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History Between Freud and Einstein as a Source of Biological Fear and Anxiety About the Future

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Abstract

Human history consists of innumerable events and experiences that have shaped the evolution of rational reflection on war and humanity, to the extent that the human being and war often appear as two structurally intertwined poles. Motivated by the pursuit of fame, aspirations to superiority, and a latent inclination toward conflict, human beings draw on these drives as a powerful foundation for continually seeking to prevail over their opponents and to impose their material and symbolic claims. Conversely, whenever nations perceive themselves as threatened by external adversaries and compelled to defend their existence, human agents mobilize all available techniques and continuously devise new instruments of confrontation in order to defeat their rivals and neutralize perceived dangers. Across this extended historical trajectory, thousands of wars and hundreds of thousands of battles have occurred between antagonistic forces, and this cumulative legacy of violence has led two of the most influential intellectuals of the twentieth century, Albert Einstein and Sigmund Freud, to regard history itself as a fundamental source of fear concerning the future. Their reflections on human

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nature have sharpened their awareness of the risks and destructive potentials inherent in human conduct, thereby intensifying their anxiety about the future of humanity. At the same time, their concern has not been limited to articulating fear in the face of human aggressiveness; rather, they have also sought to identify possible remedies that would enable human beings to attain a level of rational and moral development sufficient to draw constructively on the accumulated lessons of millennia, so that war would no longer reproduce the same catastrophic outcomes. In this sense, the convergent reflections of Einstein and Freud on the dangers arising from human desires and drives constitute an important theoretical resource for locating, within the very dynamics of history, pathways toward addressing the wounds of fear and mitigating the persistence of anxiety regarding the future of humankind.

Keywords: Freud, Einstein, war, Conflict, Power, Future anxiety, Civilization, History

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التاريخ بين فرويد وأينشتاين كمصدر للخوف البيولوجي والقلق بشأن المستقبل

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الملخص

يزخر التاريخ الإنساني بأحداث وتجارب لا حصر لها، أسهمت في صياغة تطور التفكير العقلاني حول مفهومي الحرب والإنسانية، إلى الحد الذي يبدو فيه الإنسان والحرب كقطبين متلاحمين بنيوياً. وبدافعٍ من السعي الدؤوب نحو المجد، والنزوع إلى التفوق، فضلاً عن الميل الكامن نحو الصراع؛ يتخذ البشر من هذه الدوافع ركيزةً صلبةً لمساعيهم المستمرة نحو قهر الخصوم وفرض هيمنتهم، سواءً على الصعيد المادي أو الرمزي. وفي المقابل، كلما استشعرت الأمم خطراً يتهددها من قِبل أعداء خارجيين ووجدت نفسها مضطرةً للذود عن وجودها، يحشد الفاعلون البشريون كافة التقنيات المتاحة لديهم، ويعكفون باستمرار على ابتكار آليات مواجهة جديدة؛ بُغية دحر المنافسين وتحييد الأخطار المحدقة.

وعلى امتداد هذا المسار التاريخي الطويل، نشبت آلاف الحروب ومئات الآلاف من المعارك الطاحنة بين القوى المتصارعة. وقد أفضى هذا الإرث المتراكم من العنف باثنين من أبرز مفكري القرن العشرين، وهما "ألبرت أينشتاين" و"سيغموند فرويد"، إلى النظر للتاريخ ذاته بوصفه منبعاً جوهرياً للقلق حيال المستقبل.

لقد أسهمت تأملاتهما العميقة في الطبيعة البشرية في صقل وعيهما بحجم المخاطر والنزعات التدميرية الكامنة في السلوك الإنساني، الأمر الذي ضاعف من توجسهما إزاء مصير البشرية. ومع ذلك، لم يقتصر انشغالهما على مجرد التعبير عن المخاوف أمام النزعة العدوانية للبشر؛ بل امتد ليشمل البحث عن علاجات ناجعة من شأنها أن ترتقي بالإنسان إلى مستوى من النضج العقلاني والأخلاقي يكفي لاستلهام العبر من دروس آلاف السنين بشكل بنّاء، للحيلولة دون أن تعيد الحرب إنتاج فواجعها الكارثية. ومن هذا المنطلق، تمثل الرؤى المتقاطعة لكل من "أينشتاين" و"فرويد" –حول الأخطار الناجمة عن الرغبات والدوافع البشرية– رافداً نظرياً بالغ الأهمية لاكتشاف مسارات فاعلة، من قلب الديناميكيات التاريخية، قادرة على تضميد جراح الخوف والحد من ديمومة القلق الذي يكتنف مستقبل الجنس البشري.

الكلمات المفتاحية

فرويد، أينشتاين، الحرب، الصراع، القوة، قلق المستقبل، الحضارة، التاريخ.

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Introduction

This study is structured into an **introduction** and three main sections. The introduction examines the relationship between history and fear, establishing history as a framework within which fear is formed and reproduced.

The first section analyses history as a supporter and driver of human desires, with particular emphasis on the will to power. The second section discusses fear and anxiety as sources of pessimism regarding the future, interpreted through the perspectives of Einstein and Freud. The third section addresses possible ways of confronting future dangers, arguing that any effective remedy must remain historically grounded in the insights of Freud and Einstein.

