection of “his innate sense of capacity and superiority over a series of mentors”<sup>748</sup>. During his life, Freud would become “strangely dependent on some of them for his security”<sup>749</sup>.

Einstein, on the contrary, had been brought up in a family that “had broken away with authority; that would disagree, seeking independence and which had deliberately fled from traditions and customs”<sup>750</sup>. Always encouraged to be independent and self-sufficient at home, Einstein consolidated, during his stay at the *Luitpold Gymnasium*, which he entered at the age of ten, this attitude of “not caring about traditional beliefs”<sup>751</sup> and a clear “opposition attitude that would stay with him throughout his life”<sup>752</sup>, especially with regard to authoritarianism, be it political or educational<sup>753</sup>. Even though he had been a child with visible learning difficulties (he did not learn to speak before he was three, and at the age of nine still had serious difficulties in expressing himself), the love and support he received at home ensured that he had an independent and self-confident personality.

While Freud constantly sought fame and prestige, Einstein, who became famous while still young, felt uneasy with his sudden universal fame. As he wrote in a letter to Heinrich Zangger, on 3 January 1920, “Ever since the result of light deflection became known to the general public”<sup>754</sup>, an idolisation of my person was built, which makes me feel like a pagan idol. But this, God willing, will also pass”<sup>755</sup>. And, as he said in *My Creed* (1932): “All people should be respected as the people they are, but no-one should ever be idolised”<sup>756</sup>.

Due to these significant differences in their respective *Bildungen* (backgrounds), it was only natural that Einstein and Freud also had differences in their *Weltanschauungen* (cosmovisions) in relation to leaders and the masses. Einstein never let himself think that the great leaders were the crafty political and military bosses, especially those who resort to force to restore order. As he sees it, “the great leaders” were not military leaders, but rather those people who guide humanity in the direction of morality and justice.<sup>757</sup>

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was apparently Jewish; he [Freud] was helped in this hero-worship by the fact that they were both born on the very same day, one hundred years apart” (JONES, 1963, v. 1, p. 23). (The translation of the quotations is mine.)

<sup>747</sup> JONES, 1963, v. 2, p. 420.

<sup>748</sup> JONES, 1963, v. 2, p. 3.

<sup>749</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 3.

<sup>750</sup> CLARK, 1972, p. 26.

<sup>751</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 26.

<sup>752</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 26.

<sup>753</sup> In his 1931 text, *How I See the World*, Einstein emphatically showed this repulsion of a lifetime: “This topic leads me to that which is the worst fruit of life as part of a herd: the military system, which I hate. The fact that a man feels pleasure in parading, marching to the tune of a band, is enough for me to despise him. It was only through a mistake that he was given a large brain; the spinal fluid would have been enough. We should, as soon as possible, remove this cancer from civilisation. Mandatory heroism, free violence and all that other nauseous stupidity, in the name of patriotism – how passionately do I hate them all! How vile and useless war seems to me. I would rather be drawn and quartered rather than participate in such ignominy” (EINSTEIN, c. 1954, p. 10. The translation is mine).

<sup>754</sup> This is a reference to the research made by English scientists that proved, during the solar eclipse of 1919, the curvature of light caused by the gravitational field of the sun, thus confirming the fundamental elements of the Theory of Relativity that had been published by Einstein in 1905.

<sup>755</sup> EINSTEIN, 2005, p. 5.

<sup>756</sup> EINSTEIN, 2005, p. 265.

<sup>757</sup> In an announcement made in September 1937, Einstein wrote: “Humanity has all the reasons to place those who proclaim high standards and moral values above those who discover the objective truth. What humanity owes to personalities such as Buddha, Moses and Jesus seems, in my opinion, to be much higher than all the conquests of investigative and creative minds” (EINSTEIN, 2005, p. 274). In his text about moral decline, of 1937, in the same way, he said: “I am firmly convinced that the passionate desire for justice and for the truth has done much more for the enhancement of the condition of the human being than astute political sagacity, which, in the end, just generates general suspicion. Who would doubt the fact that Moses was a better leader of humanity than Macchiavelli?” (EINSTEIN, 1996, p. 8). (The translation of the quotations is mine.)

While Freud, with his identifications with great military heroes<sup>758</sup>, got as far as justifying leadership based on force and on a dictatorial regime, Einstein never allowed himself to have such feelings. One example of Freud's political confusion was the eulogy that he wrote in a copy of *Warum Krieg?* which he sent to Italian dictator Benito Mussolini, which greatly exceeded reasonable limits: "To Benito Mussolini, with respectful regards from an elderly gentleman who sees in the ruler the hero of culture"<sup>759</sup>.

Different from Einstein, who at one time openly defended socialism (but not the Soviet regime, which he perceived as autocratic), Freud never had a personal identification with socialism (nor social democracy) or Communism<sup>760</sup>. This equidistant position shown by Freud, with some coldness and disregard, would remain the same immediately after the First World War and immediately before the Second. On 20 February 1934, Freud wrote to his son Ernst commenting on the violent reaction of the Dollfuss Government against socialists in Vienna. He said "the future is uncertain: we could have Austrian fascism or the Swastika"<sup>761</sup>. And then he remembered Shakespeare, saying: "Our attitudes in relation to both these political possibilities [Austrian Fascism or Nazism] could only be summed up in the words of Mercutio in *Romeo and Juliet*: 'A plague in both your homes'"<sup>762</sup>.

In all these analyses about relationships between the masses and the leaders, both Einstein and Freud are looking into the paths to peace within the domain of institutional social pacifism, according to the classification proposed by Bobbio, as they seek the paths to peace through the social transformation of relationships of power. In the same way, when they look into the issue of motivation, the values and the education of leaders of society, as also the subconscious causes that keep human beings bonded together and keep the masses tied to the leaders, both, especially Freud, suggest new paths to peace that rest in the realms of ethico-finalist pacifism, especially in its therapeutical side.

From the extremely complex and dynamic figure that arises from the inter-relationships between the components of this structure: individuals, society, rulers and States, what seems to be quite clear to both Einstein and Freud is the need, on the one hand, for the rulers to be sincerely interested in the well-being of their people – applying and defending justice more than any other interest, and peace above any smaller advantage – and, on the other, that the peoples of the world should make an effort to control their rulers and demand from them, keeping lucid and with independence of judgement, those measures which are more efficient for the protection and the promotion of collective living.

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<sup>758</sup> Freud, throughout his life, kept grandiose identification with important military and warrior heroes (BREGER, 2000, pp. 2-3, 27-28, 31, 42, 48, 88, 137, 160-162, 205, 240. GAY, 2004, pp. 28-29, 36, 134, 140, 141, 295, 546, 547). Peter Gay mentions an event in his youth that, among others, could have given rise to these compensatory identifications. According to Gay, Freud felt a threatening shame on hearing a report about how his father had humiliated himself before a Christian, and thus, "Fuelled by the spectacle of a cowardly Jew [his father!] demeaning himself to a Christian, Freud developed fantasies of revenge. Freud identified himself with the magnificent and intrepid Semite, Hannibal, who had promised to gain revenge for Carthage, no matter how powerful the Romans could be" (GAY, 2004, p. 28). Throughout his whole life, Freud would uphold this type of grandiose identification with historical figures. As Peter Gay well writes, Freud "had a bit of a conscientious hero inside himself, through the identification with giants in Universal History, such as Leonardo da Vinci and Hannibal, not to mention Moses" (GAY, 2004, p. 141).

<sup>759</sup> Apud. ROAZEN, 1971, p. 534.

<sup>760</sup> In the analysis made by Peter Gay, throughout his life Freud kept his position as a central Liberal, without even having given his support to either the conservative forces of the Austro-Hungarian Empire or the revolutionary forces of the right or the left. In 1920, in a letter to Kata Levy, a friend and former analysis patient from Hungary, Freud would write: "the reactionary wave should get itself installed here as well, as the revolutionary has not brought anything pleasant. Which is the worse scum? Certainly the one on top" (Apud. Gay, 2004, p. 356).

<sup>761</sup> Freud, Ernst, 1964, p. 420.

<sup>762</sup> Id. Ibid., p. 420.

