How do children make sense of peace and war? An exploratory study through the drawings of Italian pupils with an indirect experience of the war in Ukraine

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Ricevuto: 06.11.2024. - **Accettato:** 06.02.2025

Pubblicato online: 20.03.2025

Abstract

The indirect exposure to war could have an impact on children's construction of meaning about peace and war. The study investigates Italian children's representations of peace and war by observing the contents and expressive connotations of their drawings, and the possible influences of the conflict in Ukraine. Drawings of peace and war of 38 children (M = 9.43, SD = 1.47) were collected in Italy in the Spring of 2022 after the beginning of the war in Ukraine. Parents answered a socio-demographical questionnaire, including information about family indirect experience of war. According to previous literature, peace images resulted as positive actions or absence of war, and war images are typical objects and activities of war. In contrast to the negative connotation of war drawings, peace drawings were more colored and convey a positive expressivity. The majority of children began by representing peace and included few people in both drawings. The frequencies of references to the war in Ukraine are not high, even if the majority of children talked about war with their parents after the beginning of the war in Ukraine. Educational implications of understanding the representations of peace and war in children with indirect exposure to conflicts are discussed.

A. Cornaggia et al. / *Ricerche di Psicologia, 2024, Vol. 47*
ISSNe 1972-5620, Doi: 10.3280/rip2024oa19473

Keywords: peace representation; war representation; children drawings; child development; meaning-making.

Introduction

On February 24, 2022, while Europe was still dealing with the emergency caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, with all the economic and social consequences it brought about (Adıbelli & Sümen, 2020; Bianco et al., 2021; Mantovani et al., 2021; Petrocchi et al., 2020), the beginning of the war between Russia and Ukraine occurred as a new upheaval and source of fear and uncertainty. After the beginning of the war in Ukraine, each child especially in Europe and hence in Italy could have been indirectly impacted by this new critical event in an already complex scenario, primarily due to sanitary and energetic/climatic emergence. From February 24th 2022, the media in Italy were flooded with devastating images and news (Data Protection Supervisor, March 4, 2022). If newspapers more easily remain targeted to an adult audience, television and social media were those media who provided even the youngest children with access to images and videos that more or less realistically and violently reported on the war. The S.O.S *Il Telefono Azzurro* Foundation[1] reported in their dossier "On children is not trafficked" (May 25, 2022) that, there is a "sense of dramatic closeness" powered by the speed and quantity of real and fake images being shared in the media about the war in Ukraine in Italy, also demonstrated by contingent children's contacts to the foundation's services to share their fears. Another source of indirect exposure to war in Italy was the immediate activation of people in organizing solidarity initiatives towards Ukraine people, to provide concrete help by sending goods and hosting refugees. Schools in their turn involved students of all grades in efforts aimed at expressing messages of peace.

In the persistent scenario of the Covid-19 pandemic that had a great impact in terms of disrupting daily routines with feelings of uncertainty, unfamiliarity, and connected emotions, such as fear and sadness (Idoiaga Mondragon et al., 2021), this new tragical event could have impacted children's perceptions of this historical moment. The present paper aims to understand which meanings and representations Italian children may have constructed about peace and war in the current situation of conflict in

[1] S.O.S Il Telefono Azzurro Foundation promotes total respect for the rights of children and adolescents. Through a 24/7 listening telephone line supports children growth and protect children from abuse and violence that may impair their well-being and growth path.

Ukraine. Indeed, research concerning the representations and meanings attributed to war and peace was greatly influenced by developments in international relations (Hakvoort & Oppenheimer, 1998), becoming, as in this case, the subject of increased attention at a time when there were major instabilities globally (Shevlin et al., 2022; Weierstall-Pust et al., 2022). The ability to meta-represent complex elements of reality, such as peace and war, giving them meanings constructed within a specific relational context, is a crucial challenge for the social and emotional development of a child. Focusing on children's perspectives implies recognizing their activity and creativity as social actors, and understanding their representations with the purpose of identifying the most suitable forms of scaffolding to intercept and respond appropriately to their needs (Murray, 2019).

Accessing Children's Conceptions Through Drawings: Theoretical Framework

Given the complexity of the topic of war and peace due either to the ethical implications it raised and to the emotional impact it might have had even on children who were constructing their own representations of the world around them (Yohani, 2008), it became central to find the most appropriate tools to make children able to express freely and safely their perception of such concepts, which may seem quite abstract. Art-based methods have always been particularly effective in addressing these types of constructs (Bagnoli, 2009; Bliesemann de Guevara et al., 2022; Estrella & Furinash, 2007; Liamputtong & Rumbold, 2008; Yohani, 2008), because these kinds of methodologies allow participants to place abstract concepts within their personal experiences and life context (Bozzato & Longobardi, 2021; Huss et al., 2015; Longobardi et al., 2022). Language and images are systems that allow children to represent, organize, and communicate the contents – such as thoughts, feelings, emotions, knowledge – that form the subjective perception of the world (Maagerø & Sunde, 2016). Vygotskij (1978) states that symbolic mediators, such as language and drawing, are relational tools that enable people to interact within and across cultures (Liverta Sempio, 1998). Drawing-making and the verbal explanation of the drawing could be seen as a narrative tool through which the child "faces the world" (Kinnunen & Einarsdottir, 2013; Longobardi et al., 2015). In particular, when there are relevant changes in the context, the need to narrate the experience of the world increases in order to make sense of what is happening, and to place the extraordinary within the narration of one's own story life (Bruner, 1990, 1996). In the developmental literature, drawing has well been recognized as a complex process, involving not only motor and

cognitive skills, but also emotions and mental representations about that reality (Pinto, 2016). Consequently, graphic representation constitutes a very common way to process information, thoughts, and emotions and to give them a meaning via elaboration and organization (Crocq et al., 2007; Giordano et al., 2015; Hariki, 2007; Quaglia, 2003). Drawing can be considered a narrative form that allows children to express, and communicate but also construct meanings (Pinto, 2016). Children, while asked to draw, are considered active agents, enabling researchers to collect a broader and richer understanding of the child's implicit and explicit perspective embedded within the child's life experience, limiting the influence of the adult (Bliesemann de Guevara et al., 2022; Estrella & Furinash, 2007; Green & Denov, 2019; Thomas & Jolley, 1998). The communicative message produced by children through drawing can be ambiguous and with multiple meanings that need to be interpreted with caution and that require to take into account both the context in which the drawing was made and the request made by the adult (Pinto, 2016). In order to ensure a better understanding of children's communicative message, some researchers emphasized the methodological choice of pairing the graphic representation with the narration of the drawing by the authors themselves (Einarsdottir et al., 2009; Hickey-Moody et al., 2021; Maagerø & Sunde, 2016; Sewell, 2011). Combining verbal narrative with graphic expression provides a better understanding also of those communicative messages that might seem to be out-of-context elements or incongruities that the child had introduced with the purpose to convey a specific meaning (Schulte, 2019). The first communicative intention in drawing is represented by the selection of the subject of the drawing that constitutes for the author his/her representational world of specific and different sources of inspiration (Rose & Jolley, 2020). Another important source of information in observing children's drawings is the use of three expressive levels: literal, content, and abstract expression (Brechet & Jolley, 2014). These three channels can enable the researcher to hypothesize the emotional connotation of children's representations (Brechet & Jolley, 2014). For instance, to convey a connotation of happiness children could draw happy facial expressions (literal), and/or contents such as hearts, flowers, people engaged in positive actions in a picture colored with many bright colors (abstract) (Picard et al., 2007).

