

## **Post-Conflict Cultures: Rituals of Representation**

Edited by Cristina Demaria and Colin Wright

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Edited by Cristina Demaria and Colin Wright

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## The Narrative Form of Post-Conflicts – WWW.World Wide War, Again

Federico Montanari

### The Closure of the "War-recount" Circuit in the Last Wars

The idea that I want to start from is that the practices of war are inseparable from their representation and narrative form. Today especially, the virtual weapons of communication and manipulation converge more and more with the technologies of war. The construction and the placing into discourse of these representations and narrations – which actuate themselves in their own time through heterogeneous practices – react with the concrete forms of war themselves: naturally according to diverse socio-cultural formations. And the further hypothesis, with regard to current wars, takes the form of an apparent paradox: today, there is no distinction between war and post-war. The current form of war presents itself as "post-war"; today, wars appear more and more in the form of a war that follows the war. From the peace-keeping and peace-enforcing interventions of the 1990s up to the "titles" – it is almost a question of films or serials – of the different military expeditions carried out by the Western powers under the direction of the U.S., from "Restore Hope" to "Enduring Freedom".

But we start with typical characteristics of the current forms of conflict. Above all, today, in front of the media-influenced war – a phenomenon that will not be reduced to a commonplace and banal assertion of a conflict "seen through" the media – it is concerned with these "stories of war", with narrative forms that in the past used to assume the forms of the memorial or the chronicle, or in a broader sense, the myth. We certainly cannot say that the dimension of the representation or, in a broader sense, the narrative of war is less important today. On the contrary, this dimension has grown so much as to become hypertrophic. We could say that in the current wars this becomes part of the planning of tactics and of strategy itself. It even contributes to rendering an intermediate dimension more important: that which some studies define as "operational", intermediate between the intervention on the field and the level of planning and doctrine.

This operational level invests itself in either the traditionally military field of operations (logistics, information, control, acquisition and management of data) or in the terrain of the media (that which was the old role of propaganda, and now assumes the different forms of planned communication, of the dissemination of news, of preventive communication). Indeed, typical of the new forms of war is to continually make one field pass through the other: thus we will have strategies, tactics and logistics of communication, just like the control and management of information on the field of battle. We think of the case of the *embedded* journalists following the U.S. troops in Iraq; or again, of the recordings taken by the video cameras of the soldiers themselves engaged in combat, attempts to manage the images (at times the "spectacular" dimension of war itself) that sometimes escape from the net of the information censor.

This aspect comes to be theorised by scholars, and practised by strategists and military personnel. It is seen in the most sensational case or, if we prefer, a case of experimentation-in-the-field in this practice: the Kosovo war. In the course of the war the press officers of NATO, the spokespeople, and the various civil experts in strategies of marketing and in campaigns of political communication mobilised themselves to seek to construct a true and proper planning of communication: it was a question of preparing "attractive, ready-to-go stories" for the press and the public, to "refresh" the communication of the briefings for the journalists.<sup>1</sup>

In general, in the study of international relations, of political theory, as in the social sciences, there tends to be more discussion of narration and narrative models as forms of the construction of reality. This idea becomes so much more important as it is connected with practices "of the terrain" (of strategic planning of communication). Such an idea is surely not new: we think of the concept – developed a long time ago by Lyotard with regard to the "postmodern condition" – of "the end of grand narratives"; just as in the studies of semiotics (the school of Greimas) or those of social psychology (Bruner). But this narrative model has been generalised and is now utilised in various frameworks. Certainly, from one theoretical-analytical point of view it can be made clear in its forms, thanks to semiotics and more generally to the contributions provided by different sectors of the human sciences. This idea of narrativity assumes, however, also a strategic and practical-operative application.

### Why Semiotics?

But let us allow ourselves now a quick theoretical-methodological justification: "Why semiotics?". We believe that this range of research enables us to help render more pertinent and intelligible these problems. The semiotic discipline, in particular that structural-narrative part that has focused on a multi-level model of analysis (analysis of systems of subjectification, analysis of their organisation and narrative activation, analysis of forms of enunciation and styles of discourse in which these narrations are embodied), seems able to help us in the direction of an analysis of the forms and of the discourses of war; within a wider "semiotic and textual turn" in the social sciences.<sup>2</sup>

We can affirm that the aim of semiotics is to provide methodological tools to analyse forms of meaning. But the main idea of semiotics is that meaning and forms of content are not isolated, and we can find them shared, connected with forms of expression, and first of all in texts, or text-based phenomena.

