

**Towards a Theory of Fragmentation:
International Coexistence and the Transformation of War.**

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Not for Quotation**

«[...] As Afghanistan, Algeria, Bosnia and Rwanda, and countless other places prove, Warre in its elemental Hobbesian sense is not only alive and well but as deadly as ever. [...] Breaking out now here, now there, limited in geographical scope but often extremely bloody, future war will be waged overwhelmingly by, and against, organizations that are not states. And since they do not own sovereign territory and consequently cannot be threatened with nuclear annihilation, they will be able to fight each other, and the state, to their heart's content. [...] It is perhaps true to say that so far neither school has attempted to present a comprehensive theory that will go back to first principles while at the same time offering a practical guide to the future. And yet, as the countless failures of the world's state-owned, regular armed forces to put down guerrillas and insurgents show, such a theory is urgently needed».

Martin van Creveld (2000).

The international fragmentation is one of the more macroscopic phenomena of the contemporary period and of the today's current change of the international coexistence. To it is linked with all evidence the change of war, too. The fragmentation is, with the globalisation, the great stream of international relations, as emerged in the beginning of '90. It was manifested on the European continent, too. But, as happened for the problem of "change" in the theory of International Relations (Holsti, 1998), the theory is remained in an embryonic state: the problem has been preferably avoided or had been re-entered into the central categories of the matter and continues to be spread the doubt that a theory of fragmentation would be possible.

The international system today is characterized by fluidity, complexity and fragmentation but there is no consensus on what we mean by fragmentation, not to mention how to identify it even if the twentieth century showed a pattern of increasing system fragmentation. Twenty or thirty years ago, the subject of state-building would have seemed esoteric, applicable only to the few remaining colonial territories and to collapsed states like Lebanon. At the beginning of the Twenty-first

century, it is an agenda relevant to international interventions and to post-conflict reconstruction and development efforts in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Somalia, The Congo, Rwanda, Burundi, Cambodia, Afghanistan, as well as to regions like Kosovo, East Timor. In some parts of the world, disorder (including civil wars) has become endemic (Krasner, 2004, 91). Fragmentation may have geopolitical long-term consequences.

The importance of a theory of fragmentation can be noticed by the fact that now we are every day confronted with phenomena hard to explain with the usual concepts of International Relations and that carry more and more towards the theme and concept of fragmentation. To orient and face the fragmentation, it continues to lack nevertheless a theoretical compass. Some things in international life have fundamentally changed and the conceptual apparatus that may have been useful for understanding and even explaining diplomatic and military life in eighteenth and nineteenth century Europe will not help us a great deal today (Holsti 1994; Strange 1996). A lot of concepts that once had theoretical and descriptive uses, are no longer able to capture those things that are changed. Perhaps we need to reconfigure our theoretical equipment. Not rarely today traditional concepts act as ontological blinders (Deibert, 1997, 163), rather than as aids to understanding. The International Relations continue to consider by the way “normal” and “mirror” of all international system, regional systems as this European or Western, to them all other ones must sooner or later conform themselves. On opposite, in most of the part of the contemporary world the relations between international actors considered usual for almost four centuries and their basic categories (sovereignty, unity, homogeneity, territorial continuity, inside/outside) are more and more subjected to crisis or open dispute and cannot explain whether the relations between actors, nor key-phenomenon as the change of meaning of war.

What is international fragmentation

The *international fragmentation* is a complex phenomenon¹. But become always more evident two of its main aspects: first, a level of international system (crisis of homogeneity, withdrawal of occidental model of the exported modern living together between states, failure of more essays of exportation).² Second, a level sub-state (change of the actors; no more

¹ Samuel A. (1990). On the fragmentation by rapport to the theory of International Relations remain fundamental and not surpassed Santoro C.M. (1997); Colombo A. (1995, 1996). Elements of fundamental importance for the theory of fragmentation are in Camilleri J.A. (1992); Boniface P., Golliet J. (Eds) (1993); Ruggie J.C. (1993); Zartman (1995), Smouts M. C. (Ed) (1999), Badie B., Smouts M.C. (1999), Clark I. (1997), while on a theoretical plan much less deep are the works of Krasner S.D. (1999, 2001).

² Systems vary not just from multi-to-bi-or perhaps unipolar but from extreme consolidation (imperial hegemony) to extreme fragmentation (splintering into many units with no poles at all), with many possible gradations in between. Differing degrees of system consolidation promote different dynamics in the international system, including different

homogenous³, that rush into the international contest, change of relations between themselves, crisis of modern state categories). One can so speak of “fragmentation of the international system” and of fragmentation that acts on the constitutive unities. These two aspects are complementary and show themselves in a bifurcation (emerge of heterogeneous actors whether sub-national or over-national level).

It is a distribution of power and space from a big numbers of actors that comes from crash of bigger political entities and that gives an international political system not stable and conflict, an international disorder that became endemic from '50 of XX century. The fragmentation discusses the same nature of politics among nations that for ages was based on the idea of the small number. The same order was based on the clear difference between important actors and less power actors, object of a competition of more strong ones (oligopolistic character of the international politics). In the fragmentation all actors depend for their survive from the behaviour of all other ones. The actors become a lot vulnerable and the space of fragmentation is based on the insecurity and on the mistrust. The dangers spread and the calculations on self-power become very difficult, as is difficult say where one finishes and other one begins. The uncertainties grow ever with the growing of the number of actors. This produces, too, a crisis of the diplomacy and of negotiation.

In the fragmentation low the barriers to the entry of international play, that finishes so to transform itself. More the actors become small, de-territorized and different from these usual (crisis of the homogeneity), more other try to enter into the play, distorting. Become difficult say who are the actors of international politics and how must be done to become actors. Generate new politic unities, but these are subject to more fragmentation that cannot be braked using rational explaining.

