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Globalization and identities

I.

We have been accustomed during many years to identify "megatrends", almost always based on technological innovations. More and more, these trends can be observed in most parts of a world which is becoming global. Economic processes and what we called "civil society" played such a central role explains the world so completely that political, and even more international problems seemed to have become marginal. This view prevailed completely during the long decade which began with the destruction of the Berlin wall and ended with the atentate against the towers of the World Trade Center in New York city. The American neo-cons were right from this point of view : after of the cold war, The White house, The Pentagon and the CIA had an insufficient knowledge of the World and quasi absence of geopolitical strategy.

Three short years after 9/11 it is clear that US vision of the world has completely changed. They switched from economic to strategic and military priorities. Our confidence in science and development is running away while fear of new suicide attacks nourish pessimistic forecast about an uncertain future and our consciousness to live in an "unsustainable" type of

development. Most of the world, specially Europe, were brutally informed that their illusions of multilateralism were over and that the US had decided to take the decisions and the costs for themselves, within this general transformation many different interpretations have been elaborated. Even if they have in common to give a clear priority to political, national and international processes. They are very different from each other. The most pessimistic approach announces an apocalyptic catastrophe because the pressure of non western political regimes and nationalist and/or religious movements will increase and that it has been demonstrated how easy is this to destroy vital elements of a society and to scare a population which was not used to bloody attacks on its territory.

But few people actually share this pessimistic view. Especially in the US a larger number accepts the opposite view and are optimistic. The United States and their allies they say, will finally take hold of terrorist individual and groups which represent only a small number of people. In Iraq a civil war can be avoided and in Palestine, the conflict has been already so long and violent that it is little likely that it provokes a worldwide crisis.

The first one is made of the large number of people who think that the US can maintain its hegemony by changing some elements of its environment, by transforming Saudi Arabia and eliminating. These victories will be made possible by the strong attraction exerted by American economic and intellectual life for many young people and thanks to the almost total domination of American mass culture all over the world. Movies, songs and internet sites making possible of a worldwide market for Hollywood products. These positive conclusion is well documented for example by many studies on Iranian youth. A second approach is more pessimistic. Many more Bush than Kerry voters think that way ; the importance of the opinion depends on the result of next American elections.

But these two choices are equally unlikely to correspond to the situation in the near future and they are poor, because they don't include insights about other countries behaviors. This is the reason why a very different kind of analysis is so attractive.

It says that the US can no longer be the only superpower because resistance to its hegemony is now not only ideological or economic but first of all cultural and more specifically religious. The US must be prepared to accept this multicentered world and be prepared to resist attacks coming from various directions. More concretely US, like all other cultural poles must be as creative as possible but at the same time well protected against hostile idea and attacks. This analysis has become extremely influential because of the impact of Samuel Huntington writings. This moderate pessimism is associated with to a defensive orientation and to a call for strengthening national identity by linking it more tightly to spiritual or even more religious values.

These two different approaches and exert an influence a strong influence on public opinion and decision makers. For foreigners and in particular for Europeans then most visible aspect is the rupture of the US government with the multilateral system the US had themselves built in UN and other international organizations. The gap between US and Europe is widening rapidly, partly because Americans support Israel decidedly, while Europeans criticize more and more American policies and defend Palestinians in their struggles to create a national state.

But, even each one of this approach highlights important aspects of international situation they don't provide us with an analysis of the causes of such a rupture at all levels between economic processes and political or religious orientations. This is the reason why I choose here to introduce from the beginning on a central factor of change : globalization.

II.