We can think that this idea is shared with some researchers and analysts of war. But the question really is the change in the nature of war: how has it changed? War, today, is characterised by a close link between images and war practices, between these practices and its forms of representation. More generally, today's war is a "semiotic war" but not in an everyday sense. We need to find out what its mechanisms are.

Before trying to define the general question of the new models of conflict, we want to start from recent examples – among so many to which the current state of permanent and global war has made us accustomed –

relative to that which seems to us to be able to be defined as *the closure of the "war-recount" circuit*.

### Forms of Tactical-mediatic Gesticulation

In the first months of 2002, in the course of one of the episodes following the "second Palestinian Intifada", a horrific lynching occurred – an event impossible to justify, even taking into account the context of violence, of oppression and of the killings that the Palestinian people undergo daily: the lynching of two Israeli soldiers by a crowd of demonstrators, of militants and Palestinian militia. This episode serves as an example dramatically paradigmatic of the current forms of war, a war that is above all hybrid: it is urban, ethnic, political, civil and military at the same time, conducted by a regular army and by militiamen, part of a war both local and global; symbol of struggles that spread throughout the world and keep their meaning up to date; and, finally, it is "media-influenced", but in a special way. This lynching appears to have been carried out with the consent of the police of the Palestinian National Authority, and in fact occurred around and within the vicinity of a police station at Ramallah. These are the "raw facts" which have been given ample prominence on public and private television throughout the world on the international circuit of images (see also Philo, *infra*).<sup>3</sup>

It is worth saying of the consequences of the use of information and images of war, that the problem is not only strictly mediatic, nor does it concern a deontology of the media. The question that is proposed here is very different. It regards a practical, concrete form of conflict.

Let us clarify this. It is evident and obvious that the utilisation of the TV or other media becomes part of the conflict itself: the media have become instruments of manipulation and counter-manipulation in the hands of the political-military powers, and plan and conduct the given war. However, it is not only about this. We can hypothesise, in more general terms, that the new forms of conflict foresee an organised utilisation, diffuse and massive, of social and civil actors; then also the means of information, that become themselves an active part of these conflicts, true and proper protagonists (whether willing or unwilling) of the game. Always in war, civilian populations become time and time again prey to and hostages of politicians and military men; now, however, the question seems to position itself in a different way. Above all, the problem that presents itself today is that of the *speed of dissemination* of news, of information and of counter-information, endowed with a variable status of truth. True or close to true, half true and half false. It is known that war is always accompanied by this diffusion of rumours and news – so much so that, in times of war, communication is intrinsically unstable, diffusive and contagious – and that such phenomena will be exploited by those who plan the war, like military men and the structures of Intelligence (as we remember from the First World War through the examples of the classic work of Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory* (1975), and addressed in Pynchon's novel, *Gravity's Rainbow*).

However, today, the difference appears to consist in the extreme level (of intensity, of speed, and of mass circulation) that such phenomena

have reached, either on the field or thanks to current technologies. To show that these concepts are not simply intuitions, we believe that one can hypothesise, in semiotic terms, beyond the expressive plane (given by the various materials and forms, technologies, perceptions, etc.) a work of production of the mechanisms of enunciation. "Saturation" is an effect of these discursive and rhetorical practices – to describe this in the terms of the recent semiotics of discourse (see, for example, Fontanille, 1998) – an effect of a quantitative and rhythmic type. Above all there arises the creation of a space and a time in which the addressee of the communication (which coincides, for example, with the spectator or, making the appropriate changes, a given participant in an action) comes to be inserted into a type of discourse that is constructed for the accumulation and memorisation of utterances, usually objective and impersonal (from one side the opinions of experts and journalists, from the other the "it is said" and the "it appears that" of the different press agencies).

Specifically, according to Fontanille, we should look at our "daily representations of affect, which we are used to thinking about in terms of intensity" (1998, pp.204-205) either of gradients, or of qualitative variations. However for Fontanille we should also consider the often undervalued aspect of "quantitative" production: the processes through which we perceive the *accumulation* of forms and occurrences – of whatever type (thematic, figurative and so forth, up to "perceptions" and sensations, like the accumulation of emotional characteristics) – within a given "spatio-temporal organisation" of the discourse. This addresses the problem of the extension ("*étendue*"), that according to Fontanille would be, at an equal intensity, the fundamental variable of a "tensive" paradigm in semiotics. It is worth saying that such a paradigm takes into consideration phenomena of a gradual type, and not only of categories and oppositions in the production of meaning and communication; and, according to this hypothesis, also our mode of perceiving and conceiving emotions within organisations of meaning like texts or discourses.

