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John Bloch's *The Future of War* Pacifism Based on Economics

Abstract

John Bloch (1839–1902) was a railroad tycoon, banker, social activist, philanthropist and man of science. He was shortlisted for the Nobel Peace Prize in 1902 for his multi-volume work entitled *The Future of War in its Technical, Economic and Political Relations*, which was dubbed ‘the bible of pacifism.’ Thanks to his multi-layered activities he perfectly fits the positivist ideals of his time. Despite this, due to the course of history and ‘unfavourable circumstances’ for featuring his figure, for decades he was largely forgotten.

The goal of this article is to present Jon Bloch and his works in the fields of entrepreneurship, science and most of all his attempts in aid of peace. I will present his major pacifist hypotheses and arguments which are included in his work *The Future of War*. The author substituted the usual religious and humanitarian arguments in aid of peace, with economic assertions. Published in many languages, the book became essential reading for the intellectuals and politicians at the break of 20th c., while Bloch gained the nickname of ‘the father of contemporary pacifism.’ In order to verify the legitimacy of this claim I will contrast Bloch’s work to a work entitled *The Great Illusion*, by Norman Angell. Published in 1909, eleven years after the first publication of *The Future of War*, Angell’s *The Great Illusion* is well-known to the Anglo-Saxon readership.

Keywords: World War I, pacifism, economics

JEL Classification: B31, N43

1. Introduction

John Bloch¹ (1839–1902) was a railroad tycoon, banker, social activist, philanthropist and man of science. He was shortlisted for the Nobel Peace Prize in 1902 for his multi-volume work entitled *The Future of War in its Technical, Economic and Political Relations*,² which was dubbed ‘the bible of pacifism.’ Thanks to his multi-layered activities he perfectly fits the positivist ideals of his time. Despite this, due to the course of history and the ‘unfavourable circumstances’ which prevented his ideas from being popularized, for decades he was largely forgotten.

The goal of this article is to analyse John Bloch’s works in the field of peace. I will present his major pacifist hypotheses and arguments which are included in his main work *The Future of War*. The author substituted the usual religious and humanitarian arguments in aid of peace with economic assertions. Published in many languages, the book became essential reading for the intellectuals and politicians of the break of the 20th century, while Bloch gained the nickname of ‘the father of contemporary pacifism.’ In order to verify the legitimacy of this claim, I will contrast Bloch’s work to a work entitled *The Great Illusion*,³ by Norman Angell, published in 1909, eleven years after the first publication of *The Future of War*.

The test method used in this article is a critical analysis of the works of Bloch and comparing its theses and arguments to the most well-known work of pacifism in the West at the beginning of the twentieth century – Norman Angell’s above-mentioned *The Great Illusion*.

2. Biographical note and accomplishments⁴

John Gottlieb Bloch was born on June 24th, 1836, to a Jewish family in Radom, becoming the seventh child of Selim and Fryderyka. The Bloch family were in the fabrics dyeing business. The family was numerous – John had eight siblings. The family ran into financial difficulties due to the economic restrictions which were the

¹ John Bloch was also known as: Jan Gottlieb Bloch (in the land of Poland), Ivan Bloch (in Tsarist Russia), and Jean de Bloch (in France).

² J. Bloch, *Przyszła wojna pod względem technicznym, ekonomicznym i politycznym* [The Future of War in its Technical, Economic and Political Relations], Warszawa-Kraków 1900 (first published in 1898 in Tsarist Russia). Hereinafter all the references are to the latest edition published by PISM, Warsaw 2005.

³ N. Angell, *The Great Illusion*, G.P. Putnam’s Sons, New York and London 1910 (first published in the United Kingdom in 1909 under the title *Europe’s Optical Illusion* and republished in 1910).