By globalization, I mean much more than the internationalization of production and trade of material and cultural goods and services ; I mean a growing separation between economic activities which are organized at the <u>world</u> level and political and social institutions which function at only a more limited level : local, national or regional. The best way to characterize globalization is to consider it as an extreme form of capitalism, if we accept the classical definition of capitalism as a process of loosening all kinds of controls and limitations which were imposed on economic activities. This liberation of economic forces which gives them the capacities to control other sectors of social life so that economic rationality or other kinds of economic behaviors are out of reach of all kinds of social control. These process of separation between what we could call the objective world and the subjective universes leads to the <u>elimination of all institutionalized frames of actions, norms and rules</u>. If we try to imagine what the final point of this evolution could be we can describe a situation in which all social and political categories, norms and controls will have disappeared, a situation in which a totally deregulated economy has become wild and at the same time when an obsessive search for identity and homogeneity leads to aggressive "communalist regimes". Such conflicts would be much more dangerous than the sixteenth and seventeenth European religious wars. It is actually difficult for us to figure out what such a situation would be because during centuries we have given a central importance to the State, to all kinds of social controls, institutions, processes of socialization and methods of punishment. It is very difficult indeed to conceive of such « post social societies », while we can easily describe pre social societies, societies where political categories dominated social categories; for example during the first centuries of European modernization. And even more easily societies which are dominated by religious or cultural categories and correspond to what has been called

communities or holistic systems. Most classical sociologists have opposed achievement to ascription, modernity to tradition and society to community. We can not easily imagine a movement back from society to community and with even more difficulty a situation where society and community would have jointly disappeared and where the only possible social relations would be as a commercial or military without any degree of integration between buyers and sellers. Such a complete separation between economics and cultures, between networks and identities corresponds to the most extreme form of crisis and « desocialization » we can imagine.

The economic system itself is deeply transformed. Many studies have described the transformation of a system of production which was based on technostructure, companies, innovations into a market economy, a networks economy in which communications are neither controlled not even elaborated by economic actors according to R. Reich's brilliant description. At the level of public opinion, the main effect of these transformations is the rapid disappearance of loyalty to the company of the identification of individuals with their career. More and more often the Presidents of big companies are perceived by public opinion as speculators, and crooks or simply people we live outside any society.

On the other side, we observe the growing importance of actors who are defined in purely cultural, that is subjective, terms, without any link with representative political institutions. We are dramatically conscious that representative democracy is weakened both by the triumph of globalization and by the predominance of communitarian values which consider themselves as superior to political individual rights and to citizenship itself. This paper will try to make a difficult choice between two analysis of the consequences of the rupture between economic processes and cultural meanings : does it lead to the triumph of closed and

even totalitarian communities or on the contrary to the reign of violence and wilderness and chaos. It is true that ayatollahs and gunmen are not exclusive from each other but in the present situation, the two outcomes are clearly different, and have opposed consequences for all parts of the world including western Europe.

III.

The first answer gives a central role to the formation or resilience of a certain number of cultural areas, within which a central city or region, has a role of attraction on marginal or relatively isolated social units which explains the general trends towards concentration of resources and division of the world into a small number of "civilizations" which maintain their own identity while participating more and more actively in economic or financial or even scientific networks. Is it a realistic solution ? The definition of theses civilization is difficult. For example North American and Western Europe can be considered as two civilizations now because they had many elements in common than, for example, the Western and the Eastern parts of Europe. More important, is the difficulty to define a number of civilizations when one has a strong hegemonic position in many different fields. Finally what do we mean when we speak for example of a Chinese civilization or of an African civilization ? Today China is defined as much by the heritage of the Maoist revolution and by its rapid process of economic growth and by the absence of political liberalization than religious and cultural traditions. Africa like the rest of the world is constantly invaded by non African mass culture and dominated by markets on which it has no real power. At the same time, the situation of African States is probably better defined by corruption or civil wars than by references to an African culture or even to the culture of some African regions. All countries are more directly determined in their decisions by US policies than by their own cultural

history. Cultures are not like icebergs isolated from each other in a vast ocean. This power of domination, through trade and arms makes most countries powerlessness. References to old cultural roots appear very often as instruments of propaganda for very limited social and economic and political rules.