### **The Rose of Hiroshima**

Think of the children  
 Telepathic and dumb  
 Think of the girls  
 Inexact and blind  
 Think of the women  
 Altered routes  
 Think of the wounds  
 Like warm roses  
 But oh, do not forget  
 The rose, the rose  
 The rose of Hiroshima  
 The hereditary rose  
 The radioactive rose  
 Stupid and invalid  
 The rose with cirrhosis  
 The atomic anti-rose  
 Without colour or perfume  
 Without a rose or anything.

Vinícios de Moraes<sup>763</sup>

The requirement that Auschwitz should never repeat  
 itself is foremost for education. [...] It was the  
 barbaric act against which all education is directed.

Theodor Adorno<sup>764</sup>

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<sup>763</sup> Available at: <http://www.secrel.com.br/jpoesia/vm02.html>. Accessed on 24/1/06.

<sup>764</sup> Adorno, 2003, p. 119.

## 6 FINAL COMMENTS

### 6.1 Comparing the letters

Even though he lived until 1939, Freud was definitely a 19<sup>th</sup> Century gentleman, with a *Weltanschauung* consisting basically of German Illuminism, who kept himself away from the main lines of cultural innovation of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, in the arts, in music and even in science. His main perspective was towards the *inside, and the past*. Towards the inside of the human being and towards the past times of humanity.

Einstein, one generation younger than Freud, was clearly a 20<sup>th</sup> Century man, fully integrated in its scientific, cultural and social dimensions. His main focus was towards the *outside and the future*. Outside, towards the infinite Universe that he had helped to clarify, and to the future, towards a world with more justice and peace.

The approaches used by Einstein and Freud about war and peace, in *Warum Krieg?* naturally reflect these characteristics of their respective *Bildungen*<sup>765</sup> and *Weltanschauungen*<sup>766</sup>. While Einstein is basically concerned with war and peace in their external aspects — social and institutional —, Freud gives privilege to his focus about the internal and psychological dynamics, both individually and collectively. In his personal life, Freud was a man of domestic scenes. Einstein had the whole world as his horizon. Both, nevertheless, were excellent fruit borne by illustration and culture, well characteristic of the German tradition of the *Bildung*. Neither Einstein nor Freud would ever have been what they got to be had they not been inserted in this tradition, as “assimilated Jews”<sup>767</sup>.

Despite their significant differences in background, personality and life trails, Einstein and Freud, when talking about war and peace, seem to talk together. In his yearning for the end of the bellicose hostilities and the establishment of universal and definite peace between men, they talk as if in a chorus. Both these great men have, through their lives, trailed a path towards peace and understanding, signing manifestos, writing texts, communicating through abundant correspondence with the big and the small... Freud trailed this path in a more solitary way, with gradual and cautious advances, oft bordering on dithering, and with a somewhat pessimistic feeling. Einstein got involved with the world — in spite of loving solitude —, and was shot to fame in impressive style, advancing with great conviction and an optimism bordering on the purest Utopia.

When taken in perspective, we can see that the letters of both Einstein and Freud in *Warum Krieg?* show the essence of their thoughts about war and peace. Both letters were written in a period of personal and intellectual maturity of them both and, in many respects (especially the letter written by Freud), summarise the thoughts and the convictions of a whole lifetime. It is possible to extract, from almost every phrase in both letters, a universe of references to countless other works and texts of both these authors.

It also seems correct for us to say that these letters reflect the whole range of convictions of Einstein and Freud in relation to war and peace. Maybe the only exception is the movement made by Einstein — based on the horrors inflicted on the world by the Second World War, especially by the activities of the Hitler Government — of the position of almost radical pacifism to a pacifism which accepted the use of force to avoid the brutal and unfair

<sup>765</sup> *Bildung*: “intellectual, aesthetic and moral grounding” (HELL, 1989, p. 70).

<sup>766</sup> Cosmvision, world vision.

<sup>767</sup> The tradition of the German *Bildung*, in general, and its strength and preponderance in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century — the century of *Bildung* —, was of great importance to the Jewish community, or at least to that part of this Community in which Einstein and Freud were inserted. It offered a favourable environment and an important instrument for those Jews who sought to be part of the social, political and economic lives of the German world, the so-called *assimilated Jews*.

extermination of human beings. This change of focus took root in Einstein in a period after his letter to Freud (1932) and, for this reason, it is not visible in the correspondence mentioned. Aside from this sole aspect, all other issues and arguments, hypotheses and concepts presented by Einstein and Freud in *Warum Krieg?* reflect their thoughts before and after the letters were written.

While Freud stayed closer to the theoretical limits ascribed by Norberto Bobbio to *passive pacifism*, Einstein puts his body and soul into *active pacifism*. Freud, throughout his life, was much more concerned with trying to understand and explain violence and war, than actually to tackle these problems. In contrast, Einstein was an active pacifist, seeking all intellectual and social means to defend the cause of peace.

In the letters they exchange, however, both Einstein and Freud pass through all the branches and focuses which Norberto Bobbio associates with *active pacifism*. They condemn the race to arms, as is expected of *instrumental active pacifism*. They seek the path to peace through a world government and the establishment of international jurisprudence that forbids war between nations — and, in so doing, express bold ideas that belong to *institutional active pacifism* in its *judicial branch*. They also denounce social injustice and the oppression and manipulation of the governing classes as one of the obstacles preventing peace, as also they stress the value of culture in the elimination of war and, in so doing, they speak from a viewpoint that is typical of *social institutional pacifism*. Finally, on analysing the needs and possibilities of interior transformation of the human being to avoid the eruption of bellicose conflict, both entered the vast arena of *ethical-finalist active pacifism*. Einstein, in his letter, invokes the issue of the influence of the human psyche on the origin of wars, and the need of its due guidance for the establishment of peace. Freud looks at this need in detail, and shows that it is indeed possible, with arguments that Bobbio considers to be part of the standpoint of *therapeutic (or materialist) ethical-finalist active pacifism*.

In general, it can be said that the letter written by Einstein reflects the motto that “peace is necessary”, while the letter written by Freud says “peace is possible”.

## 6.2 Materialism versus spiritualism

As we well know, Freud looked at the world from a purely materialist point of view, ignoring any type of mystic or transcendental explanation, either for nature itself or the human beings<sup>768</sup>. Einstein, on the other hand, moved within a *Weltanschauung* with a definitely spiritualist slant<sup>769</sup>, even though he never actually got to practice religion and managed to keep a critical attitude in relation to many aspects of institutionalised religion. Einstein was not able to imagine a personalised or anthropoform god, as some religious traditions propose. However, he did make a point of expressing and justifying his religious convictions<sup>770</sup>.

<sup>768</sup> In the year before his death, Freud felt the need to say that: “Never in my private life, nor in my texts, have I ever made any secret of the fact that I am a downright disbeliever” (Freud, apud. GAY, 2004, p. 477). This clearly atheist posture obviously went back to the days of his youth. Peter Gay said that Freud “had been a coherent and militant atheist since his student days, mocking God and religion, not even sparing the god and the religion of his family” (Freud, apud. GAY, 2004, p. 477). Over the years, Freud never stopped giving attention to the religious phenomenon, always with the ultimate aim of attacking it. As Gay writes: “The destruction of religion with psychoanalytical weapons had, therefore, been on Freud’s agenda for many years” (Freud, apud. GAY, 2004, p. 478).

<sup>769</sup> In a letter dated 14 January 1920 to Georg, Earl of Arco, Einstein wrote: “I am convinced that the suprapersonal content transmitted by religion, even though it may be primitive in form, is more valuable than the materialism proposed by Haeckel. I believe that even in our days the elimination of sacred traditions would still result in an impoverishment of spirit and morals — no matter how shameful and vile the attitudes and actions of the clergy may be under many aspects” (EINSTEIN, 2005, p. 193. The translation is mine).

<sup>770</sup> In 1927, in a letter to a banker in Colorado, USA, Einstein said: “My religiousness consists of a humble admiration of the infinitely superior spirit that is revealed, even in the little we can understand about the part of the Universe we know. This deeply emotional conviction of the presence of a superior rational being, which is revealed in the incomprehensible Universe, is my idea of God” (EINSTEIN, 2005, p. 195-196. The translation is mine).

