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Europe: Vanishing Mediator?¹

Being invited by the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin to give this year's first public George L. Mosse Lecture is one of the greatest honors that I have received.² It is also for me a moving opportunity to return to Berlin and meet dear friends and excellent colleagues. Finally, it gives me the possibility to present before you some hypotheses on the function that European intellectuals can perform and the ideas that they should advocate in the current international situation, where the very project of a European community of nations and citizens is challenged. For all these generous gifts I want to thank you very sincerely.

I am especially pleased to speak under the auspices of George Mosse. I became aware of the importance of his work rather late in my life. Since reading *Nationalism and Sexuality* and his other books dealing with the relationships between nationalism, race, gender, and sexuality in the building of modern communities, I have always considered him a master of historical and political anthropology. I have also realized the extent to which his life and career, marked by the consequences of the European catastrophe of the twentieth century, and shared among the universities of three continents, form an epitome of our cosmopolitan background and a key to the intelligence of our present. I draw a permanent inspiration from them.

I. Voices from America

Since September 11, many calls are directed toward Europeans. This is flattering for us, but also embarrassing. We understand that we really exist, but we fear some misunderstanding. I shall concentrate on the calls coming from the United States. Leaving

aside for the moment the *official* (or quasi-official) ones which express the view of the current Administration, I will examine in more detail those coming from the *liberal* intellectuals of America. This call is indeed self-critical; it is voiced by a „minority“ that wants to distinguish itself from the „majority“, criticizing the choices that are imposed by the majority and their elected representatives. The underlying idea is that in a globalized world no power can „save“ itself *alone*, but that it could very well „doom“ itself and the others. I shall recall some of the voices from America.

My first example is Bruce Ackerman. In February 2002, the prominent jurist and political philosopher from Yale published an article in *The London Review of Books* with the title „Don't Panic“. Ackerman begins with the idea that „the attack of 11 September is the prototype of similar events that will litter the 21st century“, and that „if American reaction is any guide, we urgently require new constitutional concepts to deal with the protection of civil liberties“. Otherwise, he prophecies, „a downward cycle threatens [...]. Even if the next half-century sees only four or five attacks on the scale of 11 September, this destructive cycle will prove devastating to civil liberties by 2050“. However, he does not see „an absolutist defense of traditional freedom“ as the right response on the part of liberals. Declaring his concern to „prevent politicians from exploiting momentary panic to impose long-lasting limitations on liberty“, Ackerman is especially critical of the notion of „war on terrorism“, which can and will be used both to cancel civil liberties and to destroy the democratic balance of powers between the administration, Congress, and the judiciary. What he advocates is a carefully controlled „state of emergency“ with legal and temporal limits, where as many „normal“ institutions as possible keep working under internal and external scrutiny of the „defenders of freedom“. And he concludes: „In the future, it will not be enough to defeat proposals that threaten permanent damage to civil liberties. A framework law emerging from any major European state would have worldwide influence. It would help us see the ‚war on terrorism‘ for what it is: an extravagant metaphor blocking responsible thought about

a serious problem.“³ Even if you take into account that this was written for a European journal, it remains surprising and striking. The appeal seems to imply that certain traditions rooted in European politics form a legal pole of resistance against the tendencies towards the *militarization of politics*, inside and outside America, that threatens the very values in whose name the „war on terrorism“ is declared and fought.

I want to take my *second example* from a very different author and context. In a public lecture delivered in December 2002, the Marxist historian and social scientist Immanuel Wallerstein, Director of the Fernand Braudel Center at the State University of New York at Binghamton, explained how he saw the prospects of relationships between the United States and the world after the revelation of a completely new situation that the destruction of the twin towers had represented for Americans.⁴ In the first part of his talk, he reminds us that the United States „had always defined itself by the yardstick of the world“, which seemed to prove its continuous superiority. He goes on quoting from Osama bin Laden’s presentation of America as a „depraved“ country, showing that bin Laden was the first person in history to become able to translate very widespread anti-American feelings into a physical attack initiated on American soil that left it momentarily helpless. As a consequence, a „war on terrorism“ was declared, with „no reservations“, that is, including measures against internal enemies. Wallerstein discusses the vulnerabilities of American hegemony, by comparing it with previous examples in history. Wallerstein’s thesis is that the hegemony of the United States is no longer based on unchallenged economic superiority, but only on military capacity. He describes the successive strategies that were implemented after World War II to eliminate forces and powers considered adversary to American interests in the world: containment, neutralization, interventions, subversion, selective „anti-proliferation“ military policies.

