

VICENÇ VILLATORO

CREATING EUROPE
REBUILDING THE WEST

AWARD

Catalunya
Fundació Privada

2004

BIBLIOTECA DIVULGARE

First edition: February 2005 CATALAN
February 2005 CASTELLAN
April 2006 ENGLISH
Prints: Biblioteca Divulgare

Second edition: gratuitous circulation
electronic document - july 2006

All the rights are the sole property of Catalunya Fundació Privada
Rambla Nova 106-bis, 7º 4º -43001 Tarragona

The partial or total reproduction of this work is forbidden without the proper authorisation rights holder.

Legal deposit: T-1111-2006

CREATING EUROPE REBUILDING THE WEST

Prologue	4
First Part —The European dream: Has it existed? Does it persist?	
Introduction	9
World significance.....	10
A lost chance	11
The inexistent Europe.....	12
Europe as an agreement	14
The great European pact.....	16
The present situation's influence.....	16
The opportunity of creating a European dream.....	18
The dream of the united Europe.....	19
Reaction against war	21
The dream of progress	23
A shared welfare model	25
Diversity articulation.....	27
A place in the world for Europe	30
The European reality	32
The impact of Sarajevo.....	34
Progress, imbalance, technology.....	36
The States against Europe	39
Economic power, political subsidiarity	42
The absence of military power.....	44
Second Part — Rebuilding the West	
The West crack.....	47
Increasing distance	49
The weight of individual responsibility.....	52
Rebuilding the West space	55
A welfare state.....	57
The State's responsibility.....	59
The general good monopoly	61
The citizen's resignation	63
New protests.....	65
Alternative ways	68
New politics.....	70
Politics as a job.....	72
Citizens exclusion from politics	74
The role of civil society	76
A demand for epics.....	79
Immigration problems	82
Setting population.....	84
A continent without children?	88
World demographic transition?	91
The effects of aging.....	94

Third Part — Peoples of Europe

The unavoidable diversity.....	97
What isn't diversity?	98
The Europe of the languages	104
The Europe of the ethnic groups.....	107
People of Europe.....	109
Three earthquakes in one century	112
The State-nation crisis	115
Exporting the formula	118
Europe's limits	119
Rationalism, democracy, laicism	122
Questions about Turkey.....	125
The Islam evolution.....	127
The pre-eminence of "republican values"	130
A federative model for Europe	132
Federate, coordinate, centralise.....	134
Switzerland, the United States, Germany.....	136
The example of Finland.....	140
The government of small Peoples	142
A common European framework.....	144
Real federalism	145
Regeneration of the political system	149
Commitment to values	151
Conclusion	153
Annexed	157

PROLOGUE

In life, there are many things that are done as a duty. In the best meaning of the word this means because you feel obliged to do it in just correspondence to positive, benevolent, kind or generous acts from other people. And it is a satisfaction to be able to correspond.

And that is why you do it, and you do it with conviction. But you would not do it out of own initiative.

This is not the case with this prologue.

This is the prologue to an exciting book, full of suggestions about some topical subjects which affect us as Europeans and especially as Catalonians. But, one of the issues that gives it value, under a Catalonian perspective, is that it deals with values, challenges and visions of people, society and the World without a time or place reference in a way that is useful for us. It is good that reflections of universal value are produced here, with arguments which support themselves, without the support of the immediate situation in time or territory.

We could say that the book has two main parts, different but linked. The first part starts from the conviction of the author who believes that Europe is threatened to deteriorate and wants to avoid it. It is clear that the author believes that the EU has been a "success story" so far. But he also believes that some disappointments and the conscience of failed expectations are becoming evident now. And as a good Europeanist, he wants to analyse the reason for all this, to know which is the political or moral mechanism that fails and endangers the continuity of European success.

Villatoro stresses two of these mechanisms that fail. First, the resignation of the citizens, the weakening and sometimes perversion of the concept of general wealth, the conception of society based only on the individual and the Administration (in fact, the State). Secondly, the lack of diversity articulation, the restricted application of the subsidiarity principle. The two parts I mentioned that the book is divided into the following two subjects: The resignation of people, which is mainly produced through a deformation of the concept of citizenship and the marginalisation of the collectives which make up Europe. In fact, they are both the same: the decrease of all which is not the Administration, determined as well by economical and media powers which main purpose is not (and sometimes never at all) the general interest.

According to Villatoro, one of Europe's problem is that it is a very protected society and it has everything ensured (this makes it less competitive, but this is another issue we will not deal with now). It is a consequence of the Welfare State, which Villatoro and I have been defenders of.

In fact, the Welfare State is today one of the defining elements of Europe, and one of the most positive ones, which, in my opinion, make it the political and social model, with the best quality all around the world. But now, the European Welfare State raises questions and comments about needed changes.

Some say this because they think that it is not economically sustainable. In fact, that is what Chancellor Schröder, among others, currently states. They say it because they think that the demand of more and more welfare and safety cannot be satisfied with the economical growth. But also, Europe has suddenly discovered that our society is running fast towards a serious demographic problem with huge effects to the Welfare State. Besides, There are more and more people of all the political tendencies -and Villatoro explains it very well- who believe that the Welfare State (and indeed Europe), because of the strong protection its citizen is provided with, ends up weakening not only the individual initiative spirit, but also its sense of responsibility. Therefore, there are some who say it is necessary to check the basis of the Welfare State, or perhaps, more precisely, not only the technical basis, but the civic and moral basis of the society which is the result of the Welfare State. This means that it is necessary to analyse not only its economic sustainability, but the human quality of the society that is produced.