Introduction: The relationship between history and fear

Before analysing the nexus between fear and history, it is necessary to clarify, from the perspectives of Freud and Einstein, the conceptual ground on which fear is produced. In this context, a distinction can be drawn between the term “conflict” and the term “war”: conflict refers to confrontation between individuals or small groups, whereas war denotes a much broader arena of confrontation between states, civilizations and opposing interests. From another angle, war may be said to have been “born” at the moment when human beings divided themselves into distinct national, economic and racial groups. Humanity has not succeeded in establishing an ideal order that would gather all under a single framework and induce them to renounce mutual warfare; even within one and the same religion, some believers wage war against other believers. As long as idealism does not replace the desire for power, the possibility of eliminating war remains highly remote. The history of war is thus bound up with the history of power, within which the will to domination frequently undermines or instrumentalises the products of human ideality. War does not arise solely from social and political conditions; it also has psychological, mental and biological dimensions, through which individuals are impelled toward violence. It can therefore be understood as rooted in a destructive instinct directed toward tearing down and annihilating

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the other, while, paradoxically, the same underlying instinct has allowed the human spirit to develop creative capacities, generating the seeds of life and construction as the foundational strata of its own nature (Durant, 2007, vol. 1, p. 42). A range of psychological, biological and social factors contribute to the emergence and consolidation of fear. Social determinants such as family and community may be implicated in generating fearful states, while psychological determinants are linked to the individual's life history and formative experiences that give rise to specific patterns of fear. The historical experiences of the past can themselves become a source of latent anxiety about the future, and, from a biological point of view, it has been suggested that approximately 20% of human

beings display a heightened sensitivity to fear (Hassan, 2009, pp. 70; Qazzaz, 2010, pp. 16–17). From a linguistic perspective, fear is both the product and the external manifestation of an inner human condition.

In Kurdish, the term *tirs* functions as a general semantic field encompassing all forms and modalities of fear, as is evident in Xal's dictionary, which records multiple derivatives (e.g. *tirs, tirsan, tirsandin, tirsaw, tirsatirs, tirsnak, tirsnôk*) to capture different nuances of fearful experience, defined as the state that befalls a living being when seeing or hearing something that threatens its life and causes the heart to pound violently (Xal, 1960, vol. 1, pp. 280–281).

In the Arabic dictionary *al-Qāmūs al-Muḥīṭ*, fear is expressed through forms such as *khāfa, yakhāfu, khawfan, khīfan, makhāfatan, khīfatan*, each of which denotes fear while indexing a specific experiential nuance of the state in question (al-Fīrūzābādī, 1998, vol. 1, p. 747).

In English, the notion is captured by the term **awe**, which further branches into several clinical and colloquial categories, including **panic** (an acute, overwhelming and poorly structured fear), **phobia** (an irrational, non-logical fear), **obsession** (compulsive thoughts and ruminations that bind the subject), and **post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)**, which typically emerges following tragic or catastrophic events and is used as a general label for severe levels of human terror (Qazzaz, 2010, pp. 18–20).

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Previous scholarship has confirmed that the development of civilization is strongly correlated with all dimensions of human life and has identified fear as one of the most persistent structural factors within this process. Fear ranks among the most powerful primary and central affects in conscious human beings, functioning as an alert, a warning and a constant companion (al-Farabi, 2019, pp. 90–95). As Helmut Bunker observes, "we may say that we are afflicted by a kind of epidemic disease of fear" (Bunker, 2008, p. 70).

Becoming aware of one's fears constitutes the first step toward understanding their intensity, modalities and forms; more crucial still are the questions concerning what ought to be done in response to them. Such questioning has underpinned many major transformations in human life: when individuals compare their fears with ordinary fear and basic security, multiple forms of fear arise within them, spread, and imprint themselves upon the entire cognitive field, thereby exerting an influence on history and its trajectories (Qarachattani, 2015, pp. 386–390).

It is precisely this awareness that underlies Einstein's fear, which stems from his recognition of the ways in which human beings have filled their historical records with war and conflict, making violent struggle a central scene on the stage of human life. These conflicts have never been tranquil; rather, they have been resolved with intensity and brutality (Freud and Einstein, 2007, p. 16). For this reason, it is difficult to assert that human history will ever be free of war, since history itself attests to the contrary (Freud and Einstein, 2007, p. 15).

Numerous great wars in the ancient world occurred when humans still lived relatively simple lives, yet the desire for war already constituted a lofty and pervasive aspiration. The relationship between history and war is closely linked to economic factors, particularly trade routes and resource distributions, which help explain the persistence and recurrence of war, even as the absence of a culture of peaceful conflict management between nations has made it more likely that history would be shaped through war and that peoples would be unified by conquest (Durant, 2007, vol. 1, p. 25; Baqir,

2019, pp. 149, 155, 164, 207, 276–278; Dubuisson and Draspeck, 1979, p. 79; Wolski, 2004, p. 147). All of these wars have been inscribed in the records of history, and history itself has become a source of fear for reflective minds, insofar as it has produced a complex and often troubling image of the human being. History, understood as the process and record of human actions, functions to prevent those actions from being forgotten and to preserve the memory of human achievements (Herodotus, 2001, p. 8). This process advances through a chain of productive events, such that stability can be assumed only in the absence of radical change or revolution, which typically occurs in the wake of new crises (Marx, 2022, p. 46). In Hegel's formulation, history is the process of the spiritual development of the world through dialectic, oriented toward the attainment of freedom (Hegel, 2007, p. 32). History thus addresses the condition of human beings and human societies, dealing with forms of civilization, solidarity, power and transformation over time (Ibn Khaldun, 2016, vol. 1, pp. 127, 129).