The fragmentation presents itself whether as process as a system. The first, of quantitative character, is visible on the scale of phenomenon (waves of fragmentation) that go from the simple crack of a State in at least two parts (dissociations from former State), until the phenomenon of their crack, until the spreading of space and power. It has a cyclic character, as can be easily seen from historic process. The second (the fragmentation as system), of qualitative sort, shows itself in the formation of complex regional systems, there the interactions are not so foreseen, since the separated action of different factors. Here the processes are gone so deep to product the failure of creation of aggregations and of other politic actors, coherent with the modern international system, More, in these sub-systems no actor can control and suffer the consequences of the action of all other ones, independent from their characteristics. Can rush chain reactions that can involve all

kinds and degree of international order. (Kaufman, 1997). The degree of system consolidation is also determined by the nature of the unit in the system. (Gilpin, 1981). The nature of the units of the system is determined by the sort of unit the people consider legitimate.

³ «Forms of state, meaning of sovereignty and conceptions of territoriality are neither fixed nor constant across time and place». (Biersteker, 2006, 158).

other ones. We have an erosion of the neat separation between inside and outside, of the exclusive and homogenous territoriality, from public spaces until private spaces. The rearrange of the priorities between inside and outside ambit, typical of consolidation of modern territorial State (Rosecrance, 1986, 77) and of overcoming of medieval trans-territorial type (Ruggie 1993), suffer in the fragmentation bigger problems and can become a continuum. Parts of a State can establish intercourses with parts of other (e.g. for ethnic reasons). Break the exclusive bonds of political fidelity, foreseen by the States and the neat distinction between home and foreign politics. The States are flanked by actors of various kind, them they are back in competition with, for the control and fidelity of members.

The multiplication of the States in the fragmentation corresponds to the inexhaustible production of weak States, soft States, permeable States (James, 1986), failed nation States, collapsed States (Zartman - Ed - 1995) and of “quasi-States” (Bull and Watson (Eds), 1984); or “negative sovereignties” that end to transform often into collapsed States (Jackson, 1990, 21), emerged from processes of decolonization, and from withdrawal of surviving empires in many areas of the world, but, too, from the configuration of international bipolar system (Hironaka 2005). Can be, too, “false States”, “political and institutional hybrids”, recognized by law but completely unable of practise their sovereignty (Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia, Lebanon, Bosnia) and to obtain legitimacy (Badie, 1992). While weak states have all the attributes of sovereignty for external purposes, they severely lack the internal attributes of sovereignty and of statehood, such as clear distinction between public and private realm, government institutionalization and so on. But the crucial development in all cases is the loss of monopoly of legitimate violence, of political loyalty and the loss of control by the political centre over the key state prerogatives of revenue extraction, of the coercive collection of taxes. National sovereignties are already being undermined by organizations that refuse to recognize the state’s monopoly over armed violence (van Creveld, 1991, 225).

Many of the colonies-turned-states are in facts fictions and are characterized by an absolute tension between form and contents.⁴ The modern symbol of sovereignty, a monopoly over the legitimate use of force, plus the effective disarmament of society, exists more in rhetoric than in fact. (Holsti, 2006). Some states have moved from weakness to collapse. They (Lebanon, Angola, Mozambique, Somalia, Chad, etc.) are the ultimate failures of contemporary statehood. After a few decades of independence, many of the new states formed in the 1950s or 1960s have been unable to ensure their political stability, thus remaining fragile and vulnerable. The difficulties in the case of

⁴ As wrote K. J. Holsti: «The self-ruling State is now universally recognized and assumed to be the “natural” form of political organization. But in some cases the realities of statehood are not consistent with the norms. Some states have collapsed, others, like some of their seventeenth- century predecessors, cannot establish effective authority over their territories, and still others remains states primarily by virtue of outside support. While the state is the predominant form of legitimate authority over distinct societies, it is by no means universally successful». (Holsti, 2006).

post-soviet states can readily be seen: political, social (with the problems of national identity and especially of minorities).

Behaviour of the non-State actors at the unit level has systemic consequences. (Lebow, 1994, 276). But beyond the screen of systemic analysis, the fragmentation can also be seen as a crisis of internal homogeneities of the States, subject to test of bigger needs and always more different. Not more protected from borders identity⁵ causes crisis for closed State territoriality (as in Africa, there prevail relative ethnic tribal bonds) and unification–homogenization. The State framework in many areas of the world and reveals unable to do works once accepted (production of laws, supplier of services, distributor of resources), and is contrasted by forms of fragmentation not driven and out of control. Moreover, eroding the local law traditions, gives politic empties that and are filled by personal power, by populism, by authoritarian regimes, animated by political classes that use ideologies to compact, but that are insure because empty of legitimate authority. The same forces of fragmentation are fuelling populism, waving the banner of national sovereignty. The inability of nation-states to provide for the security of their citizens undermines the legitimacy of governments. The relations between individuals, deprived in the State framework of traditional bonds, fall more and more into fear, into absence of lawfulness, into violence empty of traditional borders. The different parts in the failed State are usually enemies between themselves, exasperated by the prospective to win State apparatus and its enormous power and national unity remain an unreachable objective.

The ambits where usually manifest the contemporary fragmentation are that that present interstate regional systems of very recent formation. They are that formed on the ruins of Ottoman empire and other empires, included Russian-Soviet or born on the ruins of European colonial empires. From Balkans region, until Africa, until Middle-East, until South and East Asia (Indonesian archipelago) the fragmentation seems the resumption of a deep current that from 1875 marked all XX century as de-concentration of the space. Different of interstate modern European system, that are recent systems that cannot reach to consolidate on the example of this Westphalian, whether as systems, as unities that compound them. Are “fluid” systems, with “immature anarchies”, made of States in continuous territorial revision, there moreover are multiplying not-State actors, that contest the rule who monopolize territorial power. Furthermore the expansion of system of States in the areas today characterized by evident phenomenon of fragmentation (Eastern Europe, Balkans, Middle East, Africa and South-Eastern Asia) occurred late of centuries and following the long wave of the fragmentation of the empires. It not occurred through the

⁵ Few population has deeply ingrained sense of national identity: most, in fact, remains primordial, fixed around clans, tribes, religious groups or limited geographic regions. Often the national government exists only in the capital city, beyond which local leaders, based on variety of claims to legitimacy, rule.

concentration of space and power, as did Occidental States, but breaking unitarian spaces before united (Colombo, 2006, 78) and spreading power (Santoro, 1981).⁶ In these regional ambits, that in many cases are transformed in “fragmentation system”, in spite of formal presence of territorial sovereign States, the main tendency is so remained to pass from great politic aggregation to many and “from big to small” i.e. the exact opposite of formation process of western interstate system. Here the new nationalism can’t produce now unification, like it happened in other world regions.

