Arts and Letters, War and Peace

What Painters and Poets Can Teach Us About International Politics

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Is there a place for the arts in the study—and teaching—of war? I want to argue, emphatically, that there is. In fact, while it is possible to engage the problem of war intensively and effectively with no reference to the perspectives of painters and poets, to do so ignores the example of some of the most influential modern students of war, including Michael Walzer, Jean Bethke Elshtain, and the late John Keegan.[1] It makes the questionable assumption that those artists who have played pivotal roles in the struggle for peace and justice—people such as Austrian writer and Nobel Laureate Bertha von Suttner, Czech playwright Vaclav Havel, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, Romanian-American writer and Nobel Laureate Elie Wiesel, and Polish writer Adam Michnik, to name but a few—have been motivated by factors unrelated to their artistic sensibilities. It leaves untapped important resources for learning in both the cognitive and affective domains. And it distances us from what peacebuilding expert John Paul Lederach calls the "moral imagination."[2]

I believe there are deep and enduring truths about war to be found in poems such as Wilfred Owen's *Dulce et decorum est* and in paintings such as Picasso's *Guernica*; that the study of artistic representations of war helps us both to understand some truths about war more easily and care more deeply about this tragic aspect of the human condition; and that, in making these points, we bolster the case for the fundamental unity of knowledge and thus for preserving the liberal arts. To make this case, let us look at the underlying problem—the fragmentation of knowledge—and how it has played out in academic studies of war within the discipline of international politics.

The Fragmentation of Knowledge

In an essay entitled "The Loss of the University," Wendell Berry lamented the fact that specialization in modern academia has meant that "the various disciplines have ceased to speak to each other."[3] Berry was hardly the first to worry about the fragmentation of knowledge. C. P. Snow, in the 1959 Rede Lecture, framed the problem in even starker terms with his suggestion that there are two cultures, the scientific and the literary. These cultures not only do not speak to each other, Snow argued, they know little, if any, of the other's language.[4] Stefan Collini, in his introduction to the Canto Classics editions of Snow's *The Two Cultures*, notes that T. H. Huxley and Matthew Arnold debated the same chasm separating scientific and literary modes of thought in the late nineteenth century, with Arnold offering his defense of the liberal arts in the 1882 Rede Lecture.[5]

Whether we think in terms of the "two cultures" or merely the fragmentation of knowledge in the broadest possible context, the issues raised are not "merely academic," to use the phrase that signals that a controversy has no practical significance. They are academic, of course, as those who sit on curriculum committees and those who allocate resources in colleges and universities know all too well. But there are echoes of the two cultures idea—sometimes deafening echoes, in fact—that appear in debates over public

policy. For example, in October 2011, Governor Rick Scott of Florida stirred controversy by proposing to shift state higher-education funding to the fields of study most likely to prepare students for existing jobs. "Is it a vital interest of the state to have more anthropologists? I don't think so," he said in an interview with Sarasota's daily newspaper, the *Herald-Tribune*.[6]

Jeff Flake, a Republican congressman from Arizona, drew the ire of political scientists in May 2012 by offering an amendment to cut funding for the National Science Foundation's Political Science Program. His measure, predicated on the belief that studies of matters such as the origins of the lower rate of representation of women in politics are of interest only to academics, actually passed the House of Representatives by a 218-208 vote.[7]

These examples are part of what seems to be an increasing tendency to disparage certain academic disciplines, a tendency that judges research and education sometimes on purely ideological grounds but, more often, according to their economic effects. In these judgments disciplines such as anthropology and political science—to say nothing of art history or literature or music—generally fare poorly in comparison with the sciences, technology, engineering, and mathematics (the STEM disciplines). The implicit assumption is that not only can the different branches of learning be distinguished in a clear-cut way but that some branches can be considered practical while others are impractical or even frivolous.

There is another echo of the two cultures thesis in contemporary political discourse, although one that seriously distorts the original version because it substitutes either faith or political ideology for literature on one side of the gulf across which understanding appears to be so problematic. In this version, science is the target in spite of its economic merits. The chief examples of the divide (although by no means the only ones) are the debates that have engulfed evolution and climate change.

These political echoes of the two cultures thesis suggest that the fragmentation of knowledge is problematic for several reasons. First, it can lead to invidious comparisons among fields of study. A host of criteria—economic utility, technological promise, global perspective, and so forth—can be found for ranking disciplines and dismissing those that fail to measure up once the assumption is made that economics, political science, business, ethics, literature, history, and the others are entirely separable fields of study. Second, it suggests that some forms of knowledge are more valid than others. While this may work against the sciences in conflicts with religion, it may also privilege the sciences (or scientific methods within fields not generally considered sciences) over literature, the arts, or even "soft" sciences such as sociology and political science. Third, it can pit those in different disciplines against each other, especially in economic circumstances that are said to demand cutbacks in some areas of teaching and research.

If the fragmentation of knowledge means what Berry suggested—that "the various disciplines have ceased to speak to each other"—then international politics, and especially the part of the discipline that focuses on war, stands as guilty as any other. In fact, those representing different schools of thought or methodological commitments within the discipline at times have difficulty communicating with each other. And, like many other disciplines, international politics has almost completely lost touch with the arts in spite of the fact that painters, poets, musicians, sculptors, novelists, and playwrights have provided, very often, the most acute depictions of the discipline's central concerns and, occasionally, some of the most original thinking about solutions. Dante, for example, argued for political unity under a secular ruler as a means of securing peace in *De Monarchia*.

