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A time of barbarism - a time of chrysalises: general notes on Palestine

ABSTRACT

This paper presents some philosophical and political reflections on the most recent events regarding the conflicts in the Middle East, more specifically concerning Palestine, in the form of an essay, due to the scope and complexity of the topic. It starts with a definition of genocide to develop some general notes on the history of Palestine, and to conclude with a confrontation between the notion of barbarism as irrationality and authoritarianism, and the chrysalises' time as the germination of resistance and freedom.

KEYWORDS

Political philosophy
History
Palestine

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INTRODUCTION

The premises from which we begin are not arbitrary ones, not dogmas, but real premises from which abstraction can only be made in the imagination (Marx; Engels, 2022 [1947], p. 7).

This text presents some philosophical and political reflections on the most recent events regarding the conflicts in the Middle East, more specifically concerning Palestine, in the form of an essay, due to the scope and complexity of the topic. We are living in a time of barbarism, structural crises, and extreme social inequality with the reconfiguration of capitalism, with signs since 2008, of a terminal hegemonic crisis of the United States power, with a systematized ascension of neoliberal conservatism and what we call neofascism. What Rosa Luxemburg, paraphrasing Marx's *Communist Manifesto*, stated in 1899 about the bourgeoisie is confirmed: it

"has imploded all bonds among human beings and left each one to their fate, their misery, and their ruin, only to remember them after dehumanizing them – spiritually or bodily, by murder or by suicide".

And she goes on to highlight the implemented madness:

"only the bourgeoisie withdrew the horror of genocide by making it vulgar, brutalizing the senses of both of victims and executioners, covering the drama of human existence with triviality", the normalization, the scariest and most macabre cynicism (Luxemburg, 2011, p. 115, nonofficial translation¹).

In a study of the writings of young Gramsci, Gervasoni (1998) examines his reading of French Romantics, at a time when, on the threshold of socialism, the young Sardinian, inspired by "*Il canto delle crisalidi*" ("The Song of the Chrysalis"), a poem by Carlo Michelstaedter, wrote the article "*La vita e la morte*", a text published in *Avanti!* in 1916. In it, Gramsci seems to outline the beginning of a reflection on the movement of history: as the World War continued, an outline of hope for the transformation and a "feeling of new life" (Gervasoni, 1998, p. 35; in the original quotation, "*sentimento de vida nova*") and regeneration appeared in socialism.

On his path to socialism, Gramsci addresses the matter of genocide in the text *Armenia*, regarding a people ignored because unknown, "turned upon one's own pain"; "For a people, for a race, it means slow dissolution, [...] an abandonment to one's own lot, defenseless and wretched before those whose only reason lies in the sword [...]". Armenia, in its massacres, "[...] received only the most platonic expressions of sympathy for its suffering, or of scorn for its executioners" (Gramsci, 2016 [1916], p. 89-90). In more recent times, there are Pasolini's considerations on genocide, far beyond brute force:

I think that the destruction and replacement of values in today's Italian society is leading, although without massacres and mass shootings, to the suppression of large areas of society itself.

Moreover, this is by no means a totally heretical or heterodox assertion. In Marx's Manifesto there is a passage that clearly and precisely describes the extremes of genocide that are carried out by the bourgeoisie with relation to certain strata of the ruled classes, above all the classes that are not working class, but sub-proletarian or various colonial populations (Pasolini, 1974).

Pasolini's text, which results from a lecture given in 1974 and published later on, shows us that a genocide is not only characterized by the violent death of human beings cynically cornered and murdered, used as targets for testing new technologies. A genocide leaves incurable physical, psychological and cultural wounds that may be irreversible. For Pasolini, it is the implementation of a system that, from a simulacrum of freedom and tolerance, executes the cultural death, producing a terrifying aphasia and a political passivity that immobilizes the working classes. Among the contradictions that this genocide highlights is the liberal idea of democracy, which presents itself as a mystifier of international political relations, with rules that seem valid to few, transgressed with such cynism that it turns real democracy into a myth and a simulacrum.

The genocide of Palestinians is one among many, but this one is witnessed in real time by static, inert populations, incapable of reacting to a barbarity that is being naturalized and taking over our daily lives. The occupation of Palestine by Zionist settlers can be identified as a true occupation colonialism in the 21st century, as it expels or kills the Palestinian population that already occupies that region for centuries, in such proportions that it characterizes a genocide in a clear process of ethnic cleansing. The Palestinian resistance exploded as a fight for freedom and emancipation of the Palestinian people, cornered and reduced to the small territory of the Gaza Strip.