We can think, therefore, with more justification, that effects of saturation and accumulation of information – producing in turn, "numbness", "intoxication" – function appropriately also in situations of action, of communication and information; then also of the manipulation of the communications themselves, in particular in situations of war and conflict.

In relation to war, as has been said, weapons and technologies – and also technologies of information – come to be considered as true and proper "materialised utterances" (Latour, 1996) inseparable from their systems of socio-anthropological values (Joxe, 1991). Indeed, beyond this, these technological objects and weapons in particular, come to be considered as true and proper "texts", containing within them narrative programmes, intentions and orientations of action. In this sense a theorist of the Cold War like General Poirier asks himself "How images – according to which those making the decisions represent the origins, the conditions, the modalities of an eventual nuclear action – participate in their evaluations and managing decisions" (Chaliand, 1990, p.1474).

I believe that this is really "the point", the main question. We have inherited from the Cold War this idea of "imaging", of imagery, because of

the idea of the virtualisation of war. The Cold War was made of defined forms of "strategic gesticulation" (anticipations, forms of threat, of threatening, the ultimatum, making believe, etc.). A virtualisation of war transforms its dimensions and its content. The most recent consequences of this transformation are that war becomes only one of the possible modes of armed violence (Poirier, 1997, p.38). More generally, war now becomes possible in this work of its "relativisation." The same possibility of recourse to force becomes only one of the possible options inside a strategic field of manoeuvres composed by "semiotic weapons" (like those of dissuasion, the ultimatum, manipulation, promising, etc.). So we can find in actual forms of war the legacy of the Cold War: the virtualisation of war and the importance of communicative gestures in conflicts.

Today, even civil technologies like the cell/mobile telephone or the internet can be considered in the same mode: as programmes of action, an anticipation of action (see Marrone, 1999); in other cases as actors; in still other spaces, as scenarios in which the actions take place. From the other side, numerous studies underline how the separation between military and civil technologies is becoming weaker and weaker.<sup>4</sup> We can recall, in relation to this, the opinion of an historian of war like O'Connell who considers arms as true and proper "self-fulfilling prophecies" (1989, p.7); as immediate materialisations of these prophecies; as displays of practices of actions foreseen or announced within the project of the use of these arms and, more generally, of technologies. This is always valid, according to O'Connell, since the war vessels and the geometric forms of the naval battle can emigrate to other types of expressions of war, like the battles on land. Never before has such a concept assumed such an efficacy, speed and generality in its effects.

Such capacity and potentiality – relative, for example, to the weapons typical of the excellence of the current forms of war, the management of information – within diverse contexts of action, seem to transform themselves immediately into tactical-strategic resources for these new forms of conflict. But because this occurs, they will certainly have to evaluate the semiotic mechanisms underpinning these processes of management and dissemination of information: to transform them into the levers in the operative means of war. We underline immediately a fundamental point, affirming that we are dealing with forms of planning of time and of space: of a true and proper "logistics" (Virilio, 1991) of information and communication.

Here also it needs to be understood that each action, and its strategic programming, occurs "in" a time and "in" a space. Yet we are dealing with evaluating these dimensions not as abstract categories, but within specific semiotics (historically and culturally located together), which display a particular production and *ad hoc* treatment of spatiality and temporality. Then we can also discover that, all in all, the current forms of warfare are perhaps not, in many ways, far from other older forms. But, as we have said, we are not discussing here the establishment of the absolute novelty of these current aspects of war, but rather the comparative similarity of general forms.