In the end, Wallerstein distinguishes between the belief that „America and Americans are the cause of all the world’s miseries and injustices“, which he denies, and the belief that „they are

their prime beneficiaries“, which he endorses. He expresses his fear that America, while trying to „rebuild“ the power that the Twin Towers symbolized, might sacrifice the ideals of freedom and universality that went along with the traditional privileges. This is where a reference to Europe (among others) surfaces again:

„What the United States needs now to do is to learn how to live with the new reality – that it no longer has the power to decide unilaterally what is good for everyone. [...] It has to come to terms with the world. It is not Osama bin Laden with whom we must conduct a dialogue. We must start with our near friends and allies – with Canada and Mexico, with Europe, with Japan. And once we have trained ourselves to hear them and to believe that they too have ideals and interests, that they too have hopes and aspirations, then and only then perhaps shall we be ready to dialogue with the rest of the world, that is, with the majority of the world.“

I understand Wallerstein’s position as expressing a neo-universalist perspective. It takes the form of a defense of *multilateralism* against the attempt to recreate the conditions of a past economic hegemony through the implementation of a military superiority that remains unchallenged at its own level, but is entirely vulnerable to the new kind of threat that develops *within the limits* of the dominant system. It should be a permanent concern, therefore, to resist the polarization of the world into the mimetic figures of *Leviathan* (the world-monopoly of „legitimate“ violence) and *Behemoth* (the ubiquitous power of subversion based on „fundamentalist“ religious creeds).

I borrow my *third example* from the article published in *The New York Times* April 2002 by the British historian and expert on Eastern European Affairs, Timothy Garton Ash (who teaches in Oxford but also works at the Hoover Institution at Stanford University), with the unambiguous title: „The Peril of Too Much Power.“⁵⁵ This is also a voice „from America“. Professor Ash be-

gins by stating that „for most of the 20th century, the defining political question was: What do you think of Russia? At the beginning of the 21st century, it is: What do you think of America?“ He recalls how „America is part of everyone’s imaginative life, through movies, music, television and the Web, whether you grow up in Bilbao, Beijing or Bombay. Everyone has a New York in their heads, even if they have never been there.“ In a sense it is not the existence of an American culture that is doubtful, but rather that of a European one. But then comes the problem of the use of America’s power and the effects of the enormous imbalance of power in the world.: „When a nation has so much power, what it doesn’t do is as fateful as what it does.“ Professor Ash especially fears the consequences of a possible American war in Iraq, without any simultaneous initiative to negotiate a settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which would unite the Islamic world against the West while dividing Europe from America, „with disastrous consequences for years to come.“ Finally he explains that, since „contrary to what many Europeans think, the problem with American power is not that it is *American*“, but that it is *unchecked*. The internal democratic controls are no longer sufficient or working. „International agencies, starting with the United Nations, and transnational nongovernmental organizations are a place to start. My answer is Europe – Europe as an economic equal to the United States and Europe as a close-knit group of states with a long diplomatic and military experience.“ A difficulty remains, however: „the gulf between its military capacity and that of the U.S. grows ever wider“. Europeans therefore face a „complicated double task“: „to strengthen [their] capacity to act outside [their] own borders while disentangling the idea of a stronger Europe from its sticky anti-American integument“.

Finally, I want to quote from a recent article by Edward Said: „Europe versus America.“⁶ Reporting from England, where he is currently teaching, Said emphasizes cultural differences between the U.S. and Europe, especially the disproportionate power of religious fundamentalism: „religion and ideology play a far greater role in the former than in the latter. [...] The vast number of

Christian fanatics in the US [...] form the core of George Bush's support and at 60 million strong represent the single most powerful voting block in US history". This American fundamentalism has merged with the conservative ideology of „American Values“ developed during the Cold War and has become „a menace to the world“. It produces the „unilateralist“ external policy, the belief that the U.S. as an „elect nation“ has a divine mission to be fulfilled by all means. Said embarks then on a synthetic comparison of the ideologies and the political systems on both sides of the Atlantic: „There is no trace of this sort of thing in Europe that I can detect. Nor is there that lethal combination of money and power on a vast scale that controls elections and national policy at will.“ For Said, Europe remains more democratic in practice, the citizens have more effective control over the politicians, are less exposed to ideological blackmail when they dissent from the official policy, and have a less Manichean view of the world. „No wonder then that America has never had an organized Left or real opposition party as has been the case in every European country.“

II. Contradictions and Illusions

We certainly cannot ignore this call coming from the intellectuals of America. It really touches our common interests. We may observe that all these texts have a certain „family resemblance“. But we suspect that they include deep contradictions, and we fear that they have substituted an imaginary Europe for the real one.

Obviously, some American liberals share the view that America is the model democracy, they are especially concerned with the future of democracy in America, which they think should be an interest of the whole world, while others – from a more „global“ or „systemic“ point of view – believe that the democratic character of the U.S. will itself entirely depend on the way America behaves towards the rest of the world. Even more striking are the diverse ways in which these voices refer to the great divides of the world after the Cold War. But what I find even more striking

is the latent tension between two opposite ways of formulating the call to Europe: either as a demand for a *check and balance*, in order to countervail the American (super)power, or a demand for *mediation* within the „war of civilizations“ that America is now apparently waging. If you choose the first formulation, you are in a „strategic“ logic, where the relationships of forces ultimately resolve into military terms, quantitatively and qualitatively. Why address Europe in this case rather than, say, Russia, Japan, or China? Perhaps because the authors of these texts more or less transfer onto Europe the ideal model of „force merged with right“ that they fear America has now betrayed. If you choose the second formulation, you are in a logic of „moral“ and „social“ influences, which certainly does not ignore relationships of forces, but sees them as only one aspect of a more comprehensive process of cultural transformation. In that case, the apparently irreversible gap in military power between the United States and Europe is not necessarily a handicap for Europe. But the question whether it really displays an *alternative* to American policy becomes more embarrassing. Clearly, „multilateralism“ does not mean exactly the same thing from these two points of view. The first is compatible with a confrontation between rival „isolationisms“. Whereas the second implies that political isolation today, among allies or even adversaries, has become obsolete and impossible to achieve. Rather than a „right of intervention“, what we are confronted with would be a „fact of intervention“, that is, interdependence: we cannot ignore it, only perhaps organize it and modify its consequences.

