ON THE LOGIC OF STRATEGIC BEHAVIOR

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Introduction

Since 1945 there has been a vast increase of American interest in strategic problems[1] This has brought about the development of an immense literature where a considerable number of scholars have approached the problems of war and peace in terms of conceptual models.[2] These models make varying assumptions about the actions and motivations of states. The "assumption of rational behavior" is the major contribution of modern social science to the theory of international relations in general and to the strategic theory in particular. Most of the American strategic analysts have adopted this assumption as their fundamental premise.

As it is explained by Thomas C. Schelling, "rational behavior" is not just an intelligent behavior, but a behavior "motivated by a conscious calculation of advantages, a calculation that in turn is based on an explicit and internally consistent value system."[3] In other words, the decision-maker has to choose from among a number of alternatives in a clearly defined situation, and each alternative has a given set of consequences. So, he tries to maximize his goal by selecting the alternative whose outcome

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1 For the evolution of the strategic thought in the United States, see Henry A. Kissinger, ed., *Problems of National Strategy*, New York: Praeger, 1965; Urs Schwarz, *American Strategy; A New Perspective*, New York: Doubleday and Co. Inc., 1966; Harry L. Coles, "Strategic Studies since 1945: The Era of Overthink", *Military Review*, April 1973.

2 The model-building in International relations has three principal purposes: explanation of actions and interactions in given situations, prediction of the actions of the adversary, and recommendation of action (policy influencing).

3 Thomas C. Schelling, *The Strategy of Conflict*, London: Oxford University Press, 1963, p. 4. See also Sidney Verba, "Assumptions of Rationality and Non-Rationality in Models of International System", in James N. Rosenau, ed., *International Politics and Foreign Policy*, New York: The Free Press, 1969, pp. 224–225.

ranks highest in terms of his value system (utility function)[4]. In spite of considerable differences in style and emphasis, most contemporary thought about strategy proceeds, implicitly or explicitly, within this basic model. This approach finds a more refined mathematical expression in the theory of games.[5] The most important contribution of the game theory is that it helps the analyst to take into account the fact that the decision-maker operates in a system where there are other "rational" actors, each pursuing his own interest. The decision-maker deals with an adversary who will counteract his moves and to whom he must in turn react. The best course of action for each actor depends on what he expects the other actor to do.[6] And, the question of what the adversary will do is answered by considering the question of what a "rational" individual would do. In other words, the opponents are assumed to behave likewise "rationally".[7]

At the outset of this study, it seems to me of utmost importance to clarify the notion of "strategy". There are two different basic ways of looking at the concept. Although the term "strategy" has traditionally a military connotation, it has today a much broader application. It refers "to any predesigned set of moves, or series of decisions, in a competitive situation where the outcome is not governed purely by chance."[8] Thus, the term is often loosely applied to economic planning, development, business, party politics, and so forth. What is then the criterion to distinguish "strategy" in its strict meaning from the purposeful planning in other fields of human activity?

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4 In order to avoid any misunderstanding, I must remind that the concept of "value" has here an "economic" connotation. It refers to utility, to something which is quantifiable.

5 The foundation of the game theory was laid in the pioneering work of John von Neuman and Oscar Morgenstern, *Theory of Games and Economic Behavior*, Princeton University Press, 1947. The relationship between the game theory and international politics is described by Thomas C. Schelling, op. *cit.*, and by Morton A. Kaplan, *System and Process in International Politics*, New York: Wiley and sons, 1967.

6 Thomas C. Schelling, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

7 John C. Harsanyi, "Game theory and the Analysis of International Conflict", in James N. Rosenau, *op. cit.*, p. 370.

8 John P. Lovell, *Foreign Policy in Perspective: Strategy, Adaptation, Decision Making*, New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970, p. 65. The author himself uses the word in this second sense.