Accordingly, history is not merely the recording of events; it is also the systematic investigation of life and of the development of civilization, from failure to success, grounded in principles of challenge and response, and in the professional and ethical evaluation of events (Toynbee, 2014, pp. 133–134). It can serve the interests of colonial power (Said, 1993, pp. 2–15), but it also functions as an analytic framework for understanding human life and social transformation (Mazhar, 2008, pp. 15–16). This broader conception of history as a general relation to all spheres of life-economic, social and cultural-underpins the argument that, for Einstein and Freud, the historical past itself becomes one of the principal sources of fear concerning the future. History may therefore be understood as a general network of relations encompassing all spheres of life-economic, social and cultural-and as a privileged framework for knowing and interpreting the human past (Baqir, 2018). On the basis of the preceding considerations regarding historical consciousness, it becomes clear that, for Einstein and Freud, the historical past itself constitutes a major source of fear with respect to the future. Freud

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regards this fear as a profoundly serious and powerful threat, insofar as human society has always been structurally divided between a leading minority and a conformist majority (Einstein and Freud, 2007, p. 86).

This division is one of the principal roots of fear, since the cessation of war in the future appears, from his perspective, as an impossibility (Einstein and Freud, 2007, p. 84). Historical experience has even led Freud to claim that war itself has a biological basis and therefore cannot be eradicated from human existence (Einstein and Freud, 2007, p. 89). This same historical record sustains Einstein's anxieties, because only a very small minority in the world-past and present-has consistently employed the masses as instruments for the preservation of its own interests, thereby rendering war a permanent and powerful possibility in the future of humankind (Einstein and Freud, 2007, p. 48). He thus identifies power-seeking elites throughout history as a central reason why definitive and universal peace is neither guaranteed in the past nor likely in the future (Einstein and Freud, 2007, p. 47). If one examines historical developments more closely, one finds that even the earliest stages of "simple" human life and the emergence of settled civilization already display patterns that generate both war and fear. For example, when human beings turned to agriculture and became territorially settled, pastoral and nomadic groups began to view cultivated lands as objects of desire and targets for predation; agriculture itself, however, represents a peaceful and non-violent mode of life that presupposes stability and attenuates the need for warfare, replacing conflict with a struggle for coexistence with nature (Durant, 2007, vol. 1, p. 67).

Despite this, war has become a fundamental and recurrent mode of interaction between communities throughout history. It is visible, for instance, in the wars between the peoples of southern Mesopotamia in the land of the Two Rivers and the earliest civilizations there, and the peoples of

northern Mesopotamia; in the conflicts between Egypt and the inhabitants of Syria; and in the wars of Assyria with the Hittites, the Greeks, the Achaemenids, the Romans and the Persians (Boutel, 2006, p. 49; Grimal, 1994, pp. 250–258; Dubuisson and Draspeck, 1979, p. 79; Razi, 1970, pp. 27–28; Frye, 1984, p. 104; Yahya, 2015, p. 97; al-Tabari, 2010, p. 606; Procopius, 1959, pp. 151–158). Within this historical horizon, war appears as an almost inevitable phenomenon: the mere destruction and defeat of one side does not eliminate the logic of warfare itself, and recurrent wars drive historical change and the transformation of civilizations, allowing new socio-political formations to emerge (Machiavelli, 2019, pp. 40, 89, 115; Graston, 1980, p. 47).

In this context, power may be defined as the capacity of an individual or group to impose its will upon others, to shape their actions and choices, and, if necessary, to compel those with less power to comply with the preferences of the more powerful (Rummel, 1979, pp. 450-451). Many theorists link power to the acquisition and maintenance of political authority and treat it as the core of the political sphere, distinguishing political relations from other forms of social interaction by reference to power.

Here, the concept is not limited to military strength or instruments of physical coercion, but also encompasses national power more broadly, including geographical position, population, natural resources, level of technological development and the nature of the political system (Ahlborg, 2017, pp. 123-126; Siverson and Miller, 1996, pp. 57-73; Luce and Rogow, 1956, pp. 83–95). In this sense, the “seeds” of power possessed by the state remain latent and ineffective unless they are translated into actual influence over the behaviour of others, which is manifested in different forms-political, social, military and economic power. Power, as the logical opposite of weakness, is thus a source of intensity, a basis for decisive action and a capacity to command; it signifies the ability to bring about effects and to

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overcome resistance, and stands in direct contrast to states of impotence or incapacity (Schroeder, 1994, pp. 109–112).

First section: History as a supporter of human desires

Human desires are effectively without limit; nonetheless, there is one desire that stands above all others and renders their fulfilment more accessible, namely the desire for **power**. In its simplest sense, power can be defined as the capacity to exert influence upon others and to make them instruments for the realization of one's own will, such that agents implement what they themselves envisage in accordance with their own interests (Tucker, 1952, p. 216).

From the standpoint of Freud's account of human drives, the strength and persistence of this will to power implies that the disappearance of war in the future is virtually impossible (Einstein and Freud, 2007, p. 84). War, in this view, is not merely an expression of desire or policy; rather, it possesses a biological basis and therefore cannot simply be eradicated from human existence (Einstein and Freud, 2007, p. 89). A small but influential minority-both in past history and in conceivable futures-systematically mobilizes the wider population in order to preserve and advance its own interests; as a result, war remains a permanent and powerful possibility in the future of humankind (Einstein and Freud, 2007, p. 48). This diagnosis emerges from a combined understanding of human desires and of historical experience: the structural alignment between the will to power and the record of recurrent conflict leads to the conclusion that power-seeking elites are a central factor preventing the realization of lasting peace.

According to Einstein, power-seeking individuals and elites throughout human history are a principal reason why neither the past nor the future can be characterized by guaranteed peace (Einstein and Freud, 2007, p. 47). Building on this insight, Freud arrives at a similar conclusion, namely that the disappearance of war in the future is practically impossible (Einstein and Freud, 2007, p. 84). Those who hold power, in their view, tend not to heed social or moral values as such, but rather

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concentrate on the preservation of their own dominance (Einstein and Freud, 2007, p. 47).