Although he was Jewish, Einstein was quite happy to defend Jesus as a sacred figure above any possibility of myth. In an interview given to G. S. Viereck and published in the *Saturday Evening Post* of 26 October 1929, Einstein said: “No-one can read the Bible without feeling the real presence of Jesus. His personality comes out in every word. No mythical figure would have this life force”<sup>771</sup>. As the most famous and cultured scientist of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, he felt no reservations about defending the essential harmony between religion and science in a long and famous speech given to the Theological Seminar of Princeton, on 19 May 1939, when, in a famous phrase, he said that “Science without religion is a cripple; religion without science is blind”<sup>772</sup>.

Bearing all this in mind, we can see that Freud’s reply to Einstein’s question – if it would be possible to guide the psychic development of the human being in a way that avoids war — could only be a partial answer. Within the theoretical scheme proposed by Norberto Bobbio, we can see that Freud only managed to address this question from the point of view of *therapeutical ethical-finalist pacifism*, but could add nothing from the standpoint of *spiritualist ethical-finalist pacifism*. His reply to Einstein, therefore, is obviously incomplete, although fascinating, valid and necessary. In other words, Einstein only received half of the possible answer from Freud, in relation to the possibility of acting upon human beings for the construction of peace.

It would be fascinating and enriching to pursue this line of thought, but unfortunately this is not possible here. However, it is important to stress that developments after Freud, in the field of psychology itself, may have filled in this gap. The first thing that comes to mind is the figure of Viktor Frankl, the founder of the third school of psychotherapy in Vienna, together with other key researchers such as Abraham Maslow, Carl Rogers and the followers of Freud, Alfred Adler and Carl Gustav Jung.

In their works, these authors present several different views of human psychology that in many respects have transcendental dimensions<sup>773</sup>, so to speak, that were not included in the psychology proposed by Freud. Their works are extremely lucid and open interesting paths for investigation that could possibly answer, in a more complete manner, the question that Einstein had made to Freud<sup>774</sup>. However, this is not the purpose of our study, and we must content ourselves with ending our comments here, in the hope that they may be useful for forming the panorama as proposed.

### 6.3 The letters and Culture of Peace

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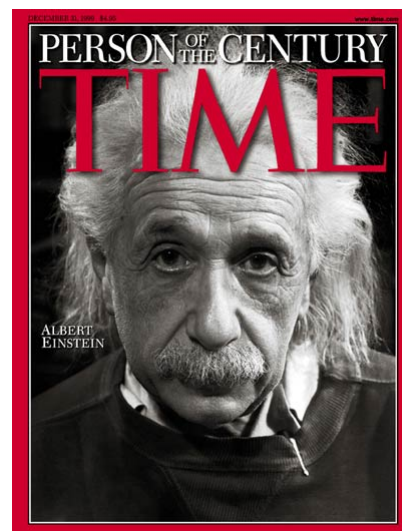
<sup>771</sup> EINSTEIN, 2005, p. 196.

<sup>772</sup> EINSTEIN, c. 1954, p. 46.

<sup>773</sup> The following excerpt from Frankl can show what Einstein could have received as an extra to his question: “As human existence is spiritual existence [...] the real criterion for authentic human existence is only in deciding if a certain phenomenon is instinctual or spiritual [...] the border between the spiritual — that which is human within the human being — and the instinct may not be underestimated. Indeed, we can see this as a hiatus [...] that separates the two fundamentally distinct regions within the total structure of the human being. [...] The body and the psyche can form one unit — a psychophysical unit — but this unit still does not represent the entire human being. Without the spiritual side as an essential base, this unit may not exist. While we are talking only about the body and the psyche, integrity has not yet been given” (FRANKL, 1985, p. 23-25).

<sup>774</sup> Another possible text to be publicised and studied is the *Declaration of Seville*, taken up by UNESCO in 1989. This declaration, since its preparation, has been one of the fundamentals for Peace Culture. It represents the taking of a stand by an eminent group of world-famous scientists, stating that war originates from cultural factors rather than biological factors. They all agree that within the realm of Biology there is no known fact that could prevent the abolition of war. War is not part of the human nature, but rather an invention that could be cast aside, as obsolete and useless.

In 1999, Einstein was chosen by Time Magazine as the “person of the century”, the individual that best represents the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. In the popular culture of millions and millions of people around the world, *to be an Einstein* is synonymous with possession of intellectual grandeur and ability to think. At the same time, his friendly figure awakens an almost irresistible attraction as well as respect for his person. Even so, contemporary generations have little or no information about Einstein’s actions and thoughts about world peace. This is a very unfortunate gap in the contemporary efforts for Culture of Peace. I believe that if Einstein’s arguments and ideas were publicised in the media, through conferences, seminars and debates, as also, and especially, in schools and classrooms where the Culture of Peace is promoted and studied, this would be a very potent reinforcement to the necessary convictions to implement such a venture.



Similarly, the same goes for Freud. In spite of all the development of psychology that has come after him, Freud is still seen as the *father* of this science. Even with the important contributions made by names such as Adler, Jung, Frankl, Horney, Maslow, Skinner, Rogers, Klein and so many others, it is still “Freud explains it!” that is heard everywhere. However, like what happens with the contributions made by Einstein, those held by Freud are also sadly unknown and little used in the educational efforts in working towards Culture of Peace.

Despite the evidence to the contrary on the part of science, popular culture seems to understand war as something inevitable, a kind of natural fate of human nature. The peoples long for peace, but doubt that it would ever be possible. Thus, a “paralysing contradiction” is produced<sup>775</sup> in human efforts working towards peace. Peace needs to appear to the new generations as something like a target to be achieved, rather than just a dream or an illusion: peace based on justice and freedom, unity in diversity, and on all the highest of ideals and values that human beings were capable of producing in their magnificent cultural trail over the millennia.

#The ideas of Einstein and Freud, expressed in *Warum Krieg?*, offer the contemporary world a powerful tool for an education working towards the construction of peace. Not only because their ideas and arguments are both wide in scope and profound, but mainly because they have been written by *Einstein and Freud*. The union of these two names of greater magnitude in the fight for world peace may bring to human hearts, everywhere, and especially to students at schools and universities, that certainty that is so vital for the unwavering efforts towards the elimination of war. Their words and arguments, in our times, could have an effect like that of the significant archaeological discoveries: to influence, through traces of the past, the construction of the present and the future.





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## APPENDIX A

German Version of *Warum Krieg?*<sup>776</sup>

[Albert Einstein para Sigmund Freud]

Caputh, bei Potsdam, 30. Juli 1932.

Lieber Herr Freud!

(§E1) Ich bin glücklich darüber, dass ich durch die Anregung des Völkerbundes und seines Internationalen Instituts für geistige Zusammenarbeit in Paris, in freiem Meinungs austausch mit einer Person meiner Wahl ein frei gewähltes Problem zu erörtern, eine einzigartige Gelegenheit erhalte, mich mit Ihnen über diejenige Frage zu unterhalten, die mir beim gegenwärtigen Stande der Dinge als die wichtigste der Zivilisation erscheint: Gibt es einen Weg, die Menschen von dem Verhängnis des Krieges zu befreien? Die Einsicht, dass diese Frage durch die Fortschritte der Technik zu einer Existenzfrage für die zivilisierte Menschheit geworden ist, ist ziemlich allgemein durchgedrungen, und trotzdem sind die heißen Bemühungen um ihre Lösung bisher in erschreckendem Maße gescheitert.