The discipline of international relations deals with a particular kind of social action, which Raymond Aron calls "diplomatic-strategic behavior".[9] This sort of action differs from the other types of social behavior, because it is concerned with the relations between political units, each of which reserves the monopoly of decision and the right to resort to violence.[10] In such a relationship, decision-makers are permanently confronted with the alternatives of peace and war.[11] If diplomacy can be called the art of persuading without using force, strategy is the art of constraining by using force.[12] The aim of strategy, according to Clausewitz, is to subdue the will of the opponent for the attainment of the foreign-policy objective.[13] In the light of these explanations and for the purpose of this essay, we may define strategy as the art of the dialectic of opposing wills using force or threat of force in a milieu where social interactions are dominated by the risk of violence. As a matter of fact, this element of force (and violence) constitutes the distinctive characteristic of strategy.[14] One may speak of the strategy of a firm or of a political party if, in the system where these units are operating, there is no central political authority regulating relations; and if entrepreneurs, managers and workers are armed, say, with machine guns, and if political parties maintain commando units. This element of force and this shadow of violence over the system fundamentally changes the logic of behavior and the essence of social interactions.

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9 *Paix et guerre entre les nations*, Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1962. (Translated from the French by Richard Howard and Annette Baker Fox. Londan Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1966).

10 *Ibid.*, p. 20.

11 *Ibid.*, p. 18.

12 *Ibid.*, p. 36. It would be useful to remind that the distinction between diplomacy and strategy is a relative one, They are the complementary aspects of the art of conducting foreign relations.

13 See Carl von Clausewitz. *On War* (translated by Colonel J. J. Graham), vol. I, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966, pp. 27–28. See also General Beaufre's explanation *(Introduction à la strategie*, Paris: Armand Colin, 1965, pp. 16–17*)*. In order to have a clearer view about what strategy is, it would be useful to define it as opposed to tactics: "Tactics is the theory of the use of military forces in combat. Strategy is the theory of the use of combats for the object of the war." (Clausewitz, op. cit., p. 86). Admiral Mahan proposed the criterion of "Contact". "Strategy transcends contact to include the whole conduct of a war." (Bernard Brodie, *A Guide to Naval Strategy*, New York: Preager (5 th ed.), 1965, p. 10).

14 See Michael Howard, "The Classical Strategists", in Alastair Buchan, ed., *Problems of Modern Strategy*, London: Chatto and Windus, 1970, p. 47.

I hope that this preliminary clarification about the concept of strategy will help to avoid confusions and misunderstandings, and will facilitate my further arguments. I admit that this paper cannot be a definitive account of the strategic phenomenon. Rather I hope to suggest an approach which may help to avoid some illusions and pitfalls. Most of the views defended here are familiar to, and experienced by, most professional soldiers (and diplomats). Moreover, they have been expressed most magisterially by Clausewitz and Raymond Aron. What I intend to do in this study is to deal with the relevance of the "rationality assumption" in models of the strategic decision-making. In the light of these often neglected and misinterpreted classical thinkers, I shall try to discern the logic of strategic behavior, and attempt to draw attention to the profound incompatibility between this particular behavior and the rationality models. But, before concentrating on the crux of the problem, I shall explain two different paradigms assuming "non-rationality". They are useful, because they show the psychological and organizational limitations imposed upon rational behavior.

Image and Organization

According to Thomas C. Schelling, the reason for the uncertain and unpredictable character of violence is that it depends on "decisions made by fallible human beings organized into imperfect governments."[15] In other words, the fallibity of the human mind and the imperfection of the decision-making organization constitute the two most important limitations of rational behavior. They have found their expression in the two basic paradigms allowing for "non-rationality". The first of them focuses on perception as an explanatory concept. The other stresses organizational and bureaucratic processes.

Some social scientists explain international behavior in terms of decision makers' perceptions of reality.[16] They assume

15 *Arms and Influence*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967, p. 93. The author adds that violence "is furthermore a hotheaded activity, in which commitments and reputations can develop a momentum of their own."