Personally, perhaps carried away by my almost instinctive anti-Malthusianism which I have always defended, I am part of the ones who would not easily give up before the economical argument (although I recognize that it impels meditation). On the other hand, I do think it is absolutely necessary to avoid and correct some negative aspects of the European society, consequence of this absolute guarantee of protection that we want; protection in every meaning and at the highest level.

Why? What has been the price of this protection? It has been to hand over a very important part of the citizens' responsibility to the Administration in general, and especially to the State.

The price has also been that the concept of the general wealth has weakened. People no longer feel responsible for general wealth, they do not apply any individual effort to its definition nor to its defence. It is the product of the mixed effect of the increase in individualism (and what we have called the moral cut off; in other words, not to feel attached to anything that is not oneself, even in very immediate issues) and of the transfer of safety and progress to public initiative. And it has another consequence, which is caused by another phenomenon: the discredit of effort. It is general and serious.

Through these considerations, Villatoro touches deeply on a range of transcendent and topical issues. I will enumerate some. He defines conformity, isolationism, and cultural relativism as the main enemies of responsibility. He deals with the objections of the radical equalitarism and its consequences in civil society.

When studying in depth the opposition between the individual and the administration, Villatoro defines it as a key element on the World vision, and, more precisely, as a basic factor of the increasing distance between the United States and Europe. And he shows, as a European and the Europeanist that he is, a deep concern not only for the distance -since the aim of this book is to collaborate in the rebuilding of the West- but because he thinks that if the couple individual or person and administration opts for the administration and this will affect the human and social quality of our society.

Because this lack of stress on the person causes less initiative spirit, less commitment, less moral effort and less self-demand.

This leads to a deep reflection on the civil society and its relationship with politics and the political power. The power, Villatoro believes, must help the initiative of the civil society, but it must not control it. Villatoro discusses all this and much more in the first part of the book. But his approach has a second dimension: the community in which the person is produced. The fact that this community, this frame is or isn't appropriate will influence the person's development.

This frame cannot only be administrative or legal. It must imply a feeling of belonging, a community of values and a common project ability in order to work and be really operative. Here we come to the question of which this appropriate frame or frames could be.

Villatoro supports the idea that, more than the States –or at least the powerful States-, the most appropriate frame are the communities, the, let's call them "local", characteristics, which can be local strictly speaking, as nations without State, as territories defined by geography and the economical and social structure still without identity and history depth. It is widely accepted that the German Länder were a very important factor for the German recovery in all its meaning, and they still are, even though the German federal system now needs some touch-ups, but not strictly related to the competence aspects of the Länder. On the other hand –and Villatoro explains it very well- the specialists on the subject generally accept that the most efficient communities from the economical and social point of view, with the best democratic quality and with the best mobilisation and cohesion ability, are the small to medium States and the regions with the strongest personality and a defined and assumed project. The examples are very well known, from Ireland to Finland, from New Zealand to Slovenia or Cyprus, from Flanders to Quebec, from Veneto to Catalonia. And here we can include many German Länder and many States of North America.

For many years, the European unification process was thought to be able to make three levels in Europe compatible, which, in the highest level, and in general terms, would give it power and ability of world ambition; balance through the States at the intermediate level; and freedom, creativity and close identity through the regions and intermediate communities of all kind. Europe would have these three pillars. This connects with the subsidiarity principle and with the social philosophy which stresses the role of the intermediate organisations. It preserved the vertebral role of the wide European space, of the States, without suffocating the deepest collective personalities and, as I have said before, with more efficiency. It also answered to a mechanical and legal concept of the social and identity weaving. And this is what Villatoro states in the second part of the book.

It is necessary to recognize that approaches like these are not going through good times now. Jean Monnet and Schumann, the main starters of the European Union, used to say that more than States, they expected to unite people. And up to just recently it has been mentioned that the

European Union expects to unite States, peoples and citizens (or individuals). Now, this disappears with the new European Constitution which only relates to States and citizens. And this is not accidental.

I complained about this to an important and influential French politician and the answer was categorical: "We had a strong alarm with the prologue initially proposed for the Corsica Statute of Autonomy. It was about the Corsican people. It recognized the existence of Corsican people. Fortunately, the Council of State ordered to suppress this expression" And added "le peuple corse n'existe pas, il n'y a que le peuple français. Et la République". And I could give more examples like this.

This is a sign of the reaction which, on one side the States and on the other the Jacobine and the state thought, to have carried out through the past ten or fifteen years. That means, exactly during the period when the States have lost so many fields (the currency, with the euro; the financial politics, with Europe Central Bank; the frontiers, with Schengen, and many more; and now they will lose the unanimous vote in many matters), they react in a dual direction; trying to condition the Brussels Commission and trying to suffocate or contain what we would call the regionalist movement, which agrees with the defence of people, autonomies and language and culture communities –and projects, too- that Villatoro proposes. It is not necessary to point out the nations without State, etc. It is possible, regrets Villatoro, that "a unification process thought to reduce the States ends up acting only through the States".

I must say, and he will further bravely comment on this, that the situation is more complex than what this phrase from Villatoro can express.