⁴ The Polish literature mentions biographical facts about Bloch in the following positions: *Kapitalista, pacyfista, filantrop. Jan Bloch (1863–1902)*, ed. A. Żor, Trio, Warszawa 2014; A. Żor, *Figle historii*, Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek, Toruń 2005; R. Kołodziejczyk, *Jan Bloch (1863–1902). Szkic do portretu “króla polskich kolei”*, PIW, Warsaw 1983; A. Bocheński, *Wędrówki po dziejach przemysłu polskiego*, cz. II, PAX, Warsaw 1966; A. Bocheński, *Niezwykłe dzieje przemysłu polskiego*, Krajowa Agencja Wydawnicza RSW Prasa-Książka-Ruch, Warsaw 1985; as well as articles by J. Bugajski, R. Kołodziejczyk, E. Małecki, R. Szubański, and A. Werner.

fallout of the November Uprising.⁵ Because of this they were forced to seek financial help from the municipality for many years. The Blochs' dire straits were the most likely reason for John to leave his family. In 1850, at only fourteen, he moved to Warsaw where he became an apprentice in the currency exchange branch of the Toeplitz bank. A year after that he converted to the Polish Reformed Church, a move which most likely was aimed at fostering his career.⁶ When he was twenty he made another religious metamorphosis by becoming a Catholic.⁷ Bloch's real career was, however, jumpstarted by his move to Russia in 1856. In the beginning, he started by working in the construction of a steam mill in St. Petersburg, but soon he became a subcontractor in the construction of a Warsaw–St. Petersburg railroad, becoming one of the Russian railroad entrepreneurs in the period of the so-called 'railroad boom.' It is unknown how he became one of the Russian 'railroad barons,'⁸ but what is certain, however, is that Bloch had already made it big in the primitive accumulation of capital in that period. In 1860, nearly 4 years after his arrival, Russian archives show him as a serious entrepreneur – the owner of 'Enterprise Bloch.'⁹

It was typical for the early capitalism in Polish territories to conjoin various forms of economic activities. After arriving back in Warsaw, Bloch established a large currency exchange bank. His aim was not to conduct any large-scale businesses though, instead his financial enterprise was aimed at co-funding and creating the Commerce Bank (pol. *Bank Handlowy*) in 1870, along with Leopold Kronenberg and the Natanson family. Bloch was one of the major shareholders in the bank. At first, he was a board-member, but later he limited his influence to that of an owner. He was also a co-founder of the Warsaw Insurance Association. In 1873 he became the director general of the Warsaw Exchange Committee, a function he performed for twelve years. For many years, he was also an 'elder' of the Warsaw Merchant Assembly and was part of the narrow circle of leaders of the Warsaw Credit Association.¹⁰

Bloch's entrepreneurial activities were unbelievable to say the least. As early as 1875, at only 39, he was at the peak of his career. He undertook initiatives of multiple characters: industrial, financial, social and literary.

⁵ After suppressing the November Uprising (1830–1831), in addition to the repressions the tsarist government also introduced economic restrictions in the form of high export tariffs on goods produced in the Kingdom of Poland. These restrictions therefore primarily affected the textile industry, which was the basic source of livelihood of the Blochs.

⁶ Jews, constituting about 10% of the population of the Kingdom of Poland, were deprived of civil rights. Often, the way for them to start a career was to change their religion to Christianity. This is confirmed by numerous cases of renouncing Judaism, particularly by Jews originating from the wealthy middle class. They frequently accepted the Protestant religion – less stringent than Catholicism, more streamlined and closer to Judaic theism. See more: A. Hertz, *Żydzi w kulturze polskiej*, Warszawa 2003 [1st ed. Paris 1961], pp. 150–151.

⁷ See: R. Kołodziejczyk, op. cit.

⁸ R. Kołodziejczyk assumes that Bloch received means to begin his enterprise from Mikołaj Skworcow – a Russian merchant and industrialist. See more: R. Kołodziejczyk, op. cit.

⁹ See more: *ibidem*.

¹⁰ *Jan Gottlieb Bloch (1836-1902) – Szkic biograficzny*, <http://www.bloch.org.pl/nowy/Szkic.doc>, p. 5. (accessed: January 2008).

For his contemporaries, he was mostly recognized as ‘the king of the iron rails.’¹¹ It was the name given to him by Poles, due to the fact that he earned his fortune by building iron railroads on the territories of the Russian Empire and Congress Poland. His most renowned investment in this field was the building of a short, but extraordinarily vital and lucrative railway branch from Koluszki Station, which connected the city of Łódź – a rapidly growing hub of the textile industry¹² – with the Warsaw-Vienna railway line. Bloch’s enterprise was able to build this 27.5-kilometer-long railroad in an astonishingly short period of only three months!