16 See, for instance, Kenneth E. Boulding, *The Image*, University of Michigan Press, 1956; Ole R. Holsti, "The Belief System and National Images: A Case Study, *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 6 (1962), pp. 244–252; Dean G. Pruitt, "Definition of the Situation as a Determinant of International Action", in *International Behavior: A Social-Psychological Analysis* (edited by Herbert C. Kelman), New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1965.

that nations act according to their images of the situation, and there is often a discrepancy between "objective" situation and perception because of the lack of adequate information, and the distortion of reality under the influence of historical experiences, beliefs and values.[17] In Korea, the most important misperception, no doubt, was that of the Chinese intention. By early October 1950, following the restoration of the *status quo ante bellum*, the United States modified its war objectives, and declared its intention to establish a unified Korea. So, the victorious United Nations troops crossed the 38 th parallel, took Pyongyang, and advanced toward the Yalu River. Despite clear warnings from the Chinese government that it would not tolerate the destruction of the North Korean regime, the American administration was convinced that China could not intervene in Korea. President Truman, General Mac Arthur and the State Department considered the Korean conflict as a Soviet-directed operation. Moreover, they believed that China would not risk her "meager" resources and her "undisciplined" army against the overwhelming forces of the United States. This misperception of Chinese intentions and capacities was the reason for the military disaster which was brought about by the unexpected Chinese attack of November 27.[18]

Let me give another example to illustrate the problem of images. Before the Cuban missile crisis in October, 1962, President Kennedy was convinced that the Soviet Union would never attempt to install offensive missiles in Cuba, because he perceived Khrushchev as prudent and not desiring to change the *status quo*. On the other side, Premier Khruchchev believed that he could do so, because, under the influence of his previous experiences such as the Bay of Pigs incident, he perceived Kennedy as undetermined and weak.[19]

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17 See Sindey Verba, *op. cit.*, pp. 218–219; K. J. Holsti, *International Politics: A Framework for Analysis*, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1972 (second edition), 360–361.

18 See John G. Stoessinger, *Nations in Darkness*, New York: Random House, 1971, pp. 45–62.

19 *Ibid.*, p. 165.

In his recent book about the Cuban missile crises, Graham T. Allison [20], criticizes the excessive simplifications of the rational-choice models in terms of the organization theory and bureaucratic politics. He reminds us that choices and actions are usually affected by organizational traditions and bureaucratic disputes. The Cuban crisis cannot be thoroughly understood by the intelligent decisions and /or the misperceptions of individual actors. The analyst should also take into consideration the fact that perception of problems and definition of alternatives are made through the organizational processes, and actions are performed according to the bureaucratic routines. International behavior is at the same time the outcome of bargaining among various government agencies. Here are some of the interesting conclusions reached by the author: (a) the united States leaders might have received the photographs of Soviet missile bases in Cuba three weeks earlier, if a U-2 had flown over the western end of the island in the last week of September 1962. This delay is explained by bureaucratic complications: the fear of a military incident as the result of a possible destruction of a U-2 by a SAM, and the controversies between the CIA and the Air Force; b) Although President Kennedy had ordered the dismantlement of the "Jupiter" missile sites in Turkey several months before the Cuban crisis occured, the "Jupiters" remained at Çiyli until the end of the crisis; (c) The decision of blockade was the outcome of a subtle and intricate bargaining among the members of the Executive Committee. The rejection of the alternative of an air strike was due to a number of coincided factors. For instance, McNamara feared a nuclear disaster, and Robert Kennedy approached the question on moral and legal grounds.

The Roots of Uncertainty

Images and organizational complications show the limitions brought to "rational" foreign-policy conduct. But the paradigms that I have explained presuppose, in the final analysis,

20 *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis*, Boston: Little, Brown, 1971. See also, Graham T. Allison, "Conceptual Models and the Cuban Missile Crisis",*The American Political Science Review*, 63 (1969), pp. 689–718; Graham T. Allison and Morton H. Halperin, "Bureaucratic Politics: A Paradigm and Some Policy Implications", in Raymond Tanter R.H. Ullman, eds.,*Theory and Policy in International Relations*, Princeton University Press, 1972, pp. 40–80.

the possibility of "rational" behavior. They assume, implicitly or explicitly, that if the psychological and organizational "defects" did not exist, "rationality" would be possible in international affairs, and the rational-choice models would be a full reflection of reality. Altough I agree with some of their conclusions, I believe that they are far from being sufficient to discern the true nature of strategic behavior. The irrelevance or the relative relevance of rationality models is not due to the inadequacy of our minds and our organizations, but rather to the peculiar features of the diplomatic-strategic phenomenon.