This diagnosis leads Einstein to maintain that war, in both past and future, has brought and will continue to bring devastation to large segments of humanity, while a small, interest-driven minority exploits the emotions and religious sentiments of the masses in order to achieve its aims (Einstein and Freud, 2007, pp. 48–49). All such efforts are directed toward the acquisition or preservation of **power**, which may be defined as the capacity to prevail in conflicts and to overcome obstacles. In this perspective, two central techniques-threat of punishment and the promise of reward-constitute the most important instruments of domination, and Machiavelli treats them as key pillars of historical power, both in shaping its allies and in ensuring its continuity over time (Machiavelli, 2019, pp. 88-89, 128-129). The aspiration to possess power and to construct a political centre is, therefore, a recurrent and shared characteristic of human communities (Machiavelli, 2019, p. 38).

Those who are powerful in any social, political, economic or cultural context are precisely those who impose their will and organize reality in accordance with their own interests. Historically, the term *power* initially denoted the ability of an entity to perform difficult actions, but it later came to designate the very principle of **authority** itself (al-Jurjani, 1985, p. 188). In this sense, power functions as both a descriptive and a normative category within political life: it names the capacity to act effectively and to structure the field of possibilities for others, and it thereby reveals how history operates as a supporter and amplifier of human desires, particularly the will to power.

In many conflicts, each party seeks either to silence, capture or physically eliminate the opposing side; and if a person does not succeed in killing their enemy in a material sense, they may attempt instead to “kill” the enemy’s spirit by instilling such intense fear that the latter will never again dare to stand in opposition. Freud, however, argues that this strategy has never fully

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succeeded: it has neither achieved complete victory nor produced enduring security, but has rather generated a persistent state of tension in which neither party is able to live in stable peace (Einstein and Freud, 2007, p. 17). Both sides, he suggests, continue to exist in a condition of mutual fear, which prevents the consolidation of genuine reconciliation.

In Freud's view, the establishment of law in human history is intrinsically linked to this bilateral fear. Law emerges as a response to the dangers of unregulated violence, yet its foundations in fear can also produce distorted social relations, fostering mistrust and hostility. As Tamburaka notes, such a legacy of fear may be transmitted across generations, leaving an inheritance of accumulated grievances that complicates the peaceful resolution of conflicts and makes consensual settlements more difficult to achieve (Tamburaka, 1999, p. 77).

Every war function as a "round" that deepens the sum of human misfortune and obstructs the path of genuine development (Einstein and Freud, 2007, pp. 38, 49). From Einstein's perspective, a powerful inner force continually undermines the prospect of stable peace in the future, because the same energies that are
mobilized for war are not yet systematically redirected toward constructive purposes (Einstein and Freud, 2007, p. 47). He insists that a more humane world is conceivable only if the totality of the energies currently consumed by warfare were instead invested in reconstruction and the improvement of life (Einstein and Freud, 2007, p. 40).

Freud, for his part, argues that human society is structurally divided into a leading minority and a conformist majority, and that the latter typically requires a strong source of authority in order to make decisions on its behalf; in most cases, it follows this authority without prior deliberation or resistance (Einstein and Freud, 2007, p. 86). Such external leadership, however, can exacerbate inherited tensions, reignite conflicts and be exploited to manipulate internal dynamics for the benefit of particular interests (Sudrijanta, 2009, p. 33).

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These dynamics of authority and obedience can crystallize into conflicts between groups or nations, as each side strives to maintain or expand its influence at the expense of the other, thereby turning relations of power into a structural driver of antagonism.

The contrast between Ibn Khaldun and Huntington is revealing in this regard: while Huntington emphasizes the role of cultural differences as primary sources of conflict, Ibn Khaldun underlines the cyclical, "bloody" nature of historical change, in which group solidarity and competition for power generate recurrent phases of dominance and decline (Ibn Khaldun, 2016, vol. 1, pp. 344, 352, 357). Human desire itself is split between the impulse to love and the impulse to fight, and history often shows that spiritual and institutional authorities have at times served merely as instruments for channeling destructive passions and desires (Einstein and Freud, 2007, pp. 74–75). Freud characterizes the instincts of love and aggression as two complementary forces—one attractive, one destructive—that coexist in the human psyche and shape behavior in ambivalent ways (Einstein and Freud, 2007, p. 75).

Aggressive impulses within the human psyche can thus be mobilized by ideologies, symbols and leaders, drawing individuals into war under the banner of "higher" meanings (Einstein and Freud, 2007, pp. 77–78). The instinct toward aggression is present in all living beings as a means of self-preservation, but in humans it can be intensified and directed by cultural and political structures, which sometimes encourage individuals to suppress their fear of death in the name of collective causes (Einstein and Freud, 2007, p. 80). Some interpretations hold that the accumulation of material resources and wealth further fuels this war-like tendency, embedding conflict within the very fabric of social life and making fear of future wars an ever-present concern (Einstein and Freud, 2007, pp. 83, 95).

Historical records confirm that wars tend to end in one of two ways: either with the destruction and disappearance of certain peoples-such as the Mongols, Turks and other so-called "barbarian" groups-or with the

consolidation and expansion of new socio-political orders that reorganize society and advance history to a new stage (Einstein and Freud, 2007, p. 66). Ancient conflicts, from the Akkadian campaigns under Sargon and Naram-Sin, through the Sumerian and Babylonian wars, to the expansionist policies of the Neo-Assyrian empire, illustrate how brutal strategies of conquest, displacement and destruction have repeatedly reshaped civilizations (Baqir, 2019, pp. 149, 155, 164, 207, 276–278). Later wars—such as the Battle of Qadesh between Egypt and the Hittites, the Greco-Persian conflicts at Salamis and Marathon, and the slave revolt of Spartacus in Roman history-further demonstrate that war is not confined to a single people or period but is a recurrent, structuring feature of world history (Grimal, 1994, pp. 250–258; Frye, 1984, p. 104; Yahya, 2015, p. 97; Razi, 1970, pp. 27–28; Rudley, 2016, p. 168).