Children's Conceptions of Peace and War: Previous Studies

Previous studies and reviews (Blankemeyer et al., 2009; Comer & Kendall, 2007; Myers-Bowman et al., 2005; Pine et al., 2005; Walker et al., 2003; Yahav, 2011; Zakai, 2019), conducted in different countries on

children indirectly exposed to war, revealed that the boundaries of a conflict's impact extended far beyond those of the nations directly involved (Shultz et al., 2012). Media and digital evolution plays a key role in children's representations of events (Gastaldi et al., 2024), it reduces perceived distances and increases the amount and quickness of information access, often without giving people – and children, in particular –, sufficient time to process, understand, and construct meaning (Zakai, 2019). Children, even if indirectly, could be exposed to such complex life contents so that it could be hard for them to attribute a proper meaning to those events, to contextualize them, and to fit them into a coherent representation of the world (Walker et al., 2003). A first step in the research on children indirectly exposed to war was to know what type of information children possessed, and how they were using it to make sense of their experience (Barenbaum et al., 2004; Walker et al., 2003). The media are certainly a main source of information that crucially contribute to children's indirect exposure to conflict violence, but also the attitudes they observe and perceive in the adults around them, in the peer group, and in the social context could be further elements in their perception of the situation (Barenbaum et al., 2004; Blankemeyer et al., 2009; Buldu, 2009; Myers-Bowman et al., 2005). Particularly, the opportunity to discuss with their parents about what is happening and to try together to make sense of it seems to be a valuable experience for children (Blankemeyer et al., 2009; Peplak et al., 2023; Van der Voort et al. 1992).

We should acknowledge that the representation of the concepts of war and peace were examined in some previous works through an interview with children (e.g., de Souza et al., 2006; Oppenheimer et al., 2003). Specifically, Blankemeyer and colleagues (2009) compared the perspectives on the war in Iraq of American and of Irish 5- to 12-year-olds, differences in children's representations can depend on the cultural ideology and on the media information, but also on the microsystem level that involves how parents share media exposition with their children, allowing them to immediately place information within a co-construction of meanings (Blankemeyer et al., 2009). Another study that compared the understanding of war and peace in children of different countries was conducted on 3 to 12 years old children from Belgrade and the U.S. always employing interviews (Myers-Bowman et al., 2005). In this work, one crucial difference was represented by the exposure to direct violence of the former group and the indirect exposure of the latter (Myers-Bowman et al., 2005). The major differences did not result in the conceptualization of peace and war, but in the references to personal experiences made by children from Belgrade compared to more abstract representations made by U.S. children (Myers-Bowman et al., 2005). As shown in an earlier study (Spielmann, 1986), children's direct exposure to

war led them to view peace as a more active concept, compared to the perspective of non-exposed children, with peace seen as a passive state. In addition to the highlighted differences dependent on the cultural context and on the exposure to violence, literature showed that war could have a strong impact (direct or indirect) on children's development, although they often demonstrate great resilience (Yahav, 2011). Therefore, cultural, social, and relational influences could be factors that contribute to the development of making sense of peace and war (Hall, 1993; McLernon & Cairns, 2001).

Accessing Children's Conceptions of Peace and War through Drawings: Previous Studies

The well-known potentiality of drawing as a tool able to foster children's understanding, expressiveness, communication, and co-construction of the meaning in dealing with complex issues that overwhelm society has led researchers to increase the use of art-based methods to investigate peace and war representations.

A first group of studies, using drawing tools, were oriented to explore the point of view of refugee children (Jabbar & Betawi, 2019; Jafari et al., 2022; Oztabak, 2020), or the traumatic impact of the war on children that lived in areas affected by the conflict (Hakvoort & Oppenheimer, 1998; Jordans et al., 2009; Slone & Mann, 2016; Yahav, 2011). As highlighted by Jabbar & Betawi (2019) with 16 Iraqi refugee children in Jordan aged from 4 to 12 years, it seems that the understanding of war starts at around 6 years of age, and that it becomes quite sufficiently articulated at the age of 8 (Jabbar & Betawi, 2019). Children were asked to draw war and peace through their eyes and to provide a verbal description of their drawings (Jabbar & Betawi, 2019). The drawing analysis was conducted through a qualitative observation of recurring themes. The specificity of this study was the frequency of religion theme in peace drawing that underlines the relevance of the socio-cultural context in children's process of constructing world representations (Jabbar & Betawi, 2019). Another feature of peace drawings was the inactivity of images. Instead, war drawings were characterized by activity, conflict and death as a consequence of war (Jabbar & Betawi, 2019). Interesting results came also from studies that compare drawings by refugee children with Turkish (Özer et al., 2018; Oztabak, 2020). In the work conducted by Özer and colleagues (2018) the focus was on the comparison between children exposed to the war (Syrian) and children not exposed to it (Turkish) to investigate the exposure effect on peace and war representations. The authors detected a significant effect of war exposure on the peace and war understanding (Özer et al., 2018) so that in the illustrations of war made

by Syrian children a more concrete representation of conflict emerged. Interestingly, the peace only in the Syrian group was represented as quiteful moments of everyday life. In the study conducted by Oztabak (2020) some differences emerged in children's drawings of warfare and migration. Indeed, Syrian and Palestinian children living in Turkey as refugees used more explicit symbols in their drawings of warfare and migration if compared with Turkish children who included more natural symbols and produced more colored drawings (Oztabak, 2020). McLernon & Cairns (2001) investigated peace and war images, through drawings, in children of three primary schools: two in Northern Ireland respectively from areas with high and low levels of political and sectarian violence and one in England. The authors (McLernon & Cairns, 2001) coded the presence or absence of some categories adapted from a previous semi-structured interview (Hakvoort & Oppenheimer, 1993). Results highlighted that the major images chosen for peace were: negation of war, religious images and natural scenarios. War drawings were characterized by pictures of weapons, soldiers, and the negative consequences of war. Also in this study, an effect of the sociocultural context was detected, because children exposed to political and sectarian violence were more inclined to define peace as absence of war. In addition, males seemed to know more about war than their female peers, because war, battles, and struggles were more common in male games. In contrast, females were more successful in defining peace when compared with males of the same age (McLernon & Cairns, 2001).

A second group of studies involved only children without a direct experience of war. 5- to 8-year-old Emirati children were asked to draw a picture of war, detecting some age differences in details and contents included in war drawings (Buldu, 2009). Other studies with drawing tool, which involved children without exposure to war, have on the contrary explored only peace representations (Cengelci Kose & Gurdogan Bayir, 2016; Güleç, 2021). The peace drawings were illustrated distinguishing a positive representation of peace as interpersonal relationship and a negative representation when peace was represented as absence of war (Cengelci Kose & Gurdogan Bayir, 2016; Güleç, 2021). When the war was included in peace drawings it was in the form of icons (elements that it easy to connect to the real object in reality) rather than symbolic representation usually adopted for peace (Güleç, 2021).

Past studies also investigated through drawings and in different contexts the representations of both peace and war in children not directly exposed to war (Deguara, 2024; Ilfiandra & Saripudin, 2023; Walker et al., 2003). Walker and colleagues (2003) investigated the indirect exposition of U.S. children after the Yugoslavia-NATO conflict, with a physical and cultural

distance, differently from our focus on Italian children, who are European children that represent peace and war, after the beginning of war in another European country. Walker and colleagues (2003) requested 56 children aged from 3 to 12 years living in the U.S. to draw a picture of war and a picture of peace, and also verbal descriptions were asked to participants. The authors conducted two levels of analysis, a qualitative one based on observation and detection of descriptive categories. The other level of analysis was oriented through colors, figures and object, space use. Results showed that the understanding of peace seems to be achieved after that of war (Walker et al., 2003). In general, peace representations included interpersonal interactions and peace as absence of war (Walker et al., 2003). War drawings were characterized by war activity, group conflicts, death, negative emotions and also fantasy (Walker et al., 2003). However, two very recent studies suggest a simultaneous development of the conceptualization of both peace and war by working with children aged 5 and 6 living in Indonesia (Ilfiandra & Saripudin, 2023) or in Malta (Deguara, 2024) and asking them to illustrate these two representations.