Never has a government imposed itself so arrogantly based on its economic and military power as Israel, supported by the United States — which imposes the rules of the world order and intends to determine the direction of world politics. In times of tension and conflicts, the bourgeois democracy, in the U.S. mold, drops its mask and shows itself as a true simulacrum of freedom and political participation. A democracy which has as a point of accomplishment the vote, which, with the mass media and the implementation of new technologies, can be infinitely manipulated. On the assumption that the one with the best economic investment conditions wins the election, we move toward the consolidation of plutocracies, distorting the meaning of the demos.

Reflecting on democracy in the context of installed barbarism is not an easy task. The concept has received abusively flexible interpretations to fit the interests of those who speak out in the discourse, often in favor of the invasion of other States. In the German context between wars, Luxemburg (2008, p. 85-86) highlights that the Constituent Assembly and the right to vote are not enough for the exercise of democracy; it is also important to guarantee "[...] a healthy public life and of the political activity of the laboring masses: freedom of the press, the rights of association and assembly".

¹ Original quotation: "implodiu todos os laços entre os seres humanos e deixou cada um ao seu destino, à sua miséria e à sua ruína, para somente depois de tê-lo desumanizado – espiritual ou corporalmente, pelo assassinato ou pelo suicídio – lembrar-se dele. [...] apenas a sociedade burguesa é que retirou o horror do genocídio por tê-lo tornado cotidiano, embrutecendo os sentidos, tanto das vítimas quanto dos verdugos, cobrindo o drama da existência humana com a trivialidade".

Rosa Luxemburg (2020) describes how the bourgeois legality serves to imprison the proletariat, as Law shapes an entire system of oppression, giving the appearance of a unity of the proletariat, which, nonetheless and in fact, nothing can achieve. She demonstrates this in her analysis of German politics when she indicates that social democracy had congregated three million men, who could do nothing to promote the popular interests, since the Parliament remained in the bourgeoisie's hands. The decision-making power was never in people's hands, except in some special moments, enabled by great revolutions.

While the capitalist State centralises and unifies politics according to the interests of a class, the paths of resistance demand the proposition of another form of political management and, as Gramsci (1919) states, based on the Factory Councils, "[...] a new type of state, generated by the experience of association of the proletarian class, and the substitution of this for the democratic-parliamentary state". Democratic instruments only work if there is an integrality of factors, among them, the possibility of free choice by the people, which demands true and broad information over the facts, and, mainly, a political education that allows the subaltern classes to autonomously decide their fate.

The limits of the Western democratic matters do not correspond to the goals of a democratic order in the East, although there have been attempts such as the uprising named "Arab Spring", which, after great popular mobilisations, led to reformist or even dictatorial regimes that restored the old political order. The weight of their traditions played a significant role in this restoration process. The case of Palestine has different characteristics, and its history strongly emerges at this moment of recomposition of the world political order.

The two decades of the 21st century are characterized by a new political setting that meets the demands of the recomposition of capitalism, now supported by technologies that allow the amplification of the concentration of capital through financialisation, subordinating the productive sector to generalised speculation. These new forms of exploitation and concentration of surplus value act on the strengthening of new hegemonic agents. The violence and horror against the Palestinians in the Middle East are inserted in this context, which we discuss in general terms ahead in this text.

THE HISTORICAL MOVEMENT AND ITS PERSPECTIVES

[...] for they allow us to recognize the sea on which we navigate and the shore from which we push off. It is here, therefore, that the "critique" of the nineteenth century –to say it in one word– ought to begin. The critique of [...] its narcotic historicism, its passion for masks [...] (Benjamin, 1999, K1a, 6, p. 391).

"The new stage of genocide and ethnic cleansing perpetrated by Israel in Palestine since 7 October 2023 has developed in the face of the failure of the international community", which includes "governments that show solidarity with the Palestinians, to act materially towards a ceasefire and the real promotion of peace in the region" (Huberman; Fernandes, 2023, p. 16).

The tragic genocide that is watched live in mass media and that

brings the Palestinian drama to the center of debates demands a critical reflection on ideology as a practice of power and mystification of reality, naturalising the conditions of barbarism. According to Traverso (2024), Israel is generally depicted as a democratic State, a description that is an assumption of corporate media. In parallel, Hamas is described as a terrorist organization, inspired by bloodthirsty fanaticism, a formulation that is also extended to other Arab movements.