Financial merits were not the only outcome of completing this investment. It was also a social success for Bloch. His name started to be mentioned among almost all railroad undertakings in Congress Poland for the remaining forty years of the 19th century.

Apart from his industrial and railroad enterprises, Bloch was heavily involved in broad and multi-faceted social work. The list of his achievements in this field is unusually long.¹³

Bloch’s multidimensional activities of was not limited to his broad social activism. He was also an incredibly prolific writer. The fruit of his scientific and literary work was the publication of more than sixty books and articles.¹⁴ The number could be considered less shocking if not for the fact that some are multi-volume works of several thousand pages! Bloch’s work was directly related to his practical vocations. It became a rule that his enterprises in finance or as an industrialist or railroad tycoon were reflected in detail in his writing.

His practice as a railroad entrepreneur led him to write several works on the topic.¹⁵ Among them, the five-volume *The Impact of the Railways on the Economics of Russia*¹⁶ stood out. The work not only earned Bloch the first prize at the Geographical Congress in Paris, he was also bestowed the status of nobleman.¹⁷

¹¹ W. Surmacz, *Dobrze Bogaci. Szczodry król kolei*, “Newsweek” 2008, No. 1. See also: A. Podolska-Meducka, *Rozwój kolejnictwa w Królestwie Polskim w II połowie XIX wieku na przykładzie Drogi Żelaznej Iwangorodzko-Dąbrowskiej* [in:] *Rola Żydów w rozwoju gospodarczym ziem polskich*, ed. J. Skoldarski, A. Pieczewski, Lodz University Press, Lodz 2014, pp. 87–100.

¹² See more: A. Pieczewski, *Kolej Fabryczno-Łódzka. Znaczenie dla gospodarczego rozwoju Łodzi* [in:] *Mkną po szynach... Z dziejów transportu i komunikacji na ziemiach polskich na przestrzeni wieków*, eds. T. Głowiński, R. Klementowski, Wydawnictwo GAJT, Wrocław 2014, pp. 77–87.

¹³ J. Hensel, *Mecenat finansjery warszawskiej w zakresie plastyki w drugiej połowie XIX w.* [in:] *Dzieje burżuazji w Polsce*, ed. R. Kołodziejczyk, Vol. 1, Warsaw 1974; W. Surmacz, op. cit.

¹⁴ G.P. Babiak counted 66 books and articles. See: G.P. Babiak, *Bibliografia wybranych prac Jana Gottlieba Blocha* [in:] J.G. Bloch, *Przyszła wojna...*, 2005, pp. 50–53.

¹⁵ E.g.: J.G. Bloch, *W kwestii Drogi Żelaznej Nadwiślańskiej*, Warszawa 1874; Idem, *O kolejach żelaznych rosyjskich, wpływach i wydatkach eksploatacji, kosztach transportu i ruchu towarów*, St. Petersburg, 1875; Idem, *Poszukiwania dotyczące sprawy poboru przez drogi żelazne opłat przewozowych w walucie metalowej*, St. Petersburg 1877 [Russian edition]; Idem, *Droga żelazna Dąbrowsko-Dęblińska pod względem ekonomicznym i finansowym*, “*Ekonomista*” 1881, No. 37 [Polish edition]

¹⁶ J.G. Bloch, *Wpływ dróg żelaznych na stan ekonomiczny Rosji*, Vol. 1–5, St. Petersburg 1878–1880 [Russian, French and Polish edition]

¹⁷ Bloch was raised to nobility in 1883. He received the Ogończyk distinct coat of arms and the battle cry *Omnia labor*.

He also published works from the fields of economics and finances.¹⁸ The most important among these was *Finances of Russia*¹⁹ with an addendum regarding the economics of Congress Poland. This work was also distinguished – it was awarded the first prize at the World Fair in Paris.