For example, for some scholars the actual models of war would correspond to forms of an "imperial" type (Hardt and Negri, 2000; Joxe,

1991; Luttwak, 1976). Such a model of imperial war expresses itself properly in the conception and the management of space, but also of time. And examples like those cited – only seemingly incongruous with such general models, and the fruit of local struggles – would not be another superficial indication of such a tendency.<sup>5</sup>

Returning then to the specific case of the lynching of these two Israeli soldiers, we see that there occurred something that is disconcerting in a way. In the following days – first on the web through different mailing lists, then through diplomatic declarations (for example from the Italian Ambassador at the UN<sup>6</sup>) followed by half-denials, polemics and accusations, and the official corrections which came to be given as statements “of the corridor” – the news circulated that this lynching was, if not orchestrated *ad hoc* by the Israelis,<sup>7</sup> at least exploited by the secret services to obtain a victory in that which we can define as the “parallel war” of the media. (In the days preceding this, the image that was travelling around the world was that of the murder of a Palestinian boy and his father).

#### Management of Space and Time: from the Dissemination of Communication to the Current Forms of War

With greater reason, and with a more and more widespread use of “systems of disseminated communication” (cell/mobile telephones, the internet, email), such phenomena cannot radicalise themselves. Continuing with our example – but it is also the case in the war of Kosovo and in part in the situations of the war following September 11 in Afghanistan, but above all in the journalists “embedded”, literally integrated, into the Armada of the United States – we see how the effect of the sources of information and of communication directly present on the ground are again stronger and indisputably more efficient; leading, in certain cases, to arrival at dramatic effects “direct from the field” or of the retroactive effect of these capacities to manoeuvre the actors on the ground.<sup>8</sup> We can then hypothesise that it is not so much the availability of “news” and “images” in themselves, as much as it is the fact that these can become elements for effecting play in the course of a conflict, for bringing about the birth of the temptation for a type of multiplication effect: I, strategist and planner, decide to make this understood or, worse, to effectively exploit the opportunities offered, on the field and instantaneously, by the presence of the media.

We can then say that the tactical-strategic activities seem to have made themselves always more contingent (and in real time) with immediate effects of *feedback*, with the construction and activation of narrative frames of action that are always more rapid and instantaneous. The problem that is raised at this point appears to us not so much to regard the plane of effects that everyone can see on TV, as much as how the action and the conflict, the story and the narrations, within this changing context, can themselves be rethought – in terms of, and with socio-semiological instruments.

We have to, once again, underline one point. One can no longer talk, with regard to political communication, of a simple “representation” of

given ideas or of concepts and values that sustain certain actions, or of a mere instrumental use of the media. What seems to have been, at least in part, undervalued is the fact that the “media” are at the same time actors in the field: actors that give themselves the responsibility of managing the ethico-emotional apparatus of the justification shown on the terrain of the engagement; but in many cases they transform themselves and can also become the space, the scenario, the environment of this encounter. However, even semiotics seems not to have sufficiently confronted the problem of the *efficacy* of the representation. Certainly, such apparatuses are composed of nothing other than the collection and sequences of heterogeneous utterances (images, declarations, reportage, services, etc.). These, in their turn, encompass other types of heterogeneous discourses and of diverse format, like threats, negotiations, visits by heads of state and rulers, declarations or diplomatic games; and these connect themselves at various levels and in different modes, producing intricate “textual networks”. We deal here with discursive forms that come to constitute the global “political” discourse: a collection of texts that justify, accompany and mix themselves with a given action or collection of actions.

We are saying, then, that the media neither possess a privileged status, nor a role of subjection: they are actors in the global arena of conflicts. And like all the actors within a discursive construction, they can delegate some utterances or, on the contrary, they can entrust themselves or come to be entrusted with *placing on the scene* certain elements.

We are dealing, however, with understanding fully the role of the media itself: without attributing a sort of omnipotence to them, without falling into the trap of the myth of “all is media” and “all is communication”; and searching at the same time to evaluate the role and the impact of the means of information on the war. There is no need to believe in the myth of total manipulation, according to which the untrustworthy military – with its centres of intelligence placed ahead of all communication and media analysis – would be omnipotent in the conduct of campaigns of manipulation. The problem becomes then the general form this type of new war assumes.

#### Narration and Imaging as the “Connectivity Machine” of Actual War

If we come back to the idea of the Cold War theorist, General Poirier, we can talk of a “strategisation of images” and of the representations of war itself. According to Poirier, this process substantially consists of the virtuality of the “ballistic-nuclear panoply” in addressing itself towards scenes and visions that form part of the course of great decisions (in the form of doctrines and “future possibilities” such as *MAD*, *Mutually Assured Destruction* etc., in “Doctor Strangelove” style). But what happens in a post Cold War world, in a post-apocalyptic, post-Armageddon vision which proposes a new wave of warfare?