The <u>Latin American</u> case has been extensively studied and discussed. Concepts like structural dualism, dependency, internal colonialism and many others, moderate or radical, indicate the necessity to give priority to historical patterns of modernization, dominated both by foreign capital and by the constant marginalization of the Indian population. What is Latin American culture ? Should we speak of an indo-America, hispano-America, ibero-America or Latin-America or should we speak separately not only of Brazil and Spanish speaking countries separately ? And do we include the Caribbean region into Latin America, or do we maintain them separately because of the African original largest part of the Carribbean population. Anyway most of the people who live in these countries and express their opinion and analysis about themselves give a strong priority to political and economic factor over cultural factors. In a parallel way, are they any countries in the world which could be named Christian countries ? To a certain extent Italy but probably more because of the presence of the Pope than because of all present tradition. Finally as a European I know that most people in Europe and outside like to speak about European culture. But what do they mean by that ? Europe would be other country. That it has never been unified no politically nor economically nor culturally. The roman Christian world and the Byzantine world have been completely separated. Protestant and catholic countries or regions have been enemies or in the best of the cases separate "pillars" of different national societies, especially Netherlands and Belgium. And all stereotypes about each European countries reveals immediately their weakness : we are satisfied to say that the level of communication in all aspects of public and private life has

increased very much among European countries thanks to lasting process of construction of European, economic and political systems. But nobody believes that Europe can be one the pillar of an Atlantic alliance because first of all Europe is extremely inferior to the United States in term of arms. And second because all Europeans feel they are dependant of the United States. Many of them consider that is positive and others that it is negative but very few would analyze their continent situation in basically cultural terms. And when people opposed the old cultural tradition of Europe to the brutality or absence of tradition of a continent of immigrants they reveal their prejudices more than their ideas about what Europe should do actually.

The most complex case is certainly the case of Israel. During a first phase of existence of the new Israeli state, before and after 1948 the legitimacy of Israel and the hopes put into its creation were basically cultural : it was a direct consequence of the <u>shoah</u> so that Israel was considered as the heir of a Diaspora or at least of a Diaspora in Europe which had been almost entirely destroyed by the nazi regime. But even, during this first period of time another image of Israel was equally important. Israel was considered as created by "manual" workers coming from Eastern Europe sharing a "Bundist" philosophy of creative labor which was opposed to the domination of religious authorities over Israel. But progressively from war to war, from victory to defeat and from a lower level to a higher level of conflict by Palestinian the central topic has no longer be in the existence of Israel but the right of both Israel and the Palestinian to live in a national state and during the last ten years especially since the beginning of the second Intifada the national problem is recognized as a central one. So that Israel is better defined by its relationships with the Palestinian authority and population than by its own values, and traditions. And numerous Arabs in Palestine and outside Palestine

consider that the constant reference to the shoah is dangerous and should be stopped because there is no reason for Arabs to pay for the crimes of Europeans.

A general conclusion can be applied to all cases. Each one of them combines at least three dimensions :

1) the <u>first</u> one is its participation in a <u>modernity</u> which is defined by universalistic principles but combined with a <u>plurality of paths</u> of modernization

2) the <u>second</u> is the position in a web of conflicts in a globalized world and especially this country relationships with the United States

3) the <u>last</u> one is the reinterpretation more than the transmission – of a cultural heritage-which creates and shapes new cultural controls of social relations. This third component is becoming less and less important. It reaches a pick in the nineteenth century when so many countries were trying to become national states and legitimized their independantist movement by the necessity to maintain or revive a language, and create new institutions.

Cultures as civilizations can no more be defined entirely by themselves than nations. The main weaknesses of multiculturalist theories are : a) that they believe that each culture is unified and homogenous and b) that this culture can be defined from internal side, cultural features more than by internal social conflicts or and external international relations. Is it still possible to define civilization by itself in a global world in which each of us depends at least as much on an international system of power as on its own past.

IV.