One may wonder, whence the European rejection of the use of force as a means to solve international conflicts originates? This is not, according to Robert Kagan’s analysis, which has received considerable attention on both sides of the Atlantic, because Europeans possess a special character or moral nature: in past centuries, when they dominated the world, they never tired of using force to increase or keep their power, and quite simply they no longer have the capacities for power politics. Europe and America have „exchanged“ their political cultures, as it were: it is now Europe that has adopted the Wilsonian discourse, dreaming of

„civilizing the world“ by putting an end to the wars and doing away with *Machtpolitik*, whose terrible effects Europeans have lived on their own soil. A nice project indeed ... with one proviso: what makes European pacifism and moral consciousness materially possible is American military power itself! The irony is that this transatlantic disagreement is the fruit of successful transatlantic policies. As Joschka Fischer and other Europeans admit, the United States made the new Europe possible by leading the democracies to victory in World War II and the Cold War and by providing the solution to the age-old ‚German problem‘. Even today, Europe’s rejection of power politics ultimately depends on America’s willingness to use force around the world against those who still do believe in power politics. Europe’s Kantian order depends on the United States using power according to the old Hobbesian rules. Most Europeans do not realize that they can project themselves into „post-history“ or „post-modern history“ only because the U.S. did not follow this path. But as a result „this has put Europeans and Americans on a collision course.“ Formally speaking, they remain allies, but the former see the latter as a „rogue colossus“, and the latter see the former as a virtual obstacle, if not a potential traitor. Perhaps it would be better to acknowledge this contradiction, rather than desperately trying to fill the cultural gap.

I don’t believe that I distort the meaning of Robert Kagan’s analysis⁷ if I say in a nutshell: the „European“ position, expressing something like a religion of law, is at the same time *powerless* („Europe? how many divisions?“, we might ask, echoing a famous question raised by Stalin), and *illegitimate* (since it disguises a historical regression as moral progress, misrepresenting its real weakness as an imaginary strength). Finally it is *self-destructive*: it undermines the defensive capacities of the Western democracies, everywhere under attack in the world, which remain its only safety. It is decidedly not America that has „too much power“, it is Europe that has too little. A double question is at stake here. *There is a first question concerning the „power“ of Europe.* In a sense, Europe as a sum is even *less* powerful than some of its constitutive nation-states, or its power is less effec-

tive, more difficult to implement. *There is also a second question concerning the „political capacity“ of Europe in today’s world, in particular its capacity to help resolve conflicts and hence the concept of the political by which this capacity can be measured.*

Here is the position that I want now to develop: undoubtedly, from a certain point of view, *Europe does not exist, it is not a political „subject“*. And in this sense to ask Europe to disturb the ongoing processes and plans, to „check and balance“ other powers, is a pure illusion. But on the other hand you cannot reduce the idea of „mediation“ to *the alternative of power politics (ultimately relying upon military force) and „moral“ powerlessness*, even if you admit that a diplomatic and institutional expression has to be found for such a mediation at some moment. The question then becomes: how to imagine a change in the relationship between „politics“ and „power“, *or perhaps better, in the very notion of „power“*.

I agree that European political capacity, which is a necessary condition of its autonomy, in a sense simply does not exist. „Economic weight“ is a weak argument, especially in a globalized economy. Even if you crown it with a common currency, it represents only a variable statistical aggregate, precisely so long as no corresponding „strategy“ or „economic policy“ exists. If you reflect further on the recent confrontation at the United Nations Security Council about the right of the United States to launch what it called a „preventive war“ against Iraq, you see clearly that it is not „Europe“ that, to some extent, has checked American power. It is a conjunctural convergence of middle-range powers who refused to become completely „marginalized“ in international relations. They are not all of Europe, and not all of them are European. In addition, they wouldn’t have achieved anything without certain internal divisions within American strategy itself.

Above all, there is a strong case to be made for Europe’s incapacity to *solve its own problems without American „help“*. When I say its „own“ problems, I am also thinking of neighboring prob-

lems where Europe is necessarily involved. This is exactly the opposite of the liberal dream, but there are numerous dramatic and recent examples, of which we can list but a few. Europe remains unable to solve the Irish problem, where two of its old nations are involved, each with its own „diaspora.“ It proved unable to prevent the civil war in Yugoslavia, which produced the worst crimes against humanity since Nazism, whether by offering a framework for development and coexistence to the various Balkan communities, or by launching a military intervention to neutralize the aggressors and protect the populations with some chance of success. The U.S. then has good reasons to explain that, beginning with the two World Wars, it has been American intervention that has stopped bloodshed and opposed savagery on European soil. What seems to be a characteristic of the twentieth century, and could characterize the twenty-first as well, is not a „European mediation“ in conflicts involving America, but rather an „American mediation“ in conflicts that rend Europe and prove that it is unable to provide an effective political expression for the historical and moral identity it claims to represent.