Aims of the Study

The main goal of the present study was to investigate Italian children's representations of the concepts of peace and war by observing the contents and expressive connotations of their drawings, and the possible impact that the conflict between Russia and Ukraine may have had on such representations.

More specifically, our first aim was to observe which contents children used to convey the meaning they attribute to peace and war. As showed by previous studies both for peace and war, children start with a concrete representation with objects and activities related to these two concepts, and then move to the inclusion of more abstract elements, such as consequences and emotions related to peace and war (Hakvoort & Hagglund, 2001; Hakvoort & Oppenheimer, 1998).

The second aim was to compare peace and war drawings at both levels of content and expressivity. The richness of both war and peace drawings in elements and people could be influenced by the type of representation that children choose (Walker et al., 2003). At the expressive level, we hypothesize that peace drawings would be characterized by a positively connoted expressiveness both in facial expressions and in the presence of objects and natural elements that refer to pleasant scenarios (Picard et al., 2007). In war drawings, instead, we hypothesize a prevalence of sad facial expressions, negative connotated objects, and the possibility to include

negative natural elements (Picard et al., 2007) to convey the negative representation of war.

The third aim was to investigate possible influences of the current situation of war in Europe on Italian children's peace and war representations. On one hand, we explored connections between drawings and family experiences of indirect exposure to the ongoing war. On the other hand, we detected possible explicit references to the war in Ukraine in children's drawing. The expectation is that children who have had the opportunity to talk with adults about the current war could produce drawings that are richer in details and contents, even referring explicitly to the current conflict (Pinto, 2016; Zakai, 2019).

Materials and Methods

Procedure

Participants were recruited through the researchers' contacts within educational and social networks in Northern Italy. The study was conducted following ethical guidelines (AIP, 2022; APA, 2017; World Medical Association, 2008). Participants were provided with a letter of introduction to the study reporting the objectives, procedure, contact information for the research manager, and safeguards concerning anonymity and privacy. Along with this, documents for informed written consent and treatment of personal data were handed out. The expression of informed consent was a prerequisite to participate and subjects had the possibility to drop out from the study at any moment. Parents who gave their consent were met by a researcher, who provided them with the questionnaire and proposed their children to make drawings.

The questionnaire for parents included some socio-demographical information and some questions about the family's experience with the topic of war, and the impact of the conflict in Ukraine. Then, a researcher met children at home and proposed to them to realize a drawing concerning peace and a drawing concerning war. After the realization of the two drawings, the researcher asked the child to narrate what he/she had drawn. To ensure that the researcher could understand all the elements of the drawing the researcher asked to be allowed to audio-record comments; however, consent to audio-recording was not a mandatory condition to participate in the study, because alternatively the researcher took notes about children's explanations of their drawings.

Participants

The research involved 38 children (26 females and 12 males), with an age range from 6 to 12 years (M = 9.43, SD = 1.47, sk = -.189, ku = -1.01) and their parents. 40.5% of children are between 6 and 9 years old. Inclusion criteria were fluency in Italian language, the absence of any developmental disorders or delays, and belonging to the Italian culture. Parents (6 males and 31 females) had an age range from 23 to 55 years (M = 43.4, SD = 6.39), with different educational qualifications: 16.2% middle school qualification, 43.2% secondary school qualification, 16.2% Bachelor's degree, 16.2% Master's degree, 5.4% postgraduate specialization, 2.7% other qualification. For one couple of participants, socio-demographical data were missing.

Measures

Children were asked to produce two drawings: one about peace and one about war, and to orally explain the content of their drawings. Parents completed the Socio-Demographic form.

Children's Drawings and Narratives of Drawings

The graphical representations were investigated through the proposal to realize two drawings related to peace and war through this script:

> Today I would like to propose you to make two drawings representing what peace is for you and what war is for you. We are interested in better understanding how children see what is going on in the world. When you finish, I will ask you to tell me something about your drawings. Would you like to? You can decide which drawing to start with. You can draw with pencils, markers, or crayons as you like, and remember there are no ratings or evaluations of your drawings. You have as much time as you want.

We purposely avoided including references to the war in Ukraine in our request, with the aim of not influencing their representations of peace and war by necessarily leading them back to the current conflict, and to have the possibility to explore freely if and how current events were affecting their representations. To ensure a standardized procedure, the researchers made sure that each child had the following materials readily available to them: two A4 sheets, a set of crayons, and a set of colored pencils.

Once completed both drawings, children were asked to explain them to ensure that the researcher could understand all the elements of the drawing. It may be worth noting that in each phase of the work the child was not forced in any way either to draw or to provide comments on drawings, and that the researcher avoided any intervention or comment in the realization of the drawings and in the narratives about them.

For the coding procedure, we used a specific grid (see Table 1) which was an adaptation and an integration of a previous grid used in a work that investigated the impact of Covid-19 on Italian children through the drawing tool (Cornaggia et al., 2022). The grid identified different levels of information: the content of the representations, and the expressive connotations of drawings (Jolley, 2010; Picard et al., 2007). At the content level, we distinguished indices related to the richness of pictures such as the number of elements (Cornaggia et al., 2022; Walker et al., 2003), people (Cornaggia et al., 2022) and colors (Cornaggia et al., 2022; Giordano et al., 2015; Picard et al., 2007; Walker et al., 2003), from others that detected the type of content. To detect the typology of images and content that children used to draw war and peace we used the categories defined by McLernon and Cairns (2001). These indicators were consistent with the peace and war themes that emerged in subsequent studies concerning the use of drawing to investigate peace and war conceptions (Deguara, 2024; Ilfiandra & Saripudin, 2023; Jabbar & Betawi, 2019; Walker et al., 2003). Peace and war indicators were used both as content indices, but also as categories to classify drawings according to the prevailing type of representation emerging from the drawing. To investigate further the first aim of the present work some content indicators from studies concerning the impact of traumatic experiences on children's life such as the representation of themselves, parents, or relatives, were also maintained (Cornaggia et al., 2022; Giordano et al., 2015).

Tab. 1 - *Indices Used in Coding Drawings*

	Indices	Coding
Content		
Common to peace and war	Inclusion of references to conflict in Ukraine	1 = Absent 2 = Present
	Inclusion of Themselves	1 = Absent 2 = Present
	Parents	1 = Absent 2 = Present
	Relatives	1 = Absent 2 = Present

	Friends	1 = Absent 2 = Present
Specific for peace images	Inclusion of war-related images in peace representations [a] (memorials, soldiers, war-ships)	1 = Absent 2 = Present
	Peace as religious issue [a] (angels, crucifixes, crosses, dove with olive tree)	1 = Absent 2 = Present
	Peace as images of nature [a] (trees, flowers, rivers)	1 = Absent 2 = Present
	Peace as positive actions [a] (shaking hands, hugging, kissing, figures smiling at each other, or carrying out activities together)	1 = Absent 2 = Present
	Peace as negation of war [a] (military withdrawal, destruction of weapons, demolition of barriers, and security fences; people resting; images of tranquility or quietness; images of the child's home or school)	1 = Absent 2 = Present
Specific for war images	Inclusion of peace-related contents in war representation (peace marches, symbols, and flags) [a]	1 = Absent 2 = Present
	Inclusion of weapons and soldiers (tanks, bombs, rifles) [a]	1 = Absent 2 = Present
	Inclusion of paramilitary or sectarian symbols (flags, slogans) [a]	1 = Absent 2 = Present
	Inclusion of war activities (shooting, stabbing, hitting) [a]	1 = Absent 2 = Present
	Representation of negative consequences of war (death, injury)[a]	1 = Absent 2 = Present
	War as negative emotions (people crying)[a]	1 = Absent 2 = Present
Richness		
	Colors	Number
	Elements	Number
	People	Number
Expressive Connotation		
	Positive natural elements (sun, rainbow, flowers…)	1 = Absent 2 = Present

Negative natural elements (clouds or rain, spiders, snakes, sickly leaves or flowers …)	1 = Absent 2 = Present
Positive objects (gifts, details on clothes, hearts…)	1 = Absent 2 = Present
Negative objects (broken objects, empty cavities…)	1 = Absent 2 = Present
Facial expression of happiness	1 = Absent 2 = Present
Facial expression of sadness	1 = Absent 2 = Present
Representation of movement	1 = Absent 2 = Present

Note. [a] These indicators were used also as categories to classify the prevalent type of representation emerging from drawing.