Alain Joxe, concerning post-September 11, “permanent war” and “Enduring Freedom” (in particular, with regard to the situation in Afghanistan, Iraq and the war on terrorism), has spoken of the “crematistic” of the war, taking this ancient concept from the “Politica” of Aristotle (see Joxe, 2003). Crematistica is, in Aristotelian thought, the art

of using wealth to produce wealth, to use money to produce money, in opposition to the practice of manufacturing, of producing goods. So, if the task becomes the exchange in itself then there is no longer a limit to that exchange. Today the aim of war is to produce itself, to produce war. Therefore, we can say the same war produces itself and the aim of war is war. So today we know a form of war which presents itself without objects and without aims: permanent total war (under the cover of tasks and objectives such as the struggle against terrorism, democracy, etc.) because of its lack of the limits of time and space.

If we find, from the definition of Clausewitz, the chameleonic feature of war, this concept today has assumed the character of a realised prophecy: today the war machine, derailed from its tracks, has spread into everything, and becomes confused with everything. Or, using another metaphor, war theatre, with its mixture of action and representation, with its hybrid actors, is confused with non-war. Post-war becomes a part of war. Michel Foucault (1990), referring to Clausewitz's famous aphorism, hypothesised turning it on its head. If power is war, struggle, politics would be the continuation of war by other means; more precisely war would be the historical moment in which the relations of force affirmed themselves. The role of power would be that of, for Foucault, "silently inscribing" in all the places of a society and in all the social relations, in bodies, in images, in economic inequality, up to language itself, these relations of war. War decides the relations. It is a political act. The war, for another philosopher (Philonenko, 1976) is the moment of "demiurgy" of the construction of meaning, the constituent moment. Do we exaggerate? There are historical epochs in which this has happened. Today, it seems that this same thing is occurring: in the current forms, certainly, of communication, of media and their technologies. The post-war is none other than the war under other guises, with other means (control, coercion, stabilisation, threat).

### Endnotes

1. In relation to this case we allow ourselves to refer to the research commissioned by the RAI, Italian public radiotelevision, carried out with the University of Bologna, and now published in Pozzato (2000). We refer further to other considerations made in the article of Massimo Pietroni, "La Nato comunicatrice imperfetta", 1999, in the dossier "La macchina dell'informazione" contained in the site dedicated to scientific communication and information, [www.sissa.it](http://www.sissa.it). In this article, the role of the NATO spokesperson Jamie Shea and of the communication advisers of Prime Minister Blair, seconded to NATO, is insisted on.
2. The textual paradigm is one of the most important points of development in the human sciences in the last twenty years (including Geertz and scholars in other fields besides semiotics, such as anthropologists, sociologists, etc.; we can remember Bruno Latour, Michael Lynch and their analysis of the practices of science and the treatment of imagery). In this sense we can speak also of a "power turn" (*power analysis*) in the human sciences and translation studies, but, as we know from Deleuze and Guattari, *we don't find power, we find only power machines*, power devices, power strategic relationships, power chainings-up. So we have to develop tools adequate for these mechanisms.
3. Images that have provoked, in Italy, harsh polemics between the Italian public television, RAI, and the Mediaset private channels – belonging to the prime

minister, Berlusconi – regarding their distribution and their use: it appears in fact that, thanks to these, the Israeli intelligence services have captured some of the participants in the lynching.