Ambrogio Lorenzetti, in a fourteenth-century fresco known today as the *Allegory of Good Government and Bad Government*, articulated a vision based on the virtues by which the leaders of Siena were encouraged to keep their state peaceful and prosperous. Christine de Pisan offered similar advice in prose to Prince Louis, Duke of Guyenne, in *The Book of Peace*. Tennyson articulated a vision of a "parliament of man" in the poem *Locksley Hall*. The experience of chemical warfare during World War I was depicted powerfully on canvas by John Singer Sargent in a 1919 work titled *Gassed* and in the 1917 poem *Dulce et decorum est* by Wilfred Owen. It was the novelist (and former colonial administrator), Leonard Woolf who, with the encouragement of Sidney and Beatrice Webb and other Fabian Socialists (including George Bernard Shaw), articulated a plan for the elimination of interstate war based on the concept of collective security, the very concept that Woodrow Wilson would make the centerpiece of his own plan for peace at the end of World War I.[8] In short, artists have had—and continue to have—much to say about war, but those who study international politics are not generally very receptive to their contributions. At a minimum, painters, poets, and other artists should be enlisted in the efforts we make to teach war.

The biologist Edward O. Wilson has argued that "the greatest enterprise of the mind has always been and always will be the attempted linkage of the sciences and the humanities." The unification that he labels "consilience" is necessary in part because "the ongoing fragmentation of knowledge and resulting chaos in philosophy are not reflections of the real world but artifacts of scholarship."[9] At its birth, the discipline of international politics, born of the desire to solve the problem of war, attempted to link the sciences and the humanities—or at least a number of them. To explain how this effort at the integration of knowledge occurred, how the discipline became fragmented, and what might be gained by incorporating an artistic sensibility into the study of war, we turn to the war *problématique*—the central concern of the study of international politics and the complex of issues that surround it—followed by a brief disciplinary history intended to suggest how its internal fragmentation has developed. Later, we will focus on a few paintings and poems related to war and reflect on how they might help us teach war and understand it more fully.

The War *Problématique*

Vitruvius, the Roman architect whose comments on mathematical proportions and the symmetry of the human body prompted Leonardo da Vinci's drawing of *Vitruvian Man*, said that the architect should "be educated, skilful with the pencil, instructed in geometry, know much history, have followed the philosophers with attention, understand music, have some knowledge of medicine, know the opinions of the jurists, and be acquainted with astronomy and the theory of the heavens."[10] The list is daunting, but Vitruvius elaborates on each discipline mentioned in further comments on requirements for the education of an architect. Acknowledging the breadth of study he has recommended, Vitruvius suggests that what makes it possible to know everything that is necessary for the architect to know is the fundamental unity of all knowledge: "A liberal education forms, as it were, a single body made up of these members. Those, therefore, who from tender years receive instruction in the various forms of learning, recognize the same stamp on all the arts, and an intercourse between all studies, and so they more readily comprehend them all."[11]

If the architect requires a broad liberal arts education in order to master her discipline, the same must be true for the student of war and peace. In fact, the study of history, philosophy,

and law seem even more germane to an understanding of war than of architecture. But many other disciplines are necessary as well. This fact may explain a comment Einstein reportedly made during a 1946 conference on the world's political problems. Asked why the human mind, capable of unlocking the secrets of the atom, had thus far proven incapable of devising a plan to prevent the atom from destroying humankind, Einstein replied, "That is simple, my friend. It is because politics is more difficult than physics."[12]

The study of war cannot be limited to a single discipline such as political science or international studies. War has economic causes and consequences and thus engages the attention of economists. It constantly demands new technologies and thus involves physicists, chemists, and engineers. It begins in the minds of men and women, and sometimes destroys those minds, and so it calls for the participation of psychologists. It evokes depths of despair that are indescribable in ordinary language and thus compels the labor of poets. It leaves behind tales of valor and evidence of political and social change and thus must have its historians. If there is a central core of war studies to be found in political science or international studies, those disciplines are apt to draw from other fields certain concepts or metaphors that seem likely to promote understanding, or maybe just a favored belief. For example, balance-of-power theorists have elevated to a cardinal principle of international relations theory the notion of equipoise drawn from the apothecary and clockmaking trades while epidemiology has unwittingly contributed the notion of war contagion.

Just as economists offer insights about war that psychologists do not, so painters evoke responses that poets do not—and vice versa. War is the elephant and political scientists, painters, poets, and physicists often find themselves in the roles of the blind men trying to apprehend it. Each senses something, an important characteristic perhaps, but not everything. The historian can draw attention to the use of aerial bombardment in World War II, but the poet and the novelist often provide a better visceral sense of what it was like to be present during an air raid than anything historians have written or recorded.

The war *problématique* comprises not only the problem of war—How might a human behavior that has proved to be increasingly destructive over time be limited or even eliminated?—but a complex set of problems related to war as well. War cannot simply be described as a product of human nature or an outgrowth of the Westphalian system of international relations. It involves problems of geography, demographics, economics, and law. It forces us to confront poverty, human rights abuse, arms races, miscommunication, deviant psychology, and resource scarcity.