Similarly, in line with the second aim of this work, indicators used previously to investigate the expressivity in children's drawings (Cornaggia et al., 2022; Picard et al., 2007) were considered to detect possible differences in expressive connotation of peace and war drawings. Finally, to address our third aim, we added one specific content indicator to observe if drawings contained elements clearly referring to the conflict in Ukraine (e.g., Ukrainian flag, Ukrainian and Russian soldiers…).

Drawings were coded independently by one of the authors of the present work and by another researcher not directly involved in this study but yet trained in coding with a similar procedure, with a calculated Cohen's kappa agreement (k = .84). The two coders subsequently discussed mismatches in coding, to provide a joint decision on the codification to be assigned. As done in previous works (e.g. Cornaggia et al., 2022), the narrations were collected, through audio recordings or detailed transcripts by the researcher (in case the children did not want to be recorded), with the aim to comprehend as accurately as possible the children's representations, and to avoid the risk of over-interpretations of the drawings by the adults.

Socio-Demographic Form

Parents were asked to complete a socio-demographic form with 17 items. The first ones concerned some socio-demographical data, such as the age and gender of the parent and of the child, the parent's education level, the presence/absence of development disorders, fluency in the Italian language of the child, and the Italian cultural background of children. Then, some

questions investigated the exposure of the parent-child dyad to the theme of war, asking if they had ever talked about war before the beginning of the conflict in Ukraine, if they had ever talked about war after the beginning of the conflict in Ukraine and, if so, who took that initiative; the frequency of exposure to news and/or images of the war, after the beginning of the conflict, and if parents or child had any direct contact with people escaped from Ukraine due to the war, or if they participated in volunteer activities on behalf of the Ukrainian population. In addition, parents were asked how comfortable they felt about addressing the topic of war with their children on a 4-point Likert scale from nothing (0) to very comfortable (4). Finally, two questions collected information about possible changes observed by parents in their children after the beginning of the war, and, if so, in which areas of development were involved (e.g., sleep, behavior, emotions, communication, or other).

Data Analysis

The collected data have been analyzed using Jamovi statistical software Version 1.6.23. The normality of data distribution was assessed considering values of skewness and kurtosis between -1 and +1 as acceptable. Since in most cases the distribution did not satisfy the assumption of normality, and given the limited sample size, non-parametric analysis techniques were used.

First of all, descriptive analyses of the sample were made concerning the socio-demographic information and the family experience of the theme of war. Then, an overview of the type of representations was provided by observing the frequencies with which the qualitative indicators in the coding grid occurred in the drawings.

Mann-Whitney test was used to explore gender differences and to compare variables with two levels of qualitative drawings indicators to detect possible age differences and also to explore comparisons based on quantitative indicators of drawings (number of elements, colors, and people). The Kruskal-Wallis test was used when variables had more than two levels. Spearman's rho correlation was used to assess the relationship between age and each one of the quantitative indicators of drawings. Moreover, the Friedman test was used for quantitative variables to compare peace and war drawings. The chi-square test was used to verify if there were significant comparisons between gender, two age groups and the nominal variables of the questionnaire and the qualitative indicators of drawings, but also to compare drawing indicators with each other.

Results

Despite the relatively small sample size and the imbalance between males and females, non-parametric analyses were conducted to examine potential differences in the representations of peace and war related to the age or gender of the participants. However, no significant differences emerged in peace and war indicators. In particular, two age groups were identified: younger (under 9 years) and older (after 9 years) children.

Drawings Representing Peace

As regards drawings, the overall view of the representations of peace is shown in Tables 2 and 3. If we consider the prevalent type of images suggested by the drawings, 3 (7.9%) vehicle the idea of peace as a religious issue (an example in Figure 1), 4 (10.5%) drawings represent peace as a natural scenario (an example in Figure 2), in 14 drawings (36.8%) the representation of peace as positive actions prevails (an example in Figure 3), and in 17 drawings (44.7%) the meaning of peace is communicated as the negation of war (an example in Figure 4). Notably, 24 children (66.7%) started with peace drawing and then moved to war drawing. The comparisons between qualitative and quantitative indicators of peace drawings are shown in Table 4. In summary, at the expressive level, the number of total elements is significantly higher when positive natural elements ($p = .037$) and objects ($p = .036$) are present in drawings. Moreover, considering the type of peace representation, when peace is represented with natural images the number of elements is significantly higher ($p = .037$); when peace drawings includes references to war, they are significantly more colored ($p = .010$) and with more people ($p = .042$); when peace is drawn as positive actions, the pictures are significantly richer in elements ($p = .003$) and people ($p < .001$); where peace is represented as a negation of war, all richness indicators are significantly higher than in the absence of this type of representation (colors, $p = .014$; elements, $p < .001$; people, $p < .001$)

Tab. 2 - *Frequencies in Peace Drawings*

Observed Indicators	Percentage
Type of content included	7.9% images of religion (*n* = 3) 50% images of nature (*n* = 19) 47.4% positive actions (*n* = 18) 42.1% negation of war (*n* = 22) 5.3% representation of themselves (*n* = 2) 2.7% representation of parents (*n* = 1) 5.3% representation of relatives (*n* = 2) 0% representation of friends (*n* = 0)
Positive expressive connotation	55.3% presence of positive natural elements (*n* = 21) 65.8% presence of positive objects (*n* = 25) 78.9% happy expression (*n* = 15)
Negative expressive connotation	7.9% presence of negative natural elements (*n* = 3) 2.6% presence of negative objects (*n* = 1) 21.1% sad expression (*n* = 4)

Tab. 3 - *Descriptive Statistics on Peace Quantitative Drawing Indices*

Index	Peace drawings			
	Min	*Max*	*M*	*SD*
Number of colors	1	19	7.79	4.31
Number of people	0	10	1.47	2.35
Number of elements	1	16	4.68	3.38

Tab. 4 - *Comparisons on Number of Colors, Number of Elements and Number of People in Peace Drawings*

Index	Number of colors			Number of elements		Number of people	
	N	*Mdn*	*U*	*Mdn*	*U*	*Mdn*	*U*
Presence of positive objects	25	8	127	5	94.5*	0	134
Absence of positive objects	13	7		2		1	
Presence of positive natural elements	21	7	119^{+}	5	108*	1	174
Absence of positive natural elements	17	5		3		0	
Presence of war references in peace drawings	3	15	4.5*	7	25.5	3	18*
Absence of war references in peace drawings	35	7		4		0	
Presence of peace as natural images	19	8	132	5	109*	1	165
Absence of peace as natural images	19	6		3		0	
	18	7	168	5.50	77**	2	61***

Presence of peace as positive actions	20	7		2.50		0		
Absence of peace as negative actions								
Presence of peace as a negation of war	16	9		5.50		2		
			92.5*		54***		45***	
Absence of peace as a negation of war	22	6.5		2.0		0		