(§E2) Ich glaube, dass auch unter den mit diesem Problem praktisch und beruflich beschäftigten Menschen, aus einem gewissen Gefühl der Ohnmacht heraus, der Wunsch lebendig ist, Personen um ihre Auffassung des Problems zu befragen, die durch ihre gewohnte wissenschaftliche Tätigkeit zu allen Fragendes Lebens eine weitgehende Distanz gewonnen haben. Was mich selber betrifft, so liefert nur die gewohnte Richtung meines Denkens keine Einblicke in die Tiefen des menschlichen Wollens und Fühlens, so dass ich bei dem hier versuchten Meinungs austausch nicht viel mehr tun kann, als versuchen, die Fragestellung herauszuarbeiten und durch Vorwegnahme der mehr äußerlichen Lösungsversuche Ihnen Gelegenheit zu geben, die Frage vom Standpunkte Ihrer vertieften Kenntnis des menschlichen Trieblebens aus zu beleuchten. Ich vertraue darauf, dass Sie auf Wege der Erziehung werden hinweisen können, die auf einem gewissermaßen unpolitischen Wege psychologische Hindernisse zu beseitigen imstande sind, welche der psychologisch Ungeübte wohl ahnt, deren Zusammenhänge und Wandelbarkeit er aber nicht zu beurteilen vermag.

(§E3) Weil ich selber ein von Affekten nationaler Natur freier Mensch bin, erscheint mir die äußere beziehungsweise organisatorische Seite des Problems einfach: die Staaten scharfen eine legislative und gerichtliche Behörde zur Schlichtung aller zwischen ihnen entstehenden Konflikte. Sie verpflichten sich, sich den von der legislativen Behörde aufgestellten Gesetzen zu unterwerfen, das Gericht in allen Streitfällen anzurufen, sich seinen Entscheidungen bedingungslos zu beugen sowie alle diejenigen Maßnahmen durchzuführen, welche das Gericht für die Realisierung seiner Entscheidungen für notwendig erachtet. Hier schon stoße ich auf die erste Schwierigkeit: Ein Gericht ist eine menschliche Einrichtung, die um so mehr geneigt sein dürfte, ihre Entscheidungen außerrechtlichen Einflüssen zugänglich zu machen, je weniger Macht ihr zur Verfügung steht, ihre Entscheidungen durchzusetzen. Es ist eine Tatsache, mit der man rechnen muss: Recht und Macht sind unzertrennlich verbunden, und die Sprüche eines Rechtsorgans nähern sich um so mehr dem Gerechtigkeitsideal der Gemeinschaft, in deren Namen und Interesse Recht gesprochen wird, je mehr Machtmittel diese Gemeinschaft aufbringen kann, um die Respektierung ihres Gerechtigkeitsideals zu erzwingen. Wir sind aber zur Zeit weit davon entfernt, eine überstaatliche Organisation zu besitzen, die ihrem Gericht unbestreitbare Autorität zu verleihen und der Exekution seiner Erkenntnisse absoluten Gehorsam zu erzwingen imstande wäre. So drängt sich mir die erste Feststellung auf: Der Weg zur internationalen Sicherheit führt über den bedingungslosen Verzicht der Staaten auf einen Teil ihrer Handlungsfreiheit beziehungsweise Souveränität, und es dürfte unbezweifelbar sein, dass es einen ändern Weg zu dieser Sicherheit nicht gibt.

(§E4) Ein Blick auf die Erfolglosigkeit der zweifellos ernst gemeinten Bemühungen der letzten Jahrzehnte, dieses Ziel zu erreichen, lässt jeden deutlich fühlen, dass mächtige psychologische Kräfte am Werke sind, die diese Bemühungen paralisieren. Einige dieser Kräfte liegen offen zutage.

<sup>776</sup> Available at [www.sozialistische-klassiker.org/Einstein/Einstein02.pdf](http://www.sozialistische-klassiker.org/Einstein/Einstein02.pdf). Accessed on 23/11/04.

Das Machtbedürfnis der jeweils herrschenden Schicht eines Staates widersetzt sich einer Einschränkung der Hoheitsrechte desselben. Dieses politische Machtbedürfnis wird häufig genährt aus einem materiell-ökonomisch sich äußernden Machtstreben einer ändern Schicht. Ich denke hier vornehmlich an die innerhalb jedes Volkes vorhandene kleine, aber entschlossene, sozialen Erwägungen und Hemmungen unzugängliche Gruppe jener Menschen, denen Krieg, Waffenherstellung und Handel nichts als eine Gelegenheit sind, persönliche Vorteile zu ziehen, den persönlichen Machtbereich zu erweitern.

(§E5) Diese einfache Feststellung bedeutet aber nur einen ersten Schritt der Erkenntnis der Zusammenhänge. Es erhebt sich sofort die Frage: Wie ist es möglich, dass die soeben genannte Minderheit die Masse des Volkes ihren Gelüsten dienstbar machen kann, die durch einen Krieg nur zu leiden und zu verlieren hat. (Wenn ich von der Masse des Volkes spreche, so schließe ich aus ihr diejenigen nicht aus, die als Soldaten aller Grade den Krieg zum Beruf gemacht haben, in der Überzeugung, dass sie der Verteidigung der höchsten Güter ihres Volkes dienen und dass manchmal die beste Verteidigung der Angriff ist.) Hier scheint die nächstliegende Antwort zu sein: Die Minderheit der jeweils Herrschenden hat vor allem die Schule, die Presse und meistens auch die religiösen Organisationen in ihrer Hand. Durch diese Mittel beherrscht und leitet sie die Gefühle der großen Masse und macht diese zu ihrem willenlosen Werkzeuge.

(§E6) Aber auch diese Antwort erschöpft nicht den ganzen Zusammenhang, denn es erhebt sich die Frage: Wie ist es möglich, dass sich die Masse durch die genannten Mittel bis zur Raserei und Selbstaufopferung entflammen lässt? Die Antwort kann nur sein: Im Menschen lebt ein Bedürfnis zu hassen und zu vernichten. Diese Anlage ist in gewöhnlichen Zeiten latent vorhanden und tritt dann nur beim Abnormalen zutage; sie kann aber leicht geweckt und zur Massenpsychose gesteigert werden. Hier scheint das tiefste Problem des ganzen verhängnisvollen Wirkungskomplexes zu stecken. Hier ist die Stelle, die nur der große Kenner der menschlichen Triebe beleuchten kann.

(§E7) Dies führt auf eine letzte Frage: Gibt es eine Möglichkeit, die psychische Entwicklung der Menschen so zu leiten, dass sie den Psychosen des Hasses und des Vernichtens gegenüber widerstandsfähiger werden? Ich denke dabei keineswegs nur an die sogenannten Ungebildeten. Nach meinen Lebenserfahrungen ist es vielmehr die sogenannte *Intelligenz*, welche den verhängnisvollen Massensuggestionen am leichtesten unterliegt, weil sie nicht unmittelbar aus dem Erleben zu schöpfen pflegt, sondern auf dem Wege über das bedruckte Papier am bequemsten und vollständigsten zu erfassen ist.

(§E8) Zum Schluss noch eins: Ich habe bisher nur vom Krieg zwischen Staaten, also von sogenannten internationalen Konflikten gesprochen. Ich bin mir dessen bewusst, dass die menschliche Aggressivität sich auch in anderen Formen und unter anderen Bedingungen betätigt (z. B. Bürgerkrieg, früher aus religiösen, heute aus sozialen Ursachen heraus, Verfolgung von nationalen Minderheiten). Ich habe aber bewusst die repräsentativste und unheilvollste, weil zügelloseste Form des Konfliktes unter menschlichen Gemeinschaften hervorgehoben, weil sich an ihr vielleicht am ehesten demonstrieren lässt, wie sich kriegerische Konflikte vermeiden ließen.

(§E9) Ich weiß, dass Sie in Ihren Schriften auf alle mit dem uns interessierenden, drängenden Problem zusammenhängenden Fragen teils direkt, teils indirekt geantwortet haben. Es wird aber von großem Nutzen sein, wenn Sie das Problem der Befriedung der Welt im Lichte Ihrer neuen Erkenntnisse besonders darstellen, da von einer solchen Darstellung fruchtbare Bemühungen ausgehen können.

(§E10) Freundlichst grüßt Sie

Ihr A. Einstein.

Wien, im September [1932]

Lieber Herr Einstein!