The Development of International Politics: From Integration to Fragmentation

Where war is concerned, the twentieth century may well be remembered for three things: the rise of total war and, with it, crimes against humanity on a massive scale; the rise of the social scientific study of war; and the beginning of the end of war. Each is related to the other two. Total war prompted the development of new approaches to the study of war, including the scientific study of war. What has been learned in the scientific study of war, combined with the widespread revulsion prompted by the enormous destructiveness of total war and its frequent companion, genocide, may be responsible for what appears to be the near-total cessation of interstate war and the decline of other forms of organized violence.[13] But the key phrases here may be the "*near-total* cessation of war" and the "*decline* of organized violence." The problem of war is not entirely behind us.

And even if it were, it seems likely that we may come to find ourselves in the same place concerning war that we do with slavery—able to celebrate abolition but forced to confront old problems in new guises.

There are, of course, many "sources" of international politics as a separate discipline beyond diplomatic history and international law. There is, first, a modest body of work in which advice on how to conduct foreign relations is proffered to statesmen. The outstanding example of this genre is Machiavelli's *The Prince*. There are also a number of discourses on military strategy, of which Carl von Clausewitz's *On War* and A. T. Mahan's various writings on naval strategy are perhaps the most enduring, that have significantly influenced at least a portion of the modern field of international politics. Finally, the development of international politics may also be traced to several important strands of political theory, from the *jus gentium* idea of Roman political theory to the just war thought of St. Augustine and through Thomas Hobbes' *Leviathan* and Immanuel Kant's *Perpetual Peace*, to name a few of the more important strands. These three rather indistinct categories are not sufficient, either singly or in combination, to have given birth to a separate discipline, but each has made important contributions to a field that developed independently.

In the aftermath of World War I, the serious study of international relations as a separate discipline began. The separate studies of diplomatic history, treaty-making, international law, and other subjects that had been examined before were still being conducted, but the crucial difference was that in the postwar period these studies began to focus on the deficiencies of the international system. They were, in other words, reform-oriented. They were also integrative. International relations as a new field of study was "invented" in order to help the world understand the conditions that had engendered the war thereby making possible the construction of a system that would prevent its recurrence.

Thus, during the interwar period international relations was a discipline having as its purpose the establishment of permanent peace. Characteristic of this formative stage was Lord David Davies' establishment of the Woodrow Wilson Chair of International Politics in 1919—the world's first professorship in international relations—at the University College of Wales in Aberystwyth. There was in this early period an excessive optimism that E. H. Carr (at one time a holder of the Woodrow Wilson Chair), in *The Twenty Years' Crisis,* compared to the utopianism of the medieval alchemists who studied matter in a vain effort to turn base metals into gold. Carr noted that this utopian phase is one through which most new sciences must pass and that it is only when utopianism is exchanged for realism that genuine progress can be made in the discipline.

The events of the 1930s shattered the postwar optimism that had informed the study of international relations. When it became clear that the idealists had been, in some respects at least, naive in their expectations, a realist reaction set in and what some historians of the discipline call the first "Great Debate" (between realists and idealists—or Wilsonian liberals) began. Much of the reaction was led by German intellectuals who had been forced to flee the Nazi regime. Scholars such as Hans Morgenthau and, in the next generation, Henry Kissinger brought to the United States a tough brand of *Realpolitik* that emphasized the overriding importance of power in relations among states. Their message was appealing to a new generation of American statesmen and academics impressed by the failure of the idealists to prevent a second descent into global conflict and burdened for the first time with major international responsibilities. As testimony to the impact the realists had on the study of international politics, it is worth noting that Morgenthau's textbook, *Politics among Nations*, remains in print over seventy years after its initial publication.

But just as there was a reaction against the idealism of the interwar period, there has been a reaction against realism. Neorealists have argued that Morgenthau and his intellectual kin were myopic in focusing almost exclusively on states as actors in the international system. World Order theorists have suggested that there are many international concerns that both realists and idealists failed to address. Others, sometimes including constructivists and theorists of the English School, have made the point that the normative approaches of the interwar period do offer something positive after all. Marxists and feminists have argued the need for greater attention to economic matters or the concerns of women, respectively. The many differences in perspective found in the discipline have produced what some call "the inter-paradigm debate," another Great Debate in the reckoning of some (but by no means all) students of the discipline's development. (Ironically, in international politics, even the question of what merits inclusion among the field's Great Debates is subject to debate.) Sadly, the study of international relations has moved far away from its original integrative impulses to a degree of fragmentation unusual even among academic disciplines. In less than a century, the study of war has gone from being an exemplar of the impulse to integrate to a discipline whose members often will not—or cannot—speak to each other.