Note. $^{+}p < .1$* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Drawings Representing War

Tables 5 and 6 show an overview of the meanings and of the expressive connotations emerging from the war drawings. As seen for peace drawings, we also observe the prevalent type of representation used by children to communicate their perception of these concepts. Only 1 drawing (2.6%) represent war with reference to peace images (an example in Figure 5). The two prevalent types of representations are war as objects or agents, such as weapons or soldiers (31.6%, $n = 12$, an example in Figure 6), and war as activities (31.6%, $n = 12$, an example in Figure 7), such as shooting, stabbing, hitting. In 7 drawings (18.4%), war is represented as its consequences (e.g., death, injuries, an example in Figure 8), and in 6 (15.8%) as negative emotions (an example in Figure 9). The comparisons between qualitative and quantitative indicators of war drawings are shown in Table 7. To summarize, at the expressive level, the number of colors is significantly higher when both positive ($p = .044$) and negative ($p = .034$) natural elements are present. Moreover, considering the type of war representation, the number of people is significantly higher ($p = .044$) when war is represented with negative emotions, and all richness indicators are significantly higher when drawings include the activities (colors, $p = .040$; elements, $p = .002$; people, $p < .001$) and the consequences of war (colors, $p = .005$; elements, $p = .013$; people, $p = .047$).

Tab. 5 - *Frequencies in War Drawings*

Observed indicators	Percentage
Type of content included	5.3% Peace-related images (*n* = 2) 76.3% Images of weapons and soldiers (*n* = 29) 13.2% Paramilitary or sectarian symbols (*n* = 5) 52.6% War activities (*n* = 20) 44.7% Negative consequences (*n* = 17) 0% representation of themselves (*n* = 0) 0% representation of parents (*n* = 0) 0% representation of relatives (*n* = 0) 0% representation of friends (*n* = 0)
Positive expressive connotation	7.9% presence of positive natural elements (*n* = 3) 0% presence of positive objects (*n* = 0) 23.8% happy expression (*n* = 5)
Negative expressive connotation	18.4% presence of negative natural elements (*n* = 7) 86.8% presence of negative objects (*n* = 33) 81.8% sad expression (*n* = 18)

Tab. 6 - *Descriptive Statistics on War Quantitative Drawing Indices*

Index	War drawings			
	Min	*Max*	*M*	*SD*
Number of colors	0	20	5.95	3.87
Number of people	0	11	1.61	2.47
Number of elements	1	18	7.00	4.89

Tab. 7 - *Comparisons on Number of Colors, Number of Elements and Number of People in War Drawings*

Index		Number of colors		Number of elements		Number of people	
	N	*Mdn*	*U*	*Mdn*	*U*	*Mdn*	*U*
Presence of positive natural elements	3	9		11		0	
Absence of positive natural elements	35	5	15*	5	24.5	2	39.5
Presence of negative natural elements	7	8		7		2	
Absence of negative natural elements	31	5	52*	5	96.5	0	73.5
Presence of war as an activity	20	6.5		9		2	
Absence of war as an activity	18	4	109.5*	3	75**	0	63***
Presence of war as its consequences	17	8	83.5**	9	93.5*	2	115.5*

Absence of war as its consequences	21	4		3		0		
Presence of war as negative emotions	13	6		7		2		
			107		123		101.5*	
Absence of war as negative emotions	25	5		5		0		

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Comparisons of Drawings Representing Peace vs. War

Comparing peace and war representations, we found that peace with positive actions is drawn more often when war is represented with negative emotions, $\chi^2 (1) = 6.92$, $p = .009$, (examples in Figures 3 and 7); the absence of war in peace drawings is more present when in war drawings the consequences of war are included, $\chi^2 (1) = 6.45$, $p = .011$, (examples in Figures 4 and 8) and Friedman test showed that there is a significant difference between the number of colors used in peace drawings (*Mdn* = 7) and those used in war drawings (*Mdn* = 5), $\chi^2_F (1) = 5.12$, $p = .024$.

The Current Experience of Indirect Exposure to the War in Europe

The representations of peace and war by children had to be contextualized within the particular historical moment, so first of all we considered the information gathered through parents about the family experience of the situation. The majority of families (88.9%) had talked about war after the beginning of the war in Ukraine, and for half of the participants the initiative to start the conversation was taken by children, even if their exposure to news and images about the conflict was little or even absent for half of the families involved in the study. 63.9% of families had no direct contact with people who escaped from Ukraine, but in 55.6% of cases parents and children were involved in solidarity initiatives for the benefit of the war-affected population. Regarding the impact on participants' personal experience, 58.4% of parents reported feeling quite or even very comfortable in dealing with the topic of war with their children, and 77.8% of parents did not detect

any significant changes in their children's habits and behaviors after the beginning of the conflict in Ukraine. As regards age, Mann-Whitney test, U ($N_{\text{Not talk}} = 4$, $N_{\text{Talk}} = 32$) = 18.00, $p = .022$, indicated that the age of the children who talked about war after the beginning of the conflict in Ukraine ($Mdn = 9.61$) was higher than the age of the children who did not address this topic with their parents ($Mdn = 7.80$). The explicit references to Ukraine in peace drawings were present in 5 drawings (13.2%) and in 8 war drawings (21.1%). Another significant difference emerged in the number of colors used both considering peace and war: children's drawings were richer in colors when children took the initiative to talk about war after the conflict in Ukraine ($Mdn_{\text{War}} = 7$; $Mdn_{\text{Peace}} = 10$), compared to the drawings of those children who were engaged by parents in the discourse ($Mdn_{\text{War}} = 5.50$; $Mdn_{\text{Peace}} = 5.50$) or when both parents and children started the conversations ($Mdn_{\text{War}} = 2$; $Mdn_{\text{Peace}} = 5$), as showed by Kruskal-Wallis test, $H_{\text{War}}(2) = 6.55$, $p = .038$; $H_{\text{Peace}}(2) = 9.27$, $p = .01$. There is a significant difference $\chi^2(3) = 20.1$, $p < .001$ concerning the inclusion of references to peace in the war drawings that is more present when families had a direct contact with Ukrainian people, although it is necessary to emphasize the low frequency of this type of inclusion in the present sample. Although there are not many direct references to the war in Ukraine in the war drawings, some significant comparisons emerge: the inclusion of references to peace in the war drawings seems more present when references to the war in Ukraine are present, $\chi^2(1) = 7.92$, $p = .005$. Similarly, the inclusion of symbols in the depiction of war (an example in Figure 10) is more present when the drawings contain elements that refer to the ongoing conflict, $\chi^2(1) = 12$, $p < .001$. As stated above, the frequencies of references to the war in Ukraine are not high. However, even when considering representations of peace and war, significant comparisons emerge. In peace drawings, references to Ukraine are more present when this type of content is also included in the depiction of war, $\chi^2(1) = 5.25$, $p = .022$, (an example in Figures 11a and 11b). In addition, the presence of references to war in the peace drawings, however few, are more included when there are elements in the war drawings that refer to the war in Ukraine, $\chi^2(1) = 4.08$, $p = .043$, (an example in Figures 12a and 12b).

Discussion

The present study aimed to explore the content and expressivity of children's drawings about peace and war. In the current historical period of instability and uncertainty (Shevlin et al., 2022; Weierstall-Pust et al., 2022),

an understanding of children's representations and potential influences about the events to which they are directly or indirectly exposed to could be crucial to facilitate the developmental process by constructing shared meanings and coping strategies in front of the most challenging scenarios (Masten, 2021; Zakai, 2019). In the following sections we will discuss our main results.