A special attention should be paid to a very special situation which can be observed in only few countries but which is interesting as examples not of cultural determinants of contemporary society but of the capacity for some countries as a consequence of their modernization and of this specific feature of it to create a new culture. That was the case in Germany after Herder and more politically after Fichte and this was the case of the United States in the nineteen century. U.S were an heterogeneous country where Italian, Irish or German influences were strong but which created in a rapid way an American culture which has been diffused all over the world through mass medias. In our early twenty first century a conspicuous case is Brazil. In spite of the fact that many people in Brazil and outside emphasize the necessity for this country to be part of an integrated Latin America, it seems that a specifically Brazilian culture has taking shape and is clearly identified in many different parts of the world. The consequence is that Brazil is joining the club of the "big powers" , and will be able to discuss its own orientation with the most powerful countries because its cultural identity is now generally accepted. The same judgment can probably be applied to Australia. Bust the most interesting cases are small countries which are often quite successful economically, maintain Welfare policies and are very well integrated into world economy. Israel is one member of this group ; Finland, Iceland, and probably tomorrow one or two former communist countries will be recognized as owners of a specific culture. In some cases the construction of a specific culture is a strong argument for political independence or more concretely for a guarantee given by the main world powers to this country that its independence will be protected. One of the most difficult problem is Taiwan which hopes to gets its independence and not to be reintegrated into China Republic and which tries to build a

culture which becomes more and more different from the authoritarian culture of Continental China.

We are now faced with the necessity to make a choice between two possible answers to our central problem. The question which can be now formulated : populations and governments which resist to their complete subordination to global economy and American hegemony, do they mobilize national feelings or even nationalist movements to organize their resistance; or is it possible to find example of resistances which are based on culture more than on national or economic forces ?

I do not believe that this basically cultural process of resistance can actually be observed because there is no possibility to stop half way the process of social decomposition which was born from the triumph of a global economy and hegemonic political system. More concretely : When the United States passed from an economic domination to the choice of a war, as an answer to 9/11 and then to a second war which can any day be transformed into a civil war or into chaos in Iraq, without mentioning than the tension is increasing with Iran which has been characterized by the US Government as belonging to the world of evil, a certain point of no return has been reached and we will observe, the development and maybe a radicalization of two complementary sides of a process of desocialisation and depolitization. We have already entered a world which is dominated by endless conflicts in which, even when some problems can be solved, the absolute hatred of the other, the negation of the other, makes impossible to find solutions. Violence, war and extreme nationalism are substituted for both social and cultural problems. The main fact is the destruction of " capacity for political action" of most countries.

To illustrate this solution, I'll briefly refer to two regional cases. The first, the most important one today, is the evolution of the islamist movement. After the fall of the Shah in Iran or the success of Khomeini we observed the creation of a series of islamist republic from Iran to Afghanistan, from Sudan to Algeria (at least if the elections which were won by the FIS in this country had been respected by the FLN). This seems to be a perfect example of the predominance of cultural, religious factors which are reinforced by a common hatred for American imperialist domination. But rapidly, this solution lost strength. Some observers say it is because the national "bourgeoisies" preferred in a period of globalization to integrate themselves, into a worldwide economy then to transform itself into a national bourgeoisie limited to small internal markets. Islamist regions have been unable to find a equilibrium between religious, populist and repressive regimes, and an internationalized economy. The penetration of western culture, especially form internet, became a major fact of political change, especially in Iran. The <u>Turkish</u> case is the most complex and that's why its importance is decisive especially for Europe. In Turkey, Kemal Ataturk had wiped out Islamic culture. Islamic resistance after the end of this period grew up again, and sometimes linked its forces with Kurdish national and revolutionary movement, so that Turkey was faced with multiple movements in which hard-liners communist, local or religious leaders join their forces against the political of "laïcité" which was mainly supported by the army. But the evolution of Turkey during the last decade, in spite of political crisis, violent fight against the Kurdish movement and terrible measures of repression in prisons, has been dominated by combinations between Islam and western oriented process of modernization. Turkey can be just defined as an ambivalent country which is both western and Islamic, and which is not satisfied with anyone of these orientation but which has avoided a civil war and has even progressed in most aspects of its internal life. The Leninist PKK has lost great part of its fighting capacity and the Turkish prisons slowly lose some of there terrible reputation.