In these regional systems the international coexistence is characterized by the resistance to the claim of a strong nucleus (ethnic or politic, often supported by Western powers) to create few unitarian States coherent with the modern international system and of trend to base on the multiply of actors (sub-State, too) who struggle for the existence and international acknowledgement. (Horowitz, 1985). As it is resisted to this nucleus that pretends to consolidate the State (we must think to the case of Lebanon, to the Somali, to the Bosnian, to the Chechen), so the forces of fragmentation are contemporary opposed to powers external to the regional area, who try to influence on the nature of actors, on their number (to admit in limited manner and controlled by international assembly), on the same physiognomy (politic, economic, ideological) of regional orders: From the fall of empires are so emerged not only “rush to international recognition” of actors very different each other (that international conferences tried to order, from that of Berlin in 1878 to that of Yalta or of Dayton, leaving on the borders the deep reasons of many local actors) but of forces that cannot obtain it, and contest order and modern international society, and his system of relations, transforming in many cases into “permanent” true systems of fragmentation. I define “systems of fragmentation” as regional sub-system in which political units show structural constraints and behaviour patterns which substantially diverge from the logic of the post-westphalian international system. In many parts of the world, the State is but one player among many, competing with players “free from sovereignty”, who often seek ways of ensuring their well-being and security through channels other than citizenship.

The process became macroscopic during the Cold War (Santoro, 1981) when exploded the difficulty of the superpowers of train and control the diffusion of political spaces, diffusion and dynamic of armed conflicts and of civil wars. The end of international bipolar system enlarged these trends, quickening the speed the States of many regional areas lost the capacity to “keep hold” on international relations. But the fragmentation comes most of all from increasing failure of a process of formation of States “Western way” and of exportation and consolidation of an international homogeneous system. In the most part of these regional sub-systems, then, the formation of a territorial modern State is become difficult by the same physiognomy of ethnic religious

⁶ Since the mid-1950s about a third of African states have been in failure (Krasner, 2004, 92).

components, by proliferation of minorities, all components (that empires usually did not achieve or did not want to destroy) that did not want to subject to a politic structure as this modern State one. The intensity of chain conflicts in the regional fragmented areas, the plurality of fronts of hostility, are, for the most, explained by this problem. Furthermore is clear crisis of coherence between population and territory, of relation inside/outside, because the minorities are often brought to express as international the internal conflicts, granting the help of external powers or favouring their penetration in an “inside” dimension.

The unitary actors who try to consolidate in these areas of fragmentation, continue to be menaced of more processes of fragmentation: this creates a difficult stable situation, even though with the appearances of formal sovereignty. By the way, when we have seen it is possible to divide in more fragments the politic build unities, or the borders can be subjected to revision (process inaugurated by German reunification), do not exist brakes to the production of fragments and actors even more small. From temporary re-aggregation and very weak States or failed States can be easily passed to new fragmentations. Since the problem of fragmentation as process “for imitation” and “as cascade”⁷, typical particularly of claims of ethno national identity, linked whether to the infinite multiply of these aspirations, or to the types of conflict (based on insecurity of national existence) that explode when are not satisfied. The States of recent formation do a home repression that strengthen unstable identity of sub state actors, of ethnic or religious minorities and that provokes more insecurity. The weakness of States cannot brake the action of sub state groups, that in fact try to become international actors, almost of a regional fragmented scenery, guessing them free to act in front of State sovereignty (Rosenau, 1990). But the competition, the struggle, the cooperation are oriented particularly towards actors that are not inside the borders of State sovereignty (Rosenau, 1964). In their attempt to brake the internationalisation of home conflicts (that provoke a pouring off of anarchy from international ambit to home ambit, destroying this distinction), the States exasperate forms of assimilation or of ethnic cleansing or genocide that provoke equal and opposite reactions (as in Kosovo) and more fragmentations. Many weak states have been a major threat to their populations. More people have been killed by the agents of their own states, than by foreign invaders. Where the state is captured by one individual or a political clique that has no foundation in popular legitimacy, opposition to arbitrary rule is often met by widespread oppression and mass killing.

Furthermore, the international recognition of these States remain always suspended. This is true whether for the States formally recognized, or for new potential States, “able of sovereignty”

⁷ Between the other aspects of problem, after the cascade disintegration of ex Yugoslavia, one can think to the international worrying for the independence of Kosovo, that can provoke cascade claims in all the world.

(Kosovo, Abkhazia, Iraqi Kurdistan, Palestinian National Authority, Ossetia, Nagorno Karabach), but not recognized.

There is no panacea for domestic sovereignty failures. Even with the best of intentions and resources, external actors cannot quickly eliminate the causes of these failures.

The contemporary problem is this of foresee length and greatness of phenomenon; it is to understand if these processes and these systems of fragmentation are now directed towards a consolidation that is maintained as target to reach, too, to local and regional level (and that is understood in the West as unity and politic stability, forbidden of more processes of fragmentation and of change of borders, coherence of States and uniformity of relations between themselves, limited access to international play, acceptance of structures and rules of the inter-State living together), or if are trained towards different organized forms, embryonic too, of "international" coexistence, emerged from chaos and not very different from existed forms, even prevalent in history, very different from this, exceptional (Bull, Watson, - Eds – 1984, Wight 1977, 1978, 14), of modern particularistic Western States, that can be not formed at all (Tilly –Ed – 1975. Bull, Watson – Eds – 1984, Wight 1977, 1978). Many of these regional systems, by the way, are not signed by universalism "e.g. the Islamic *umma*, that is a mirror the Occidental neo-universalism of order and law)⁸ or by communities of civilisation that contribute to destroy forming States, or in consolidation (Huntington 1996), to not recognized the legitimacy of modern interstate system, as some sub-States or over-States actors, carriers of an unitary project, different from this of divisions between States and of neat separation between home or foreign nature of their relations. There is enormous difficulty in predicting the direction in which change will proceed. That appears to us today as the black-hole of fragmentation (Zartman, 1995, 7), can be the basis of different forms of international coexistence and certainly the biggest handicap to the perspective of an unipolar world.