Representations of "Peace" Concept

Regarding the representation of peace, in the majority of drawings we find peace drawn as the negation of war. This result is in line with previous findings in the literature, claiming that the definition of peace in terms of negation or absence of war and the presence of stillness/tranquility is the most used by children (Covell et al., 1994; Deguara, 2024; Hakvoort & Oppenheimer, 1998; Ilfiandra & Saripudin, 2023; Walker et al., 2003). One hypothetical explanation for this result requires to broaden our gaze from the individual child to the context within which he/she builds his/her meanings: this type of representation may be influenced by the fact that children who live in a no-war country do not ask themselves what peace is, or they are not given an explanation of what peace is, because it is a condition that is somehow "given for granted". So, children may develop a representation of peace as something obvious, a sort of passive state instead of something that needs to be built through an active process (Alvik 1968; McLernon & Cairns, 2001). However, differently from results by Walker and colleagues (2003), the use of tranquility images (i.e., natural scenarios) did not mean that children made less rich drawings, indeed these drawings are richer in elements, colors, and people than when this type of representation is not present. The representation of positive actions enriches the drawings with people enacting these actions, and also with elements that help to contextualize the scene. The number of elements is higher also when the representation of natural elements is included, even if in this case sometimes it seems that the purpose of enriching and adorning the picture is chasing. The number of colors and people is significantly higher when war references are present in peace drawings. These references to war are often included as symbols used to contrast the peace representation included in the same drawing, for instance with the image of positive actions. It is anyway necessary to remember that the majority of children started with the peace drawing, differently from the work conducted by Walker and colleagues (2003) where it seemed that the first request was the war drawing: this difference could have influenced the richness of representations.

At the expressive level, in peace drawings there is a consistency of expressions, because they are richer when objects and natural elements with

positive connotations are present. This result could be an index of the process of development of children's concept of peace (Hakvoort & Hagglund, 2001; Jabbar & Betawi 2019; Walker et al., 2003), but further research is needed to confirm this point. Moreover, we have to consider that our sample was composed of the majority of girls who, according to previous studies, tend to reach an understanding of peace earlier than boys (Hall, 1993; McLernon & Cairns, 2001). Future research should better control this aspect.

Representations of "War" Concept

Even the contents and the type of representation used for war drawings in our study recall some evidence from previous literature. Indeed, if we consider the prevalent type of war representations described in the literature (Covell et al., 1994; Deguara, 2024; Hakvoort & Hagglund, 2001; Hakvoort & Oppenheimer, 1993; Hall, 1993; Ilfiandra & Saripudin, 2023; McLernon & Cairns, 2001), the most used are the presence of weapons and soldiers, and war represented through activities (shooting, struggling, killing): in our work, we also retrieve these elements. This is particularly evident for the inclusion of typical objects used in war and of soldiers, which makes evident the concreteness of the representation of war rather than more abstract contents, such as the consequences of war or negative emotions, that in fewer cases constitute the prevalent image vehiculated from drawings (Buldu, 2009; Jabbar & Betawi 2019). For what concerns the number of colors, elements, and people, both war activities and the consequences of war are types of representations that contribute to obtaining drawings richer in all the considered dimensions in line with the quantitative indicators (e.g., objects, figures) used by Walker and colleagues (2003). The number of people included in drawings is generally low in the sample; what seems to led to a significant difference in the number of people indicator is the inclusion of emotions and hence the people that were feeling that emotion (sadness, fear, scare…). Probably for this reason, when war drawings represented negative emotions, the number of people drawn is significantly higher than in drawings without negative emotions.

Differences Between Peace and War Images

In comparing peace and war representations there are significant associations between the types of images chosen to vehicle children's ideas of war and peace. The first association between positive actions and negative emotions might hypothetically refer to the achievement of a clear distinction and opposition between the two concepts, especially since the literature

suggests that the representation of war as a negative emotion is usually achieved at a later age when the construct of peace might also be better articulated (Covell et al., 1994; Hakvoort & Hagglund, 2001; Hall, 1993; Walker et al., 2003). The second association is between the negation of war in peace drawings, and the consequences of war in war drawings. This result, according to previous studies (Jabbar & Betawi 2019; Walker et al., 2003), reflects the gap between a more advanced understanding of war and a more basic understanding of peace as reported in the literature. However, it could also be hypothesized that the representation of something emotionally strong as war in its aftermaths may lead the child to distance himself/herself completely from it, until the point of denying it in the representation of peace: this process may be similar to those situations where the child's exclusion of certain elements from the drawing is an indication of his/her difficulty to manage the elicited emotions (Quaglia & Saglione, 1990). In comparing the number of colors in peace and war drawings, according with literature (Walker et al., 2003), we retrieved the use of a significantly greater number of colors to represent peace, thus suggesting that the richness of color may be a strategy used by children to differentiate the two opposing concepts of peace and war.

Meanings of Peace and War in the Current Context

The third aim of this paper was to explore children's representations of peace and war in light of recent international upheavals. For this reason, we considered appropriate to gather some information from parents that would allow for a better contextualization of the representations emerging from the drawings. In this regard, we found that older children tend to take the initiative to discuss the topic of war with their parents, in line with those findings in the literature that underline how older children tend to be more informed than younger ones concerning events and tend to reason about them more (Costello et al., 1994). In addition, children who have taken the initiative themselves to address the topic of war with their parents have made richer drawings in terms of color: this seems to suggest that what is happening around them is something that can be talked about, that can be addressed together, and therefore that can also be depicted carefully. Regarding the inclusion of specific references to the war in Ukraine there are significant findings that would require further study in a broader sample. The greater inclusion of references to peace where war drawings contain also elements that refer to the ongoing conflict might indeed refer back to those resilience skills observed in studies that have investigated children's representations of similar issues (Yahav, 2011). In line with this result,

children that belong to families that had a direct contact with people from Ukraine seem to include more references to peace even in war drawings. Instead, the use of symbols in drawings where there are references to the war in Ukraine could refer to the role played by the context in influencing representations, particularly that of the media and image communication (Zakai, 2019). There also seems to be consistency between the inclusion of references to the ongoing conflict in the drawing of peace and war. In addition, the current situation may have influenced the inclusion of references to war in the peace drawings as well. However, in considering these results it is necessary to keep in mind the limited frequency of explicit references to the war in Ukraine in both types of representation.

Limitations and Future Directions for Research

First of all, the small sample size, the wide age range, and the gender imbalance in the recruitment of the sample limit the generalizability of our findings. We are aware that these limitations require future more robust studies to confirm the pattern of results. Moreover, the period between 6 and 12 years of age is characterized by significant developments in all domains of children's development. A reduction in the age range or an increased number of participants for each year of age could facilitate the acquisition of more comprehensive knowledge regarding the evolution of the concepts of peace and war in interaction with the development of cognitive, emotional, social, and even pictorial skills. However, it may be worth noting that the limited sample size allowed us to meet each child individually, and to propose the work under the best possible conditions of calm and concentration, paying attention to the signals and needs of each participant.

A second limitation is the choice to use drawings as the main tool of the research, thus exposing to some risks of misinterpretation and generalization. For this reason, we asked children for a narration of their drawings to collect as much information as possible. Moreover, two coders worked first independently and then discussed and reached a shared decision in cases of disagreement. For the coding procedure, we used categories previously employed in other published studies (Cornaggia et al., 2022; McLernon & Cairns, 2001; Picard et al., 2007), but further studies are needed to demonstrate the validity of this specific coding grid, which included also the indicator concerning references to war in Ukraine that was specifically introduced for the aims of the current work.

It may be important to remember that the purpose of this study was mostly exploratory, so all our results have been discussed cautiously, as they may provide a starting point for further investigation about children’s peace and

war perception, also when they are not directly involved in the violence of conflicts. In future studies, it would be interesting to investigate whether Italian children's representations change when their life context is more peaceful, not affected by images, news, and possible repercussions of war. To this respect, a longitudinal study could be useful to observe changes in representations as children grow or as external events progress.