The merit of Villatoro's book is that it approaches all the subjects related to the attitudes that people may have towards the values which form civilization or a culture. It is from there, from those personal attitudes that Villatoro takes position regarding Europe, regarding the West, regarding our civilisation. This has the virtue of helping us understand that we are personally committed to this. Therefore, even admitting that the influence capacity of a person is limited –as it is indeed-, if we get involved in these matters, if we commit ourselves, we introduce our lives in a plus of responsibility, it makes us better.

But going back to a less personal approach –going back to Europe and the West– we must remain ready for a fight with the ideas Villatoro explains, even though some of them have lost influence in Europe lately, for at least one reason: because Europe is no longer doing well, or at least not as well as it should.

The European Union has been a success. It is so obvious that it there is no need to demonstrate. And it still is. But now it has serious problems. It faces double pressure: American and Asian, it doesn't grow enough economically, caused by a half to its competitiveness, it has a worrying demographic perspective, it must face a very difficult reform of the welfare state, it has very serious interior political tensions and contradictions which hinder its role as a world scale actor; immigration is added to this –besides a needed labour force- serious problems related to cohesion, coexistence and identity, etc. A

growing lack of interest and sometimes disappointment is noticed. And little Europeanist hope.

The Constitution will be a useful instrument. The fact that it disappoints us in more than one subject as Catalonians doesn't mean that, in some matters, it would improve the working tools of the Union. But it will probably not modify this frame of mind. What could indeed change it, on the other hand, is the recovery of that foundational spirit which has remained until the late 90's and which was very tied to the values that Villatoro vindicates, and also tied to the conviction that there is a Western civilisation that has been the impeller of the World of democracy, economical and social progress. So the fight goes on. A fight on the political, economic and financial field, but especially, in the field of ideas.

Jordi Pujol

Barcelona, January 2005

FIRST PART

THE EUROPEAN DREAM: HAS IT EXISTED? DOES IT PERSIST?

Introduction

Possibly, like several times in our history, today Europe is the object of all sort of reflection. The ratification process of the Treaty between the different States that make up the European Union, with the aim of providing it with a Constitution, brings up new and old questions: the issue of what Europe is and what it should be. Also the question of whether this process, this treaty and this Constitution are the best way to achieve the Europe that should be. Questions, therefore, about Europe and the European Constitution; but questions, as well, about the future of humankind: in a way, what we think for Europe is an embryo, a scale model of what we wish for the world.

Among all these questions, the Biblioteca Divulgare and the Fundació Privada Catalunya proposed, in 2002, a deeper issue: Must human collectives be created or constitutionalised? This Europe we talk about is, without a doubt, a human collective, a new "us" that is already part of our horizon and invites us to participate in it. We are talking about providing it with a Constitution. But, are Constitutions the ones that, over all, like a mould, generate a human collective where there was none? Or is it, on the other hand, the existence of a human collective, created by history and will, what ends up generating a Constitution? And if so, can we consider that this European human collective is already complete and mature enough to be provided with a Constitution as the one proposed, and with very little leeway, by the way?

It is clear that human collectives are not created on paper through a Constitution. However, it is true that the existence of a political entity, though artificial in the beginning, could finally, through many tensions and difficulties, create a differentiated collective conscience. The decolonization processes which generated in Africa and America, for example, totally artificial States, with frontiers drawn in offices, and with time, in some of these states, some sort of differentiated identity has been created, a sort of feeling of being unified as a people, although sometimes very faint and challenged. Debates on the identity of some of these countries are extremely torturing and complex. But in the case of Europe, it is obvious that it is not the Constitution what makes Europe, but that the first task that is still pending which, from my point of view, is just to give rise to Europe, to create Europe. And to create it on the only basis on which it can be created, which is the acceptance of People's diversity and the start of a process of confluence in a federative frame that will have cultural, economic and political aspects; and it is necessary to think that at some point of history it will also have military or defence aspects, although, in any case, it will be a slow process full of obstacles.

To create or to constitutionalise? Asks the Biblioteca Divulgare. Well, to create. To create from the bottom and with new basis. To create in order to fulfil the demands of history and the present difficulties. To create thinking about a global future that goes beyond Europe itself.

This book does not intend to give a political juncture answer to a juncture problem (we will speak about this further on): the European Constitution referendum. It intends to propose a deep reflection, taking advantage of the exceptional interest of this juncture. Probably, a position on the day to day debate will come out from this general reflection. But it will be the result, not the origin.

World significance

It is probable that when we take stock of the 20th century, as full of tragedies as of scientific improvements, it is settled that one of the most significant facts around the world is the beginning of the process for the European unity building, a process that has been able to generate great hopes and positive expectations in relatively little time, but also to drag us to huge disappointments, which have ended up with surprising signs of indifference. With a shade of meaning: great hopes and great dreams belong especially to the initial moments, when European unity was strictly a project or an idea; and great disappointments have been showing up with time when that idea has been captured in a certain way and has associated itself to specific practices that its small print has been generating.

In a way, it is possible to say that the idea of a united Europe generated enthusiasm and that the reality of this united Europe has caused disappointment and indifference. The participation average on the European elections in all the Union countries is the clearest sign of this indifference.

It is true that a part of this European disappointment, of this discomfort towards the actually existing Europe is also the expression of other parallel discomforts which are not caused by the strict effect of the unification process. For example: without a doubt, above this process, there are more general disappointments and indifferences about what politics is in the western world; how it is carried out; how citizens participate or not; how our rulers are created and destroyed.