In any case we are before, in these areas, processes of fragmentation much more deep than they seem, that appear altering whether the coherence of international modern system (with his structures, rules and laws), as the physiognomy of politic unities that compound it. In many cases, however, the phenomenon of fragmentation isn't necessarily replacement. The old and new can coexist for a long time (like interstate war and "new wars"). While behaviours consistent with elements of realism persist in many areas of the world, new forms of fragmentation are also developing. If realism is not wrong, that is incomplete if we want to explain the whole international politics of today. The major difference with "ordinary" international system is the extraordinary

⁸ As it is known, the idea of closed territorial State, organized on basis of human law, was completely out of Islamic and Ottoman politic theory of government. The Umma, community of believers, is the true basis of politic aggregation and exclude the principle of equality of the States and of diplomatic reciprocity. If this was been superated with inclusion of Islamic societies and of Ottoman empire in the colonial European expansion and in the international modern system, but never was had a fully integration of culture, habits, tradion,(Bull, Watson 1994, 176-177).

heterogeneity of the units involved. It is no longer exclusively a question of States in the conventional sense (a territory, a population, an effective government), as in the time of the European alliance, but also of regional groupings with vague borders and of countries which have broken down. Here not only does coexistence have to be organized, but existence as well. It is radically new situation. Moreover, it seems to me that even systemic forces promote the forces of fragmentation (old and new forms of nationalism; principles of unit identity⁹, principles of legitimacy, which tends to destabilize the international system and promote more fragmentation) and international society has become more a machine for destroying states rather than producing states.

The most famous theory, that of “globalization-fragmentation paradox” of Clark (Clark, 1997) neglects to consider in the fragmentation aspects as these. Also the theories of “regime stability” overlook the forces driving political fragmentation and they cannot explain simultaneous push toward economic integration and political disintegration. The remaining superpower lacks the ability to control large areas, that are outside its hegemonic control.

The systems of fragmentation are characterized instead by chronic problems of legitimacy of home borders (established by foreign powers in the regional areas in the bigger international conferences), of number and identity of actors, of the same international system and of rules of international society. Who seek to give order (block of winner States in the cold war), restoring the *status quo ante* of international community, to born again, with a sort of “therapeutic effort” (USA, UN) to maintain living these States, an international stratified and hierarchic system, must more and more be aware with the fragmentation that acts today in more than a half of planet and that brakes the restoration of international order. But the collapse of the States falls outside the security mechanism foreseen for example in the Charter of the UN which is based on the peace treaty of Westphalia. All the international institutions try to rebuild collapsed States at the most possible, in name of international stability, giving oxygen with foreign norms. But external pressures contribute in most cases to feed the fragmentation.

Fragmentation: change and resolution of system and of international society

If it can be true the fragmentation of international society is not the logic consequence of the challenge thrown since decades to European predominance and if it is true not to strengthen of different cultures in regional subsystems is enough to hamper the function of the international society (because we can find rules and historically were found in absence of a common culture, too)

⁹ See Kedourie E. (1993).

(Bull, Watson, 1994, 454)¹⁰, the fragmentation is a phenomenon that in all cases stresses more than others the change of post-Westphalian western and modern international system. We cannot speak of crisis or more of missing of system, but the fragmented regionalize of international political system, to change of phenomenon before of States in a level over-national and the deep crisis of a whole of political links (a general crisis in the traditional models of political identification), legal and of culture, the change of international competition base since centuries on rules and precise borders (international society as something different from simple intercourse of strength) says much more as usually one admits. Rey Koslowsky and Friedrich Kratochwil (1994, 215-48) argued that the end of the Cold war constituted a “transformation” of the international system – not a change within the system, but a change of system.¹¹ Undoubtedly there are a lot of transformations in foundational institutions of the international system and not only in the practice of war. Also the institution of sovereignty is transforming, as an increasing number of analysts claims. (Rosenau, 1990; Ruggie, 1993; Strange, 1996; Clapham 1998). If it is true, we are in the midst of epochal change in the fundamental characteristics of international relations. The main problem perhaps remains how we can distinguish minor change from fundamental change, trends from transformations, and growth or decline from new forma. The intellectual problems are both conceptual and empirical.

Anyway, the fragmentation (not only territorial) is the phenomenon that most of all menaces the true pivot of the States system, the State, the institution par excellence of international society. The most part of thinking on International Relations, by the way, is not today hiding the charm of the State on International politics is weakened, and is challenged by factors issued by “normal” function of international system.¹² The fragmentation shows then the clear crisis of ruler principle that establishes who must be the political and law subjects of international coexistence and how must do. Furthermore goes in crisis the ability of major powers to simplify the international relations imposing a certain and controlled order. The appropriation of the war by non-State actors that pretend their use of violence is legal, is been considered as that by an important part of international society (Bull, 1977, 269).

¹⁰ To this thesis is opposite Adda Bozeman (Bull, Watson 1994, 409), that by plurality of reference picture, by heterogeneity comes the impossibility to find common fields, institutional too, for the international society.

¹¹ Rosenau adopted an “additive” notion of change, where the world of non-sovereignty based actors joins with the more traditional state-centred political universe. But he wrote also of “epochal transformation”, implying the persistence of some elements of the old – into a new world order (implying replacement). (Rosenau, 1990, 1997, 2000). See also Holsti, 1998.