A second Great Debate fragmented the discipline in the 1950s and 1960s. (If the inter-paradigm debate is numbered among the Great Debates, it was the third, having developed in the 1970s.) This debate was a methodological debate between traditionalists—those using case studies or other non-quantitative methods—and advocates of more scientific, often statistics-based, approaches. It was prompted by the rise of behavioralism in the broader field of political science in the late 1940s, but, like the discipline of international politics itself, it has roots in the response of scholars to World War I. In fact, one of the earliest advocates of the scientific study of war was Lewis Fry Richardson, a Quaker who served in a Friends Ambulance Unit in northern France during the war. Without violating his pacifist convictions, Richardson experienced total war in a very direct fashion—one that would lead him to attempt, independently of the developing scholarly community in the field of international relations, to discern the causes of war through mathematical analysis.

Richardson is best known for his application of mathematics to weather forecasting. Using similar methods, he attempted to generate a science of conflict, first with a differential equation (now known as the Richardson Equation) that describes the process of competitive arms buildups and then with a statistical analysis of the world's "deadly quarrels" between 1815 and 1945.[14] Although Richardson's only academic appointment was in the physics department at Westminster Training College, his work on conflict inspired many analysts of war after his death.

During the 1930s, Quincy Wright at the University of Chicago began his own quantitative studies of war. *A Study of War*, a three-volume compilation of his work, was published in 1942. It also inspired a generation of students who, witnessing the behavioral revolution in American political science, believed that the scientific study of international relations held the greatest promise, if not the only one, of yielding valid conclusions about war and its correlates. To Wright and Richardson's work must be added the pioneering studies of Pitirim Sorokin, the founder of Harvard's sociology department; Kenneth E. Boulding, an economist and founder of general systems theory (and, like Richardson, a Quaker); and J. David Singer who, in 1963, established the Correlates of War Project at the University of Michigan to provide a comprehensive source of data for those students of war interested in applying statistical methods to the discipline.

In 1954, the Rockefeller Foundation convened a two-day meeting that brought together Hans Morgenthau, Reinhold Niebuhr, Arnold Wolfers, William T. R. Fox, and other notable realists. The purpose of the meeting was to establish the parameters of international relations theory. The participants sought to establish a discipline separate from political science and inoculated to some extent from the scientific ambitions political science appeared to be developing. The effort was hardly successful in the latter respect, but it may have helped to solidify the branch of the discipline committed to the realist paradigm and the traditionalist methodology.[15]

This sketch of the development of the discipline born in the aftermath of the Great War to study the problem of war shows a curious path from the initial integration of studies of law, strategy, politics, diplomatic history, and other disciplines to the eventual fragmentation of the discipline under the strains of philosophical and methodological debates that might be more aptly characterized as parallel monologues since few of the participants have actually addressed those on the other side.

Painters, Poets, and War

What have painters and poets had to say about war? The short answer to the question is that they have conveyed the full range of beliefs about and attitudes toward war held by humankind as a whole. Given that war and its impact on humankind has been one of the universal themes in art, this should not be surprising.

Visual artists and poets alike have depicted warfare in various ways since antiquity. The *Iliad of Homer*, an account of the Trojan War, is one of the oldest surviving works of Western literature. Greek amphorae include depictions of Ares, the god of war, or Athena, the goddess of war; scenes from the Trojan War; and unidentified soldiers prepared for battle or in actual combat, among many other war-related themes. The *Alexander Mosaic*, taken from the floor of the House of the Faun in Pompeii and now on display in the National Archaeological Museum in Naples, depicts Alexander the Great and Darius III of Persia in battle. It is believed to have been based on a painting produced in Greece some three centuries earlier. The *Aeneid* of Virgil begins, "I sing of arms and the man." All in all, it is difficult to avoid the presence of war in the art of the ancient world. But war is well represented as a theme of painters and poets in subsequent ages as well.

What follows is a very brief look at the contributions of painters and poets to our understanding of war. No effort has been made to go beyond painting and poetry or to be comprehensive with respect to time or space: Western painters and poets from the Renaissance era forward are favored, but this reflects the limits of my own knowledge rather than a preference. Paintings and poems are grouped into categories representing three themes that have much more to do with my own reasons for looking at the works than with any attempt at careful analysis. Two of the themes are presented as paired opposites, or thesis and antithesis. The section concludes with a few comments on the didactic role of paintings and poetry.

Thesis: War as a Heroic Activity

One of the most common themes related to war in the visual arts is the celebration of heroes. Public statuary all over the world, especially in capital cities, honors war heroes. (London, which is no exception to the rule, does honor conscientious objectors as well

with a monument in Tavistock Square where a statue of Mahatma Gandhi has also been erected.) Hero worship—or its close relative, patronage—has been common throughout history. In many instances, artists have depicted their patrons as military heroes, often engaged in daring military exploits. Jacques-Louis David's *Napoleon Crossing the Alps*, executed in five different versions, stands as a noteworthy example of the genre. What may be the American counterpart of David's work (although painted by the German Emanuel Leutze) is *Washington Crossing the Delaware*, a work that, ironically, was destroyed by a British air raid on Bremen during World War II. (A second version by the same artist survives in the Museum of Modern Art, and copies of the first abound.)