Many of his writings are derived from his experience as an entrepreneur and land owner. Outstanding works in the field of industry and agriculture include *The Industrial Factories of the Polish Kingdom*,²⁰ *Land and its Debt Relief in the Polish Kingdom*,²¹ and *The Drainage Credit and the State of Agriculture in the Country and Abroad*.²² His work was commented on in different ways. It is stressed that, as an economist, he was not a representative of any particular direction of research. He was instead a practically-minded publicist with a sensitivity for current issues.

It is certain that no one could deny Bloch his wide interests. In the scope of his analyses there was place for a lot of different issues. Starting with typically practical and local issues, such as sanitation, and Warsaw's waterworks,²³ through wider economic and social problems such as representing discriminated Jewish communities,²⁴ through to international affairs.²⁵ In the last decade of the 19th century he was completely engulfed in a matter of a universal and timeless character – war and peace.

¹⁸ E.g.: J.G. Bloch, *Stan ekonomiczny Rossii*, Warsaw 1878; Idem, *Finanse Królestwa Polskiego od roku 1815–1866*, Warsaw 1882.

¹⁹ Idem, *Finanse Rosji*, Vol. 1–2 with an appendix, St. Petersburg 1882.

²⁰ Idem, *O przemyśle fabrycznym Królestwa Polskiego za okres dziesięciolecia 1871–1880*, Warsaw 1884.

²¹ Idem, *Ziemia i jej oddłużenie w Królestwie Polskim*, "Biblioteka Warszawska" 1891, self-published Warszawa 1892.

²² Idem, *O kredycie melioracyjnym i stanie rolnictwa w kraju i za granicą*, Warsaw 1890.

²³ Idem, *Głos w kwestii kanalizacji miasta Warszawy i łączenia nieruchomości z kanałami*, Warsaw 1889.

²⁴ Idem, *Sprawnienija materialnego i nrawstwiennogo sostojanija nasielenija w czertie osiedlosti Jewrijew i wnie jego*, Vol. 1–5, St. Petersburg 1891.

The work is not available as most of the edition was burnt and it has not been released again. After his accession to the throne, Tsar Alexander III multiplied the anti-Jewish legislation, restoring limits to Jewish settlement and displacing them from big cities. At the end of 1881 and in 1882 there were many pogroms of Jews from Russian cities. December of 1881 saw a Jewish pogrom in Warsaw. In the first half of the 19th century in the Kingdom of Poland both communities - Polish and Jewish - lived in separate enclaves. The only way for Jews to assimilate and gain their civil rights was to change religion. During the January Uprising, the insurgent government changed the legislation, aiming at equal civil rights of Jews, and so relations between Poles and Jews improved. However, in the 2nd half of the 19th century the situation worsened. The Polish community was growing anti-Semitic, while the Jewish community in parallel started embracing the Zionist movement. The first mention of plans to establish a Jewish settlement in Palestine date back to 1876. The first Polish Zionist Congress took place in 1884 in Katowice. See: *Jan Gottlieb Bloch (1836–1902) – Szkic...*, pp. 12–13.

²⁵ John Bloch authored several articles regarding China and South Africa, among them: J.G. Bloch, *Zagadnienia chińskie*, "Kraj" 1900, No. 31; Idem, *The Transvaal War and its Problems*, London 1900; Idem, *Europa i Afryka Południowa*, Warsaw 1902.

3. *The Future of War* and the pacifist work of Bloch

The international situation and the growing tension in the late 19th century relating to preparations for the European military conflict led Bloch to undertake research on this subject.²⁶ Initially, Bloch asked, on behalf of the Warsaw merchants, for access to the materials regarding the protection of the capital of the Kingdom against the consequences of possible hostilities. With horror, he stated that the documents were dominated purely by military aspects. None of them held information about matters of supply, medical care or the evacuation of the population. This was not a trivial case, for according to the military strategy of Tsarist Russia, it was the territory of the Kingdom of Poland that was supposed to be the epicenter of the clash. Bloch decided to take charge out of concern for the fate of the capital. It started with a little essay, then a few articles, and finally ended by becoming a very deep analysis of many aspects of the war to come,²⁷ enclosed in a five-volume long work of 3 thousand pages, published in several languages, entitled *The Future of War in its Technical, Economic and Political Relations*.²⁸ Bloch himself wrote that his original intent was to 'show what conditions would be found in our country by a war extending from the west, and what phenomena it would cause. We did not think of the study in purely military terms. We learned fast, however, that if you do not know precisely what war is, what it will be, what means and what methods it uses, it is impossible to understand with certainty how long it will last, and what its relation towards [the warzone] inhabitants will be.'²⁹ The work – as it would later turn out, the work of his life – absorbed him completely.