It is worth explicating, though briefly, what is understood as democracy in this beginning of century: the implementation of neoliberalism from 1970 on and the financialization of economy brought to the political scene "gigantic transnational companies, the 'new Leviathans', whose planetary scale and extraordinary economic, social, and ideological gravitation" transformed the real bases of liberal democracies (Boron, 2001, p. 175, nonofficial translation²). In this context, attributing to Israel, a State that has long violated international rights and imposed its group interests by resorting to military force, the title of democracy has become an expression of true cynicism.

According to Rancière (2014, p. 7) "[...] the arguments used to back up the military campaigns devoted to the worldwide rise of democracy reveal the paradox concealed by the dominant usage of the word today". On one side, the "[...] arbitrary government, government without limits — which, depending on the moment, is referred to either as tyranny, dictatorship, or totalitarianism". On the other, the strenuous efforts of social and political groups to build an effective democratic life.

Genocide as an instrument of ethnic cleansing has been recurrent in political history. Here we return to Gramsci (2002, p. 26), regarding the massacre in Armenia, to emphasize that it is rather unfair to not be acknowledged and not have its own history, since those who do not know, do not feel. However, sometimes, knowing it distortedly, in a manipulated manner that makes communication another war instrument, also generates great mistakes. The situation in Gaza is characterised as a genocide since it involves an army armed with the most advanced technologies of target identification that deliberately aim at the unprotected civil society, systematically decimating mostly women, children, and elderly citizens.

To understand the Palestinian genocide, it is necessary to revisit some points of its history since 1948 to reveal the forms of a process of decades of occupation and colonialism, racism, and ethnic

"The Israeli state preaches the impossibility of a Palestine and accuses the world in solidarity with the Palestinians of imaginary violence in the face of the possibility of the dissolution of the Israeli state and paths that involve other governance configurations besides the Zionist state" (Huberman e Fernandes, 2023, p.23).

violence, which caused the inevitability of the resistance organisation. We begin with the observations of Arlene Clemesha (2024, p. 211), on the position of the Palestinian people, who, for about a century, continuously resisted to their dehumanisation, uprooting and dispossession, rejecting the implantation of

2 Original quotation: "gigantescas empresas transnacionais, os 'novos Leviatãs', cuja escala planetária e extraordinária gravitação econômica, social e ideológica".

colonialism in their lands. And this is not about opposition to the Jewish people, with whom they have peacefully lived throughout time, but about an ongoing process of violent and expansionist repression by the Zionist Israeli government.

The conflict between Zionists and Palestinians did not start in October 2023, but it has a long history rooted in great mistakes caused by international agreements on the self-determination of peoples, systematically disrespected by Israel. The “Palestinian struggle and resistance, which emerged with the 1917’s Declaration of Balfour, cultivates its own roots, prior to October 7, 2023”. Since then, Palestinians have defended themselves against the colonialist invasion and the “Zionist plans to forcefully expel Palestinians from their homes, claiming the land, based on an exclusive Jewish religious identity” (Addameer, 2024, p. 37, nonofficial translation³).

The regions of Gaza and the West Bank belonged to Palestinians for a long time and became an object of imperialist aggression following 1948’s international decisions that introduced into their geographic space, into their body, a foreign body called the State of Israel. The Gaza Strip emerged from the forced displacement of native Palestinians, who mostly headed to neighboring lands; “[...] the Sinai desert formed a natural impediment to long-distance mass migration”, so that a large part “[...] gathered in a tiny slice of historic Palestine that remained under Egyptian administration”, an area that has since been known as the Gaza Strip (Attalah, 2024, p. 173).

The martyrdom of the Palestinian people then began, in a continuous process of dispossession of their lands, and violent repression perpetrated by Zionism established in a colonisation process that generated progressive isolation and forced displacement of the Palestinian population to other States in the region and to the Gaza Strip. The evidence of intention and attempt of ethnic cleansing realised by Israel’s Zionist regime took shape mostly from 1948 on; since then, the persecution of Palestinians has produced more than two million refugees scattered in 32 camps in the West Bank and Gaza, with a consequent loss of identity, culture, and land to the Israeli settlers (Addameer, 2024, p. 37).

Countless international agreements aimed at restricting the use of force by Israel or creating the autonomous State of Palestine were disregarded by Israel, which has systematically ignored not only UN resolutions, but also human rights organisations.