This is equally true concerning the way Europe deals with violent situations that have developed at its „borders“. Algeria, Palestine-Israel, Chechnya: these are the names of a long series of shameful collective resignations of Europe. Each time in different ways, tracing back to colonial history, to its own ethnic and religious divisions, its wars and genocides, Europe was involved as a cause or a mirror of these „impossible to solve“ conflicts, whose continuous degradation threatens its own civility and moral identity. History seems to show that any political entity, in order to exist, needs an „idea“ or a universal project to unify its human and material forces. But Europe’s project can no longer be to subjugate the world, as in the colonial era. Nor can it be a messianic project of announcing the birth of the „new man“. Europe can indeed try to exercise a „civilizing“ influence in the world, as well as to build the moral conditions of its own construction, but in order to do so it has to be more active. By abandoning the Chechens to the total war waged against them by post-soviet Russia, Europe keeps in the traditional line of blindness before

genocidal processes, and it practically denies the „European“ character of Russia, destroying the possibilities of finally lifting the „iron curtain“. By practically endorsing the plans of the U.S.-Israel alliance in the Middle East, the Europeans help the development of a new „generalized“ anti-Semitism in the world, where judeophobia and arabophobia paradoxically merge. By keeping silent on the crimes of the Algerian army (which seem to match the crimes of the Islamic terrorist groups) and backing the repression of democratic movements by other authoritarian regimes in Northern Africa, while at the same time racially and culturally discriminating against their own „immigrant“ populations from the Maghreb, they provoke a disastrous collapse of the „Euro-Mediterranean“ project.

But, we may ask, is this the only way to analyze the situation? I would suggest that the new „global“ conjuncture offers other alternatives. Undoubtedly the cultural divisions and conflicting interests of the world also affect us in Europe and could become acute. There is to date no strong symbol of a common identity that could help neutralize or suppress them. Undoubtedly Europe and America are not separated spaces, any more than Europe and Eurasia, or Europe and the Middle East. In this respect some countries owe to their history or their geography or their demographic composition the virtual capacity to „open gates“ and „build bridges“. Whether you think of Britain, the Ukraine, Turkey, or the Balkans, it would be absurd to try and forcefully locate them on a single side of an external „European border“. Undoubtedly Europe does not have the capacity to impose a kind of European „Monroe Doctrine“. But you can read all this in the opposite sense. No European „identity“ can be *opposed* to others in the world because there exist no absolute *borderlines* between the historical and cultural territory of Europe and the surrounding spaces. There exist no absolute borderlines *because Europe as such is a „borderline“*. More precisely it is a superposition of borderlines, hence a superposition of heterogeneous relations to the other histories and cultures of the world, which are reproduced within its own history and culture established rules.

We must draw all the consequences from the fact that *Europe is a borderland* rather than an entity that „has“ *borders* (or „will have“ them in the future). This quite naturally leads us to completely reexamine the relationships between „strategy“, „power“, and „subjectivity“ . In order to overcome the dilemma of a strategy that presupposes the autonomy of the subject that conceives and implements it, *agency* must have a privilege over *identity*. What is at stake is indeed a complete change in the way *relations of power* are calculated, imputed, and recognized on the world scale.

III. Toward a European „Anti-Strategic“ Policy?

I am convinced that only a transformation in the way we understand the concept of politics in relation with the idea of „power“ will allow us to begin to escape the aporias affecting the notion of a „European policy“, and to give a realistic content to the notion of a „European mediation“, which combines such opposite demands as increasing Europe’s specific role in world affairs, and deconstructing the myths of European closure and exclusive identity. How then both to *individualize and de-substantialize Europe*? Is that really possible?

It will become possible only if, reacting to the calls addressed to us and drawing lessons from historical experience, we criticize to the roots the proposition presupposed by most of the arguments concerning politics and power: that an efficient action can take place only when the agent has an exclusive control over some resources, and is able to use them as a unified „sovereign subject“, at the very least enjoying a stable and recognized identity. This was typically the objective of the classical nation-states, and the European Union seems to be in permanent search of similar constitutional and administrative tools to achieve the same result. What I suggest is that we need to explore a completely different path, where *power does not predate action, but is rather its result*, in a sense that depends upon the goals that one wants to achieve. It is action, or agency, that produces the degree and dis-

tribution of power, not the reverse. As Michel Foucault used to explain, agency is „power acting upon power“, therefore it is the (efficient) use of *the other's power*, also resulting from its own orientation.⁹ For the same reason, a „collective identity“ is not a given, a metaphysical prerequisite of agency, and it is certainly not a mythical image that could be forcefully imposed upon reality by inventing this or that historical criterion (for example, „Christian Europe“). It is a *quality* of collective agency, which changes form and content in time, as new agents come into play and new solidarities are built among those who, not long ago, were ignoring or fighting each other.

It will be useful to remind ourselves, in a schematic manner, of historical experiences that contributed to shaping contemporary Europe, especially in the past century. The lessons that we can draw from them are clearly not beyond dispute; they can be interpreted diversely in different places on the Continent and according to the social and political affiliations of each of us. But they have become to a large extent part of our collective memory, which is active in our intellectual elaborations and the institutional realities of Europe.