In the first place, the peculiarity of strategic behavior results from the relative and incalculable character of power. In the initial analysis, power seems to be something that states have and can accumulate.[21] So, we may say that the power of a nation depends on its poulation, geographic situation, resources, skill, and on its intention to mobilize all these elements for the purpose of acquiring the capacity to influence the actions of others. The difficulty, however, starts at this point, because the problem of influence brings us to a different level of comprehension. Clausewitz stresses that the objective of military operations is to subdue the will of the enemy. Even if the military force of the enemy is destroyed, and his country is invaded, the war goes on as long as the will of the enemy is not conquered.[22] This means that as the capacity to influence (to impose its will upon others and to prevent others from imposing their will), power refers to an interaction. In this sense, it depends not only on the above-mentioned elements, but also on the functioning of all these forces in a specific context and with a view to particular goals. Power is conditioned by the nation's own objectives, by other states, and by the historical situation in which it is exercised. It is generated in an encounter which is a conflict of wills.[23] After the Greek victory at Kütahya-Eskişehir, what chance had the British and

21 Professor Knorr calls this "putative power", See Klaus Knorr, *Power and Wealth: The Political Economy of International Power*, New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1973, pp. 13, 193.

22 Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, vol. I, pp. 27–28.

23 Professor Knorr calls this "actualized power" (*op. cit.*, pp. 13–15). Raymond Aron had adopted a similar distinction between "force" and "power" (See *Paix et guerre*, pp. 59–80). See also Cecil V. Crabb. *Nations in a Multipolar World*, New York: Harper and Row, 1968, pp. 27–37.

Greek governments of convincing Mustafa Kemal to acknowledge that he was defeated? We know today that a simple evaluation of the relation of forces (physical and even moral) was not enough to predict the antecedents and consequences of the Battle of Sakarya.[24] Nor was Mr. Khrushcev able to calculate the consequences of installing missile bases in Cuba. What chances had he to conquer the will of President Kennedy? Since the power relationship depends on the particular circumstances of each specific case, the only valid test of any nation's power must ultimately be the result of the process of interaction. Any previous calculation would leave a large margin of error. and thus, it could not dissipate uncertainties.

The second difficulty arises from the fact that the process of interaction has no real limits. Clausewitz distinguishes between the "immediate" and the "ultimate" objectives of military action. "The possession of provinces, towns, fortresses, roads, bridges, magazines, etc., may be the immediate object of a battle, but never the ultimate one... (They) can never be looked upon otherwise than as means of gaining greater superiority... Therefore all these things must only be regarded as intermediate link<, steps... leading up to the effectual principle, but never as that principle itself".[25] Thus, the battle is linked to the war as a whole, because the tactical developments of an engagement determine its strategic consequences. The war itself is related to the political objective, because the political outcomes of a war are determined by the conduct of hostilities. The unconditional surrender of Germany and Japan in the Second World War affected the conditions of the Cold War. The political objective in turn is determined by subjective values and history, by the adventure of the state in time. The process of interaction is endless. The end of of one isolated interaction is the means for the next. The outcome of one modifies the terms of the following. Any isolation of a tactial or strategic interaction is then artificial, because the value of a stake cannot be separated from the total situation.[26]

24 For the British and Greek miscalculations, see Bilâl N. Şimşir, *İngiliz Belgeleri ile Sakarya'dan İzmir'e*, İstanbul: Milliyet Yayınları, pp. 144–237.

25 Carl von Clausewitz, *op. cit.*, p. 173. See also vol. III, p. 121: "War is only a part of political intercourse, therefore by no means an independent thing in itself.