The Palestinian people were left solely with the path of clandestine resistance, which erupted in 2023 and led to Israel’s military invasion of Gaza, with disproportionate violence and a clear intention of ethnic cleansing, destroying all existing infrastructure, attacking hospitals and civil systems of protection, deliberately killing women and children with accurate headshots, that is, professedly committing war crimes, with the protection and benevolence of the United States.

On the Palestinian side, a movement of resistance has taken great proportions from civil society, social movements, and their fight for human rights. The entire social and intellectual life of Palestinians has been hindered and controlled by the occupying State since its creation, based on the 1948 resolutions. Ever since, the Palestinian people have bravely faced the invader to defend their lands and their lives, with the most varied forms of resistance. Hiding its past and demonstrating a lack of memory, after years of authoritarian repression, Israel dates the beginning of everything to October 2023, and attacks with monstrous weapons as if it were a victim defending their rights. With the support of the United States, it no longer disguises its colonial goals, and announces its progress in expanding Israel’s limits to form a single State.

According to Clemesha (2024, p. 209, nonofficial translation), after destroying the Gaza Strip, Israel makes its intention of annexing the West Bank clear, with an increase of violence, accentuating that “bands of armed settlers have invaded homes (mostly in coveted locations in East Jerusalem) and attacked Palestinian villages”⁴, which amplifies brutal actions in terms of violence against the settlers. The statements of the Israeli government incite hatred against Palestinians in a clear situation of inhumanity that borders on cynicism.

The normative definition of the crime of genocide was stipulated by the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (1948, in force since 1952), and it was on this basis that the International Court of Justice issued its opinion of January 26, 2024 on the plausibility that a genocide is underway in the Gaza Strip, as well as provisional measures to prevent its consummation, all of which were ignored by Israel Israel (Clemesha, 2024, p. 210, note 9, nonofficial translation)⁵.

In the face of colonialism and violence perpetrated by a regime that ignores and violates human rights, the International Court of Justice, which establishes the obligations that arise from international law and delimits the “principles and rules concerning the basic rights of the human person”, such as “protection against slavery, racial discrimination”, and war crimes (Trindade, 2017, p. 81, nonofficial translation⁶), received the complaint filed by South Africa accusing Israel of genocide. This action paved the way for other very important political manifestations for the Institution to make the decision to affirm that the attack on Palestine is indeed a genocide, a war crime.

What is happening in Palestine is clearly a genocide perpetrated throughout the years, since the “approval of Palestine’s partition by the UN to carry out a plan that predicted its dispossession for the creation of a State ethnically and mostly Jewish”⁷. It regards an ongoing ethnic cleansing action that has been expanded since 1948 and that took the event of October 2023 as a pretext for the violent extermination of the civilian population of Gaza and subsequently, of the West Bank (Clemesha, 2024, p. 215, nonofficial translation).

3 Original quotations: “[...] luta e resistência palestina, surgidas com a Declaração Balfour de 1917, cultiva raízes próprias, anteriores ao 07 de outubro de 2023. [...] planos sionistas para expulsarem os palestinos de suas casas à força, reivindicando a terra, com base em uma identidade religiosa judaica exclusiva”. Addameer’s official website seems to be currently down.

4 Original quotation: “bandos de colonos armados têm invadido casas (principalmente em locais cobijados de Jerusalém oriental) e atacado vilarejos palestinos”.

5 Original quotation: “A definição normativa do crime de genocídio foi estipulada pela Convenção das Nações Unidas para a Prevenção e a Repressão ao Crime de Genocídio (1948, em vigor desde 1952), e foi com base nela que a Corte Internacional de Justiça emitiu o parecer de 26 de janeiro de 2024 sobre a plausibilidade de que um genocídio esteja em curso na Faixa de Gaza, bem como medidas provisionais para impedir sua consumação, todas elas ignoradas por Israel”.

6 Original quotation: “princípios e regras atinentes aos direitos básicos da pessoa humana [...] proteção contra a escravidão, a discriminação racial”.

7 Original quotation: “aprovação da partilha da Palestina pela ONU para realizar um plano que previa a sua desocupação para a criação de um estado étnico e majoritariamente judeu”.

The argument created and disseminated by large media corporations is to instrumentalise history by accusing of anti-Semitism any and all criticism of the genocide committed by the Zionists in power, to justify the horror that is being committed in the expulsion, exile and dispersion (Said, 1992) of the Palestinians expropriated from their lands. Anti-Semitism exists “in the rhetoric of specific neo-Nazi and neo-fascist groups, with nefarious and violent consequences” based on the actions of rising far-right parties, extending itself in the form of racism and exclusion of Arabs and Muslims; “The old anti-Semitic myths have been readapted and now directed at Arabs” (Clemesha, 2024, p. 2017, nonofficial translation⁸).