Moreover, future studies could deepen the role of parents' talk with children in influencing the peace and war representations emerging from drawings. In this direction one limit of the present study is the absence of open-ended feedback from parents or the specific observation and analysis of parents-child conversations. Of note, future research should investigate if the current findings from Italian children could be extended to other cultural contexts. For example, what was lacking in the current work is a comparison between the drawings of Italian children indirectly exposed to war with the ones of Ukraine refugee children in Italy that were previously directly exposed to the conflict. Of note, a very recent study (Zhou, 2024) collected around 4,000 drawings by children from war-affected areas (mainly Ukraine) and underlined how analyzing the symbols, the colors, and the structures of the drawings, four main categories of emotional expressions were detected: fear, pain, anger, and hope.

Educational Implications

Drawing has been identified as a useful tool for parents and teachers to be used in constructing shared meanings with children (Einarsdottir et al., 2009), starting from children's point of view. This method previously has been found to be particularly effective in children's understanding of complex information, including violent images, to which children are exposed to, and specifically for events with significant ethical and emotional implications (Zakai, 2019; Pinto, 2016). The process of empowering children to construct and share their own interpretations of experiences entails recognizing their agency and, concomitantly, enabling them to exercise it by recognizing the value of their unique and irreplicable narratives of possible worlds (Brockmeier, 2009). Drawing activities concerning complex social events in the classroom could facilitate children in recognizing the similarities and differences with others' perspectives and feelings, but also could become a means to connect the school experience with the external context (Cameron et al., 2020).

The role of adults is critical in addressing children's need to construct meaning around their experiences and in integrating them into a coherent narrative that will inform their future understanding of the world (Bruner,

1996; Wiederhold, 2022; Zakai, 2019). Consequently, adults must recognize that safeguarding their children does not entail denying or concealing the existence of war and violence (Zakai, 2019). Denial can indeed potentially generate taboos that foster fears and anxieties in children, stemming from the impossibility of constructing shared meanings with adults (Semenec, 2018). In addition, recognizing the children's perspective in its complexity and richness, as allowed by drawings (Podobnik et al., 2024), can establish a base for the development of peace education, thereby enabling each child to construct their own peacemaking identity (Walker, 2007). Contents, images, and expressivity composing children's point of view about peace and war, could be the starting point to promote peace through educational methods rooted into children's experience in every specific context, starting from the school one, as suggested also by previous works (Buldu, 2009; Sunal et al., 2012; Walker et al., 2003).

Conclusions

In representing peace and war children vehicle some meanings constructed from their individual experience, an experience that is rooted within a context and a society that influence their perspective (Bliesemann de Guevara et al., 2022). This is shown by few, but present, references to the war in Ukraine, even if it was not made explicit in the drawing proposal. The positive connotation, the type of contents in peace drawing and the choice to start with peace drawing suggest the importance of truly understanding children's needs, including keeping hope alive when facing with difficult situations (Eggum et al., 2011; Walker, 2007; Wiederhold, 2022; Zakai, 2019). Moreover, the present study conveys representations rich in content and expressiveness that refer to the resilience and positivity that usually emerge in this type of study with children (Yahav, 2011), where also the expressed negativity of war can be represented. Drawing could be particularly useful in organizing the multiple information, also in the form of violent images, to which children are exposed, above all concerning complex events with a strong ethical and/or emotional value (Pinto, 2016; Zakai, 2019). The process of data collection used can be viewed as a moment of adult-child interaction through drawing that allows them to share meanings and emotions, resources for coping with situations, and provide to the children the idea of the importance of their point of view (Hickey-Moody et al., 2021; Sewell, 2011). Finally, the drawing tool could have represented a useful means to simplify the sharing of meanings also for younger children,

who more rarely take the initiative to talk about peace and war with their parents.