4. In relation to the dissemination of information and networks of communication on the ground, strictly for the uses of war, see the article by the historian John Keegan, which appeared in an Italian newspaper: "Il fortino di Milosevic, nemico senza volto", *La Stampa*, Torino, 24/4/1999, among others on the use of the civil mobile telephone networks by Serbian officials; or, again, the terrible way in which the wife of one of the two lynched Israeli soldiers was made aware of the massacre by cellular telephone.
5. We recall the proposal of Hardt and Negri (2000) that, on the basis of a vast literature – from Duverger, to the story of the Roman Empire, with Mazzarino, to studies on the economics of globalisation like Jameson or Said. In relation to this, Said argues that the idea of war and empire is in some way rooted in North American culture from its origins; from a more historico-political point of view, scholars like Arrighi (1994) or Zolo (1995) seek to define in historical and philosopho-political terms the concept of empire. They come together on this issue with numerous other studies also on the theory of war, like those of Joxe and, in certain ways, of Luttwak (who seem to think again in terms of an "American Empire"). According to Hardt and Negri, we are not dealing with a metaphor: in general the imperial order is understood as the order of a space which is aware of a lack of borders, and is, literally, a "boundless" space, abrogating the differences, absorbing them into other external entities, "Others": "no territorial boundaries limit its reign" (pp.XIV-XV). They deal with a spatial entity that recovers the world with its "civilisation." Without borders, such an entity foresees wars only to subdue the "barbarians" (those who are not "others" but are only to be normalised) or the "rebels", internal or external. The external is neutral, the non-space. The signs of this passage, of this "imperial narration" would be given, among other things, by the reappearance of the notion of the "just war" and by the opposition of wars of rebellion with wars of a "tribal" type. The authors add: "In effect, one might say that the sovereignty of Empire itself is realized at the margins, where borders are flexible and identities are hybrid and fluid" (*ibid.*). The authors talk explicitly of a vision that rereads Marx in the light of Foucault and of Deleuze and Guattari, and therefore it is "Capital that makes itself Empire" (*ibid.*). But, citing Braudel, they underline that Capitalism triumphs only when it comes to be identified with the state, when in fact it is the state.
6. See for example, the correspondence of Arturo Zampaglione, *la Repubblica*, 20/10/2000 and of Alessandra Farkas, *Corriere della Sera* 20/10/2000 in relation to the intervention of the Italian Ambassador at the UN, Sergio Vento. Regarding the web, from 13 October (the lynching occurred on the 12<sup>th</sup>) a series of rumours and notices began to spread like lightning around, among others, the mailing lists [awsa@listbot.com](mailto:awsa@listbot.com), and [n.naber@att.net](mailto:n.naber@att.net). For the web and the mailing lists, one can speak of true and real waves of news that then, sometime, vanish or, on the contrary, feed themselves with the possibility of rising again from sources that are "inversely proportional" to this weight of news. But what is relevant for the new wars is the contagious and widespread impact of this weight of information.
7. And here one is at the limits of conspiracy theories, with tones that in certain moments have touched on an attitude with, even if certainly involuntary, anti-Semitic force. But this provides no justification, naturally, to the Israeli attitude.
8. See the interview with Virilio (in *Theory, Technology and Culture*, vol 23, No. 3, 18/10/2000) on the reporters, often independent, and sometimes collaborators



with CNN on international video-agencies – the so-called “newshounds” – shooting on the ground equipped with digital mini-video cameras, ready to capture, always and everywhere, events and situations. But we can think also of similar cases of independent communication: for example, the Indymedia case, an international circuit of sites and videoactivists that have followed the different protests of the Anti-Globalisation movement, from Seattle to Genoa. Today, according to Virilio, the predominance of the field would be above all the “perceptive” type (see also Virilio 1991) beyond the media-influenced; we would add: perception, but within the narrative constructions that form themselves more and more in “real time” and are instantaneous. At the other side of the independence of these sources of disseminated images, the winner is the one who collects and assembles these images the most quickly. In the remainder of the interview, Virilio himself puts forward the example of the infamous case of the images of the beating of Rodney King by Los Angeles police officers that provoked the subsequent, extremely violent, riots: an amateur video rapidly disseminated by private television. Virilio, in this interview, argues for another very interesting point: these “newshounds” would be like the “wolf packs” (we would add, “media-mute”) that disperse themselves, attack, compose and recompose themselves in the hunt for images. So there would not be only dissemination, and therefore uncertainty and undefined multiplication from the information sources, but also its “making itself mute”. It is worth saying that the production of the broadcast scatters itself to then recompose itself and capture other images and information. We remember that one of the sources of *A Thousand Plateaus* by Deleuze and Guattari, in particular on the question of war and social order, is precisely the Canetti of *Masse und Macht*, where the “mute” and the “mass” are counterposed to hypothesise two interactive forms of social construction and conflict. Perhaps today we could talk of a “mediated mass” and of a “media mute” in the construction and dissemination of the news, in particular, but not exclusively, in times of war (for many scholars war is assumed as the paradigm of the constitution of the means of communication). The first would clearly regard the system of traditional means, and the second, the “broadside”, “rumours”, and broadcasts of news that clot, proliferate and connect with each other, making themselves space in the mediated mass.

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