The Palestinian matter has to be understood in the context of the new setting of the capitalist world order: neoliberal practices facilitate the application of new forms of labor exploitation and expropriation, in precarious labor resources, unemployment, and legislative flexibilisation, which fall upon the working class, which daily suffers from the increase of social inequality. There is the emergence of new forms of colonialism. There is also a geographic setting that becomes more important as natural resources are discovered and trade relations are propelled at a crucial spot for general trade. The confrontation between the two forces that dispute world hegemony is intensified: the system dominated by the U.S. has been confronted by the design of a new social order led by China in the movement known as Global South.

The decimation of the Palestinian people, with the support of the U.S., has as a backdrop the natural resources of that region and the dispute over control of the Mediterranean. In this process, economic interests diminish the respect for the lives and existence of specific ethnic groups, as is the case of Palestinians nowadays and as was the case of Kurds and African populations in the past. The resistance of oppressed peoples does not appear as such in the dominant discourse. The organic crisis compromises U.S. hegemony, and the use of force seems to be the path to global geopolitical control. The military apparatus is used as a threat, while the control of the financial system and common sense are disputed, with the implementation of new communication technologies.

The far-right dominates the formation of common sense since it knows and uses new mass communication technologies, a space that for some left-wing activists, seems like a riddle; this is a space of dispute that can only be confronted with continued education and political organisation of the popular classes. In this context, the rise of neo-fascist proposals is reinforced by the new digital colonialism, which is accompanied by the loss of autonomy in this area by dependent countries:

“It will not be easy to think of solutions for peaceful coexistence in the region again after the genocide that is currently taking place in the Gaza Strip and that will leave its irreparable mark for generations. I suggest that we first look at the past to understand, honestly, how we got here, where the course of

history is heading, and how big is the challenge that lies ahead” (Clemesha, 2024, p. 219, nonofficial translation⁹).

The future solution, which depends on international relations, is the implementation of Oslo decisions regarding the creation of two States or, in the wake of the radical and genocidal stance of Israel, the establishment of a single Palestinian State. “There is no doubt that, in the future, Gaza war will find its historians” (Traverso, 2024, nonofficial translation¹⁰); time will also reveal media’s distortions, the complicit connivance of those who had the power to interfere and prevent the worst and remained in silence. In the current circumstances, the least that must be done is to publicise the indignation at the horror of the genocide, disguised as a “right to defense”, an “anti-Semitic persecution”, a cynical and perverse narrative that hides the killing of thousands of civilians, most of them women and children. Denouncing barbarism and thinking that the movement of history is also the movement of the germination of resistance.

A TIME OF BARBARISM, A TIME OF CHRYSALISES

The life that becomes death, and the death that will create new life. The chrysalises are the most alive symbol of this moment of world life (Gramsci, CT., p. 235, nonofficial translation¹¹).

In the context of Critical Theory, reflections on barbarism were inspired by the decline of the Weimar Republic, which concentrated in its politics a series of contradictions that culminated in the failure of insurgent movements and the restoration of conservative order in 1919’s Germany. At that time, both violence of the forces linked to power and poverty, misery, and social injustice were called barbarism. The theme is rekindled in the debates with the rereading of Marx based on the publication of *History and Class Consciousness* (1974), by the young Lukács, in 1923.

The general goal is to understand the essence of Marx’s method (1974, 2009), with the conviction that the thoughts of this author offer “the *true method* by which to understand society and history”, and that its most “pre-eminent aim is *knowledge of the present*”, based on a method that presents “an unendingly fertile source of solutions to otherwise intractable dilemmas” (Lukács, 1923, p. 3). Lukács emphasises the importance of returning to a traditional of interpretation of Marx, stressed by Engels and Plekhanov, but mostly to Hegel’s logic for Marx’s methodological proposition. From this premise, he encourages a resumption of Marx’s writings, with an emphasis on the concepts of commodity fetishism and alienation, fundamental for the comprehension of historical crises and their confluence in the present.

At the same time, philosophy, along with politics and history, questions the origins and meanings of violence and its consequences in historical and social coexistence. Several approaches, from Hanna Arendt (1994), through Adorno and Horkheimer (1985), and even Sorel (1992), delve deeper into the theme, accentuating the deepening of the opposition between rational and irrational, reaching the limit of contradiction as a negation of humanity.