The discomfort towards Europe is also the discomfort towards a way of understanding democracy in which the citizens are only called every four years in order to decide some names among a considerably limited universe, and then they are drawn to wash their hands regarding any idea of general good. This happens in each and every country of the European Union; but the Union itself seems to be the most bleeding caricature: there are distant instances of power which decide on subjects that affect people's daily lives but that remain in a sort of strange half-light submitted to an unknown political and functionary caste, with little control and which answers to a logic, if there is such, that they are unable to transmit. The faults of the system,

which are beyond the European unification process, are especially visible in this scenery and they are a source of disappointment.

A lost chance

Even today, I am still convinced that if we asked Europeans if they believe in the convenience, or even the need, of a united Europe, they would answer that they do. If we asked if the European Union, as it is, with its shortages and defects, just as the so-called Constitution that has been drawn up wants to formalize it, will improve their lives or make them worse, almost for sure most Europeans would say that it may improve. In any case, for sure it will not make it worse. Therefore, if it is to improve, why this scepticism, indifference and discomfort? From my point of view the reason is that most Europeans have the feeling that the process of these years is not negative, it has not caused going backwards, but it has been a lost chance, the lost chance to build Europe on a different basis. It is not to say that what has been done has been intrinsically incorrect and it causes rejection and disdain, but that it is not proportional to the initial idea. In other words, the new Europe has been built on a routine and conservative way, in the worse sense of the word, shy, on old basis. And for this reason it has not fulfilled the expectations. We will see this in one of the further chapters.

A lost chance. An excessive distance between the European dream and the European reality. A wasted occasion. But, why was united Europe so hopeful and revolutionary (in the best sense)? In first place, because it seemed to be necessary. Necessary to avoid the chronic damage of the European wars and necessary as well to avoid the decline of the continent, its consignment to a secondary role in the world. But also because something never seen before was proposed: the free confluence of a whole continent, divided into states, formed by diverse people, with a common political project. History was full, until then, of disintegrating processes.

People's lives had led (and in recent time it had been faster) to many divorces and limited marriages, to more separations than confluences. And when there had been confluences they had not been, in most cases (and it would be difficult to find some exception) free and respectful, stemming from a mutual interest. On the contrary, they had been forced unifications, imposed by weapons, by conquest and submission and people had been forced to fundamental renunciations. For this reason, creating a free process, without submissions or renunciations which would allow the diverse people of a continent to converge in a bigger political unit, was an extraordinary fact and a future wager which stimulated will and enthusiasm towards the European Union.

According to that, the dreamt European Union was something beyond a Nations Society or a United Nations. The ambition of this type of international organisations (being great, in historical terms) was far more limited. It was no more than a meeting, a starting point. Indeed, it was already in the logic of a

planetary, global conception of politics. I understand now that the interests of the humankind itself are common, more or less faint, and they are beyond the interests, confronted or not, of the states or even the people. But the aim was only to offer them a place to discuss it and some minimum game rules, usually unfair, wrong and disproportionate, to be able to pose and solve conflicts. The European Union was to go further. The aim was to build a new and unknown political space. The aim was to fuse part of the interests of the people of Europe in a common crucible.

The inexistent Europe

Paradoxically, if it is wished, I would say that one of the great values of the idea of Europe's unity was precisely the artificial character of Europe. Europe has never been a natural political space. Europe is not even a clear and indisputable geographical space. It is not an island like Australia, with perfectly established limits. Europe is an idea and, therefore, it can only be a conventional union. And this was, and still is, its strongest disadvantage.

Neither history nor geography outline a perfectly homogeneous space on the inside and perfectly differentiated to the outside. It has never been. Distance, in all its meanings, climatic, cultural, of ethnic origins, between northern and southern Europe is huge. There are very important realities (Russia, Turkey), with one foot inside Europe and the other outside, which are continentally transverse. There are cultural and ethnic realities external to Europe, closer to certain European cultures than other cultures from the same continent are: the British may feel closer to the United States, Australia or Canada than to Lithuania or Bulgaria. The French, besides still having colonies outside of the continent, have more connection with Quebec than with Malta or Macedonia.

Europe has never been one, in almost any meaning. For the ancient world, although for the medieval as well, the Mediterranean rim was a clearer geographic unit than the continent. The Greeks are a civilisation that rides over the sea, which only reaches where its ships reach. The Roman Empire is, above all, a sea Empire ruled from the centre of the Mediterranean, but built almost around an interior sea. The Mediterranean Europe and the Atlantic Europe over centuries have turned their backs on one another about everything. In the Iberian Peninsula, the distinction between the Castilla Kingdom and the Aragon Kingdom is almost a hydrographical distinction: the part of the peninsula where the rivers flow into the Mediterranean or the part where the rivers flow into the Atlantic. France is an Atlantic country with its centre in Paris which, at a certain time, conquers and assimilates a Mediterranean country, Occitane, the d'Oc country. The Alps have been a frontier much longer (Latin world and Germanic world one on each side) than the thin sleeve of sea between Italy, Sicily and Tunisia.

Along its history, Europe has been sort of dead end street, sort of a stuck funnel towards which people from central Asia have been going, spreading towards west and settling in the new territories, superimposing upon the

previous migration waves and the native peoples in the region. The Balkans, funnel inside the funnel, substratum over the substratum, in a certain way are Europe's scale model: a *finis-terrae* beyond which there would not be (until not so long ago) much horizon and where people coming from the Caucasus or central Asia would settle. Therefore, regarding this, we can't talk about a homogeneous and differentiated Europe either. Europe is a peninsula, and therefore, an impasse; but its eastern limits are difficult to define. This raises problems not metaphysical but totally practical in the current European building process.