¹² There is an evident crisis of international legitimacy. If this principle means: «The collective judgment of international society about rightful membership of the family of nations; how sovereignty may be transferred, and how state succession is to be regulated, when large states break up into smaller, or several states combine into one» (Wight 1977, 153), it is very difficult to affirm that this principle works regularly today.

The international society reached its acme in first year of XX century, and had introduced in the international relations the extension of common rules and values, began to decline with World War I and is probable this long wave, begun with balkanization of the world produced in Versailles, carries on until today. The end of bipolar world frees the currents of fragmentation, that the cold war managed only partially to keep (Santoro, 1981) but without avoiding to continue to dive under the foundations of modern international society, until to crack them. This withdrawal not only stresses on the habits of actors, but can send in crisis, with the problems created by fragmentation, with the modern States system.

The elements carrying to ascertain these cracks, as the cyclical of fragmentation, are:

1. The difficulty to consolidate everywhere international law equal actors and that recognize each other as legitimate. An international society exists only when the actors that like and recognize themselves; but today the States are flanked by actors that have power of influence (Rosenau, 1990) and that do not follow code rules; furthermore the aspiration to create new States on Western model provokes home fragmentation and catastrophic exits, between them are civil endemic wars (Kedourie, 1993) caused by difficulty of export this model;
2. the growing difficulty to concentrate power to a restricted group of actors (the winners of Cold War) in many regional areas and the affirmation of an opposite trend: this of breaking or fragmentation of power between smaller actors, whether national as sub-national (competing claims of authority have started to emerge from non-state actors and non-state based forms of authority in the world system) as over-national and of refusing and resistance of creation of an international pyramidal structure.
3. The failure of international assets, foreseen by international Congresses, applying rules and institutions of general characters, typical of western international society and for centuries used to regulate the contrasts of European International (ending to wars and dictating the principles and the norms of successive international orders); different in the de-colonization, the realignments and of contemporary aggregate are developing more and more in contrast with this praxis and ask requests always more ambitious of international order, provoking a labyrinth of legitimacy.
4. these rules become more and more less efficacy out western world, because is more and more less felt the must to conform to these institutions and norms, to the

- narrowing of consent correspond the discussion of the whole legitimacy of the international society;
5. the exhausting of political europized and westernized classes in many regional world areas and the emerging of traditional and religious ways of life them before these elites were always stressed to settle western ideas and imported methods on course of expansion of international society; States admitted to the international play continue to be shaken by tensions of fragmentation, because of the contrasts between these structures and local (tribe, etc.) identity of political relations; the relations of political fidelity are directed towards reference points different to the State (shared loyalties);
 6. the emerging of growing heterogeneity in the international system, based on cultural factors that make more and more difficult the sharing of values and norms as these typical of only one international society;
 7. the difficulty of the “normal” international system to come back in its normal function processes and systems as these of fragmentation, that are confined “outside” of system and where can rule jungle law, because is impossible prevail law on chaos; those tat might be called “transitional administration” are very difficult and resources – economic, institutional, and military – are often limited and is particularly problematic in situations where local actors disagree about basic objectives among themselves and with external actors; the inherently temporary character of transitional administration increases the difficulty of creating stable institutions (Krasner 2004, 100) (i.e. Bosnia, Kosovo);
 8. the refusal to accept norms, institutions (that have a coercive character), principles of International Law (equality, reciprocity), fallen victim of lack of consensus on its contents (Bull,1977), to accept the same characteristics of the States and the international system composed only by sovereign national States (Centre-South Asia, Middle East, sub-Sahara Africa, where weaken too the formulae ideological-political of western matrix);
 9. the crisis of efficacy of diplomacy, hard declined after 1914 (Wight, 1978, 120);
 10. the refusal of a threshold considered too high to be admitted as legitimate actors of international system, as the refusal of characteristics of base (centralized government, territory, sovereignty, homogenous population, stable diplomatic relations) and of criteria formal of access;

11. The States have less and less to do with actors similar in the sphere of security: end so to be rafted and involved on fields that cannot more control and weaken their power of coercion and menace;
12. the inefficiency of the whole of norms that had ruled in the international modern system the relation between peace and war, correspond to stable relations of sovereign States, not for chance the solutions of post-conflict and stabilization comport reactions of handicapped parts of processes of more and more difficult State- building.

The more macroscopic element of change of homogeneity of international system and society, is revealed empirically in the change of meaning of war (de-institutionalization on the course of all XX century) and of crisis of its rules, really linked to the modern international society. The limitation of violence was followed in the international society through the iron monopole of States on legitimate war (*jus ad bellum*) and through the borders imposed by the condition of war (*jus in bello*). But the fragmentation, that show as multiply and be different of international actors, sub-State and over-State, as strategic bifurcation, as loss of monopole on war from States, as same border between peace and war, signs an evident crisis in the international society.

Change of the meaning of war and international fragmentation

The war as foreseen phenomenon and as institution (that is useful to maintain the international order imposing the Law, preserving the balance of power and consenting the international change) (Bull, 1977, 188-189) seems not to be the rule on contests of fragmentation, in this late lesser is war linked to precise borders, as its legitimacy (*juxta causa* to the base of *jus ad bellum*) and limitation whether whose can recur (only who takes the form political-legal of the State), as in the use of ways apt to destroy to enemy (*jus in bello*, limited on space and time to struggle, separation between strugglers and not- strugglers, protection of neutral and of defenceless, etc.). The war as organized violence between sovereign States is declined vertically after 1945 and particularly in the contests of fragmentation is been had more and more a confused interlace of civil wars and of international wars, but with a neat drop of wars between States. The sides are mostly non-state (Smith 2005, 301): they are either sub- or supra-national. The result over the past ten years has been the development of an unprecedented complex pattern of armed conflict that has increasingly transcended traditional ideas about warfare. The decline in the incidence of interstate wars refers to the properties of the entire international system.