The heroic view of war at the common soldier's level has been expressed frequently by those with too little experience of it. Rupert Brooke made war seem a noble thing in a series of sonnets written before his death (of blood poisoning) enroute to fight at Gallipoli, a battle that proved to be one of the great follies of World War I. Brooke's poem *The Soldier* was read by Dean Inge from the pulpit of St. Paul's Cathedral on April 4, 1915. It begins with the famous line, "If I should die, think only this of me: / That there is some corner of a foreign field / That is forever England." *The Dead* expresses a view of the nobility of war that few in England would still retain by the war's end in 1918:

> Blow out, you bugles, over the rich Dead!
> There's none of these so lonely and poor of old,
> But, dying, has made us rarer gifts than gold
> These laid the world away; poured out the red
> Sweet wine of youth; gave up the years to be
> Of work and joy, and that unhoped serene,
> That men call age; and those who would have been,
> Their sons, they gave, their immortality.
>
> Blow, bugles, blow! They brought us, for our dearth,
> Holiness, lacked so long, and Love, and Pain.
> Honour has come back, as a king, to earth,
> And paid his subjects with a royal wage;
> And Nobleness walks in our ways again;
> And we have come into our heritage.

A work by a lesser poet, Owen Seaman, titled *Pro patria* expresses a similar sentiment, though from the perspective of one too old to go off to war. Two of the poem's nine stanzas provide a sense of what it advises those headed into battle:

> Others may spurn the pledge of land to land,
> May with the brute sword stain a gallant past;
> But by the seal to which you set your hand,
> Thank God, you still stand fast!
>
> Forth, then, to front that peril of the deep
> With smiling lips and in your eyes the light,
> Steadfast and confident, of those who keep
> Their storied scutcheon bright.

The poem's title is based on a line from the Roman poet Horace: *Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori*. (It is sweet and proper to die for one's country.)

The kind of poetry that Brooke and Seaman wrote at the outset of World War I became much rarer after the war. While there have always been artists who have focused on the unheroic aspects of war, the conflicts of the twentieth century made their work far more acceptable than it would have been in an earlier period.

Antithesis: The Unheroic Aspects of War

Wilfred Owen and Siegfried Sassoon, both of whom experienced more of the First World War than either Brooke or Seaman, provide a very different take on war in their poetry. Owen's *Dulce et decorum est*, in fact, treats with scorn the line from Horace that supplied Seaman's title as well. The poem describes a march in which soldiers, having lost their boots, "limped on, blood-shod" until a chemical attack forces them to put on gas masks. After explaining what it was like to witness the horrible death of a comrade who failed to get his mask on in time, Owen concludes,

> If in some smothering dreams you too could pace
> Behind the wagon that we flung him in,
> And watch the white eyes writhing in his face,
> His hanging face, like a devil's sick of sin;
> If you could hear, at every jolt, the blood
> Come gargling from the froth-corrupted lungs,
> Obscene as cancer, bitter as the cud
> Of vile, incurable sores on innocent tongues,-
> My friend, you would not tell with such high zest
> To children ardent for some desperate glory,
> The old Lie: Dulce et decorum est
> Pro patria mori.

Siegfried Sassoon captured very succinctly the constant presence of death in war in *The Dug-Out*, an eight-line poem that describes his premonition of a friend's death in a foxhole. It concludes:

> You are too young to fall asleep for ever;
> And when you sleep you remind me of the dead.

The poet who looked most clearly at death in World War II was probably Randall Jarrell. In *Losses* he wrote, "In bombers named for girls, we burned / The cities we had learned about in school— / Till our lives wore out; our bodies lay among / The people we had killed and never seen." In the more famous *Death of the Ball Turret Gunner*, he began, "From my mother's sleep I fell into the State" and concluded, "When I died they washed me out of the turret with a hose."

The tendency of modern poets to describe war plainly and to urge its renunciation may be why Lyndon Johnson once told members of his staff, "I don't want anything to do with poets." His aversion was clearly political rather than aesthetic: one who had visited the White House had used the occasion to criticize the Vietnam War.[16]

As war has become more destructive, artists have focused more and more on the baser realities of war. After all, there is no virtue to be celebrated in a massacre. The work that, perhaps above all other twentieth-century paintings, is considered the iconic antiwar statement, Pablo Picasso's *Guernica*, offers a good place to start an examination of visual art that presents the more chilling aspects of war.

Guernica was painted for the Spanish Pavilion in the 1937 World's Fair in Paris, an event that had as its theme a celebration of modern technology. In spite of the ongoing economic depression, wars in Spain, Manchuria, and Ethiopia, and ominous developments in Germany, the World's Fair exuded a spirit of optimism about the prospects for a better world through technological development. *Guernica*, however, would prove to be a more prophetic statement about the impact of technology on the world, at least over the course of the next eight years.

On April 27, 1937, the German Condor legion, fighting on behalf of Generalissimo Francisco Franco's forces in the Spanish Civil War, bombed the Basque village of Guernica for over three hours. For the Germans, the attack was an exercise to test the effectiveness of tactics that would become part of their *Blitzkrieg*, or "lightning war," strategy two years later. Sixteen hundred people, all of them noncombatants, were killed or wounded.

Picasso was inspired to take the assault on *Guernica* as the theme of his painting for the Spanish Pavilion by Parisian newspaper coverage of the event and by the massive May Day demonstration that he witnessed, one that included angry protesters condemning the attack. He began making sketches for the mural immediately and finished the work three months later.