26 See Raymond Aron, *op. cit.*, p. 758.

For instance, the famous battle of Jutland, like all the other battles in history, cannot be understood without being examined within the wider context of the conflict. Even if the total situation is taken into cinsideration two contradictory evaluations of the battle are possible. According to one point of view, Admiral Jellicoe was right to reject the hazards of a night action, and to decline to pursue the High Seas Fleet of Germany in the North Sea towards the South. Thanks to the prudence of the Admiral, the British ships avoided to expose themselves to the German mines and submarines. The Royal Navy already enjoyed command of all the seas essential to Britain and to the Allies, and consequently, there was no need of risking this strategic superiority for the sake of annihilating the High Seas Fleet. The attempt of the German fleet to break the blockade was repulsed, and so, the objective was attained. An opposing point of view argues that Admiral Jellicoe wasted an opportunity of giving a fatal blow to the German fleet. Such a victory in the North Sea would reinforce the confidence of the Allies, and finally, it would shorten the war by opening the Baltic to invasion.[27] Although it should be recognized that the caution of Jellicoe was considerably justified, because the Allies continued to maintain command of the oceans, the Royal Navy had fought an undecided battle, and so, it had lost some of its prestige. In the decision maker's mind, glory and prestige may sometimes become the supreme objective of the confrontation. And, the prestige of the state is shaken or confirmed by the attitude adopted. This brings us to the third problem which results from the diversity of objectives.

In order to give a rationalizing explanation of international politics, some "realist" writers consider power (and security) as the fundamental object of foreign policy conduct.[28] This conception of international politics is criticized by Raymond Aron who stresses that the satisfaction of *amour-propre*, the desire for revenge, the defense and propagation of an idea are not less "rational" and less real than the "struggle for power". The ob-

27 See Bernard Brodie, op. *cit.*, p. 255.

28 The leading scholar of this school of thought is undoubtedly Professor Hans J. Morgenthau for whom international politics is nothing but a "struggle for power". Statesmen, remarks Morgenthau, "think and act in terms of interest defined as power". (*Politics among Nations*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 4 th ed., 1967, p. 5.).

jective of strategic behavior cannot be reduced to a single term valid for all civilizations and for all historical situations.[29] The gain or loss cannot be evaluated merely on the basis of the material aspects of the stake. Sometimes a party may prefer losing a province rather than losing a battle. For the United States, saving its honor and its reputation for loyalty to commitments were as vital as saving South Vietnam. In the Second World War, for the United States and Great Britain, an absolute victory in purely military terms, was more important and more desired than the political advantages that the Western Powers had to achieve at the end of the War. Moreover, the possible interpretations of an interaction may sometimes become more important than the concrete outcomes of the same interaction. Although President Kennedy had previously decided that the "Jupiter" missiles in Turkey were obsolete and created an undue risk, he thought that to dismantle them in a crisis situation and as a result of a bargain would adversely affect the Soviet and allied image of the United States. Such a behavior would be interpreted by the NATO countries and the USSR as a sign of weakness.[30]

Fourthly, the peculiarity of strategic behavior is due not only to the plurality of objectives but also to the indeterminacy of the utility of the stakes. In international politics, stakes are relative in the sense that "one and the same political object may produce totally different effects upon different people, or even upon the same people at different times".[31] Moreover, "the original political views in the course of the war (or the crisis) change very much, and at last may become totally different, just because they are determined by results and probable events".[32] Let me give some illustrations. Raymond Aron remarks "a double asymmetry in inverse ratio" between North Vietnam and the NLF on one side and the United States on the other. The resources of the United States are immense compared with those of North Vietnam (in spite of Chinese and Soviet aid), "but, *per*

29 See Raymond Aron, *op. cit.* pp. 81–102.

30 See Robert Jervis, *The Logic of Images in International Relations*, Princeton University Press, 1970, p. 178.

31 Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, vol. I, 12.

32 Ibid., p. 31. See also Raymond Aron, *op. cit.*, pp. 752–758.

contra, the stake-the government of South Vietnam-means much more to Hanoi than to Washington". This is one of the points explaining why the several years of bombing have not crushed the will of the North Vietnamese leaders.[33] Now let us compare the following hypothetic issues of the Vietnamese affair from the American point of view: South Vietnam is communized without the military intervention of the United States, or Vietnem is communized after the military intervention of the United States. The establishment of a communist government in Saigon despite the American intervention, represents a loss much more considerable than the same communization without the military involvement of the United States. In a dispute or crisis, the military intervention (or any other move) thus automatically modifies the value of the stake. As regards the transformation of policies in the course of war or crisis, we may turn to the case of Korea. As it has been pointed out, at the the outset of the hostilities the political objective of the United States was to repulse North Korean aggression and to restore the *status quo ante* which consisted in the partition of Korea at the 38 th Parallel. After the landing of Inchon and the defeat of the North Korean armies, the United States government adopted a new objective which was the unification of the two Korean states. However, the intervention of the Chinese forces and the defeat of the United Nations armies obliged Washington to retun to its initial objective.