A first lesson – let us call it *the lesson of tragedy*, because it concerns the „civil wars“ that devastated the European community of peoples – seems initially to be purely negative. However, it gives its deep roots to what I would call, following Monique Chemillier-Gendreau, a „transnational public order“ that contradicts the „Clausewitzian“ equivalence of the „means“ of war and the „means“ of politics.¹⁰ Retrospectively, the interstate national wars that periodically broke into the history of the „peoples“ and modified their respective powers, leading in the end to the mass exterminations during the World Wars and even after, are only one aspect of a more general system of violent conflicts, which includes also „wars“ between classes, religious communities, ideologies. And it is far from easy to always clearly distinguish what mainly depends on ethnic or religious, as opposed to social and ideological determinations. Whenever you believe to be able to reach a „final“ solution, you create the conditions for more de-

struction and self-destruction. Mutual extermination as such does not have an „end“ – or better said, it can reach an end only when it is radically deprived of its legitimacy, and if collective institutionalized counter-powers emerge.

But this is an incomplete lesson, and in some sense a blind one. It takes the problem of violence *within a „metropolitan“ framework* that cannot really be isolated. Only recently, and with considerable difficulties, have we become conscious of the fact that „barbarity“ indeed circulated for centuries between the dominant center and the dominated periphery. The critical labor of memory concerning the violence of European conquest and rule did not immediately start with decolonization, but long after the event, as in the case of the French War in Algeria. Much remains to be uncovered and acknowledged, but this growing consciousness of the realities of colonial history, a history that has made Europe what it is, has now profoundly disturbed Eurocentric visions that used to contrast „our“ civilization with „their“ barbarity: the greatest barbarity certainly. The *positive* counterpart of all this is a powerful, irreversible phenomenon of hybridization and multiculturalism now transforming Europe in a way that considerably differs from the American „melting pot“, even if you consider such „cosmopolitan“ cities as New York and Los Angeles. It started with specific, reciprocal ties between former metropolises and their former empires, but is now quite generalized as a pattern of interaction between Europe as such and its „exterior“. If the first lesson to be drawn from recent European history could be called a tragic lesson of public order, we might call this other one a lesson of *otherness*. It leads Europe to recognize, albeit with considerable hesitations and drawbacks, that the Other is a necessary component of its „identity“, therefore its future vitality, its „power“.

I would like to add a third lesson. It cannot be isolated from the other aspects of European history, but has its own specific implications. It concerns the possibility of a gradual transformation of the violence of social antagonisms into collective political capacities by combining the different resources of *institutionalizing*

conflicts, setting up *public and private* instances of social regulation, and progressively introducing *new basic rights*, which add new positive „liberties“ or, as Amartya Sen calls them, „capabilities“,¹¹ to the existing rights of the individual, thus becoming an essential component of citizenship. We might call this lesson „Machiavelli’s Theorem“, referring to the political model that can be found in famous pages in his *Discorsi sopra la prima deca di Tito Livio*.¹²

I would admit that globalization has weakened this lesson, or confronts it with a dilemma, since it places nation-states in a defensive position, restricting their possibilities to mediate social conflicts and leaving without solution the urgent problem of the constitution of a new „citizenship“ in Europe. But the fact remains that Europe, in this respect, has a singular, if not privileged, position in the world. Europe certainly has no monopoly of pluralist representative democracy. But its own history of social movements has produced a level of institutional recognition of basic social rights that is still unrivaled in today’s world.

It would seem that this last lesson has to do with an original elaboration of *conflictual democracy*, where different heterogeneous constitutional principles are combined. This combination includes a development of *legal or formal democracy*, making sure that the individuals who vindicate them are recognized, ultimately, as the true bearers of rights. It also includes a development of *social or substantial democracy*, making sure that inequalities are addressed and conflictual interests taken into account, so that individual freedom is not pure and simply equivalent with competition, and competition with an elimination of the weakest within the „city“. Finally, it refers to an idea of *expansive democracy* (in the language of Antonio Gramsci) or *democratic invention* (in the language of Claude Lefort), which means that politics remains open to the integration of new elements into the „common part“ of mankind, and there can be no „end of history“. ¹³

I would not be misunderstood: none of these „lessons“ seems to me irreversible, valid for ever, or unquestionable. All of them re-

main clearly fragile and ambiguous. After experiencing extermination processes on its own soil, Europe believed that it had become the natural champion of international law, which in many cases it does not obey itself. It has become conscious of the positive value of the other as such, but it keeps excluding people by systematically combining criteria of culture (practically equivalent to race) and economic discrimination. The „European“ conception of conflictual democracy that I have described is more a past ideal than a living reality today: it has a tendency to return to purely corporatist forms, since economic deregulation and globalization deprive it of its material possibilities to protect citizens from the brutal variations in the labor market and the continuous decrease in the level of welfare. However, these deep contradictions are part of a dynamic whose consequences should and could be to continue and broaden the European experience of politics by mobilizing all our forces, be they economic, cultural, intellectual, social, or legal, but also „external“ forces, to transform international relations. Such a project is not an exercise of power politics; it does not aim at constituting a new (great) power, but rather at constituting a *new type of power*, one that nobody can appropriate. This type of power is essentially a *new correlation among the existing forces*; it becomes effective inasmuch as structures and relations of forces are evolving, and resistances and alternatives to the dominant tendencies become more consistent. This explains why I preferred the expression „anti-strategic politics“. But it is not to say that we can do without initiatives, orientations, and even mottoes. I have no intention to define a „program“, but I will try to list some priorities, being aware that they concern long term evolutions, where obstacles and setbacks and rectifications will inevitably take place.