The Future of War is a careful and profound analysis of a future total war in three dimensions: 1) technological means of destruction and the consequences of their usage, aspects of a modern army, built upon achievements of the Industrial Revolution, as well as modern battlefield; 2) economic needs of the military and civilians, along with the economic ramifications of a world war in individual countries and Europe as a whole; 3) potential political and social tremors occurring at the time of, and following, the conflict.

According to Bloch, a total war of the future with the technological achievements of the Industrial Revolution would be radically different from previous conflicts known to mankind. Above all, the differentiating factor would be the engagement of incomparably larger human and material assets. Unprecedented, he argues, would be the devastation and loss of human life, which may occur because of employing fighting resources which have massive destructive potential. Bloch lists a number of economic outcomes of a total conflict. He enumerates: material losses, the generation of colossal war credits, the breakdown of economies of the nations

²⁶ In 1893 France signed a treaty with Russia. Relations between Austria and Germany became tighter while tensions grew between Russia and Austria

²⁷ Jan Gottlieb Bloch (1836–1902) – *Szkic biograficzny*, <http://www.bloch.org.pl/nowy/Szkic.doc>, p. 14. (accessed: January 2008).

²⁸ J.G. Bloch, *Przyszła wojna...*, 2005.

²⁹ *Ibidem*, *Wstęp do cyklu artykułów "Przyszła wojna, jej ekonomiczne przyczyny i skutki"*, "Biblioteka Warszawska" 1893, Vol. 1, No. 3, p. 576.

involved, large-scale inflation phenomena, the collapse of banking systems and gold-standard currency, and the decapitalization of industry, which, in turn, would lead to a drastic drop in the population's living standards. The backlash of such economic chaos would be a progressing political destabilization. Simultaneously, social destabilization in the forms of strikes, protests and riots may result in a socialist revolution, which was feared the most.

The analysis presented by Bloch is of a scientific nature, as are the partial conclusions of the work. The essence and the message of the work, however, have an ideological overtone (pacifist) and it is surprisingly simple – war, in its modern form, does not make sense. There will be no real winners. The effort put into war will exhaust warring countries economically and will destabilize them both politically and socially. As Grzegorz Babiak³⁰ writes: Bloch, in his reflections, was led to believe in the improbability of war. It was a kind of invocation to contemporary statesmen, an attempt at creating multilateral evidence that, from the point of view of political logic, war could mean the destruction of mankind, and so it is not possible.

In a series of articles, he wrote: 'War started by Germany would, in fact, equal suicide. It would take away a daily portion of bread from millions of people, so there can be no conceivable way to collect taxes in order to fulfill budget needs, whereas the one-million-man army put up by Germany would require a daily expenditure of 20 million marks.'³¹ Bloch saw that international treaties were the only way of amicably settling disputes. The preservation of peace in Europe was also crucial, according to Bloch: '(...) due to the competitive stance of America, which day by day gains an advantage in European markets, and in the interest of agriculture of the entire world.'³² In the words of Babiak, in *The Future of War* Bloch made a case that a vibrant American economy is possessive in expanding to new buyers, and if it doesn't face strong resistance in a war-weakened Europe, it will be even able to deny Europe influence over its own markets, causing economic damage impossible to make up for.³³

It hardly ever happens in the social sciences that the prediction of the author is highly accurate. In this case, however, the accuracy of Bloch's predictions at a general level is impressive. World War I destabilized Europe. In Russia and Germany, through economic and social disturbances that the war had caused, two most anti-human ideologies were born – communism and Nazism. Nazism led to the disaster of World War II, and communism for decades has fueled the world with armed conflicts. As a result, and as predicted by Bloch, Europe gave away civilizational and economic leadership to America.