Europe, where's the limit? Turkey has a relatively small part in Europe, but its main territorial and demographic bulk is in Anatolia, Asia Minor. The demographic and historic centre of Russia is in the confines of Europe, but it spreads out to the Pacific, to Vladivostok. Not politically, but geographically, is it clear that Turkey or Russia are Europe? Is it clear, is it understood, is it assumed that a European Union with Turkey included would have direct frontier with Syria or Iraq? Is it clear that a European Union that were to include Russia would have frontiers with Mongolia and China and it would get to the doors (for us, the back doors) of the United States, through Alaska and the Bering Strait? And these two partners of the European Union (not at all hypothetical partners who are considering their entry in not a very long term, especially in the case of Turkey) would not be at all secondary in Europe. On the contrary, they would be the main components. If it were to enter, Turkey would be the largest country of the Union; and even more in the case of Russia, if this possible entry were considered.

Therefore, Europe is a geographical reality difficult to define and it is not possible to talk exactly about a historical unit, but on the contrary: Europe's history is a history of separations, wars, opposed blocks which sometimes confront and sometimes ignore each other. A cultural unit? Not completely. Europe does not have a linguistic uniformity (different languages with different morphologies), nor cultural moulds. There are diverse ways to see the world and acquire the customs that are still often structured having religion as the centre, even in parts of the population considered as non-believers, but with costumes, habits and world visions which refer to religious roots. The large religions of Europe, Catholicism, Greek and Slavic Orthodoxy, the different forms of Protestantism, have a common Christian reference. But they probably come from different pre-Christian cultural substrata and have historically increased the differences even more.

From this –let's call it "cultural"- point of view or world vision, diverse parts of Europe will find themselves more comfortable with non- European partners than with very different European partners. If it can be said, the *Commonwealth* is more solid as a cultural unit than Europe. The Castilian Spain has always had doubts between its connection with Europe or Latin America and, in a certain way, a Polish in Madrid is more a "foreigner" than an Ecuadorian is. And this is still without considering a Europe with Turkey, Bosnia or Albany in it; this means, countries with a world vision built on the cultural moulds of Islam. And without even mentioning the existence of people and communities in Europe that have risen from other very diverse

cultural moulds, from Jewish to gypsies, besides all the communities that have risen from the new immigration. All this would be full of nuances and it would be very debatable, but I think it refers to a thorough check: if Europe exists, it is not because there is an interior cultural uniformity or a clean and distinctive difference from the rest of the world. Neither geography, nor history, nor culture. Europe is, and now it can only be, an agreement of intentions, a conventional union. A multilateral pact on which a collective may be built, possibly maturing faster than North Americans did centuries ago.

Europe as an agreement

But this conventional character of Europe is probably its best virtue. Europe is not a natural political space, so to speak. It is not, it cannot intend to be, and neither can it get to be a "Nation" or "a People". There is no possibility (I would say that there is no danger) of the raising of a European patriotism that would be imposed and would destroy the feelings of belonging of the citizens in each community. Europe is a political superstructure, a place you can approach from interest and not from feelings, history or language. There is not a European identity. All this is a fabulous advantage, because, from this point, it is possible to ask citizens of the different European communities to be integrated into Europe without rejecting what they are, without being forced to renounce to a less conventional political entity, based more on feelings and more deeply tied to history, culture and origins.

If we take it as a metaphor and not in the literal meaning, a community is like a family in a certain way: a space of relatively natural belonging, based on feelings. In Europe, each one knows which community they belong to and which one they want to belong to. Europe would not be a family. It would be more like a public limited company. A superstructure created freely, through association, interests, between people who belong to diverse families, but who are associated with common aims. Not for every objective: a public limited company has a concrete and specific objective. If the European Union were something like a family, in any case it would be a marriage of convenience. It only needs will, determination and complementarity among its parts. Not an absolute affinity in all fields of life. Only a complementarity limited to its objectives which, as in public limited companies, would be partly economic for the generation and interchange of goods, but in this case they would be also cultural and political. Maintaining an important role in the world, preserving civilisation values, offering the rest of the world, even those who may seem hostile, an example of progress and democratic values.

This Europe, conceived as an agreement does not move on, and cannot move on, the creation of a great state-nation, among other reasons, because it comes from the crisis of the state-nations, from the ascertainment of their problems. Probably for centuries, a United Europe would not be like the United States of America, which has built a political field of belonging, which is a federation of states, but also forms a national entity in terms of collective feelings. The European Union is now only an administrative mosaic.

Regarding this, it could have some resemblance, very partial, to some of the ancient empires, for example, the Austro-Hungarian Empire. It was accused of imprisoning People, and it is true. But there was a conscience that inside it some communities coexisted. The Austro-Hungarian Empire created empire's subjects, not nationalists of Austria-Hungary. A Serb, Hungarian, Croatian, Slovak, were subjects of the empire, but they remained Serbs, Hungarians, Croats and Slovaks. Certainly, their collective political rights were not recognized. In fact, their belonging to the empire was not voluntary but forced, product of weapons and conquest. But in this other meaning, the difference between subject and nationalists, empires can be a reference. In the case of the United Europe, they would not be subjects but citizens. But each one from their People, because no one would ask them to be part of the European People, as no one would ask them to be part of an Austro-Hungarian People, inexistent in the Empire.