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Figures

Fig. 1- *Peace drawing by 11-years-old girl*

Fig. 2 - *Peace drawing by 11-year-old girl*

Fig. 3 - *Peace drawing by 8-year-old girl*

Fig. 4 - *Peace drawing by 11-year-old girl*

Fig. 5 - *War drawing by 8-year-old girl*

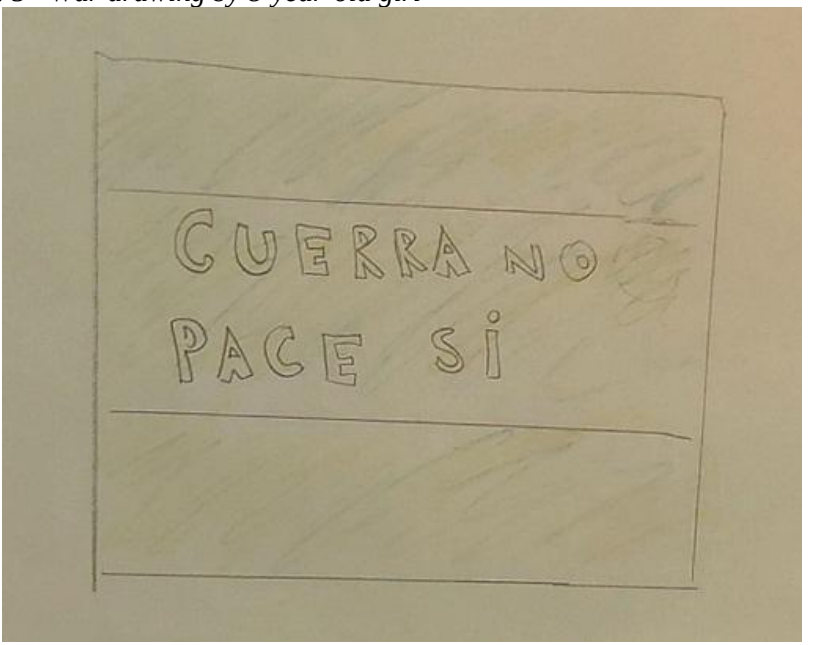


Fig. 6 - *War drawing by 7-year-old boy*

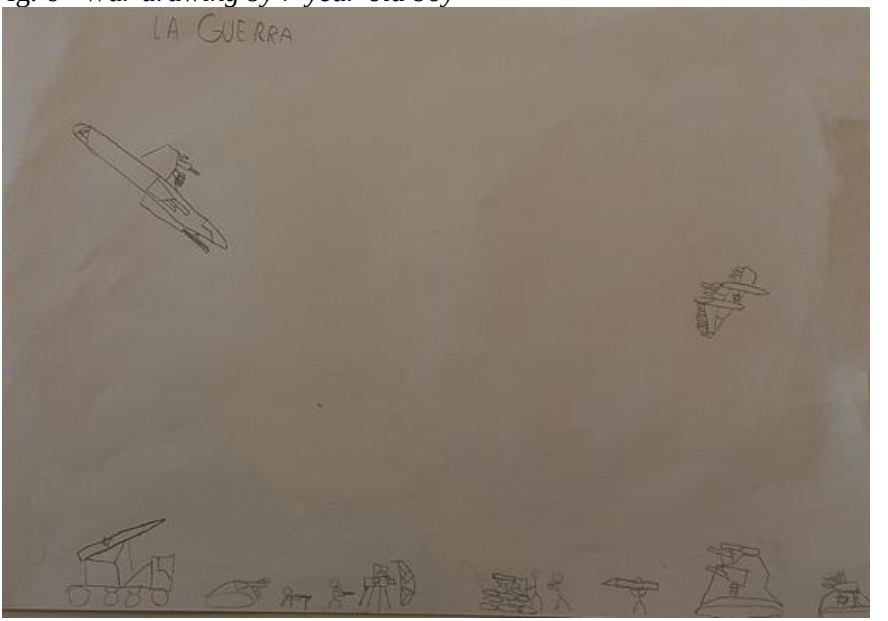


Fig. 7 - *War drawing by 8-year-old girl*

Fig. 8 - *War drawing by 11-year-old girl*

Fig. 9 - *War drawing by 10-year-old girl*

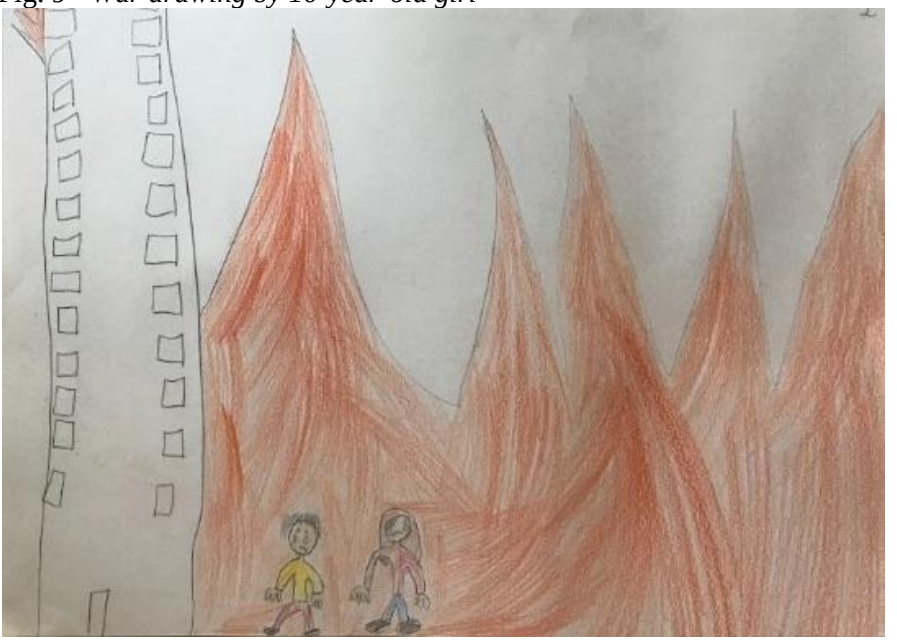


Fig. 10 - *War drawing by 12-year-old girl*

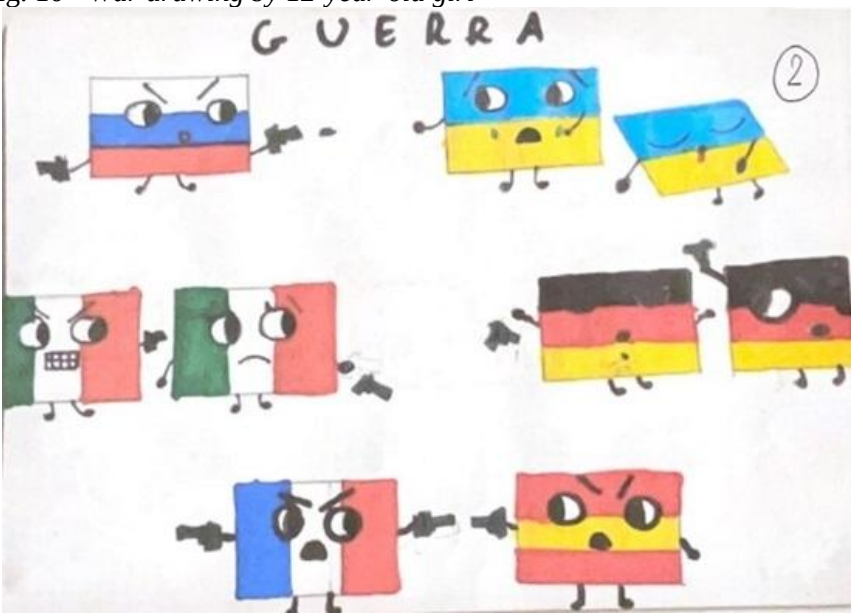
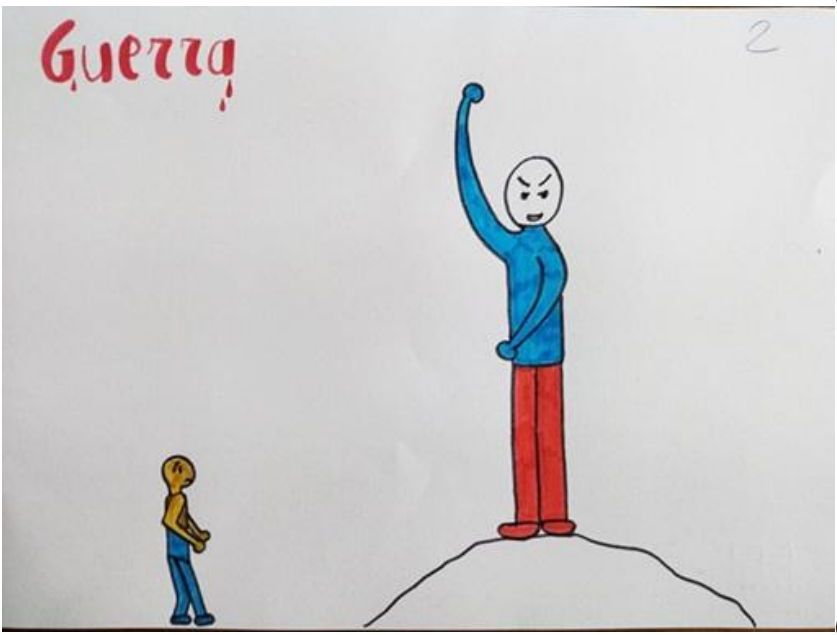


Fig. 11 - *Peace (a) and war (b) represented by 12-year-old girl.*

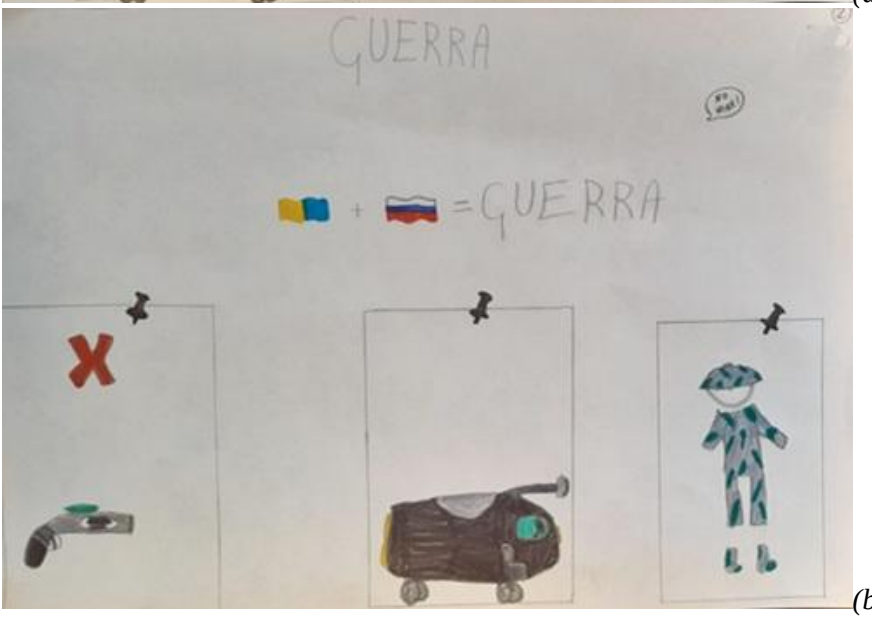
(a)



(b)

Fig. 12 - *Peace (a) and war (b) depicted by 9-year-old girl.*

(a)



(b)