History thereby reveals that the human propensity for war is closely tied to self-interest and the instrumentalization of others. Time and again, small elites positioned above the law have clashed with larger groups subject to the law, and these clashes have often culminated in uprisings and revolutions that redefine political orders (Einstein and Freud, 2007, p. 64). In many epochs, powerful actors coalesced to subdue emergent forces that threatened their dominance, and victory typically yielded two rewards: the elimination of an enemy and the production of a “lesson” intended for surrounding communities (Einstein and Freud, 2007, p. 58).

History also shows that alliances forged in struggle tend to dissolve once their common goal has been achieved, leaving no lasting transformative effect beyond the immediate outcome (Einstein and Freud, 2007, p. 60). If one examines past events closely, it becomes evident that conflict is a primary mechanism through which historical change is produced; change itself is inevitable, but genuine progress following change is not (Ibn Khaldun, 2016, vol. 1, pp. 187, 198, 344, 366, 403, 417; Huntington, n.d., p. 24). History thus bears witness to continuous shifts in political centres and balances of power,

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confirming that while transformation is certain, its direction and ethical quality remain contingent (Ibn Khaldun, 2016, vol. 1, pp. 356–358, 367–371).

Second section: Conflict as a source of fear and anxiety about the future in the thought of Einstein and Freud

In Freud's reading of human history, social life has been marked by continual conflict and unresolved tension between one or more social formations. These conflicts have occurred between smaller and larger units alike-between individuals and groups, cities and tribes, societies and nations, as well as between empires with divergent interests-and have frequently culminated in war as their most extreme form (Einstein and Freud, 2007, pp. 65–66).

Conflict can be understood as the pre-war stage: it denotes a state of unresolved incompatibility between the aims and desires of individuals or collectives over material or natural issues (Asli, 2009, p. 4). In a deeper sense, conflict is a natural and, to some extent, inevitable feature of human existence (Ibn Khaldun, 2016, vol. 1, p. 482). It arises whenever two desires, two goals or two sets of interests confront one another in such a way that each seeks to achieve its own end at the expense of the other (Rifa'i, 2003, p. 15). The recourse to force and violence then becomes a primary means of suppressing or "resolving" this conflict, although in practice such methods often reproduce, rather than eliminate, antagonism.

In this respect, human beings exhibit patterns of behaviour that are not found in the animal world, where conflict is usually limited to immediate survival needs (Einstein and Freud, 2007, p. 16). The future offers no guarantee that humanity will renounce this dynamic or that all conflicts can be reconciled. Einstein argues that the "mass public" can always be mobilized and sacrificed in the service of the interests of a relatively small group, which is willing to expend human lives to secure its own objectives (Einstein and Freud, 2007, p. 49).

At a basic level, conflicts often begin locally and on a small scale, but soon draw in the wider population through propaganda and ideological

mobilization; ordinary people, who do not freely choose war, are pulled into the vortex of violence (Einstein and Freud, 2007, p. 38). Einstein maintains that even highly educated or "enlightened" individuals do not always learn effectively from their own historical experience and can be manipulated into supporting conflict. For this reason, the persistence of conflict in the future appears to him as a realistic expectation rather than a remote possibility, and history itself becomes a source of fear regarding what lies ahead (Einstein and Freud, 2007, p. 51).

Even within a single religious tradition, segments of believers have often gone to war against other believers, which illustrates that, so long as the quest for power remains in place, the prospect of an ideal order supplanting it is extremely limited (Einstein and Freud, 2007, p. 19; Hamza, 1989, pp. 21-22). In this sense, a concise history of war can be written as a history of power, in which the will to rule frequently undermines or instrumentalises any form of human idealism.

Freud also emphasizes that certain historical conflicts have been resolved without recourse to overt violence, and he interprets this not as a simple exception but as an indication that conflict itself is a structural feature of human development and civilizational progress (Einstein and Freud, 2007, p. 16).

He notes that although the forms of conflict differ across epochs, their underlying essence is the same, and that the transformation of raw, violent conflict into legally regulated order constitutes a form of advancement; law thus emerges as a sublimated continuation of force, aiming to organize the life of individuals and groups without open brutality (Einstein and Freud, 2007, pp. 16, 18).

According to Freud, every group or community is internally differentiated by unequal distributions of power: weak and strong, female and male, young and old, all occupy distinct positions with different capacities to impose their will (Einstein and Freud, 2007, p. 18). At this point, he links the roots of war to what he calls the "instinct of destruction" or "death drive," which he

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contrasts with the "life instinct." (Eros) The life instinct is directed toward love, preservation and union, whereas the death drive tends toward aggression, rupture and annihilation. Freud insists that these two instincts never exist in isolation; neither is, by itself, better or worse, since human life is constituted by a continual interplay and tension between them (Einstein and Freud, 2007, p. 20).

In light of the foregoing discussion, the concept of **conflict** can be refined along the lines suggested by Huntington and others. For Huntington, conflict arises wherever relationships are structured around competing projects: it designates the condition in which the pursuit of one set of goals necessarily entails resistance to, or obstruction of, alternative goals, whether at the level of individuals, groups or entire societies (Huntington, n.d., p. 30; Rifa'i, 1980, p. 90). Civilizations themselves are differentiated by distinctive cultural, religious and historical characteristics, and these differences constitute a primary source of conflict between them (Huntington, n.d., p. 18).