(§F1) Als ich hörte, dass Sie die Absicht haben, mich zum Gedankenaustausch über ein Thema aufzufordern, dem Sie Ihr Interesse schenken und das Ihnen auch des Interesses Anderer würdig erscheint, stimmte ich bereitwillig zu. Ich erwartete, Sie würden ein Problem an der Grenze des heute Wißbaren wählen, zu dem ein jeder von uns, der Physiker wie der Psychologe, sich seinen besonderen Zugang bahnen könnte, so dass sie sich von verschiedenen Seiten her auf demselben Boden trafen. Sie haben mich dann durch die Fragestellung überrascht, was man tun könne, um das Verhängnis des Krieges von den Menschen abzuwehren. Ich erschrak zunächst unter dem Eindruck meiner fast hätte ich gesagt: unserer Inkompetenz, denn das erschien mir als eine praktische Aufgabe, die den Staatsmännern zufällt. Ich verstand dann aber, dass Sie die Frage nicht als Naturforscher und Physiker erhoben haben, sondern als Menschenfreund, der den Anregungen des Völkerbundes gefolgt war, ähnlich wie der Polarforscher Fridtjof Nansen es auf sich genommen hatte, den Hungernden und den heimatlosen Opfern des Weltkrieges Hilfe zu bringen. Ich besann mich auch, dass mir nicht zugemutet wird, praktische Vorschläge zu machen, sondern dass ich nur angeben soll, wie sich das Problem der Kriegsverhütung einer psychologischen Betrachtung darstellt.

(§F2) Aber auch hierüber haben Sie in Ihrem Schreiben das meiste gesagt. Sie haben mir gleichsam den Wind aus den Segeln genommen, aber ich fahre gern in Ihrem Kielwasser und bescheide mich damit, alles zu bestätigen, was Sie vorbringen, indem ich es nach meinem besten Wissen — oder Vermuten — breiter ausführe.

(§F3) Sie beginnen mit dem Verhältnis von Recht und Macht. Das ist gewiss der richtige Ausgangspunkt für unsere Untersuchung. Darf ich das Wort *Macht* durch das grellere, härtere Wort *Gewalt* ersetzen? Recht und Gewalt sind uns heute Gegensätze. Es ist leicht zu zeigen, dass sich das eine aus dem anderen entwickelt hat, und wenn wir auf die Urfänge zurückgehen und nachsehen, wie das zuerst geschehen ist, so fällt uns die Lösung des Problems mühelos zu. Entschuldigen Sie mich aber, wenn ich im Folgenden allgemein Bekanntes und Anerkanntes erzähle, als ob es neu wäre; der Zusammenhang nötigt mich dazu.

(§F4) Interessenkonflikte unter den Menschen werden also prinzipiell durch die Anwendung von Gewalt entschieden. So ist es im ganzen Tierreich, von dem der Mensch sich nicht ausschließen sollte; für den Menschen kommen allerdings noch Meinungskonflikte hinzu, die bis zu den höchsten Höhen der Abstraktion reichen und eine andere Technik der Entscheidung zu fordern scheinen. Aber das ist eine spätere Komplikation. Anfänglich, in einer kleinen Menschenhorde, entschied die stärkere Muskelkraft darüber, wem etwas gehören oder wessen Wille zur Ausführung gebracht werden sollte. Muskelkraft verstärkt und ersetzt sich bald durch den Gebrauch von Werkzeugen; es siegt, wer die besseren Waffen hat oder sie geschickter verwendet. Mit der Einführung der Waffe beginnt bereits die geistige Überlegenheit die Stelle der rohen Muskelkraft einzunehmen; die Endabsicht des Kampfes bleibt die nämliche, der eine Teil soll durch die Schädigung, die er erfährt, und durch die Lähmung seiner Kräfte gezwungen werden, seinen Anspruch oder Widerspruch aufzugeben. Dies wird am gründlichsten erreicht, wenn die Gewalt den Gegner dauernd beseitigt, also tötet. Es hat zwei Vorteile, dass er seine Gegnerschaft nicht ein andermal wieder aufnehmen kann und dass sein Schicksal andere abschreckt, seinem Beispiel zu folgen. Außerdem befriedigt die Tötung des Feindes eine triebhafte Neigung, die später erwähnt werden muss. Der Tötungsabsicht kann sich die Erwägung widersetzen, dass der Feind zu nützlichen Dienstleistungen verwendet werden kann, wenn man ihn eingeschüchtert am Leben lässt. Dann begnügt sich also die Gewalt damit, ihn zu unterwerfen, anstatt ihn zu töten. Es ist der Anfang der Schonung des Feindes, aber der Sieger hat von nun an mit der lauernden Rachsucht des Besiegten zu rechnen, gibt ein Stück seiner eigenen Sicherheit auf.

(§F5) Das ist also der ursprüngliche Zustand, die Herrschaft der größeren Macht, der rohen oder intellektuell gestützten Gewalt. Wir wissen, dies Regime ist im Laufe der Entwicklung abgeändert worden, es führte ein Weg von der Gewalt zum Recht, aber welcher? Nur ein einziger, meine ich. Er führte über die Tatsache, dass die größere Stärke des Einen wettgemacht werden konnte durch die Vereinigung mehrerer Schwachen. *L'union fait la force*. Gewalt wird gebrochen durch Einigung, die Macht dieser Geeinigten stellt nun das Recht dar im Gegensatz zur Gewalt des

Einzelnen. Wir sehen, das Recht ist die Macht einer Gemeinschaft. Es ist noch immer Gewalt, bereit, sich gegen jeden Einzelnen zu wenden, der sich ihr widersetzt, arbeitet mit denselben Mitteln, verfolgt dieselben Zwecke; der Unterschied liegt wirklich nur darin, dass es nicht mehr die Gewalt eines Einzelnen ist, die sich durchsetzt, sondern die der Gemeinschaft. Aber damit sich dieser Übergang von der Gewalt zum neuen Recht vollziehe, muss eine psychologische Bedingung erfüllt werden. Die Einigung der Mehreren muss eine beständige, dauerhafte sein. Stellte sie sich nur zum Zweck der Bekämpfung des einen Übermächtigen her und zerfiel nach seiner Überwältigung, so wäre nichts erreicht. Der nächste, der sich für stärker hält, würde wiederum eine Gewaltherrschaft anstreben, und das Spiel würde sich endlos wiederholen. Die Gemeinschaft muss permanent erhalten werden, sich organisieren, Vorschriften schaffen, die den gefürchteten Auflehnungen vorbeugen, Organe bestimmen, die über die Einhaltung der Vorschriften Gesetze wachen und die Ausführung der rechtmäßigen Gewaltakte besorgen, für der Anerkennung einer solchen Interessengemeinschaft stellen sich unter den Mitgliedern einer geeinigten Menschengruppe Gefühlsbindungen her, Gemeinschaftsgefühle, in denen ihre eigentliche Stärke beruht.

(§F6) Damit, denke ich, ist alles Wesentliche bereits gegeben: die Überwindung der Gewalt durch Übertragung der Macht an eine größere Einheit, die durch Gefühlsbindungen ihrer Mitglieder zusammengehalten wird. Alles Weitere sind Ausführungen und Wiederholungen. Die Verhältnisse sind einfach, solange die Gemeinschaft nur aus einer Anzahl gleichstarker Individuen besteht. Die Gesetze dieser Vereinigung bestimmen dann, auf welches Maß von persönlicher Freiheit, seine Kraft als Gewalt anzuwenden, der Einzelne verzichten muss, um ein gesichertes Zusammenleben zu ermöglichen. Aber ein solcher Ruhezustand ist nur theoretisch denkbar, in Wirklichkeit kompliziert sich der Sachverhalt dadurch, dass die Gemeinschaft von Anfang an ungleich mächtige Elemente umfasst, Männer und Frauen, Eltern und Kinder, und bald infolge von Krieg und Unterwerfung Siegreiche und Besiegte, die sich in Herren und Sklaven umsetzen. Das Recht der Gemeinschaft wird dann zum Ausdruck der ungleichen Machtverhältnisse in ihrer Mitte, die Gesetze werden von und für die Herrschenden gemacht werden und den Unterworfenen wenig Rechte einräumen. Von da an gibt es in der Gemeinschaft zwei Quellen von Rechtsunruhe, aber auch von Rechtsfortbildung. Erstens die Versuche Einzelner unter den Herren, sich über die für alle gültigen Einschränkungen zu erheben, also von der Rechtsherrschaft auf die Gewaltherrschaft zurückzugreifen, zweitens die ständigen Bestrebungen der Unterdrückten, sich mehr Macht zu verschaffen und diese Änderungen im Gesetz anerkannt zu sehen, also im Gegenteil vom ungleichen Recht zum gleichen Recht für alle vorzudringen. Diese letztere Strömung wird besonders bedeutsam werden, wenn sich im Inneren des Gemeinwesens wirklich Verschiebungen der Machtverhältnisse ergeben, wie es infolge mannigfacher historischer Momente geschehen kann. Das Recht kann sich dann allmählich den neuen Machtverhältnissen anpassen, oder, was häufiger geschieht, die herrschende Klasse ist nicht bereit, dieser Änderung Rechnung zu tragen, es kommt zu Auflehnung, Bürgerkrieg, also zur zeitweiligen Aufhebung des Rechts und zu neuen Gewaltproben, nach deren Ausgang eine neue Rechtsordnung eingesetzt wird. Es gibt noch eine andere Quelle der Rechtsänderung, die sich nur in friedlicher Weise äußert, das ist die kulturelle Wandlung der Mitglieder des Gemeinwesens, aber die gehört in einen Zusammenhang, der erst später berücksichtigt werden kann.