Collective security: for protection, against fortifications

In order to transform international relations, we need a *model of collective security* that can open the possibility of escaping the confrontation between „terrorist“ and „counter-terrorist“ forces. But the notion of „collective security“, which is constitutive of

the texts on which international institutions are based (in particular the Charter of the United Nations),¹⁴ can not remain purely formal. It cannot simply demand that the use of military force be subjected to the conditions registered in international law. It must become (again) a *political goal*, therefore involve *decisions* on certain crucial issues. In my view the demarcation line clearly passes between a *necessity* and an *impossibility*. It is necessary to take into account the real complexity and deep social roots of the *causes* that feed violence and encourage the recourse to terrorist practices and ideologies everywhere in the world: not only in the „peripheries“ ridden with poverty, humiliation and corruption, but also in the „centers“ where inequalities and discriminations are growing, with probably no less corruption. But it is impossible to blindly accept violence and terrorism as real answers to exploitation and domination. This answer is neither legitimate nor effective; it destroys the very cause in the name of which it is exercised. Collective security therefore requires us to reject the projective illusion of transforming the main victims of insecurity into its ultimate authors, but also to leave aside prophetic discourses picturing „the capitalist system“ as the hidden cause of every violence and all conflicts, including those which are obstacles to its own development.

What are then the complementary requisites of a viable model of collective security? It must allow the possibility for both actively fighting against injustice *and* having intelligence and police services combine their actions under legal control against terrorist networks, if their existence is proved (which seems to be the case of Al Qaeda, although the various powers involved clearly don't want all its dimensions to be clarified). If we agree that, for various reasons, there currently is a special threat of „Islamic terrorism“, there is no doubt in my mind that the ultimate condition for an effective „counter-terrorist“ policy is an active commitment to promoting the emergence of democratic regimes within the Islamic world. Only the ensemble of societies and states where Islam is the essential cultural reference, with the assistance of the international community, will prove able to „uproot“ Islamic fundamentalism and terrorism. A model of collective security

therefore rules out the substitution for joint operations that prove either too difficult or too embarrassing for the hegemonic power and its clients, of potentially exterminist and imperialist wars that serve mainly objectives of regional domination and prestige.

General Disarmament: Who is in Charge?

It is meaningless to talk about collective security if the global level of armaments is not reduced. International institutions are not only in charge of negotiating and settling conflicts; they have been created with a goal of generalizing and controlling the process of disarmament. This is the true basis of the idea of „multilateralism“, and it cannot be left aside from the moment when it becomes officially a question of obtaining the „disarmament“ of one or several states whose weapons, quantitatively and qualitatively, are dangerous „for the whole of mankind“. By definition no state („rogue“ or not) can be excepted from this rule, since precisely the populations of the whole world are likely to become victims of aggressions or, conversely, of retaliations and preventive wars against particular aggressors. It has been repeatedly proven that the origin of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and more generally the constant elevation of the level of military equipment in the world, has to be traced back to the great powers themselves, which produce them or develop most of the corresponding research programs.

The practical consequence is that Europe should not accept the comparison currently drawn between the „war on terrorism“ and the war against Nazism, raising once again the specter of „Munich“ when the idea of disarmament is suggested. It should refuse NATO plans to start a new cycle of development of its military capacities. On the contrary it should immediately raise the question of a long-term reduction in the level of armaments in the world, concerning both the „new“ and the „old“ concentrations of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons, which include the European concentrations and exportations, under international control and inspections.

There are obvious difficulties with such a perspective, which are only too likely to lead to its abandonment. It contradicts powerful private and public interests in the production and consumption of arms, which continuously increase the level of insecurity throughout the world, producing a general phenomenon of militarization of social life, and transforming large regions of the world into zones of endemic violence and death. This is true enough; it proves that any serious program of disarmament involves a number of material conditions, including social and political changes all over the world. This is also the reason why we should not simply identify disarmament with pacifism. Controlled disarmament should be compatible with modernized national or supra-national defense policies, provided only that negotiations take place to replace offensive programs by defensive ones. Consequently and above all it means that „the world“ agrees to offer *guarantees and means of security to the American people* which, in the long run, would appear better than the prospects of isolation, fortification, and counter-terror on a world scale. This may indeed require the experience of tragic events, such as the attacks on September 11.