On the other hand, the state-nation, with which Europe has been built on so far, does not want to have only citizens, but they aspire to also having nationalists. They aspire to the agreement between the state and the nation, the state and the people. And when there are diverse people inside the state, what they try is to standardize them; to convert it into one community; to reduce them to one sentimental belonging; to build a common origin for them; to make them adapt to one language or totally hegemonic, believing that there are diverse cultures and trying to create a specific one. For this reason, it is a virtue and an advantage that Europe is not, does not want to be and cannot be, a huge state-nation.

The great theoretical challenge of building Europe was to converge without any kind of obligation and only through freedom and the free election of everyone, without renouncing to anything in a wider political space that would compulsorily be a Great European Pact: what the European Union should be. What the Empires had done by force without considering the rights of Peoples (nor of the individuals), achieve it for the first time in history through a pacifist agreement; a great agreement to create a human collective motivated by the convenience of all the participants, telling the world that it is possible, that we can organise ourselves freely in wider spaces being what each one is and wants to be. And through this path, converge, possibly in a long period of time, step by step, probably federation after federation, in a new conception of the whole world where we can all be just civilised humans.

In this horizon of global convergence, Europe must be concerned about its organisation, but it must also think of how its movements on the board of international politics favour a better organisation of the world. It is convenient for Europe that other spaces, as the Slavic world or the Islamic world, find pacifist federative organisations, not hostile or moderate. This implies, for example, certain politics related to Russia or Turkey that help with this configuration. We will discuss it further, when Europe's limits are commented.

The great European pact

Consequently, the Great European Pact is not only an economic or political unity agreement. It should be considerably more ambitious: an instrument for making Europe a useful experience for Europeans and all humanity in the scope of a global world. Therefore, an instrument that is not used for maintaining and confirming the defects of the system next to its evident virtues. The Great European Pact (we will discuss this further) also means a change in the way of making and understanding politics; a call to individual responsibility; a way of involving the citizens, as well as the economic and intellectual sectors, professionals, and the rest of the citizens in general, in the management of the common wealth, that should stop being a speciality of, or monopolised by, a political class that is obsessed with electoral marketing and with the permanent exercise of demoscropy, at least in some cases.

Europe suffers specific problems within the world. One of them is the obvious ageing of its population, as well as its political structures. It is about a problem of world importance. A problem in the value system and civility. At the same time, it possesses its own actives: rationalist tradition, acknowledgement of scientific and rational thought over esoteric ones; a public secular space that perfectly coexists with the religious experiences of people and the communities. If the Great European Pact, Europe's creation and the construction process does not confront these problems and makes the most of these actives, it is no use at all. A central fact in modern Europe is the extra-community immigration. It is the mirror where our own problems are more evident and where our virtues are made necessary.

If the Great European Pact has a positive result, Europe is not the only beneficiary. It is the world where other spaces exist that may search for articulations similar to the European Union: from the Far East near China and Japan, to some of the independent states of the former Soviet Union; from the Arab-Muslim world, to Latin America; from Central and Southern Africa, to the south of Asia.

But over all, a united Europe may provide intention and direction to an inevitable globalising process, positive in many ways, but in a sense, it is being blindly produced, without a leader nor a model. Europe would gain importance and the world would gain direction. All in all, it would seem an objective that should be encouraging for European youth and enough reasons for dreaming. The only thing needed is the will to do so.

The present situation's influence

These days we are discussing the acceptance or rejection of the so called European Constitution, which is not clearly a constitution, in the classic sense of the term, but more like a treaty among states. Everyone who manifests themselves around this Constitution or Treaty want to emphasise their Europeanism: those who declare their vote in favour, as well as those who are

against or will abstain, they all say that it is in the name of their Europeanism. Probably, behind the words there are concepts and different, and even contrary, projects.

For some, especially for those who share a more French matrix Jacobin vision of what Europe should be, this Constitution is a kind of *photo-finish*. *"We have already achieved the Europe we wanted, this is your definitive model and, therefore, it is necessary to set it and guarantee it with a Constitution"*.

A Europe conceived as a Club of States in which even the president of the European Commission, the European government, sourly complains that much of the members of the Club desire a weak Commission in contrast to strong states. It is just that this Commission, this government, even its president, do not address the will of its citizens in a direct manner, they make proposals and the state chooses through its current governments. But in any case, there is a sector for which the term Europeanism means satisfaction for the Europe that is already built, which is considered adequate and sufficient, and there is a vocation of setting it and celebrating it with a Constitution.

For others, Europeanism and the Constitution are not fixation of the point of arrival, but the establishment of a path to advance. This attitude is present in the interior of many institutions of the Union, who notice the imperfections of the system and its democratic deficits. But, for them, the only problem (although the only solution) is time. *"We are doing fine, the path is the correct one, but there is a long way to go. A lot of time has to pass to be able to reach our objectives"*. The Constitution would establish this path.