(§F7) Wir sehen also, auch innerhalb eines Gemeinwesens ist die gewaltsame Erledigung von Interessenkonflikten nicht vermieden worden. Aber die Notwendigkeiten und Gemeinsamkeiten, die sich aus dem Zusammenleben auf demselben Boden ableiten, sind einer raschen Beendigung solcher Kämpfe günstig, und die Wahrscheinlichkeit friedlicher Lösungen unter diesen Bedingungen nimmt stetig zu. Ein Blick in die Menschheitsgeschichte zeigt uns aber eine unaufhörliche Reihe von Konflikten zwischen einem Gemeinwesen und einem oder mehreren anderen, zwischen größeren und kleineren Einheiten, Stadtgebieten, Landschaften, Stämmen, Völkern, Reichen, die fast immer durch die Kraftprobe des Krieges entschieden werden. Solche Kriege gehen entweder in Beraubung oder in volle Unterwerfung, Eroberung des einen Teils, aus. Man kann die Eroberungskriege nicht einheitlich beurteilen. Manche wie die der Mongolen und Türken haben nur Unheil gebracht, andere im Gegenteil zur Umwandlung von Gewalt in Recht beigetragen, indem sie größere Einheiten herstellten, innerhalb deren nun die Möglichkeit der Gewaltanwendung aufgehört hatte und eine neue Rechtsordnung die Konflikte schlichtete. So haben die Eroberungen der Römer den Mittelmeerländern die kostbare pax romana gegeben. Die Vergrößerungslust der französischen Könige hat ein friedlich geeinigtes,

blühendes Frankreich geschaffen. So paradox es klingt, man muss doch zugestehen, der Krieg wäre kein ungeeignetes Mittel zur Herstellung des ersehnten *ewigen* Friedens, weil er im Stande ist, jene großen Einheiten zu schaffen, innerhalb deren eine starke Zentralgewalt weitere Kriege unmöglich macht. Aber er taugt doch nicht dazu, denn die Erfolge der Eroberung sind in der Regel nicht dauerhaft; die neu geschaffenen Einheiten zerfallen wieder, meist infolge des mangelnden Zusammenhalts der gewaltsam geeinigten Teile. Und außerdem konnte die Eroberung bisher nur partielle Einigungen, wenn auch von größerem Umfang, schaffen, deren Konflikte die gewaltsame Entscheidung erst recht herausforderten. So ergab sich als die Folge all dieser kriegerischen Anstrengungen nur, dass die Menschheit zahlreiche, ja unaufhörliche Kleinkriege gegen seltene, aber um so mehr verheerende Großkriege eintauschte.

(§F8) Auf unsere Gegenwart angewendet, ergibt sich das gleiche Resultat, zu dem Sie auf kürzerem Weg gelangt sind. Eine sichere Verhütung der Kriege ist nur möglich, wenn sich die Menschen zur Einsetzung einer Zentralgewalt einigen, welcher der Richtspruch in allen Interessenkonflikten übertragen wird. Hier sind offenbar zwei Forderungen vereinigt, dass eine solche übergeordnete Instanz geschaffen und dass ihr die erforderliche Macht gegeben werde. Das eine allein würde nicht nützen. Nun ist der Völkerbund als solche Instanz gedacht, aber die andere Bedingung ist nicht erfüllt; der Völkerbund hat keine eigene Macht und kann sie nur bekommen, wenn die Mitglieder der neuen Einigung, die einzelnen Staaten, sie ihm abtreten. Dazu scheint aber derzeit wenig Aussicht vorhanden. Man stünde der Institution des Völker Bundes nun ganz ohne Verständnis gegenüber, wenn man nicht wüsste, dass hier ein Versuch vorliegt, der in der Geschichte der Menschheit nicht oft — vielleicht noch nie in diesem Maß — gewagt worden ist. Es ist der Versuch, die Autorität — d. i. den zwingenden Einfluss —, die sonst auf dem Besitz der Macht ruht, durch die Berufung auf bestimmte ideelle Einstellungen zu erwerben. Wir haben gehört, was eine Gemeinschaft zusammenhält, sind zwei Dinge: der Zwang der Gewalt und die Gefühlsbindungen — Identifizierungen heißt man sie technisch — der Mitglieder. Fällt das eine Moment weg, so kann möglicher Weise das andere die Gemeinschaft aufrecht halten. Jene Ideen haben natürlich nur dann eine Bedeutung, wenn sie wichtigen Gemeinsamkeiten der Mitglieder Ausdruck geben. Es fragt sich dann, wie stark sie sind. Die Geschichte lehrt, dass sie in der Tat ihre Wirkung geübt haben. Die panhellenische Idee z.B., das Bewusstsein, dass man etwas Besseres sei als die umwohnenden Barbaren, das in den Amphiktyonien, den Orakeln und Festspielen so kräftigen Ausdruck fand, war stark genug, um die Sitten der Kriegsführung unter Griechen zu mildern, aber selbstverständlich nicht im Stande, kriegerische Streitigkeiten zwischen den Partikeln des Griechenvolkes zu verhüten, ja nicht einmal um eine Stadt oder einen Städtebund abzuhalten, sich zum Schaden eines Rivalen mit dem Perserfeind zu verbünden. Ebenso wenig hat das christliche Gemeingefühl, das doch mächtig genug war, im Renaissancezeitalter christliche Klein und Großstaaten daran gehindert, in ihren Kriegen miteinander um die Hilfe des Sultans zu werben. Auch in unserer Zeit gibt es keine Idee, der man eine solche einigende Autorität zumuten könnte. Dass die heute die Völker beherrschenden nationalen Ideale zu einer gegenteiligen Wirkung drängen, ist ja allzu deutlich. Es gibt Personen, die vorhersagen, erst das allgemeine Durchdringen der bolschewistischen Denkungsart werde den Kriegen ein Ende machen können, aber von solchem Ziel sind wir heute jedenfalls weit entfernt, und vielleicht wäre es nur nach schrecklichen Bürgerkriegen erreichbar. So scheint es also, dass der Versuch, reale Macht durch die Macht der Ideen zu ersetzen, heute noch zum Fehlschlagen verurteilt ist. Es ist ein Fehler in der Rechnung, wenn man nicht berücksichtigt, dass Recht ursprünglich rohe Gewalt war und noch heute der Stützung durch die Gewalt nicht entbehren kann.