Some Contemporary Dilemmas

Whoever tries to explain the contemporary international relations should not neglect the implications of modern technology. There is an important divergence of opinion today regarding the impact which the nuclear weapons and the intercontinental missiles have upon the structure of international society and the nature of strategy.[34] Some students of international politics assert

33 Raymond Aron, "The Evolution of Modern Strategic Thought", in Alastair Buchan, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

34 See Robert Gilpin, "Has Modern Technology Changed International Politics", in J. N. Rosenau, V. Davis and M. A. East, eds., *the Analysis of International Politics*, New York: The Free Press, 1972, pp. 166–174, and Bernard Brodie, "Military Technology and International Strategy", in A. Lepawsky, E. H. Buehrig and H. D. Lasswell, eds., *The Search for World Order*, New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1971, pp. 72–84.

that the advent of nuclear weapons has fundamentally modified the nature of international politics. According to this view, the modern technology has had not only tactical but also strategic and political consequences. It has modified the nature of war, and the military power can no longer be considered. as an instrument of foreign policy. On the other hand, some scholars maintain that the advent of nuclear weapons and long-range ballistic missiles has not fundamentally transformed the structure of international society. They point to the fragmentation of power, the absence of central authority and the competition of nations for individual advantage as the essential and persisting characteristics of international politics.

The author of this paper believes that there is truth in both of these divergent views. Nuclear weapons and today's means of delivery make it possible to devastate the enemy's homeland without first achieving victory,-without first destroying his military force. "Victory is no longer a prerequisite for hurting the enemy. And it is no assurance against being terribly hurt."[35] This suicidal character of nuclear exchange creates, among the superpowers, a very strong common interest in avoiding war. Because of the fear of mutual annihilation, they refrain from using nuclear weapons as an instrument of policy, and their actions aim to reduce the risk of total war. The originality of this situation is not sufficient by itself, however, to alter the fundamental characteristics of international politics where force continues to play a significant role. The meaning of deterrence has not changed. Nuclear or conventional, it consists in preventing "certain threats or actions from being carried out by posing an equivalent or greater threat".[36] Today as yesterday, it depends on both the material means and the resolution.[37] From this point of view, the strategy, on the nuclear level, is not fundamentaly different from the conventional one, because it always deals with a dialectic of wills involving the risk of increase to extreme violence.

On the conventional level, nuclear weapons have not abolished war as a possible instrument of policy. Moreover, the super-

35 Thomas C. Schelling, *Arms and Influence*, p. 22.

36 Henry A. Kissinger, *op cit*, p. 3.

37 Raymond Aron, *Paix et guerre*, p. 401.

powers confront each other by indirect means. They tend to exploit the local and domestic conflicts. Wars by proxy, propaganda, subversion and economic pressure have become the elements of strategy.[38] "The further a conflict is removed from the thermonuclear threshold, the more tempting and useful it may be as an instrument of foreign policy for large and small states."[39]

On one hand, the United States and the Soviet Union have ruled out force in its nuclear form as an instrument of their policies; on the other they are committed to the use of violence, even in its nuclear form, under certain circumstances, and they never cease preparing themselves for such contingencies.[40] Thus the modern strategy itself tries to pursue three contradictory objectives: the avoidance of a major nuclear war; the limitation of war in the case that deterrence fails; the victory if conflict occurs, because the rivalry between states persists. The modern strategic theory tries to reconcile these discrepancies by making use of the rational-choice assumption. In the nuclear context, this assumption takes the following form: all-out nuclear war will be averted or at least its damages mitigated, and military force, including the nuclear one if necessary, can be used to further national policies, if decision-makers will only make correct (rational) choices.[41]

No one would deny that the common interest of superpowers in preventing the competition from reaching the stage of mutual annihilation is the expression of a "rational" desire (or thought). In other words, "rationality" consists in one party acting with moderation and in the other reacting with the same or similar restraint. This mutual interest in survival creates a trend toward stability in the nuclear balance. But, on the other hand, one should also take into account the fact that whoever stri-

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38 See Général Beaufre, *op. cit.*, pp. 95–118.