*Local and Global Processes:
Who Is Accountable, Who Can Mediate?*

I am not trying to introduce a new brand of pacifism. I speak of collective security and advocate, against the current, a new cycle of general disarmament, but I don't speak against *any intervention* in the violent conflicts and civil wars that tend to shape world politics today: not only *humanitarian* interventions, but *coercive* interventions, making use of the means that derive from the contemporary intersections of economic, technological, and cultural processes. Not even military „forces of interposition“ should be excluded as a matter of principle, if the conditions exist for their introduction. However, Europe might draw another lesson from its own experience: military conflicts where ethnic, religious, and cultural communities confront each other, which are at the same time extremely unequal and mixed with one another,

can be resolved only *locally*. Better said, *the local and global determinations should invert their roles*. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is exemplary here. Everybody understands now that the roots of further hostilities were present in the very terms of the Oslo Accords and the „peace process“ based on them. But the Oslo Accords had one important positive aspect: they implied that, with the help of external mediating forces, the solution should be found *by the conflicting groups themselves*. You frequently hear just the opposite nowadays, both in America and in Europe: that „the Israelis and Palestinians have proved incapable of discussion.“ The result is a merging of the causes of the conflict into elements of a global conflict, producing destructions and hatreds that become more irreversible every day.

What I tentatively call an „anti-strategy“ therefore also implies giving a systematic primacy to local determinations over the „global“ ones, because they refer to the specific historical and geographical roots of the conflict. But to emphasize the importance of the local level is not to isolate it: we should neither deny globalization nor fetishize it as a „destiny“, but rather explore all the possibilities that it provides in order to set up „multilateral“ interventions which provide the conflicting subjects with observers, mediators, and witnesses who are *themselves accountable*, in order to build a space for coexistence. On the stage of globalized violence, there are today many actors more or less powerful and dangerous, but apparently only one „judge“, who is or seems to be as powerful (and therefore also as dangerous) as all the others combined. But seen from another angle, this stage also offers many potential „mediators“: Europe is one of them, albeit not the only one. It is perhaps no chance if many of them, as Europe itself, are trans-national orders, which can be found or will emerge in a near future in East Asia, in the *Cono Sur* of Latin America, in Southern Africa, perhaps even in the Middle East, where a renovated „Arab League“, both democratized and liberated from the dream of the „Arab Nation“ could play a decisive role. Maybe we could say that these potential „mediators“ are the true „anti-systemic forces“ of today and tomorrow, to borrow one of Immanuel Wallerstein’s favorite categories.¹⁵

The „Fault Line“ Reduced, or the Euro-Mediterranean Ensemble

In order to be more precise, I will now make a critical use of the great debate raised by the publication of Samuel Huntington's book *The Clash of Civilizations*, with its strategic proposal of a new „world order“ based on the simultaneous acceptance of a „multicultural world“ and rejection of „multiculturalism“ within the West, more specifically within America.¹⁶ My „anti-strategic“ idea that we ought to push in the direction of the primacy of local determinations over global determinations within the relation constitutive of both, in order to promote the „mediated“ resolution of conflicts, will remain meaningless unless it proves possible to define an *open, non-exclusive* framework that would nevertheless be *sufficiently binding* in geographical and historical terms. In such a framework conflicts would ultimately appear as „civil wars“, that is, as wars whose very violence and „irreconcilable“ character force the community to assert itself, offering simultaneous recognition to the conflicting camps, and thus paving the way for mutual recognition or the building of „civil peace“. There seems to be an enigma, if not a logical flaw in such a formulation: *which community* is able to play such a role. No *preexisting community*, based on traditional membership and „roots“, can play this historic role, but only a community of alliances that is instituted *with a view toward favoring this kind of recognition*. Let us note in passing that, to a large extent, this was precisely the way in which modern nation-states were „invented“, as a *non-existing* solution for the problem of religious, feudal, and regional conflicts, but at a different scale and following procedures that are now obsolete.

I believe that the „Euro-Mediterranean ensemble“, whose development is both advocated and constantly hindered by multiple obstacles, including phobias profoundly buried in the collective unconscious which trace back to centuries of religious and colonial conflicts, is nevertheless exactly such a framework. Its progressive construction, through negotiations, common projects, and simultaneous mediations in the common interest, is itself a

way to affirm the originality of Europe's position in international relations, where the assertion of a specific identity goes hand in hand with its (seeming) opposite: the inclusion of the Other within itself. This is where Huntington's conceptualization can give us a precious *inverted* indication, since the central notion in his book is not only the concept of „borderline“ separating heterogeneous populations and territories, but more precisely the concept of a *global borderline*, which appears as a real „fault line“. It is along such „fault lines“ that the new (coming) type of wars would develop. According to Huntington, *it is impossible to reduce fault lines*: you can only „freeze“ the violence they tend to unleash, and organize the world order around the fragile equilibrium of competing, ultimately incompatible civilizations, which are essentially external to one another. This idea clearly derives from the geopolitical notions that were theorized around World War II by the German (pro-Nazi) jurist and philosopher Carl Schmitt, who explained that every political institution was based on the absolute primacy of the „friend versus foe“ divide, and sought to transfer this notion to the new „spatial distribution of power“ (*Nomos der Erde*) emerging after the second World War.¹⁷ Clearly, the idea of a „Euro-Mediterranean“ ensemble (or alliance) expresses the exactly opposite axiom: it does not say that there are no „fault lines“, no vested hostilities around them, but it does say that political institutions precisely arise when hostility becomes a focal point for the elaboration of common interests and historic compromises. Such common interests express the „complementarity of the enemies“, to borrow an expression from the French anthropologist Germaine Tillion that I have commented elsewhere, and this is what makes them politically significant.¹⁸ The whole of the southern shore of the Mediterranean will become progressively involved in the construction of a common space of interdependence, a laboratory for new relationships between „developed“ and „developing“ countries, and between cultures that have their religious roots in antithetical versions of the same monotheistic theology. Provided, of course, that the political conditions are consciously and tenaciously forged. If such an ensemble were to gain consistency, it would become at the same time an instrument to correct inequalities in