Nevertheless, a third party who proclaim themselves as Europeanists in a sincere and effective manner, still exists, without considering that we are on the right track nor, even less, naturally, that we are on a good point of arrival. For these sectors, Europe's deficits are obvious. The solution is not only in time, because the problem is not only in the fact that we have only gone through part of the path. For these sectors, the problem is that we have been following, for some time, an incorrect path that does not reach any real objectives. They are Europeanists because they share the same objective, the idea of Europe. But they are critical, not only with the current Europe, but also with the Europe that this path taken is leading us to. These sectors are against the Constitution. Because if it is, like some say, the idea of Europe that we have, the current Europe does not satisfy it. And if it is how others say, the idea of a path to the future, the route chosen does not satisfy them and they consider that, at a certain point of the route, maybe at the very beginning, Europe took the wrong way in some of its junctions.

In consequence, it is necessary to ask if now is the right time to provide Europe with a constitution, whatever the real content of the Constitution is and the ways which they have been reached. If it is about unifying Europe like the current European Union has articulated, if it is simply about providing constitutional solemnity to what already is the every day practice (is a more general line), it doesn't seem necessary. If what is desired is to mark a path, forms of evolving, that can take us to another Europe that we have not yet seen nor know over all how it would be, then maybe a Constitution is a useful tool. But in this case, not this Constitution. Another kind of basic framework is

imaginable, federative, where the real Europe can evolve into the possible and desirable Europe.

The most evident thing is that Europe has been built from the State-Nations, according to the needs and mistrusts of the states and parting from the will of the states. This may seem good or bad, it may indicate that there already was the initial idea, or that it is a betrayal to the Europeanist project.

The will of the states has not always gone in the same direction: they have been active and inoperative, with the aim of advancing or restraining; they have been asymmetric, because the weight of the states is also asymmetric. But we advance a consideration: this Europe, made to measure to the states, does not exhaust, it doesn't even start, the transforming potential that a new Europe could have, capable of inventing a new system of articulating diversity and making it possible to govern. A Europe of the states is, in the end, a conservative Europe, that does not satisfy the expectations of evolution and that, therefore, does not generate expectations for global evolution.

Some political parties and social sectors adapted to the European horizon what has been made the world anti-globalisation motto, and at one time said "another Europe is possible". Because, the same sectors would have also said, "another world is possible". In both cases they are right, but not entirely. It is true, another Europe is possible, another world is possible. Not one Europe, but many. Not another world, but many. And out of all these other possible Europes, some are better, and others worse. At the moment, neither in the current debate, and much less, in the underlying debate is it enough with proclaiming criticism with the existing Europe, not even with the path that the European construction has covered. Next to the critical attitude, there now should be the basis of an alternative. And many other Europes are possible, but not all desirable. Each one must decide towards which one of these Europes it is possible to aim to. What defects are observed in the real Europe, as well as what virtues can be added. This is one of the objectives of the following pages.

The opportunity of creating a European dream

When, after World War II, the process that we have been discussing begins and that should conclude with the European unity, we have already commented that the importance of the project goes further than the continent. It is an importance that exceeds the strict current reasons. In history there have been projects that have been more or less diffuse. However, they all had been imperial projects, of European domain, under the great central hegemonic power. Even Nazism was presented as a Europeanist project. In the Roman Empire, Alexander the Great's Empire or the Sacred Roman-German Empire planned an intention of European unity, but it was the conquest's unity. The project that is born after World War II has a profoundly different nature. It is, in its beginnings, a project of free junction and, deep down, a project that provides a new way of organising and articulating the

political space, a way of governing ourselves.

For this reason, the ideal Europeanist project went further than the European continent in its influence. Because, in a way, it was an example. Europe would be reinvented, redefined, re-founded, over new bases and preparing itself for a different world that, maybe then, was already visible. More than the creation of the Society of Nations, the creation of a united European space (or, better said, the generation of a first economic, and later political, project that needed to lead to this unit) was posed as an innovative proposal for organising the world, that went further than the planetary map, created through the State-Nations and colonial empires. A path leading towards a new global world that would need innovative forms of articulation and government. A united Europe could be the scale model for the new global world, that could already be visualised, organised and governed with great spaces of junctures, not only European. And a united Europe could also be a formula for channelling the presence and the weight of the western world in this global world which technology, communications and transports could already allow to imagine. It was, according to a slogan that later became famous, taking imagination to power, corner routines.

The dream of the united Europe

This first dream of Europe was not simply positive hope. It was also a reaction. The idea of achieving a united Europe was born from the will for the future, as well as fear for the past. Europe had suffered two terrible continental wars in thirty years. Europe's strong nucleus, Germany and France, had openly fought three times in sixty years, and we can also add to this the Napoleon wars in the two centuries prior. Great Britain entered into the post war period with the intuition that the new world order would end all colonial empires and that, therefore, not only Great Britain, but the combination of European Countries as well, would withdraw into its continental territory. And this is, without a doubt, one of the reasons that motivated Churchill to launch the idea of a united Europe, even before the end of the war.

But when this end arrived, Stalin's Soviet Union became a physical threat to the European continent: after World War II, a third world war started, the cold war, of different characteristics than the other two, but no less a war, in which Europe had all the possibilities to become a playing field again. A cold war that, in the end, left Europeans in a subsidiary position for the first time in history, a prisoner between the two great potencies: United States and the Soviet Union. A united Europe seemed to be the only way out between the two giants, but a hypothetical giant Europe could not have, in any way, the homogeneity nor the unity of the other two that covered the Atlantic side and threatened the east side.