Ibn Khaldun similarly maintains that all conflicts are ultimately struggles to dominate others, to prevail over rival groups and to extend influence at their expense (Ibn Khaldun, 2016, vol. 1, p. 367). Conflict can thus occur between persons, between social groups, and between strata within society, whenever each party seeks to gain control over political authority, to participate in decision-making, or at least to have a tangible impact on those who govern. On the other side of this relationship stands the tension between rulers and ruled: authority is generally exercised in the interests of particular classes or coalitions, rather than of society as a whole (Duverger, n.d., p. 17).

A large proportion of social conflicts can therefore be described as conflicts over power and authority. The degree to which an individual or group is able to access power determines how far they can realize their own preferences at the expense of the preferences of others.

Personal dispositions, material resources and structural "power factors" can all contribute to the expansion of one's influence. Charisma, in particular, is one of the key qualities that enhances the capacity of actors to shape the

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behaviour of others. In this context, power and authority may be defined as the ability to bring about a specified outcome by influencing or directing the conduct of others; power is not merely equivalent to superiority, but also encompasses the capacity to attract, to persuade and to structure relations of dependence (French, 1956, pp. 63, 181–194).

History constitutes a cognitive map of human reflection and a record of divergent interpretations, and this very fact explains why conflicts are prolonged and continually re-energized. History confirms a fundamental truth: conflicts tend to arise whenever a powerful actor endowed with resources seeks to subjugate and control a weaker actor (Huntington, n.d., p. 25).

Such conflicts project an image of the future that is saturated with confrontation, fear and anxiety, generated by the way human beings pursue their interests and ambitions (Madore and Schacter, 2015, p. 200). Conflict, in this sense, denotes a state of unresolved and seemingly intractable incompatibility between opposing parties (Asli, 2009, p. 4). Human history has never been a history of tranquility devoid of conflict; whenever one examines human aspirations in the past, it becomes evident that the future has always been perceived as bearing the marks of struggle and uncertainty. From a biological standpoint, the inclination toward confrontation appears as a quasi-inevitable dimension of human existence (Sidley et al., 1997, pp. 197, 201).

The struggle to control the core of political and civilizational life—the state and its institutions—has been a central theme of relations between groups and “races” throughout history. Each group has possessed its own strategies and capacities for attaining dominance over others, and conflict has often taken the form of attempts by centralizing powers and hegemonic forces to neutralize rival centres of power (Ibn Khaldun, 2016, vol. 1, p. 170). The ultimate objective of such actors is to establish a state that reflects their own values and interests, compelling other groups to follow their lead.

Power thus becomes both an instrument and an end in itself in the field of international relations. The state may be conceived as a living entity that

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requires growth and expansion, even when this necessitates the use of force (Thompson et al., 1979, pp. 630–631). For Ibn Khaldun, this reflects a basic feature of domination: the desire to control others is an intrinsic component of political power and presupposes the ability to prevail over competing forces (Ibn Khaldun, 2016, vol. 1, p. 478).

Having a set of goals oriented toward the future inevitably brings with it obstacles and constraints, which in turn become sources of fear (Raune et al., 2005, pp. 315, 323).

Mental representations of the future are constructed around networks of hope and expectation that are simultaneously framed by fear and uncertainty in each individual's mind (Schacter et al., 2008, pp. 43, 55).

There is no guarantee that the future will be free of threats to existing achievements, especially given that human society is internally unequal, composed of dominant elites and subordinate groups whose interests do not coincide. In such a context, the very success of some actors presupposes the subordination of others, and social equilibrium is often established through asymmetric victories (Einstein and Freud, 2007, p. 63).

A brief glance at history shows that, in earlier times, enemies were simply killed, whereas today former enemies are frequently compelled to serve the interests of those who have defeated them (Einstein and Freud, 2007, p. 58). This transformation does not eliminate the logic of domination; rather, it reconfigures it, and thereby sustains the conditions under which fear and anxiety about the future continue to be reproduced.

War functions as a mechanism for consolidating power and affirming the existence of a central political unit, insofar as it is tied to the practices through which those who possess power preserve their dominance and protect their interests (Jahanbeglu, 2001, p. 64). Individuals, communities and states alike come to regard power as a necessary instrument for deterrence and for safeguarding their material and symbolic advantages (Durant, 2007, vol. 1, p. 70). Historically, the construction of "great powers" has often depended on

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war as a principal means, with the eventual outcome being the reconfiguration or collapse of the existing central authority. Consequently, future wars are likely to remain wars of interest-maximization, in which some actors seek to secure their own gains while compelling others to act as their protectors or subordinates (Einstein and Freud, 2007, p. 67).

For these reasons, war cannot be reduced to a mere clash between two biological instincts within the individual. Rather, it is anchored in social structures whose core components-power, the state, empires and nations-are continually prepared to bring others under their control, even at the cost of mutual destruction (Einstein and Freud, 2007, p. 90). Every human being has a right to life; yet war "kills" human hopes, chains and diminishes people, and forces them—contrary to their own desires-to kill, thereby annihilating the material achievements of entire societies. Modern warfare can obliterate one or both sides completely, because human beings have created instruments capable of erasing the enemy ever more rapidly, leaving no genuine prospect of security in the future of humanity (Einstein and Freud, 2007, pp. 89–90).

A further layer of complexity arises from the fact that the instinct of self-preservation, often expressed through love, can itself become a source of aggression when it seeks to secure its own aims at any cost. In this respect, the "life instinct" (Thanatos) and the "death drive" intertwine: neither ever exists in pure form, and no human being lives under the exclusive sway of only one instinct.

Einstein and Freud therefore argue that the future will necessarily be marked by sharp tensions between those who struggle for life and those who struggle to defend or expand their interests, making conflict structurally likely (Einstein and Freud, 2007, p. 76). Human societies have repeatedly attempted to reduce the scale and frequency of war, yet the wars that have occurred have often been more destructive, more total and more ruinous than those of earlier periods (Einstein and Freud, 2007, p. 68).