39 Stanley Hoffmann, *The State of War*, New York: Preager, 1965. p. 142.

40 Ibid., p. 219: and Hans J. Morgenthau, "The Four Paradoxes of Nuclear Strategy", *The American Political Science Review*, March 1964, p. 23.

41 These "correct choices" find their expression in the schemas of Thomas C. Schelling *(The Strategy of Conflict; Arms and Influence)* and in the scenarios of Herman Kahn *(On Escalation: Metaphors and Scenarios*, New York; Praeger, 1965). These leading scholars have devoted themselves to a subtle analysis of a great number of conflict levels, and of a variety of actions which one can perform for gradually compelling or persuading the adversary to lay down arms or to negotiate.

kes first will have a considerable advantage.[42] Even if the retaliatory forces of both sides are invulnerable [43], the first strike will at least confuse the system of communications and command of the target state. One cannot easily argue that a nuclear first strike would be an "irrational" act. Despite its fatal consequences, it may be advantageous for the party who makes it so long as it seems congruent with the stake. Moreover, the suspicion that the adversary intends to make the first strike would induce the decision-maker to take the initiative. In crisis situation, weak or strong, there is always a temptation to deal the first blow.

One of the most important developments peculiar to the nuclear age is the detailed elaboration of a strategic doctrine of limited war. This doctrine is a product of both fear and determination. Its purpose is to bring force under control as a "rational" instrument of policy.[44] Proponents of the doctrine of limited war tend to look upon the problem of escalation as one that can be scientifically calculated and controlled through the application of certain analytical techniques such as game theory, systems analysis and simulation. The assumption is that the decision-makers will only make "rational" choices which consist in promoting the cooperative process in a conflict. But is it not equally "rational" to act uncooperatively for the party who perceives that he already is losing?[45] Moreover, if the measures for the prevention of escalation taken by one party prove to be unsuccessful, the only way left to him is either all-out war or surrender. And these two alternatives are both rejected by the limited war "rationality".[46]

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42 In his famous article "The Delicate Balance of Terror" (*Foreign Affairs*, January 1959; and in Kissinger, *op. cit.*, pp. 34–58), Professor Wohlstetter emphasizes the qualitative difference between first strike and second strike.

43 Invulnerability is a relative notion. Even today, there does not exist a complete invulnerability of the means of retaliation. The vulnerability is reduced by the multiplication, dispersion, hardening, and mobilization of the bases on land and at sea.

44 See Robert E. Osgood, "The Reappraisal of Limited War", in Alastair Buchan, *op. cit.*, p. 96.

45 See Philip Green, *Deadly Logic*, New York: Schocken, 1968, pp. 174–175; and D. M. Gormley, "NATO's Tactical Nuclear Option", *Military Review*, September 1973, p. 9.

46 Philip Green, *op. cit.*, p. 168.

I have already pointed out that the stake of the strategic game is never definite because it is not seperable from the total context. So, in nuclear strategy, the question is not to calculate decisions to be taken, since the probable results have no value known in advance. Rather the question is to convince the adversary of the value attached to the stake of the conflict, and to gradually increase this value in the course of crisis. Like any other strategic behavior, deterrence is as much a psychological and political as a military problem. The essential point is to create the appearance that one is possessing the ability and resolution to destroy the adversary.

The concept of escalation has already a privileged place in the arguments of Clausewitz. In terms of his abstract logic of conflict, "war is an act of violence pushed to its utmost bounds."[47] The tendency to increase to extremes exists in the very dynamics of war, because war is constituted by "reciprocal actions" which proceed not only from ideas and policies but also from "feelings and circumstances which dominate the moment."[48] Adversaries cannot act independently from each other. They distrust each other. Both of them try to realize a complete security which cannot be achieved except by disarming the opponent. Once hostilities have started, escalation (or de-escalation) is not a matter of "rational" choice. Even when policies have a dominant place in the dialectic of conflict, the "absolute form of war" continues to cast its shadow on the battle ground or the conference table.