Guernica was not Picasso's only antiwar work. Toward the end of World War II, he executed another large canvas with shading and composition similar to *Guernica*. It also depicts a massacre. *The Charnel House* (1944-45) was based on newspaper photographs and seems to suggest either the slaughter that occurred in Nazi concentration camps or the many killings of civilians that occurred at the hands of soldiers. Although the scene shifts in *The Charnel House* from the open air where people are killed by bombs while shopping in the market to the more intimate setting of a kitchen or dining room near a table spread for a meal, the figures are still contorted in their unnatural deaths.

In 1951, drawing on news reports of a massacre at Sinchon in North Korea, Picasso painted *Massacre in Korea* depicting a group of unarmed civilians being shot at close range, apparently by anti-communist forces. The composition of Massacre in Korea calls to mind Francisco Goya's *The Third of May 1808*, a painting that, along with a series of prints entitled *The Disasters of War*, reflected Goya's struggle to come to terms with the Peninsular War of 1808-12. The large canvas shows French soldiers, early in the conflict, executing a group of civilians in reprisal for an attack by partisans. The scene depicted by Goya—the murder of innocents in response to guerrilla warfare—has been an unfortunate part of war throughout history, and repeatedly during World War II. For example, on March 24, 1944, 335 Italians were massacred by a German unit at the Fosse Ardeatine near Rome. On June 10, 1944, 642 civilians were massacred by a German SS division in Oradour-sur-Glane, France. *The Third of May 1808* is clearly political in character, but some of Goya's best commentary on the problem of governments taking on their own people came in a work that is much less overtly political.

During a period of withdrawal from public life, Goya painted a number of disturbing scenes, some directly onto the walls of Quinta del Sordo, the home near Madrid that he

occupied beginning in 1819. One of the images from among what art historians have called the "Black Paintings"—and one of the most famous works held by the Prado—is *Saturn Devouring One of His Sons*.

The painting depicts Saturn—Cronus in Greek mythology—grotesquely biting the arm off the headless torso of one of his sons. Saturn, who had seized power from his own father, Uranus, was obsessed by the prophecy that he would in turn be overthrown by his own offspring. He sought to avoid this fate by consuming each of his children at birth. Jupiter (Zeus), however, was hidden by his mother from Saturn and, in time, fulfilled the prophecy.

For Goya, living in Spain under an often brutal French occupation during the Peninsular War (1808-1814) followed by independence and the revocation of the liberal Spanish constitution by King Ferdinand VII, Saturn may well have symbolized the powerful state at war with its own people. Certainly others have supplied that interpretation in similar circumstances. In 1964, the military in Brazil (with the support of the U.S. government) overthrew democratically elected president Joao Goulart and created a "national security state" under the rule of a succession of generals. The military dictatorship there would last until 1985. Brazil was not alone. Other Latin American governments—among them Argentina, Chile, Paraguay, and Uruguay—fell under the sway of the national security doctrine's perverse belief that the armed forces were required to defeat vast conspiracies inside the state. As a consequence, tens of thousands of citizens, many of them university students, were, in a manner of speaking, devoured by the military, ostensibly to protect the state from communists but in reality to protect military *juntas* fearful of being overthrown. In Argentina under the military regime, an estimated 30,000 people were "disappeared." Eventually, the mothers of the disappeared—including the courageous Madres de la Plaza de Mayo in Argentina—acted, like Saturn's wife Ops, not only to save their children but to ensure that those devouring them would be overthrown.

Under circumstances like these, *Saturn Devouring One of His Sons* is an especially evocative work. But if it can be said to have anything to do with war (even an internal war), an allegorical reading is required. Someone like Goya, aware of cases in which government troops had executed civilians in retaliation for attacks by partisans, could easily have been drawn to the myth of Saturn because of its allegorical possibilities.

Allegory demands more from the viewer than a work such as *The Third of May 1808* does. It is also open to a wider range of interpretations. These characteristics of allegory make the genre especially well-suited to those situations in which the objective is not merely to convey information but to encourage critical thinking.

Visions of Peace

Poets and painters have often played an important role in our collective contemplation of war by providing visions of peace. An allegorical work that does so while leaving little room for misinterpretation is Edward Hicks' *The Peaceable Kingdom*. Hicks, a Quaker minister who made his living as a sign painter at first, took as the inspiration for a work on peacemaking the prophetic (and poetic) words of Isaiah:

> The wolf shall lie with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them.
>
> The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

> The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den.
>
> They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain; for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. (Isa. 11:6-9)

In the foreground of *The Peaceable Kingdom* the scene described by Isaiah is faithfully rendered. But lest the meaning be misunderstood, a scene in the background shows a group of Quakers—representatives of William Penn's colony, presumably—parleying with a group of Native Americans. Peaceful accommodation the Quaker way is contrasted in this mute fashion with the alternative model being implemented nationally at about the time Hicks began painting the various versions of this subject. On May 26, 1830, President Andrew Jackson signed the Indian Removal Act that mandated the relocation of Native Americans living east of the Mississippi River to federal lands in the West. It was the migration of the "Five Civilized Tribes" from the southeastern part of the United States to Oklahoma that produced the Trail of Tears and renewed warfare between U.S. government forces and certain tribes that resisted removal. But what *The Peaceable Kingdom* fails to convey is the fact that Pennsylvania's pacifist governors were not above hiring mercenaries to fight native peoples when they deemed it necessary.