The change of meaning of war in the fragmentation (“Lebanonization”, “Balkanization”) was more deep, too. Regard to the wars of national liberation, to the revolutionary wars and to the civil wars, well identified as “internal” and finalized to the conquest of a centralized power of a land, despite conflicts within nation-state were typically viewed as domestic matters, outside the purview of the international community, the war in fragmentation is presenting as total confusion between inside and outside dimension, as pervasive phenomenon, always less limitable and lawful. All sub-conventional conflicts and terrorism campaigns take place in extremely complicated environments (van Creveld in: Townshend - Ed -, 2005, 362). The distinction between “inside war” and “outside war” (“international”, inter-states) is a hinge of *jus publicum europaeum*, that needs of existence of politic frameworks formally and hard compact and contiguous, endowed of a central administration and of stable borders.¹³ The absence of regular armies or their marginalization comes from a failed formation of stable politic regimes and having the monopole of war (Van Creveld, 1991; Holsti, 1996), different than not occurring in “revolutionary war” and in the civil one. When these characteristics are subjected to destroying tensions, as occurs in contemporary fragmentation, disappears the distinction between the two ways of war, too. Most non-European parts of the world have never known the modern state. It follows that, where there are no states, the threefold division into government, army and people does not exist in the same form (van Creveld, 1991, 50). Some practices that for three centuries have been considered uncivilized, in some zones had never really been abandoned. Irregular groups, sub-States, but too supra-States nets of international terrorism, represent today the actual actors of a “strategic bifurcation” (Evans, 2002) that overflows completely from classic strategy of conduction of a war in the modern inter-State forms of war¹⁴, and shows the crisis of international homogeneity, typical of contest of fragmentation. Contemporary international security system had bifurcated, that is, it had split between a traditional twentieth state-centred paradigm and new twenty-first-century sub-state and trans-state strata. The war in these ambits, subjected to claims of control, super-imposed or to a deep de-legitimacy, become not recognizable, transform in a “intrigue place” (Colombo 1995, 15). Because of the state-centric nature of the present system, the regulation of violence among non-state actors as well as anti-state violence by non-state actors remains in something of a grey area.

On the other hand, the theoretical analysis of civil war is not enough to explain the phenomena involved in the change of meaning of war on the ambit of fragmentation. By the way, the new forms of violent aggression, typical of this last dimension and there returning, cannot be by

¹³ National frontiers, that at present constitute perhaps the greatest single obstacle to combating low-intensity conflict, may be obliterated or else become meaningless as rival organizations chase each other across them. As frontiers go, so will territorial states (van Creveld, 1991)

¹⁴ «Strategy as taught at staff and war colleges, is inadequate for understanding a war without fronts» (van Creveld, 1991).

force included into the theoretical schema of civil war, that becomes a “typological content”, only in parts useful in the research and catalogue of “regularities” of change of meaning in war in these specific contest. For example, Rupert Smith wrote that is now time to comprehend the new paradigm of “war amongst the people” that is both a graphic description of modern war-like situation and also a new conceptual framework (Smith 2005, 3). The “wars of fragmentations”, inside them must be entered too the ethno national and “of identity” conflicts (Horowitz 2000; Aklaev, 2005), overflowed since the beginning of '90 in most parts of the planet, are referring for the most to the content “sub-State” in the scissor of global strategic bifurcation, nevertheless contain key-elements, that can be revealed too in the component trans-State, too because all the contemporary security issues (inter-state, trans-state and not-state) appear with all evidence interconnected and reciprocally strengthened. The change of war in the twenty-first century reflects the consequences of a global system became bifurcated between a state-centric world on the one hand and new trans-state and sub-state on the other hand. Bifurcation and the advanced technologies are redefining modern territoriality in connection with war (Evans, 2002).

The wars of disintegration are generally defined from the strategic point of view as “existence” and not “instrumental” conflicts¹⁵, are empty of delimitation-restrictions, defined on space and time. The nature of the entities for which war is made, and the ends for which it is fought is changing from the hard absolute objectives of interstate war to more malleable objectives to do with the individual and societies that are no states. This kind of conflict tends to be timeless.¹⁶ The territorial dimension takes in these conflicts a politic and strategic specific importance, but transform in an element with strong symbolic and psychological charge that do not coincide with the conception of territorial prevalent in the system and in the international State-centre modern Law and with our present notions of policy and interest, both of which are closely associate with the modern state. As the warmaking function is taken over by new types of organization, no doubt those organization will proclaim new myths and define their objectives in radically different ways (van Creveld, 1991, 226). Wars of fragmentation are different in a stressed way too from anti-colonial conflicts, that move too inside a juridical framework correspondent to a formal system of sovereign territorial States (Zartman - Ed - 1995, 1). Unlike the old national liberation insurgents of the Cold War era, fragmentation radicals are more concerned with a strategy of population displacement rather than with winning popular support; and with sectarianism and secession rather than with building of inclusive model societies.

¹⁵ «There will be also cases, when wars originally started “in order to” realize this or that objective, will degenerate into life-and-death struggles for existence». (van Creveld, 1991, 217).

¹⁶ This open-ended and timeless trend occur for three reasons. The first is to do with the chosen objective or end in sight, the second is to do with the method or way (these two are combined) and the third is to do with the shift between paradigms (Smith 2005, 289).

This kind of conflicts do not substitute obviously in the world arena in complete way other kinds of war and neither the inter-State wars, that even remain in the world (Panebianco, 1992, 1994, 2004) not being overflowed (Black 2001,114) and in some areas inter-state and conventional wars remain a possibility, but flank, often is overflowed to them and is bigger whether in growing quantitative terms, as in qualitative terms. We must pay attention furthermore in many cases they are presenting as “inter-State wars” are only apparently such, remaining by the way linked to the contests and to the logic of fragmentation¹⁷: take by the way this physiognomy because of exploitation from single political classes of prevalent internationalized criteria for the legitimacy of war and to take the advantages that the international universalized Law consent to enjoy in terms of power, even remaining the below not soluble tensions, because not to insert in the repertory of grammar that rules today the international modern relations. (Badie, 1992, 91-93).