We do not observe the formation of a culturally redefined country but on the contrary , how a country which gives a clear priority to its participation in the European Community is transforming itself economically at a rapid speed, without been exposed to a religious civil war.

At the same time, Iranian regime is rejected by large part of the population; in Afghanistan the Talibans, after having defeated the soviet army have been almost eliminated; the Sudan is judged responsible for a mass-murder of a large part of the population by the Muslim in power in Khartoum and the impact of the FIS in Algeria decreases, while a similar movement has been crashed in Tunisia. In Morocco, king Hassan II had survived a dangerous islamist atentate and has created a kind of controlled democracy. His son has maintained the same moderate policy which has avoided a major crisis.

But the downfall of Islamic republic influence has led in many parts of the Arab world to military conflict, especially in Iraq, which after the destruction of the non-religious Bouthist dictatorship has fallen into a situation of political disorganization. Instead of observing the formation of a new Islamic republic in Iraq, we see that internal conflicts increase, especially between radical Sunnites groups and the chiites majority. The Sunnites will never accept a chiite regime in Iraq which will create a tight alliance with Iran. Month after month, and in spite of American efforts have not entirely failed, Iraq is entering more and more into chaos, violence and terrorism which much be defined here as the exact contrary of a culturally defined society. Terrorism-we know that this world is rejected by many people who consider the terrorists, especially the ones who sacrificed their own life to destroy enemy lives -as martyrs- terrorists are no longer soldiers of a war, their action express the absence of political unity, cultural unity and first of all political programs and economic resources. Theses resources could very well support a new type of state, governed in the name of religious

values. But, even if these people refer to religious value against the west, they do not act as members of a religious society and national goals remain predominant especially in Palestine.

The second example, is even more important because of his lasting symbolic value. Israel was created both as a homeland for the Jewish people which has been identified with its religion and as a Heimat for survivors of the Shoah but it was, at the same time the creation of a new kind of social democracy in which the central union, the Histradruth played the central role and in which kibbutz represented a non capitalistic kind of economic organization and defended threatened frontiers. The Palestinian movement had passed trough a fast nationalist revolutionary period during which orthodox Christians played an important role as leaders of the most radical Marxist groups; much later the difficult creation of the Palestinian authority demonstrated the predominance of national over religious motivations. Since the beginning of the new Intifada which followed the failure of the negotiation for peace which had began in Oslo, violence and terrorism led by subgroups linked with the Fatah or with the radical wing of Hamas and many others sub-groups are gaining ground every day. But again in action is first of all a national one. In all Arab countries, the vast majority of the people who were asked in a survey : what is the main condition for the creation of a Palestinian state ? answered : the destruction of Israel and the dissemination of the Jewish population in other countries. On the Israeli side, not only the colons, who have settled recently in the Gaza strip but a growing number of people no longer believe a solution is possible. The idea of a lasting war and of the necessity to build a wall separation between two countries did not come from the most conservative sectors and if the Israeli government could accept the frontiers which had been accepted by both camps in Camp David the separation of these two national states could be an alternative to a constant development of terrorism on both sides.

Terrorism is violence separated from all kinds of political and military project and from cultural values. Terrorism can be very efficient ; it can scare a large number of people all over the world but it does not carry a positive project; it is a force of disintegration of an organized social or cultural movement ; it is not a way of building a new collective action.

The case of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is so central that it has direct effects in many different countries. For example, in France a noticeable increase of antisemitic acts – and of anti arabic acts too- is a direct effect of the middle-east conflict ; while in the past Jewish and Arab population which in many cases lived near each other had not created nor been involved in violent conflicts. These examples, even if they are limited show clearly that the tension between Islam and the Western world, which had been first economic,-because of oil then has become more heavily loaded with a cultural conflict now disintegrates itself into violence, terrorism and the murder of hostages even when they have no links with the United States and its allies. They killed victims only to make impossible the search for an agreement.