the rates of development, an intermediary structure making it easier for Europeans to effectively influence world affairs, and a powerful force for democratizing Arab-Islamic regimes in the Middle-East. This is the real way to overcome the old patterns of opposition between „Occidental“ and „Oriental“ cultures. It seems to me obvious that, in conjunction with other, similar processes, it could play a very effective role in promoting collective security and activating the working of international institutions. The alternative is quite gloomy: that the „global“ logic keeps igniting „fault lines“ for decades ...

These propositions are thrown into current debates as a contribution coming from an „intellectual“, whose instruments are the history of ideas and the analysis of discourse. What in a broad sense could be called „translations“. The intellectual is often perceived as someone who comes always „after the battle“. Let him take some risks to try and be a little ahead of the events, therefore also probably off balance. What is certain, however, is if the intellectuals need to keep deserving their name, they should not plug their ears, and close their lips. As a consequence, as Althusser used to say, they will fall in the trap... Indeed, but this is the condition for keeping a social function about which many of our contemporaries now have their doubts.

Notes

- 1 I borrow this formulation from Fredric Jameson's brilliant essay: „The Vanishing Mediator; or Max Weber as Storyteller“, originally published in 1973 in *German Critique*, later included in *The Ideologies of Theory*, vol. 2, University of Minnesota Press, 1988, p. 3–34.
- 2 An enlarged version of this Mosse-Lecture will appear as conclusion in my forthcoming volume: *We, the people of Europe? Reflections on Trans-national Citizenship*, Princeton University Press, 2003.
- 3 Bruce Ackerman, „Don't Panic!“ *London Review of Books*, February 7, 2002, pp. 15–16.
- 4 Immanuel Wallerstein, „America and the World: The Twin Towers as Metaphor“ (delivered as the Charles R. Lawrence II Memorial Lecture, Brooklyn College, December 5, 2001), *Transeuropéennes* 22 (Spring–Summer 2002): pp. 9–29.
- 5 Timothy Garton Ash, „The Peril of Too Much Power“, *New York Times*, April 9, 2002, p. A25 (op-ed).
- 6 Edward W. Said, „Europe Against America“, *Al-Ahram Weekly*, November 14–20, 2002.
- 7 Robert Kagan, „Power and Weakness“, *Policy Review* 113 (June–July 2002): 3–28.
- 8 Be they „old“ or „new“ in Mary Kaldor's terms: See Mary Kaldor, *New and Old Wars: Organized Violence in a Global Era* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999).
- 9 Michel Foucault, „The Subject and Power“, *Essential Works of Foucault*, vol. 3, pp. 326–48.
- 10 Monique Chemillier-Gendreau, „Contre l'ordre impérial, un ordre public démocratique et universel“, *Le Monde diplomatique*, December 2002, pp. 22–23.
- 11 Amartya Sen, *Inequality Reexamined* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1992).
- 12 Machiavelli's basic idea is that the strength of the Roman Republic came from the fact that the antagonism between the two great social classes found an institutional solution with the creation, after violent revolts and repressions, of the „Tribunate of the Plebs“. See Niccolò Machiavelli, *Discourses on Livy*, trans. Harvey C. Mansfield and Nathan Tarcov (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), book I, chapter 4 („That the Disunion of the Plebs and the Roman Senate Made That Republic Free and Powerful“), pp. 16–17.
- 13 „Expansive democracy“ is a synonym for what Gramsci more often

calls „hegemony“, that is, a strategy of „permanent revolution“ transposed within the state itself. See Antonio Gramsci, *Quaderni del carcere*, Edizione critica dell’Istituto Gramsci, ed. Valentino Gerratana, 4 vols. (Turin: Einaudi, 1975), pp. 972–973, 1565–1567 and passim. See also Claude Lefort, *L’Invention démocratique: Les limites de la domination totalitaire* (Paris: Fayard, 1981).

- 14 See Charter of the United Nations, Chapter I, Article 1: „The Purposes of the United Nations are: 1. To maintain international peace and security, and to that end: to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removals of threats to the peace, and for the suppression of acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace, and to bring about by peaceful means, and in conformity with the principles of justice and international law, adjustment or settlement of international disputes or situations which might lead to a breach of the peace.“
- 15 Giovanni Arrighi, Terence K. Hopkins, and Immanuel Wallerstein, *Antisystemic Movements* (London: Verso, 1989).
- 16 Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996).
- 17 Carl Schmitt, *Der Nomos der Erde im Völkerrecht des Jus Publicum Europäum* (Berlin: Duncker and Humblot, 1988).
- 18 See Germaine Tillion, *France and Algeria: Complementary Enemies*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1961).