8 Original quotation: “na retórica de certos grupos neonazistas e neofascistas, com consequências nefastas e violentas. [...] Os velhos mitos antisemitas foram readequados e dirigidos agora aos árabes”.

9 Original quotation: “Não será fácil voltar a pensar em soluções em prol da convivência pacífica na região a partir do genocídio que hoje se vive na Faixa de Gaza e que deixará sua marca irreparável por gerações. Sugiro olhar primeiro para o passado para entender, honestamente, como chegamos até aqui, para onde aponta o curso da história e qual o tamanho do desafio pela frente”.

10 Original quotation: “Não existem dúvidas que, no futuro, a guerra de Gaza encontrará seus historiadores”.

11 Original quotation: “A vida que se torna causa de morte e a morte que criará nova vida. As crisálidas são o símbolo mais vivo deste momento da vida mundial” / “La vita che diventa morte, e la morte che creerà la nuova vita. Le crisalidi sono il simbolo più vivo di questo momento della vita mondiale”.

Philosophic reflections follow this path, moving from the observation that enlightenment is totalitarian (Adorno; Horkheimer, 1985) to the assertion that the State is totalitarian (Arendt, 1989) and can produce the “totalitarian horror, which is nothing other than the time of barbarism (Santos; Pires; Helfer, 2009, p. 113, nonofficial translation¹²). Barbarism as institutionalized irrationality, as a practice of power that spreads in state structures that should implement human rights, in the expansion of violence (wars, security, social control, etc.), and that generates and reproduces violence, which erupts in civil society as racial hatred, prejudices (religious, identity-based, etc.), on the path to amplification and naturalization of irrationality in the absence of any ethical parameter.

Thus far, violence is understood as the brutal force of those who hold power and control society. But violence takes on other more subtle and effective forms that are not explicit aggression; they are educational and produced by cynicism, mockery, public humiliation, etc. In other words, every form of violence is corrosive and causes not only social but also individual harm. In a genocide, the best situation is that of those who are fatally decimated; those who remain, even if not physically mutilated, may suffer irreparable psychological trauma. This is what we call barbarism, which, in turn, justifies attitudes of insurgency and resistance to the aggressor.

A time of barbarism, but also a time of chrysalises, a time for the germination of new forms of social and collective life, from insurgent energies that can rise in the movement of history, opening new horizons. The suffering of the Palestinian people, which “have resisted for a century to their dehumanization, uprooting and dispossession” (Clemesha, 2024, p. 2019, nonofficial translation¹³) of their lands, their culture, their lives, reject and resist the implemented colonialism, and that vindicate their right to life by resorting to fight and armed resistance. By making their suffering and history known, they shall make the world awake from its numbing slumber to build new international relations that truly guarantee the accomplishment of human rights.

A BRIEF CONCLUSION

We define the time of barbarism as the primacy of irrationality and authoritarianism, against which we must counterpose the experience of rationality and freedom, in order to make humanity prevail. It is known that, in the context of capitalism, this is not possible, since the “bourgeois society spread the veil of invisibility over its crimes”. And, in its consolidation, it “has taken the shudder away from their mass murder because it has made it commonplace”. The naturalization of horror, the trivialization of violence, “million-headed and yet headless people, with a million beating and yet heartless hearts, encompassing millions of human and yet inhumans, deaf, blind monsters—civil society!” (Luxemburg, 1899).

On another part, the disenchantment for the loss of the sense of humanity, but the necessity to fight and try to survive chasing fear and indifference away from many in the face of the evil that befalls a people:

“The things that occur do not occur because some people exer-

cise their will, but because the multitude abdicates its own will and lets things be, allowing for knots to form that it will take a sword to unfasten” (Gramsci, 2016 [1916], p. 129).

Society is wrapped in lethargy, a numbness fueled by mass media, which we can say, paraphrasing Benjamin (1999), is the great narcotic of the century.

But this is also the time of chrysalises, of fight and persistence of insurgent movements, which draw their strength from the need to survive, to create a new world for new generations, to engender forms of resistance and overcome all that is morbid and pathological in this society: the Palestinian resistance exploded as a fight for freedom and emancipation of the Palestinian people, in defense of their lands and their history. New international relations need to germinate and, sooner or later, the world shall acknowledge the historical injustices committed against these people and their strength and determination in the defense of their right to life ■

¹² Original quotation: “terror totalitário, que não é outra coisa senão o tempo da barbárie”.

¹³ Original quotation: “resiste há um século à sua desumanização, desenraizamento e expropriação”.

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