Feelings of pessimism and anxiety about the future are closely linked to the deeply rooted fear of loss, particularly the loss of what one already

possesses (Seligman et al., 2013, pp. 119, 141). The future has never been a domain free of conflict; even at the time of Einstein and Freud's exchange, their dialogue remained unfinished when the Second World War began, confirming their shared intuition that the coming era would be filled with new and perhaps more intense forms of conflict. In this light, the future appears as a horizon in which conflict is recurrent and peace is fragile, and in which the structural conditions that generate war and fear have by no means been overcome.

Third section: The future between fear and resolution, grounded in history in the thought of Freud and Einstein

The future cannot be conceived as a domain of complete peace or an area free from fear and anxiety (MacLeod, Williams and Bekerian, 1991, pp. 480, 484). Throughout history, mutual incomprehension and the accumulation of tensions between societies differing in language, institutions and value-systems have constituted major sources of conflict. Ibn Khaldun argues that the long-term endurance of any culture depends on the way it institutionalizes justice and the extent to which it is prepared to make sacrifices for the sake of defending its principles; these practices, once consolidated, become cultural capital and historical legacy, thereby reinforcing cultural dominance and extending the life of the political centre (Ibn Khaldun, 2016, vol. 1, p. 187).

The assertion of hegemonic power over others, and the dissatisfaction produced by unequal historical legacies and deep-seated cultural differences, create structural obstacles to mutual understanding, communication and cooperation. These cultural asymmetries intensify conflict and increase the difficulty of reaching stable settlements, even though differences of interest and perspective have accompanied human history from the outset. At the same time, culture has also served as an important medium for fostering relationships among human beings and for moderating conflicts (Huntington, n.d., p. 25). From Freud's standpoint, everything that characterizes the human

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being, beyond mere biological existence, is the product of cultural processes; all human effort and labour are condensed in the forms of civilization and culture that emerge over time (Einstein and Freud, 2007, p. 92).

All forms of confrontation that originate in the quest for basic survival and in simple forms of life cannot be entirely eradicated, because they are rooted in structural conditions of scarcity and competition (Ibn Khaldun, 2016, vol. 1, p. 187). Differences in belief, aspiration and political orientation arise, among other things, from the distinct locations in which groups consolidate their power; each centre of power tends to obstruct other centres and to regard itself as superior, which undermines stability and generates conflict. If, however, deliberate work is undertaken to transform these relations into genuinely cultural processes—through dialogue, shared institutions and reciprocal recognition—then accumulated tensions can be reduced and conflicts made more manageable (Ibn Khaldun, 2016, vol. 1, p. 188).

At this level of analysis, violence and war can be interpreted as manifestations of the **death drive**, that is, the instinct that impels human beings toward destruction and annihilation. When this drive becomes dominant, it turns into a powerful source of devastation, prompting human beings to employ it in order to eliminate whatever is perceived as external or other.

A crucial point in Freud's account is that both the life instinct and the death drive are transposed into the political sphere. Political life can thus be organized either around the expansion of love, solidarity and the protection of life, or around the amplification of hatred, hostility and ruin (Einstein and Freud, 2007, pp. 20–21). Freud does not, therefore, consider war solely in social and political terms; he also locates its roots in a psychological and instinctual register that disposes human beings toward organized violence (Einstein and Freud, 2007, p. 19).

Nonetheless, Freud maintains that human beings are capable of reflecting on these impulses and striving to strengthen the life instinct while reducing the influence of the death drive. This effort may take the form of attempting

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to make love more powerful than hatred, or of subordinating both instincts to the regulating force of reason, so that rational deliberation holds them in a state of equilibrium (Einstein and Freud, 2007, p. 21). Yet he cautions that such aspirations remain, to a considerable extent, **utopian**: although humanity has repeatedly tried to achieve this transformation, these attempts have not, up to the present, produced a fully satisfactory or definitive result (Einstein and Freud, 2007, p. 21).

No factor can prevent war from breaking out unless human beings consciously remove its underlying causes. Freud and Einstein argue that war is rooted in instinctual drives, and that, historically, the pursuit of "great" goals has typically begun with the mobilization of a relatively small, committed minority (Einstein and Freud, 2007, pp. 16, 38).

For Freud, a sober reading of human historical experience does not justify optimism about the emergence of a war-free humanity in the future. The historical record persistently undermines any confident answer to one of the most pressing questions of history, namely whether the future of humankind can be one of universal peace without war; it is therefore not intellectually responsible to build expectations of a conflict-free future on denial or wishful thinking (Einstein and Freud, 2007, p. 14).

At the same time, Einstein insists that, while it is impossible to change the basic "structure" of the world, it may still be possible to expand the space for peace within that structure in the future (Einstein and Freud, 2007, p. 41). All efforts must therefore be directed toward preventing people from being driven, or seduced, into war, and this requires educational processes that render war morally repugnant and make mutual acceptance a non-negotiable final option (Einstein and Freud, 2007, p. 39).

In this prospective process of reducing war in the future, states play a crucial role. Through appropriate institutions and policies, they can either cultivate or restrain the aggressive instincts of their citizens; Einstein and Freud thus envisage a significant responsibility for political authorities in transforming the psychological and cultural conditions that currently sustain the recurrence of war (Einstein and Freud, 2007, p. 40).

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From Ibn Khaldun's perspective, the ultimate aim toward which collective effort tends is the establishment of the **state**, which represents the institutional crystallization of the aspirations of dominant cultural groups (Ibn Khaldun, 2016, vol. 1, p. 383). Attaining state power is the outcome of a long process of group solidarity, and both the rise and fall of states are closely tied to the strength or erosion of this underlying cohesion; when solidarity weakens, disintegration and
fragmentation follow, revealing a deep cultural logic at work in political formations (Ibn Khaldun, 2016, vol. 1, pp. 689–690, 891).