The second case, I would briefly mention here is the European one, just to say that the short period during which some European hoped that the European Community could become a real nation-State defined in cultural as well as economic terms is over. Such an idea was never popular except among German people who maintained a highly understandable fear and hatred for a German national state. The European meeting at Nice and the difficult elaboration of a constitutional treaty which should be ratified by all countries shows the predominance of national interests. Some countries insisted for mentioning the Christian origins of Europe in the preambule of the constitution. But other countries, in particular France oppose it in the name of their own constitution which proclaims its laïcity. Anyway, Europe is massively considered by its inhabitants as an instrumental device necessary to be able to resist, somehow, American hegemony and to get rid of internal conflicts ; Europe is not conceived by European as a moral and a religious state comparable to United States. On

the extreme Islamist side the main orientation is favorable to world violence but Terrorism is rather main obstacle to the formation no longer of religiously based central conflict. In Europe cultural values and goals have a very limited importance, in spite of so many statements and speeches which oppose European culture and American culture or absence of culture. Such statements should not be taken too seriously, on either side of the Atlantic. The real conflict between the United States and Europe is not a moral or religious one, it results from American decision to abandon the multilateralism they had created and to rely only on one radical unilateralism.

VII.

I am convinced that western countries, the United States, Canada and Australia as well as Great Britain and France do not consider that their own solutions could be applied to the whole world. Many people speak so constantly of multiculturalism but we don't know whether they refer to the integration of immigrants in good conditions in XIX century in America or for the more painful settlement of immigrants in Europe more recently. But all of them are looking for a combination of unit and diversity : ex pluribus unum, classical formula which supposes both the defense of cultural diversity and stronger institutions which maintains the unity of the nation, the republic and its citizenship

A great merit of Samuel Huntington's book is to have come back to a realistic image of a world which can not be considered as living a process of formation of the United States of the world. But his image of the world corresponds more to a central preoccupation for the defense of the United States more than to offer a satisfactory description of the processes which are transforming the whole world today. Because I maintain that the main factor of change is the

widening gap between a global economic system and a plurality of cultures, such a gap makes more and more difficult to give a central role to civilization. On the contrary, it leads us to political violence in which terrorism gains ground against military actions which were still recently considered by the classical tradition of being part a national policy.

One of the most visible features of today's world situation is a constant weakness of all institutional and political systems. In many parts of the world, corruption, nepotism and open violence make impossible the success of any general project of government.

Maybe in the future it will be possible to interpret the present day situation as a step towards the decline of American empire because of the growing influence of religiously oriented states. But today many of the countries which are supposed to be communities which are ruled by religious principles follow a different logic. A country like China is not primarily the sort of a culture category, and it is not for non religious and cultural reasons that it represents a major threat for the American empire. At a world level, it is difficult to name a powerful country which defines itself by a religious view while everywhere in the world on the contrary we can see that disorganization of societies which is a consequence of globalization, is increased by the growing strength of supra-national economic and financial networks and, what is even more dramatic by the growing impossibility to maintain a certain institutional integration for populations which are in a situation comparable to that of refugees in their own country.

Our most urgent duty is not to accept more or less diversity within our national states or regions ; it is to construct or reconstruct a bridge between the economic world and the cultural worlds, between the universe of objectivity and the world of subjectivity, because both of them when they are separated from each other by the process of globalization become on both unable to control oneself.

The most important goal to reach is to reinstitutionalize economic life as many prominent economists have said, according to them, economic development can not be reached by the elementary recommendations of the Washington consensus. In spite of the fact that European and other countries are living a deep crisis of the welfare-state, which was created at the end of the second world war, we will not go out of the present day difficulties by following a policy which has already increased inequalities and all forms of exclusion in many parts of the world. A new European social model, to use Jacques Delors expression, may be found and worked out, the same is true for the United States which have not succeed yet in creating   a modern system health insurance a few years ago.