A more challenging allegorical work is Winslow Homer's *The Soldier in a New Field*. Homer, best remembered for seascapes and other works that seem far removed from war, painted numerous scenes of combat and its effects during the Civil War. After the war, he painted a Union soldier (identifiable through his blue pants and, tossed to the side, blue coat) using a scythe to harvest wheat. The scythe, of course, is the instrument used by the Grim Reaper and ripe grain being mowed down—a common eucharistic symbol in Christian art—further conveys the idea of Death. (Alternatively, and carrying the Christian symbolism further, it may be resurrection we should see.) Central to the work, however, is a survivor—a soldier who has returned from war to embrace the work of his pre-war life. The work calls us to think about the ubiquity of death in war and the inability even of survivors to escape its impact. But it also reminds us that there is the promise of a return to life and productive work after war.

The academic study of war has been closely bounded by the necessity of working within the limits of what is actually attainable—so much so that students of war have often failed to envision alternatives. As Otto von Bismarck succinctly put it, "Politics is the art of the possible." By characterizing Woodrow Wilson and those who supported his faith in the possibility of ending war as "utopians," E. H. Carr effectively excluded the examination of visionary models of global politics from the "scientific" study of international relations. As a consequence, it has often been difficult for visionaries—those with new, untested ideas about what could be—to break through the dominant realism of the discipline of international politics.

One of the virtues of poetry—and the arts more generally—is that, while hard-bitten realism is certainly a possibility (the war poetry of Wilfred Owen and Randall Jarrell testify to this), imagination is also valued. Poets have often seen—and described—alternatives that those constrained by what is cannot perceive. In *Locksley Hall*, Alfred, Lord Tennyson offered a futuristic vision of war and peace through the musings of a young soldier on his return to his boyhood home.

> For I dipt into the future, far as human eye could see,
> Saw the Vision of the world, and all the wonder that would be;

Saw the heavens fill with commerce, argosies of magic sails,
Pilots of the purple twilight dropping down with costly bales;

Heard the heavens fill with shouting, and there rain'd a ghastly dew
From the nations' airy navies grappling in the central blue;

Far along the world-wide whisper of the south-wind rushing warm,
With the standards of the peoples plunging thro' the thunder-storm;

Till the war-drum throbb'd no longer, and the battle-flags were furl'd
In the Parliament of man, the Federation of the world.

There the common sense of most shall hold a fretful realm in awe,
And the kindly earth shall slumber, lapt in universal law.

The historian Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. reported that Harry S. Truman was a fan of the poem and carried a portion of it with him in his wallet. More recently, Yale historian Paul Kennedy titled his book on the United Nations *The Parliament of Man*.

Poets can also remind us of the peace that already exists even though it may be overlooked. William Stafford's poem *At the Un-National Monument Along the Canadian Border* begins by pointing out "the field where the battle did not happen, / where the unknown soldier did not die."

The Didactic Purposes of Art

The visual arts have long been used to teach. In fact, many of the world's greatest art treasures are found in Christian churches and monasteries where biblical narratives are depicted in paintings and sculptures produced for the benefit of illiterates. A secular parallel is found in Siena's Palazzo Pubblico where Ambrogio Lorenzetti frescoed the walls of the Sala della Nove—the chamber in which Siena's rulers met to discuss matters of state policy—with a work that we know as the *Allegory of Good Government and Bad Government*. On the wall that separates the two depictions of the effects of good and bad government—noteworthy in the history of Western art as perhaps the first landscapes—is an elaborate rendering of the virtues associated with those who govern well. The figure of Justice is prominently displayed and bears this admonition: "Diligite iustitiam qui iudicatis terram." (Love justice, you who govern the world.) The line is from Dante's *Paradiso*.

In a poem that uses dark humor to deliver its message about war, e. e. cummings lamented the fact that some people have trouble understanding that war is hell. In *plato told*, he said: "plato told / him :he couldn't / believe it." Jesus, Lao-Tsze, and General Sherman also told him, but he wouldn't hear it. So "it took / a nipponized bit of / the old sixth / avenue / el ;in the top of his head :to tell / him."

Peter Appleton's *The Responsibility* offers an excellent example of a poem designed not only to make a point but to strike the conscience of the reader. It follows the form of the nursery rhyme *The House that Jack Built*: "This is the farmer sowing his corn, / That kept the cock that crowed in the morn, / That waked the priest all shaven and shorn" and so forth. In Appleton's poem, the subject is nuclear war. It concludes with these stanzas:

I am the man who fills the till,
Who pays the tax, who foots the bill
That guarantees the Bomb he makes
For him to load for him to drop
If orders come from one who gets
The word passed on to him by one
Who waits to hear it from the man
Who gives the word to use the Bomb.

I am the man behind it all;
I am the one responsible.

In the end, it may be that we will come to understand that painters and poets have made two key contributions to the abolition of war: they have presented its true nature and have forced us to confront our own responsibility for it.