The Future of War brought its author international acclaim. In August of 1898, young Tsar Nicholas II took the initiative to convene an international peace conference in The Hague. He issued a manifesto against war, in which word-for-word he

³⁰ G.P. Babiak, *Jan Gottlieb Bloch (1836–1902) Portret zapomnianego pacyfisty* [in:] *J.G. Bloch, Przyszła wojna...*, 2005, p. 7.

³¹ J.G. Bloch, *Finanse i wojna*, "Kurier Warszawski" 1901, No. 353, p. 3.

³² Idem, *Finanse i wojna*, "Kurier Warszawski" 1901, No. 346, p. 2.

³³ G.P. Babiak, *Jan Gottlieb Bloch...*, op. cit., p. 14.

repeated arguments from the works of Bloch.³⁴ The Hague Peace Conference was held on May 18th – July 29th, 1899 in a suburb of The Hague at the Maison du Bois. It was attended by 26 countries, mainly from Europe, while other members included the USA, Mexico, China, Japan and Persia. The conference adopted several conventions and established the Permanent Court of Arbitration. In the final act, it was recommended to the member countries that they consider the possibility of arms limitation.³⁵ Bloch was not a member of any of the 26 official government delegations; as an observer, however, he took an active part in its deliberations.³⁶ Although The Hague conference did not prevent the outbreak of the Great War, it was the first such large gathering of this kind, and undoubtedly drew the attention of international public opinion on the matter of peace. Bloch commented: ‘The renunciation of the madness of arming cannot be avoided. But why does it need to occur only at the cost of unnecessary victims and misfortunes undeserved? (...) But all is not yet lost. The propaganda of the sound mind and progress must eventually win. The results of civilization’s work in The Hague – we are sure – were only somewhat delayed.’³⁷

Bloch’s original idea was to create a Museum of War and Peace in Lucerne.³⁸ The purpose of its creation was to show what war is, and why we should strive for world peace. For this purpose, he set up a joint stock company, of which he became the president. Unfortunately, he did not live to see the day of its opening, which took place a few months after his death. Although the museum did not survive World War I, it gave rise to other establishments of this type, scores of which started emerging around the world.³⁹

Bloch’s activities in favour of peace met with the approval of international opinion. He was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize⁴⁰ by many institutions, including the Polish Academy of Sciences. Unfortunately, before it was granted, the most likely winner of this prize died in 1902.⁴¹

Despite the international publicity, he did not win the favour of his countrymen. His pacifist views stood in contradiction with the generally prevailing sentiment on Polish soil, manifesting the conviction that only a total war is able to return freedom to Poland. By contrast, Bloch saw a chance of the coexistence of nations while in disarmament. The first step to achieving it would be to make societies, and above all, their elites, aware of the threats that a modern war carries.

³⁴ *Jan Gottlieb Bloch (1836-1902) – Szkic...*, p. 17.

³⁵ E.J. Omańczyk, *Encyklopedia ONZ i stosunków międzynarodowych*, Wiedza Powszechna, Warszawa 1982, p. 261.

³⁶ E. Małecka, *Konferencja Haska i Jan Bloch przeciwko wielkiej wojnie*, “Wojsko i Wychowanie” 2000, No. 5.

³⁷ J.G. Bloch, *Niemcy i pokój zbrojny*, “Kraj” 1901, No. 46, pp. 2–3

³⁸ Peter van den Dungen, *Zapobiegając katastrofie: pierwsze na świecie Muzeum Pokoju* [in:] *Wyjątkowa księga pamiątkowa dedykowana Profesorowi Ikuro Anzai*, University of Ritsuemikan (Japan), Isaru 2006, pp. 23–36.

³⁹ *Jan Gottlieb Bloch (1836-1902) – Szkic biograficzny...*, p. 18.

⁴⁰ Peter van den Dungen, *Jan Bloch i inauguracyjna Pokojowa Nagroda Nobla (1901)*, “Det Norske Nobelinstituttets Skriftserie” 2002, Vol. 3, No. 2, pp. 1–27.