Law, in this context, is an invisible but essential component of culture. Although laws are written and promulgated by those who hold power, they cannot permanently eliminate recourse to violence and coercion, especially when interests diverge-even within a single group-and when actors perceive force as a viable means of achieving their goals (Einstein and Freud, 2007, p. 18). Law thus operates both as an instrument of authority and as a potential site of contestation.

Legal norms are often extended downward from rulers to the wider population, but large numbers of people have limited access to genuine legal protection and may be compelled to challenge or circumvent the existing legal order. This can occur in at least two ways: first, when those in power place themselves above the law; and second, when the disadvantaged attempt to modify a legal system that has been designed to serve dominant interests (Einstein and Freud, 2007, pp. 63–64). Such dynamics encourage the "masses" to hope that, through struggle, they can bring about historical change, and the history of humanity is filled with examples of such attempts.

A significant part of human striving has been directed toward escaping oppression and injustice. Einstein and Freud suggest that the energies currently expended in warfare could, in principle, be redirected toward constructive ends, such that the human capacity for struggle would be invested in service rather than destruction (Einstein and Freud, 2007, p. 40).

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In this sense, any project that seeks to transform a war-oriented being into a culturally oriented being is, by definition, a project opposed to war.

Culture, in the broad sense, is therefore a form of development that stands against war. The crucial question is how much time and effort will be required for humanity to transform the "warrior human" into the "cultural human." Freud acknowledges that it is impossible to provide a definitive answer, yet he insists that this transformation-from a being defined by war to one shaped by culture—is the only viable path for rescuing humanity from despair (Einstein and Freud, 2007, p. 22).

Freud holds that humanity has not yet succeeded in establishing an ideal order in which all people gather around a common framework and renounce war; in his view, the only realistic path toward such an ideal lie through the gradual development of **culture** (Einstein and Freud, 2007, p. 19).

For this transformation to occur, he argues, two conditions are required: first, the creation of a higher normative authority; and second, the transfer of effective, comprehensive power to that authority (Einstein and Freud, 2007, p. 68).

In Freud's and Einstein's analysis, war ends only when those who lead society are genuinely free in thought and spirit and refuse to act as mere instruments of blind domination. Such leaders will not transform themselves into dictators; rather, they will be used by the majority to secure the common interest, instead of manipulating the majority to serve the narrow desires of a small minority (Einstein and Freud, 2007, p. 87). From this perspective, Einstein suggests that if the world's resources and wealth were distributed more justly, humanity would not be, like "slaves in the mines", in thrall to rigid economic doctrines; there would be sufficient money, work and food for all. Yet, above all, one must not allow defensive preparations, or exploitative economic practices, to drag thought and action into preparing new wars (Einstein and Freud, 2007, p. 37). This leads him to ask whether it is not better, in good conscience, to endure the pain and hardship of peaceful

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coexistence, rather than suffer in wars whose premises are themselves doubtful (Einstein and Freud, 2007, p. 38).

In Freud's terms, the rational and erotic (life-affirming) drives can be **sublimated** within cultural processes so that they assume the place of the death drive and counterbalance its destructive tendencies (Einstein and Freud, 2007, pp. 93–94). The only reasonable hope for reducing humanity's reliance on war lies in expanding cultural solidarity between peoples, and here the role of states is crucial: they must foster shared cultural frameworks rather than instrumentalizing differences (Einstein and Freud, 2007, pp. 95–96). Much of human struggle has, in fact, been motivated by a desire to make life bearable in common, to construct forms of coexistence that mitigate suffering (Einstein and Freud, 2007, p. 62). At the deepest level, there exists within the "mass public" a desire for unity and mutual recognition, which is why societies are formed in the first place (Einstein and Freud, 2007, p. 61).

Accordingly, while it may be impossible to imagine a complete end to war, it is equally untenable to abandon the effort to work toward a more pervasive peace. Education, the critical engagement of cultural differences, and the strengthening of cultural solidarity between societies remain indispensable tasks, precisely because future wars offer no clear horizon or safe refuge for humanity; the future contains no guaranteed sanctuary from the risks that war brings to human life.

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Conclusion

First, the human being, viewed biologically, psychologically and socially, exhibits a fundamentally conflict-oriented and competitive disposition, which makes it difficult to assume that the future will be characterized by lasting peace or the disappearance of fear about what lies ahead.

Second, history demonstrates that the desire for domination is a persistent and powerful motive: human beings continuously strive to assert and expand their power, and this drive functions as a basic survival strategy and a primary existential choice.

Third, Einstein's central question arises from a scientifically informed fear grounded in awareness of the dangers inherent in technological development, particularly with respect to the survival of the human species. In his view, the future cannot simply be reconciled with a humane civilization, because the very existence of war, amplified by modern technology, threatens human continuity.

Fourth, Freud's response regarding the impossibility of abolishing war and his proposal to reorient human beings toward cultural solidarity and the sublimation of sexual and aggressive drives does not provide a fully satisfactory solution. He accepts that people may be as deeply attached to certain ideas and ideals as they are to their sexual desires, yet historical experience shows that such attachments have not prevented the recurrence of war.

Fifth, humanity can and should work to deepen cultural solidarity, minimize the emphasis on cultural differences and strengthen practices of coexistence; however, none of these efforts guarantees that interest-driven elites will cease to instrumentalize others. With the rapid development of military technology, the world has effectively become a "small village" in which all actors can affect one another's fate, and decisions taken in one place may have global consequences, which means that the future remains uncertain and cannot be regarded as secure.

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