(§F9) Ich kann nun daran gehen, einen anderen Ihrer Sätze zu glossieren. Sie verwundern sich darüber, dass es so leicht ist, die Menschen für den Krieg zu begeistern, und vermuten, dass etwas in ihnen wirksam ist, ein Trieb zum Hassen und Vernichten, der solcher Verhetzung entgegenkommt. Wiederum kann ich Ihnen nur uneingeschränkt beistimmen. Wir glauben an die Existenz eines solchen Triebes und haben uns gerade in den letzten Jahren bemüht, seine Äußerungen zu studieren. Darf ich Ihnen aus diesem Anlass ein Stück der Trieblehre vortragen, zu der wir in der Psychoanalyse nach vielem Tasten und Schwanken gekommen sind? Wir nehmen an, dass die Triebe des Menschen nur von zweierlei Art sind, entweder solche, die erhalten und vereinigen wollen — wir heißen sie erotische, ganz im Sinne des Eros im Symposion Platos, oder sexuelle mit bewusster Überdehnung des populären Begriffs von Sexualität — und andere, die zerstören und töten wollen; wir fassen diese als

Aggressionstrieb oder Destruktionstrieb zusammen. Sie sehen, das ist eigentlich nur die theoretische Verklärung des weltbekannten Gegensatzes von Lieben und Hassen, der vielleicht zu der Polarität von Anziehung und Abstoßung eine Urbeziehung unterhält, die auf Ihrem Gebiet eine Rolle spielt. Nun lassen Sie uns nicht zu rasch mit den Wertungen von Gut und Böse einsetzen. Der eine dieser Triebe ist ebenso unerlässlich wie der andere, aus dem Zusammenund Gegeneinanderwirken der Beiden gehen die Erscheinungen des Lebens hervor. Nun scheint es, dass kaum jemals ein Trieb der einen Art sich isoliert betätigen kann, er ist immer mit einem gewissen Betrag von der anderen Seite verbunden, wie wir sagen: legiert, der sein Ziel modifiziert oder ihm unter Umständen dessen Erreichung erst möglich macht. So ist z.B. der Selbsterhaltungstrieb gewiss erotischer Natur, aber grade er bedarf der Verfügung über die Aggression, wenn er seine Absicht durchsetzen soll. Ebenso benötigt der auf Objekte gerichtete Liebestrieb eines Zusatzes vom Bemächtigungstrieb, wenn er seines Objekts überhaupt habhaft werden soll. Die Schwierigkeit, die beiden Triebarten in ihren Äußerungen zu isolieren, hat uns ja so lange in ihrer Erkenntnis behindert.

(§F10) Wenn Sie mit mir ein Stück weitergehen wollen, so hören Sie, dass die menschlichen Handlungen noch eine Komplikation von anderer Art erkennen lassen. Ganz selten ist die Handlung das Werk einer einzigen Triebregung, die an und für sich bereits aus Eros und Destruktion zusammengesetzt sein muss. In der Regel müssen mehrere in der gleichen Weise aufgebaute Motive zusammentreffen, um die Handlung zu ermöglichen. Einer Ihrer Fachgenossen hat das bereits gewusst, ein Prof. G. Ch. Lichtenberg, der zur Zeit unserer Klassiker am Göttingen Physik lehrte; aber vielleicht war er als Psychologe noch bedeutender denn als Physiker. Er erfand die Motivenrose, indem er sagte: "Die Bewegungsgründe (wir sagen heute: Beweggründe), woraus man etwas tut, könnten so wie die 32 Winde geordnet und ihre Namen auf eine ähnliche Art formiert werden, z. B. Brot-Brot-Ruhm oder Ruhm-Ruhm-Brot." Wenn also die Menschen zum Krieg aufgefordert werden, so mögen eine ganze Anzahl von Motiven in ihnen zustimmend antworten, edle und gemeine, solche, von denen man laut spricht, und andere, die man beschweigt. Wir haben keinen Anlass, sie alle bloßzulegen. Die Lust an der Aggression und Destruktion ist gewiss darunter; ungezählte Grausamkeiten der Geschichte und des Alltags bekräftigen ihre Existenz und ihre Stärke. Die Verquickung dieser destruktiven Strebungen mit anderen erotischen und ideellen erleichtert natürlich deren Befriedigung. Manchmal haben wir, wenn wir von den Gräueltaten der Geschichte hören, den Eindruck, die ideellen Motive hätten den destruktiven Gelüsten nur als Vorwände gedient, andere Male z.B. bei den Grausamkeiten der hl. Inquisition, meinen wir, die ideellen Motive hätten sich im Bewusstsein vorgedrängt, die destruktiven ihnen eine unbewusste Verstärkung gebracht. Beides ist möglich.

(§F11) Ich habe Bedenken, Ihr Interesse zu missbrauchen, das ja der Kriegsverhütung gilt, nicht unseren Theorien. Doch möchte ich noch einen Augenblick bei unserem Destruktionstrieb verweilen, dessen Beliebtheit keineswegs Schritt hält mit seiner Bedeutung. Mit etwas Aufwand von Spekulation sind wir nämlich zu der Auffassung gelangt, dass dieser Trieb innerhalb jedes lebenden Wesens arbeitet und dann das Bestreben hat, es zum Zerfall zu bringen, das Leben zum Zustand der unbelebten Materie zurückzuführen. Er verdiente in allem Ernst den Namen eines Todestriebes, während die erotischen Triebe die Bestrebungen zum Leben repräsentieren. Der Todestrieb wird zum Destruktionstrieb, indem er mit Hilfe besonderer Organe nach außen, gegen die Objekte, gewendet wird. Das Lebewesen bewahrt sozusagen sein eigenes Leben dadurch, dass es fremdes zerstört. Ein Anteil des Todestriebes verbleibt aber im Innern des Lebewesens tätig und wir haben versucht, eine ganze Anzahl von normalen und pathologischen Phänomenen von dieser Verinnerlichung des Destruktionstriebes abzuleiten. Wir haben sogar die Ketzerei begangen, die Entstehung unseres Gewissens durch eine solche Wendung der Aggression nach innen zu erklären. Sie merken, es ist gar nicht so unbedenklich, wenn sich dieser Vorgang in allzu großem Ausmaß vollzieht, es ist direkt ungesund, während die Wendung dieser Triebkräfte zur Destruktion am der Außenwelt das Lebewesen entlastet, wohlthuend wirken muss. Das diene zur biologischen Entschuldigung all der hässlichen und gefährlichen Strebungen, gegen die wir ankämpfen. Man muss zugeben, sie sind der Natur näher als unser Widerstand dagegen, für den wir auch noch eine Erklärung finden müssen.

(§F12) Vielleicht haben Sie den Eindruck, unsere Theorien seien eine Art von Mythologie, nicht einmal eine erfreuliche in diesem Fall. Aber läuft nicht jede Naturwissenschaft auf eine solche Art von Mythologie hinaus? Geht es Ihnen heute in der Physik anders?

(§F13) Aus dem Vorstehenden entnehmen wir für unsere nächsten Zwecke soviel, dass es keine Aussicht hat, die aggressiven Neigungen der Menschen abschaffen zu wollen. Es soll in glücklichen Gegenden der Erde, wo die Natur alles, was der Mensch braucht, überreichlich zur Verfügung stellt, Völkerstämme geben, deren Leben am Sanftmut verläuft, bei denen Zwang und Aggression unbekannt sind. Ich kann es kaum glauben, möchte gern mehr über diese Glücklichen erfahren. Auch die Bolschewisten hoffen, dass sie die menschliche Aggression zum Verschwinden bringen können dadurch, dass sie die Befriedigung der materiellen Bedürfnisse verbürgen und sonst Gleichheit unter den Teilnehmern an der Gemeinschaft herstellen. Ich halte das für eine Illusion. Vorläufig sind sie auf das sorgfältigste bewaffnet und halten ihre Anhänger nicht zum Mindesten durch den Hass gegen alle Außenstehenden zusammen. Übrigens handelt es sich, wie Sie selbst bemerken, nicht darum, die menschliche Aggressionsneigung völlig zu beseitigen; man kann versuchen sie soweit abzulenken, dass sie nicht ihren Ausdruck im Kriege finden muss.

(§F14) Von unserer mythologischen Triblehre her finden wir leicht eine Formel für die indirekten Wege zur Bekämpfung des Krieges. Wenn die Bereitwilligkeit zum Krieg ein Ausfluss des Destruktionstriebes ist, so liegt es nahe, gegen sie den Gegenspieler dieses Triebes, den Eros, anzurufen. Alles, was Gefühlsbindungen unter den Menschen herstellt, muss dem Krieg entgegenwirken. Diese Bindungen können von zweierlei Art sein. Erstens Beziehungen wie zu einem Liebesobjekt, wenn auch ohne sexuelle Ziele. Die Psychoanalyse braucht sich nicht zu schämen, wenn sie hier von Liebe spricht, denn die Religion sagt dasselbe: Liebe Deinen Nächsten wie Dich selbst. Das ist nun leicht gefordert, aber schwer zu erfüllen. Die andere Art von Gefühlsbindung ist die durch Identifizierung. Alles was bedeutsame Gemeinsamkeiten unter den Menschen herstellt, ruft solche Gemeingefühle, Identifizierungen, hervor. Auf ihnen ruht zum guten Teil der Aufbau der menschlichen Gesellschaft.