In these kinds of conflict that base on phenomena that carry to the destroying (secessionist civil wars, irredentists civil wars, intercommunal and transnational ethnic wars, identity-based civil wars) coming from below, stimulated by weak States (Hironaka, 2005, 47) and exploited by local fractions of political class for their targets, leaking other sources of identification and control, are discussed central characteristics of State modern dimension, sovereignty, monopole of war, inviolability of borders and not interference into home affairs. Under conditions of “strategic bifurcation”, the old distinction between civil and international conflicts, between internal and international security, crisis, and between national and societal security began to erode. The changing character of conflict and war mirrored the bifurcation of the international security system.

War in systems of fragmentation sees disappear the classic distinctions between: “internal war” / “outside” war; civil war / criminal violence; “public” war / “private” war¹⁸; “regular” / “not regular” combatants (the enemy is extremely dispersed and often indistinguishable from the civilian environment); organized violence / violence between independent groups / violence of States on individuals and on groups of civil people; aggression from outside / “internal” violence; State / non-State war; there is not a clear caesura between condition of war and of condition of peace. A new forms of armed conflict multiply and spread, they will case the lines between public and private, government and people, military and civilian, to become as blurred as they were before 1648 (van Creveld, 1991, 226). The assertion of private managers of violence, of private military companies, of criminal and terror trans-national organizations, corrode the State monopole of act of strength, and so even the essential element constituent of western conception of modern State. The rise of

¹⁷ As a matter of fact «The Third World population had never known the Clausewitzian trinitarian war and its sharply-drawn division between government, army and people». (van Creveld, 1991, 41).

¹⁸ As wrote Charles Townshend: «The breakdown of some states has been accompanied by a ‘privatization’ of military forces, raising the question whether modern war itself has no become obsolete». (Townshend, 2005, VI).

“low-intensity conflict” undermines the Trinitarian structure of the modern state, which is why that state in many ways is singularly ill-suited for dealing with this kind of war (van Creveld, 1991, 194). Some of the “grammar” of war has deeply changed and contemporary trends in warfare within the context of international fragmentation are signals of radical shifts. The fragmentation of war has been mirrored in the obsolescence of “major war theory”. Increasingly, the conventional cannot be separated from the unconventional, the symmetric and the asymmetric may overlap in time and space. Once useful demarcations between theatre and strategic operations will continue to evaporate (Evans, 2002). Politics in modern war now pervade all three levels of war, namely tactics, operations and strategy. The new paradigm of “war amongst the people” is based on the concept of a continuous criss-crossing between confrontation and conflict, regardless of whether a state is facing another state or a non-state actor. The premise of the modern war was the sequence peace-crisis-war-resolution. The new paradigm is very different. Rather than war and peace, there is no predefined sequence. (Smith, 2005, 16-17). War has become a mixture of phenomena. We have conflicts favoured by similar historic contingencies¹⁹, by confluences of events, by acts of political classes and by acts and reactions of hostility in the ambit of States of many parts of the world where was exported the model of modern inter-State coexistence.

But we must not forget in these conflicts plays a determining rule, too, the action whose try to keep or impose the fictitious centralized power of a State or in a region in phase of total disintegration, or to take the power imposing its monopole of violence: matter provoking a reaction same and opposite. It is frequent in Africa, but occurred too in ex Yugoslavia and in Caucasus, where exploded the reaction due to the transforming of relations between centralized State and local institutions, before since forms of refusal of declared independences until, after, stressed repression and to forms of bloody war and without borders, nor formally declared.

The external interventions can only try to circumscribe the conflicts of fragmentation, to build “sanitarian belts” to avoid contagion (Colombo, 1995). A concerted therapeutic effort has had to be undertaken to protect weak states over the course of the past few years, with an extension of peace-maintenance operations in order to prevent their destruction, if not also to allow their reconstruction (Under-Saharan Africa, South-East Asia, central America).

But the intervention of “international usual system” is expensive, comports losses not acceptable by public opinion and reveals itself in the most part of cases only temporally effective.

¹⁹ Usually are situations of crisis, of politic transition, of forming of new States and of new internal minorities that are inducted to do profiting of weakness of the State itself, in preventive form, taking possess of territories and of a position of strengthen and of superiority to be able to de in future. It is the case of many African conflicts, of action of Serbs of Bosnia, as initiative taken by the inhabitants of Nagorno Karabach or of the struggles of Valley of Fergana and of Tashkent in Uzbekistan. The same occurred for the resistances whose have the power in the State: preventive action in Iraq by regime against Scythes in South and Kurds in North.

Like fragmentation, all forms of war-low-intensity conflict is the most contagious. Furthermore, the imported traditional war in these “abnormal” systems meets extreme difficulties. The need to combat in this kind of conflicts causes regular forces to degenerate into police forces. The contests of more stressed disintegration contribute to drop a fog more thick than Clausewitz’s one, on wars running there and to become more “chameleonic” (Evans, 2002). Often the military operation may be a success, but the essential strategic problem remains unresolved. In all these cases military force may have achieved a local military success, but frequently this success failed to produce its political promise: there is no decisive victory.

Since the no-symmetry of conduction of war, we pass to “asymmetric” warfare²⁰: the moral and law norms, the International Right of war ends in an abyss of absence and of inapplicability, the enemies not recognize each other as “criminal” and the enemy cannot more try to engage a law form (so can be only destroyed), in spite of “humanitarian” nature and the classic way to fight the external interventions, the involved powers, too, are “inspired” in vortex of fragmentation for impossibility to subject to the not symmetry and that provokes a big number of civil victims (Shaw, 2002).

Many structural factors of international political system contribute to heal the incidence and gravity of long, “abnormal” civil, intra-state wars (Hironaka, 2005, 2), that produce in areas of advanced fragmentation. The chances of secessionist are slim without consent of the sovereign government they are fighting against and recognition by the international community. Consequently, civil wars – with or without foreign intervention – drag on endlessly with neither winner nor losers – just prolonged and seemingly useless bloodletting (Jackson, James, 1993, 346-7) - as in Sudan, Kurdistan, Sri Lanka, Chechnya and so on. This is due also on the conservative inclination and practice of contemporary State and the States system to recognize the international legitimacy and territorial integrity of all existing States, including even countries which lack internally legitimate governments and contain profoundly alienated ethno-national regions (Jackson, James, 1993), where a significant proportion of the population does not accept the boundaries of the State as a legitimate political unit to which they owe obedience.