Let us take the problem of counter-insurgency. The strategic objective of conventional warfare is to defeat the enemy's armed forces, whereas the strategy of unconventional conflict must consist in winning control of the civil population. In guerrilla warfare, the behavior and motivations of the indigenous people acquire a paramount importance.[49] The United states expeditionary force in Vietnam has never run the risk of a mili-

47 Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, Vol. I, p. 5. For the author's distinction between "absolute" and "real" war, see vol. III, pp. 79–83. He remarks that, in the abstract logic of hostility, "absolute war" is a genaral point of direction.

48 *Ibid.*, vol. III, p. 82.

49 See J. K. Zawodny "Unconventional Warfare", in Kissinger, *op. cit.*, pp. 333–343; and Franklin A. Lindsay, "Unconventional Warfare", in Kissinger, *op. cit.*, pp. 344–355.

tary defeat. But the political goal, a South Vietnamese government strong and popular enough to protect itself against the NLF, has not been attained. If Hanoi, through the intermediary of the NLF, gains the control of Saigon, the United States will have lost the war even if it has won most of the combats.[50] It is true that the purely military approaches (search-and-destroy and seize-and-hold tactics) are necessary to deal with guerillas. But these are not more than short-term tactical responds. The successful conduct of counter-insurgency depends on the systematic application of tactics and strategy toward influencing the behavior of local populations. It is necessary to take into consideration their values, goals and grievances, and to combine military, political, economic and administrative measures in order to be able to give satisfaction to the popular aspirations. Then the final solution depends not on a calculated decision but on a political value judgement taken under circumstances peculiar to that occasion.

Conclusion

Nearly hundred and fifty years have elapsed since the first posthumous publication of "On War". Most of Clausewitz's arguments are today as relevant as in the beginning of the 19th century. The reason for this is not only the author's rigour of thought but also the fact that our modes of thought and habits of action have not undergone a radical transformation. The fundamental feature of international society is still the fragmentation of power. Today as in the previous periods of human history, strategy, diplomacy and policy merge at every point under the risk of "increasing to extremes". The traditional ambiguities of strategic behavior simply reappear today in a new technological setting.

A growing body of work by a group of contemporary American scholars tries to solve these uncertainties by making use of the rational-choice assumption which finds its expression in the means-ends schema. On the other hand, some other scholars reject the assumption of rationality as the most useful premise for understanding governmental behavior. They stress instead the

50 This example is borrowed from Raymond Aron, "The Evolution of Modern Strategic Thought", in Alastair Buchan, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

decision-makers' perceptions and organizational procedures. But in the background of these attempts, there is the implicit idea that if the psychological and organizational "defects" are corrected, "rational" decision will be possible. In other words, such concepts as "perception", "image" and "bureaucracy", when generalized beyond specific situations and specific decision-makers, establish a mathematical relationship between a general assumption of rational behavior and a subassumption of "misperception" or "bureaucratic routine".

The oversimplified view of "rational "decision-making leads modern "scientific" strategists to separate the concept of "national interest" from the political and moral issues, and to neglect the subjectivity of the behaving unit in the particular circumstances of specific situations. In the diplomatic-strategic phenomenon, there does not exist an "objective rationality" which is supposed to regulate the relations between states. Rather, each actor has his own "subjective rationality" which emerges from specific historical situations, and which is susceptible to change following the dynamics of interactions. Absolutely contradictory behaviors may be equally "rational", depending on the perspective adopted. Accordingly, the war which is limited from the point of view of one side may be total from the standpoint of the other. A decision which is tactically correct may be strategically incorrect.

Nevertheless, I admit that the abstract models of strategy are quite useful for the intellectual training of decision-makers. They help them to acquire a discipline of thought, and to condider as many eventualities as possible in a given situation. But their services must not go beyond these limits. They "should educate the mind of the future war leader, but not accompany him to field of battle."[51]

51 Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, vol. I, p. 108.