(§F15) Einer Klage von Ihnen über den Missbrauch der Autorität entnehme ich einen zweiten Wink zur indirekten Bekämpfung der Kriegsneigung. Es ist ein Stück der angeborenen und nicht zu beseitigenden Ungleichheit der Menschen, dass sie in Führer und in Abhängige zerfallen. Die letzteren sind die übergroße Mehrheit, sie bedürfen einer Autorität, welche für sie Entscheidungen fällt, denen sie sich meist bedingungslos unterwerfen. Hier wäre anzuknüpfen, man müsste mehr Sorge als bisher aufwenden, um eine Oberschicht selbständig Denkender, der Einschüchterung unzugänglicher, nach Wahrheit ringender Menschen zu erziehen, denen die Lenkung der unselbständigen Massen zufallen würde. Dass die Übergriffe der Staatsgewalten und das Denkverbot der Kirche einer solchen Aufzucht nicht günstig sind, bedarf keines Beweises. Der ideale Zustand wäre natürlich eine Gemeinschaft von Menschen, die ihr Triebleben der Diktatur der Vernunft unterworfen haben. Nichts anderes könnte eine so vollkommene und widerstandsfähige Einigung der Menschen hervorrufen, selbst unter Verzicht auf die Gefühlsbindungen zwischen ihnen. Aber das ist höchstwahrscheinlich eine utopische Hoffnung. Die anderen Wege einer indirekten Verhinderung des Krieges sind gewiss eher gangbar, aber sie versprechen keinen raschen Erfolg. Ungern denkt man an

Mühlen, die so langsam mahlen, dass man verhungern könnte, ehe man das Mehl bekommt.

(§F16) Sie sehen, es kommt nicht viel dabei heraus, wenn man bei dringenden praktischen Aufgaben den weltfremden Theoretiker zu Rate zieht. Besser, man bemüht sich in jedem einzelnen Fall der Gefahr zur begegnen mit den Mitteln, die eben zur Hand sind. Ich möchte aber noch eine Frage behandeln, die Sie in Ihrem Schreiben nicht aufwerfen und die mich besonders interessiert. Warum empören wir uns so sehr gegen den Krieg, Sie und ich und so viele andere, warum nehmen wir ihn nicht hin wie eine andere der vielen peinlichen Notlagen des Lebens? Er scheint doch naturgemäß, biologisch wohl begründet, praktisch kaum vermeidbar. Entsetzen Sie sich nicht über meine Fragestellung. Zum Zweck einer Untersuchung darf man vielleicht die Maske einer Überlegenheit vornehmen, über die man in Wirklichkeit nicht verfügt. Die Antwort wird lauten, weil jeder Mensch ein Recht auf sein eigenes Leben hat, weil der Krieg hoffnungsvolle Menschenleben vernichtet, den einzelnen Menschen in Lagen bringt, die ihn entwürdigen, ihn zwingt, andere zu morden, was er nicht



will, kostbare materielle Werte, Ergebnis von Menschenarbeit, zerstört, u. a. mehr. Auch dass der Krieg in seiner gegenwärtigen Gestaltung keine Gelegenheit mehr gibt, das alte heldische Ideal zu erfüllen, und dass ein zukünftiger Krieg infolge der Vervollkommnung der Zerstörungsmittel die Ausrottung eines oder vielleicht beider Gegner bedeuten würde. Das ist alles wahr und scheint so unbestreitbar, dass man sich nur verwundert, wenn das Kriegführen noch nicht durch allgemeine menschliche Übereinkunft verworfen worden ist. Man kann zwar über einzelne dieser Punkte diskutieren. Es ist fraglich, ob die Gemeinschaft nicht auch ein Recht auf das Leben des Einzelnen haben soll; man kann nicht alle Arten von Krieg in gleichem Maß verdammen; solange es Reiche und Nationen gibt, die zur rücksichtslosen Vernichtung anderer bereit sind, müssen diese anderen zum Krieg gerüstet sein. Aber wir wollen über all das rasch hinweggehen, das ist nicht die Diskussion, zu der Sie mich aufgefordert haben. Ich ziele auf etwas anderes hin; ich glaube, der Hauptgrund, weshalb wir uns gegen den Krieg empören, ist, dass wir nicht anders können. Wir sind Peacefisten, weil wir es aus organischen Gründen sein müssen. Wir haben es dann leicht, unsere Einstellung durch Argumente zu rechtfertigen.

(§F17) Das ist wohl ohne Erklärung nicht zu verstehen. Ich meine das Folgende: Seit unvordenklichen Zeiten zieht sich über die Menschheit der Prozeß der Kulturentwicklung hin. (Ich weiß, andere heißen ihn lieber: Zivilisation.) Diesem Prozeß verdanken wir das Beste, was wir geworden sind, und ein gut Teil von dem, woran wir leiden. Seine Anlässe und Anfänge sind dunkel, sein Ausgang ungewiss, einige seiner Charaktere leicht ersichtlich. Vielleicht führt er zum Erlöschen der Menschenart, denn er beeinträchtigt die Sexualfunktion in mehr als einer Weise, und schon heute vermehren sich unkultivierte Rassen und zurückgebliebene Schichten der Bevölkerung stärker als hochkultivierte. Vielleicht ist dieser Prozeß mit der Domestikation gewisser Tierarten vergleichbar; ohne Zweifel bringt er körperliche Veränderungen mit sich; man hat sich noch nicht mit der Vorstellung vertraut gemacht, dass die Kulturentwicklung ein solcher organischer Prozeß sei. Die mit dem Kulturprozess einhergehenden psychischen Veränderungen sind auffällig und unzweideutig. Sie bestehen in einer fortschreitenden Verschiebung der Triebziele und Einschränkung der Triebregungen. Sensationen, die unseren Vorahnen lustvoll waren, sind für uns indifferent oder selbst unleidlich geworden; es hat organische Begründungen, wenn unsere ethischen und ästhetischen Idealforderungen sich geändert haben. Von den psychologischen Charakteren der Kultur scheinen zwei die wichtigsten: die Erstarkung des Intellekts, der das Triebleben zu beherrschen beginnt, und die Verinnerlichung der Aggressionsneigung mit all ihren vorteilhaften und gefährlichen Folgen. Den psychischen Einstellungen, die uns der Kulturprozess aufnötigt, widerspricht nun der Krieg in der grellsten Weise, darum müssen wir uns gegen ihn empören, wir vertragen ihn einfach nicht mehr, es ist nicht bloß eine intellektuelle und affektive Ablehnung, es ist, bei uns Peacefisten eine konstitutionelle Intoleranz, eine Idiosynkrasie gleichsam in äußerster Vergrößerung. Und zwar scheint es, dass die ästhetischen Erniedrigungen des Krieges nicht viel weniger Anteil an unserer Auflehnung haben als seine Grausamkeiten.

(§F18) Wie lange müssen wir nun warten, bis auch die Anderen Peacefisten werden? Es ist nicht zu sagen, aber vielleicht ist es keine utopische Hoffnung, dass der Einfluss dieser beiden Momente, der kulturellen Einstellung und der berechtigten Angst vor den Wirkungen eines Zukunftskrieges, dem Kriegführen in absehbarer Zeit ein Ende setzen wird. Auf welchen Wegen oder Umwegen, können wir nicht erraten. Unterdes dürfen wir uns sagen: Alles, was die Kulturentwicklung fördert, arbeitet auch gegen den Krieg.

(§F19) Ich grüße Sie herzlich und bitte Sie um Verzeihung, wenn meine Ausführungen Sie enttäuscht haben.

Ihr Sigmund Freud