But   the most difficult problem by far, is to reincorporate cultural values and economic instruments into the same political and institutional system. The attempts made to create a decision making system and for instance to reach a higher degree of economic integration among Latin America states have failed. The conclusion is that solutions are no longer local or national and can be find only at a global level. Is it possible to fill at least partially the gap which is every year widening between a global economy which become wild and culturally defined societies which are hit by process of decomposition which leads towards uncontrolled violence and self-destruction.

Who can succeed rebuilding institutions and societies ? Who can impose to United States and to "poor countries" to become partners in the reconstruction of institutionally control societies ? Who is able to give a central importance to the reconstruction of citizenship in countries, in regions where the elements of decomposition are every year stronger and the elements of unity and integration weaker ?

The first victim of the period which has been opened by 9/11 attentate and then by the American military intervention in the middle East is the United Nations. The system of the

united nations has lost its strength and the trust that so many people, especially in America had put in it has disappeared.

A possible solution could come from countries or regions which are least directly involved in the present war of religions. But they are seldom able to challenge the new power of the U.S. The hope that the European Union could play an active role in proposing the creation of a new world order does not correspond the weak level of decision making we observe in Brussels.

First of all, when we say Europe it's difficult to know what we exactly mean. If we call Europe the Brussels commission or the Council of the chief of States, it seems almost impossible that a European institution allows its leaders to play such an important role, most of all because many members of the European Community would accept to define themselves as go-between the United States and the Islamic world. As far as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is concerned it seems clear that the Israeli government is absolutely opposed to any role of the European Union, because it has always considered the United States as its only secure friend. The Palestinians, even if they are supported by European public opinion, are certainly not willing to give the impression that they share with European countries which support the United States the same preoccupation for an agreement between Israel and the Palestinian authority.

Should we just drop this idea and give up the hope for institutional reconstruction of this world ? This pessimistic answer is certainly the most realistic one but it is impossible to recognize it, it would mean to accept a complete victory of violence and the defeat of all instruments of political and social controls.

Europe is to big and too small to take useful initiatives but Europe can give a new life to the United Nations, first try to transforming the Security council so that the main countries and regions of the world would participate in the construction of the whole world. The Europeans

can probably propose a transformation of United Nations not for their own sake, but to give a stronger voice to countries like Brazil which must be associated to the management of crisis.

I must unfortunately conclude that the most pessimistic hypothesis is the most likely to correspond to the coming situation.

There is a real danger for all of us to enter into a world in which we all would be swallowed and destroyed by violence. Or we could easily imagine a Europe which would be paralyzed by its basic conflicts about its relationship with United States and an American society, where the most conservatives elements of the republican party, would defend a deeply isolationist view. More dramatically, we can already see in various parts of the world "non-existing" countries. In all parts of the world they are territories which are considered as states but which have a small participation in legal economy, which survive with resources coming from outside or from illegal activities. There are many countries in which : at midnight the government does not control half of its territories, as it said for Colombia. Thirty years ago we didn't feel with the same anxiety this process of disintegration of the world.

Than a clash of civilizations that is the reason which are themselves consequences the basic dissociation a global economy and subjective politics why I give such a large importance to all processes of reconstruction of conditions which make possible to limit processes of designations which are progressing now.

But most of us we could agree on a much more elementary conclusion. We have entered not on 9/11 but much before a situation which has become conscious after 9/11 : The world system is out of control. What used to be considered a society : network of relations between various sectors of collective life and the control of institutionalized political authority over social life is falling into pieces and not only in the poorest countries. How can we take part in

the necessary reconstruction of political institutions, and trust again democratic rules. More concretely, we need to be more and more actively convinced of the necessity of a group like this one, which has been imagined by Candido Mendes and other people to dedicate its reflex ion and initiative to reintegrating, reconstructing links as the top as well as the bottom of world order. Institutional controls which will allow us not to be engulfed in this violence.

Alain Touraine