Moreover, the hegemonic aims and of control (the try to affirm the superiority of the remained superpower, pull the war out the traditional frame of International Law, because, too, the

²⁰ However, Rupert Smith wrote: «War amongst the people reflects the hard fact that there is no secluded battlefield upon which armies engage, nor are there necessarily armies, definitely not on all sides. To be clear> this is not asymmetric warfare, a phrase I dislike invented to explain a situation in which conventional military power in some formulation would be capable of both deterring the threat and responding to it. War among the people is different> it is the reality in which the people in the streets and fields - all the people anywhere - are the battlefield. Military engagements can take place anywhere: in the presence of civilians, against civilians, in defence of civilians. Civilians are the target, objectives to be won, as much as an opposing force. However, it is also not asymmetric warfare since it is also a classic example of disinterest the change of paradigms. [...] The model of war rather than its name is no longer relevant: the paradigm has changed». (Smith 2005, 3-4).

international institutional architecture has lost their cohesion and their coherence: the uncertainty on principles is translated in growing of discretionary of the most powerful), the display of military forces, on bases in areas signed by failed States, the international interventionism not calibrated or survivor of bipolar phase, support to corrupted political classes, that fight to maintain the State-territorial integrity stimulate the fragmentation and their conflicts. Then become formal retouching politic-territorial assets, given for sure for decades (or emerging from processes of fragmentation) and their borders that contribute to augment further wars of fragmentation and to render them particularly bloody. From the same influence of international modern system derive whether the trend permanent character and/or repetitive of these conflicts, as the unstable solutions and precarious that foresee assets of compromise not definitive, based on national criteria and artificial “homogenous” and between “internal” and “international” dimensions. Even the agreements to democratize (or to federalize on the basis of ethnic homogeneity) from outside the political system often can paralyze the states and stimulate fragmentation, traditional ethnic and tribal animosities and develop conflicts and bloodbaths.

It is weakened too the possibility of border a strategic-diplomatic stable whole, where the war too has its law regulation. The space of the diplomatic managing of war is weakening. The heterogeneity renders impossible the enemy to negotiate to his condition. Reaction to the US and international presence may grow but in a fragmented, not unified manner, that could threaten an endless civil war and conflicts that spill across international borders. Fragmentation has created a historically unprecedented situation in which polities with very limited material capability can threaten the security of much more powerful states. (Krasner, 2004, 86). The regulation or management of violence by the state system is problematized by these changes.

Last but not least, fragmentation and war are strictly connected also because as the average state decreases in size, while sophisticated weaponry becomes less and less expensive, the relative influence of non-state actors is likely to rise.

Conclusions

The contemporary fragmentation, with their characteristics that seem weaken the pillars of post-Westphalian system of international relations, says to us is today running a change of long period and the rules constitutive of modern international system, adapt to rule a world of States, but are no more to affront the challenges of contemporary coexistence what Rosenau defined “multi-centred world” (Rosenau, 2000) and Bull had defined “new medievalism” (Bull, 1977), describing even elements of fragmentation (system of overlapping authorities, of multiple loyalties, political

disintegration, and regional integration, forms of international private violence). The current system may be more likely to devolve into regionalization, as regional subsystem become increasingly autonomous from global forces. Especially some regions, such as parts of Africa, Asia may be characterized by further fragmentation and disorder. The prospects for the emergence even of stable regional orders are problematic. While states remained central to international politics throughout the course of the twentieth century, the meaning of “state” has not remained fixed in time or place.

The contemporary fragmentation constitutes the ambit, where, in the most clear way, appears the crisis of form of modern war (or “interstate industrial war”) (Smith 2005, 16), a crisis seem correspond in all, for what have we seen, to this general of principles, of norms and of rules of international society. the change of meaning of war in the fragmentation is in the evident fact it breaks furthermore and on a further step with the ways and the rules typical of modern inter-State war, spacing out even from these of civil war. The conflicts of fragmentation are these of “most extreme point” reached by international coexistence and belong to an era of radical discussion of modern inter-State model and its expansion, world exportation/importation. If war is the most important factor of change of international system, with his first function of redistribution of power between actors (Gilpin, 1981), the wars of fragmentation correspond to a deep change, denounce a radical transformation in the international living together, that invests the same text of norms, that disrupts a veil on the existence of an universe of relations where the State frameworks see become different from the factors of power and even get away from the duty of self adorn of a “sovereign” legitimacy (to the point to be obliged to use in a “pluriverse”, in a series diversified of arenas [Launay, 2003, 27] where rules disappear, superimpose multiply rationalities and disordered spaces), noticing for counterblow an international society more and more lacerated between contradictory principles and not able to use categories in evident obsolescence²¹. But the war maintains in these ambits too its characteristic of foundation of new orders, as in the case of structural fragmentation. (Hironaka, 2005, 65). The starting point to changing our approach must be a change in our concepts of analysis. (Smith 2005, 373).

The same meaning of “international order” would perhaps be rethought. In the reflection of Bull, by the way, the international order can be obtained in these other ways that go through an international society of States (finding an explicit and legitimate alternative to conventional sovereignty, which is not a static concept, but a dynamic one), even though the price is to calculate with alternative principles of politic and law organization that accompanies always the transition from a model of living together to an other (Bull, 1977,140-141). The dynamism, the uncertainty,

²¹ «If the modern state will lost its military effectiveness and the ability to safeguard the lives of its members, vis-à-vis other warmaking organizations, no longer it will be able to call on those members loyalty even to the point where they are prepared to die for it». (van Creveld, 1991).

the international change typical of fragmentation, reveal today deep dynamics that point to flexibility and to redefinition of international coexistence, perhaps with spontaneous reassembling of aggregations of power. A theory of fragmentation is necessary, because it is an instrument to orient in the change and to meet to the international change, until today confined to the borders of theoretical analysis.

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