⁴¹ G.P. Babiak, *Jan Gottlib Bloch...*, op. cit., p. 13.

4. Norman Angell's *Great Illusion* versus John Bloch's *The Future of War*

I shall now compare the work of John Bloch to a work well-known and recognized by the Anglo-Saxon readership, entitled *The Great Illusion*, by Norman Angell. It was published in 1909, or, eleven years after the first publication of *The Future of War*. My attention will be focused on a comparison of the main objectives of these works, their structures, types of analyses, claims, and messages that they carry.

Norman Angell⁴² (born in 1872 in England; died in 1967) was an English journalist, writer and politician. He was a member of the Labour Party and a member of the House of Commons. He was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1933 for his activity in the League of Nations and the National Peace Council. His adventure with the pro-peace movement began when, as a journalist, he watched the Spanish-American War and the Boer War in South Africa. Soon after, he published his first book on matters of world peace entitled *Patriotism under Three Flags*. Then he published another set of works (at about ten-years intervals). Second, and probably most famous, was *The Great Illusion* (1910), then later *The Fruits of Victory* (1921), *Money Game* (1928), *Peace with the Dictators?* (1938), *The Steep Places* (1947), and *After All* published in 1951.

Angell's work *The Great Illusion*⁴³ consists of three parts. In the first part, called *Economics of the Case*, he challenged the old and common doctrine that the economic prosperity of any nation depends on its territorial expansion and implementation of political force against others.

A nation's relative prosperity is broadly determined by its political power. He analysed the contemporary economy and noticed that it was wholly different from what it had been earlier, hence, he concluded that in the modern world's economy, based on trade and credit, military power is socially and economically futile, and has no relation to a nation's prosperity. Contemporary war, even victorious, can no longer achieve the goals for which people used to strive. Believing in this old doctrine, Angell claims, is the eponymous 'great illusion.'

The second part of *The Great Illusion* is entitled *Human nature and morals of the case*. The author analysed psychological cases for war and peace. He concluded that the real law of man's struggle is the struggle with Nature, not with another man. He also deliberates on human nature. The idea that the struggle between nations is a part of the evolutionary law of man's advance involves a profound misreading of the biological analogy. Warlike nations do not inherit the earth; they represent the decaying human element. The diminishing role of physical force in all spheres of human activity carries with it profound psychological modifications.

⁴² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Norman_Angell (accessed August 2015). See more in: M. Ceadel, *Living the Great Illusion: Sir Norman Angell, 1872–1967*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2009; J.D.B. Miller, *Norman Angell and the Futility of War*, Macmillan, London 1986; M. Meadowcroft, *Norman Angell* [in:] *The Dictionary of Liberal Thought*, eds. D. Brack, E. Randall, Politicos, London 2007.

⁴³ N. Angell, op. cit.

A fight for ideals can no longer take the form of a fight between nations, because the lines of division on moral questions are within the nations themselves and intersect the political frontiers. The moral and spiritual struggles of the modern world go on between citizens of the same State. Angell concludes that, unfortunately, our ideas are still dominated by the principles and axioms, images and terminology of bygone days.

The third part of Angell's work is devoted to the practical application of conclusions of the first and second part of the book. According to the author, the main task is to change public opinion. New, modern ideas should be brought to life. They should start living in peoples' minds as soon as possible. He shows how such a political reformation is within the scope of practical politics, and the methods which should be employed to bring it about.

The Future of War, the work of John Bloch, consists of five volumes (parts). The first three parts of the work are devoted to the technical aspects of war. In the first volume of the book he examines the technical aspects of modern weaponry and its impact on the future battlefield. The second volume refers to tactics, logistics, and the morale of a modern army. The third is devoted to the analysis of the future of the war at sea. The analyses are very detailed. He concluded that modern weapons would change the battlefield (and war) in every aspect (its scale, tactics, death toll, cost, and duration).