The Abolition of War: A Battle for Hearts and Minds

On May 4, 1965, President Lyndon Johnson told the assembled members of the Texas Electric Cooperatives that "we must be ready to fight in Viet-Nam, but the ultimate victory will depend upon the hearts and minds of the people that actually live out there."[17] Johnson was not the first to refer to "hearts and minds" in the context of war, but his use of the phrase, combined with the subsequent failure of the United States to win hearts and minds in Vietnam, has made it a fixture in modern discourse about war. (An Academy Award-winning documentary about the Vietnam War directed by Peter Davis titled *Hearts and Minds* also played a role in popularizing the phrase).

If winning wars—or at least defeating insurgencies—involves an appeal to hearts and minds, so does teaching war. There is a human dimension of war that can easily be lost in discussions of political aims, diplomatic maneuvers, military strategy, and social or economic transformations. The poetry of Owen, Sassoon, and Jarrell, the memoirs of Dunant, Remarque, and O'Brien, the drawings of Goya and the paintings of Picasso, are important for the way they reveal the human costs of war in ways that dramatize and personalize what may otherwise seem both distant in time and space and highly abstract.

An effort by those in the social sciences (and especially those engaged in the study of war) to engage the imagination and to add hearts to minds as we address the war *problématique* has the potential to undo some of the fragmentation of knowledge that Wendell Berry and others have lamented. But, more importantly, it has the potential to restore a measure of humanity to a subject that has often been too cold and clinical for the issues it addresses. Ken Booth, another holder of the Woodrow Wilson Chair of International Politics that Lord Davies established in 1919, once complained about specialists who have "provided the Eichmanns of Armageddon. These are the strategists in their nuclear counting houses, who rationalize the inhuman."[18]

To counter this it is worth remembering, as Berry noted, that "the thing being made in a university is humanity." The university should produce "responsible heirs and members of human culture."[19] If this is correct, then war—the destroyer of humanity—stands in opposition to the university and especially to that aspect of the university—the teaching of liberal arts—that preserves and passes on human culture. It is part of the vision of poets,

painters, and others, however, that this thing called "culture" should not simply stand in opposition to war but should be part of the solution. Stark representations of the reality of war, imaginative alternatives to politics as usual, and penetrating lessons on human folly can all come from the pens of poets and playwrights, the brushes of painters, the direction of filmmakers, and even the artistry of musicians. The materials are there for our use if we can overcome the fragmentation of knowledge. ■

Notes

1. The particular works I have in mind here are Michael Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars: A Moral Argument with Historical Illustrations* (New York: Basic Books, 1977); Jean Bethke Elshtain, *Women and War* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995); and John Keegan, *The Face of Battle* (New York: Viking Press, 1976).

2. John Paul Lederach, *The Moral Imagination: The Art and Soul of Building Peace* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005).

3. Wendell Berry, "The Loss of the University," *Home Economics* (New York: North Point Press, 1987), 76.

4. C. P. Snow, *The Two Cultures* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

5. Snow, ix–xvii.

6. Zac Anderson, "Rick Scott wants to shift university funding away from some degrees," *Herald-Tribune*, October 10, 2011 (http://politics.heraldtribune.com/2011/10/10/rick-scott-wants-to-shift-university-funding-away-from-some-majors/).

7. Doug Lederman, "Playing Politics with Poli Sci," *Inside Higher Ed*, May 11, 2012 (http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2012/05/11/house-passes-bill-bar-spending-political-science-research).

8. L. S. Woolf, *International Government* (New York: Brentano's, 1916). Woolf is perhaps best known as the husband of Virginia Woolf.

9. Edward O. Wilson, *Consilience: The Unity of Knowledge* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1998), 8.

10. Vitruvius, *The Ten Books on Architecture*, Book 1, trans. Morris Hicky Morgan (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1914), 5-6 (http://www.gutenberg.org/files/20239/20239-h/29239-h.htm).

11. Vitruvius, 10–11 (http://www.gutenberg.org/files/20239/20239-h/29239-h.htm).

12. Grenville Clark, "Letters to the Times," *New York Times*, April 22, 1955, 24 (ProQuest).

13. See Joshua S. Goldstein, *Winning the War on War: The Decline of Armed Conflict Worldwide* (New York: Dutton, 2011); and Steven Pinker, *The Better Angels of Our Nature: Why Violence Has Declined* (New York: Viking, 2011).

14. Lewis Fry Richardson, *Arms and Insecurity: A Mathematical Study of the Causes and Origin of War*, ed. Nicolas Rashevsky and Ernesto Trucco (Pittsburgh: Boxwood Press, 1960); and *Statistics of Deadly Quarrels*, ed. Quincy Wright and C. C. Lienau (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1960).

15. See Nicolas Guilhot, ed., *The Invention of International Relations Theory: Realism, the Rockefeller Foundation, and the 1954 Conference on Theory* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011).

16. Calvin Woodward, "They Sing the Electric of the Body Politic," *AP News Archive*, July 24, 1996 (http://www.apnewsarchive.com/1996/They-Sing-the-Electric-of-the-Body-Politic/id-ac9d690ef76cc5c9f0f23dd8a8107504).

17. Lyndon B. Johnson, "Remarks at a Dinner Meeting of the Texas Electric Cooperatives, Inc.," May 4, 1965, *The American Presidency Project* (http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=26942).

18. Ken Booth, "Human Wrongs and International Relations," *International Affairs* 71 (January 1995): 109.

19. Berry, 76.