The fourth volume relates to the economic aspects of the war. He analyses the economies of the main agents of the future conflict (Great Britain, France, Germany, Austria-Hungary, Italy, and Russia). He lists a number of economic consequences of the conflict. These include: the huge costs of war, great material losses of war, the rise of huge war debts, the collapse of the budgets of struggling countries, large-scale inflation, the collapse of the banking system and the gold standard, and the recapitalization of industry, which would result in a drastic decline in living standards of the population. It is worth noting that, in addition to conventional economic analysis, he uses a number of institutional analysis factors: prevalent culture, level of education and civilization, the specificity of the political system, criminality, etc. which may affect the economy.

The consequence of the economic chaos would be progressive political instability. It would be accompanied by social destabilization, which could turn into – and what was feared most – a socialist revolution.

In the fifth volume, the author introduces us to the history of pacifist ideas. He also looks into the possibility of war from a political point of view. The author analyses the political interests of possible future war actors.

Bloch wanted societies, and above all, their elites, to realize the threats of modern war.

Below I present a synthetic comparison of the works of these two 'fathers of contemporary pacifism.'

Table 1. A comparison of the approaches of John Bloch and Norman Angell

John Bloch	Norman Angell
Aim: Bloch wanted to scare the readers with the consequences of a future war.	Aim: Angell wanted the readers to realize the fallacy of thinking that war brings wealth to the nation.
Analysis: He devotes a lot of space to analysing modern weapons. He also points to the influence of total war on economy and politics.	Analysis: He focuses on the role of political and military power in economic prosperity. He also points out the changing human mentality.
Conclusion: Any future war will look quite different to previous ones. It will be longer and more expensive than previous ones. This will cause great losses and economic and political turbulence, including a socialist revolution (which turned out to be true.)	Conclusion: Nowadays, war no longer brings the expected benefits. The role of physical force is diminishing in all spheres of human life.
Message: Total war equals the destruction of humanity. From the point of view of logic – total war should not break out. But this time, Bloch unfortunately was wrong.	Message: The aim should be to change political and public opinion on the impact of war on economic prosperity.

Source: own elaboration.

5. Summary

The Future of War by Bloch and *The Great Illusion* by Angell bear similarity but use different arguments and emphasize different aspects of peace. First of all, they both revolve around firm, economic arguments in favour of peace. They both point to the rapid change of economic and social relations that contrast with the outdated views on war and peace which prevailed among the elites and societies. Both authors were aware of the key task that stood before them: an attempt to change these views. According to Angell and Bloch, it was necessary to, in a way, 'enlighten' societies, and above all their political elites, that a future war, or wars, would have quite a different outcome than previous ones, and that wars, in the long run, do not pay. Moreover, even a war which ends is the source of more conflicts in the future.

The work of Norman Angell has gained immense popularity and permanently entered the classical canon of pacifist literature. The work of John Bloch, however, while in the beginning enjoying great popularity in Europe, has been forgotten (especially in Poland). The pacifist stance and Bloch's activities did not, in fact, fit the ideals of the period's strong trend of independence. Most Poles believed that only the Great War could give hope for freedom and independence. Afterwards, the authorities of the Polish People's Republic only regarded him as a representative of the enemy class of capitalists – therefore, there could be no discussion about glorifying Bloch.

The importance and significance of Bloch's work for the European thought of peace would be expressed best by words of Norman Angell. He read *The Future of War* and held it in great esteem. In one of the annotations to *The Great Illusion*, he had this to say about Bloch⁴⁴:

I do not desire in the least, of course, to create the impression that I regard the truths here elaborated as my 'discovery,' as though no one had worked in this field before. Properly speaking, there is no such thing as priority in ideas. The interdependence of peoples was proclaimed by philosophers three thousand years ago. The French school of pacifists – Passy, Follin, Yves Guyot, de Molinari, and Estournelles de Constant – have done splendid work in this field; but no one of them, so far as I know, has undertaken the work of testing in detail the politico-economic orthodoxy by the principle of the economic futility of military force; by bringing that principle to bear on the everyday problems of European statecraft. If there is such a one – presenting the precise notes of interrogation which I have attempted to present here – I am not aware of it. This does not prevent, I trust, the very highest appreciation of earlier and better work done in the cause of peace generally. The work of Jean de Bloch, among others, though covering different ground from this, possesses an erudition and bulk of statistical evidence to which this can make no claim (...).

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