All the elements of the situation participated in the European dream, and we will analyse them further on. But in this initial dream, expectations of another kind mix. It was a reaction against the ghost of Europe's decline, heir of the Spenglerian ghost of the decline in the West. Europe's history is full of

ascending and descending empires. Since the Spanish Roman Empire, from the Ottoman Empire that had started the century as the great ill one of Europe and it would end in a defensive and subsidiary position, up to the Austrian-Hungarian Empire that had been defined as a prison of the people and ended giving birth to a multitude of unstable and mixed states.

Now, the continent saw itself threatened by the decline and marginality. The war had destroyed cities and factories, roads and railways. Europe, in its time, had saved the challenge of the opening to the Atlantic and even the Indian Ocean. And an idea started taking shape in which the new world rode over the Pacific, in a sea between the United States and the Soviet Union, China's and Japan's sea, the sea where the war that started in Europe had ended. The European Unity was a reaction against the threat of decline that was being announced in this change in the world's political and economic crux, from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

For this reason, in the 50's of the 20th century, speaking about the great opportunity of generating a European dream was possible. A dream that in the beginning is embodied in initiatives of very modest appearances and centred in the economic field. The coal and steel communities, the elements needed to make war, let's not forget. The first steps are taken in the economics field, because Marxism had introduced a half truth in the collective conscience: that the super-structures are born from the infrastructures that ideas and political projects translate into economic and production relationships. And, in contrast, as Max Weber said, changes in the ideas, changes in infrastructures, can provoke modifications in the economy, in the super-structure. So any of the following statements can be true: Protestantism is the son of Capitalism, or, the Protestant ethics settles the basis for the apparition of a new Capitalist. In Any case, the European dream is set off on small and shy crutches with fearful imagination. The consequences will be paid later on.

Nevertheless, there exists the possibility of creating a European dream, or various European dreams, in any case, different to what is called American dream. The American dream is an individual progress project, a personal or familiar horizon in a new world where everything is possible. The European dream is a collective dream, in an old world punished by wars and where everything is possible. The American dream, in a way, has already been fulfilled, it has already materialised. A society geared towards this individual triumph, towards the kingdom of individual will has been created. The possible European dream should be an alternative or an example, thought for Europe, but with the rest of the world as a landscape, thinking about the future. Nevertheless, in many aspects the dream will not occur. Only a project is born filled with ambitions as well as lustre. If the European space is to work out, if it can find a happy formula, other spaces in the world can follow the same route: the Islamic world, Latin America, Southeast Asia, the Middle East... But the European project is born in conditions that are clearly defined and with specific aims and expectations. We will analyse this in the following parts.

Reaction against war

Probably, the first objective in chronological order and by importance, in the appearance of the European dream, was to avoid war in the interior of the continent. The modern and contemporary Europe, which was conventionally initiated with the invasion of Constantinople by the Turks, has lived war as an endemic and permanent evil. And not only in its hypothetical eastern frontiers with the Ottoman Empire, but also right in the centre of the European peninsula, and especially, in the western zone. The French-German rivalry has caused Western Europe's nucleus to always be punished by conflicts. Nevertheless, we must add to this the prior French-British rivalry, the confrontations in Europe and overseas of the British and Spanish Empires, and Italy as a battlefield since the Middle Ages until after its independence, struggling with the Austrian-Hungarian Empire. In 1945, Europe had on its shoulders, almost 500 years of permanent wars, with short periods in between.

In spite of this, Europe had lived a dream of peace, an illusion of truce between the end of the French-Prussian war in 1870 and the beginning of the World War I in 1914. Besides the Balkan war and the strictly civil conflicts, there was almost thirty five years of peace in which the myth of the European spa was generated, Europe's summer. Literature has left us numerous and brilliant testimonies. George Steiner speaks about this in "In Bleu Beard's Castle" and Stephan Zweig, in a shocking manner, does the same in his memoirs: "The World of Yesterday, Memoirs of a European". Technological progress, the great exhibitions and the colonial expansion created an illusion that Europe had reached a stable and solid balance.

Zweig's memoirs clearly reflects the surprise and pain with which part of the European intellectuals saw in 1914 how (after the assassination of the archduke) a war that seemed impossible was wasting away, hate among the Europeans that was considered to be exceeded only by culture and civilisation. We will return to this issue later on (precisely following commentaries from Steiner), although it is important to stress some similarities between the mirage of eternal peace that Europeans wanted to believe in at the end of the century and the one we have constructed for ourselves in the last decades.

When all that world that seemed so solid and stable started to fail, Europe was perplexed. But immediately after World War I, after contemplating that fierce slaughter, the innumerable deaths in the battle of the trenches and the new powerful war machinery, Europe constructed itself another fragile illusion of eternal peace: after that atrocity, war could not be possible again. The nations had become immune to war. The 20's are a new version, reduced and more fragile, of the illusion of peace that the Europeans had established towards the end of the 19th century. Humanity and civilisation had advanced enough for Europe not to become again, for a long time, the scene of another horrible slaughter.

In this sense, World War II confronted Europeans with the fragility of the peace mirage that they wanted to build. It is a load of deceptions: deception of the culture and the civilisation. Progress is not enough to stop

the cruelty. On the contrary: some of the new forms of cruelty appeared associated to science and technology, firstly the Jewish holocaust, but also the bombardments of cities, civil deaths in Gernika, London, Dresden or Hiroshima. We know that science and technology do not cause the catastrophe, but we can also see that the scientific and technological progresses are not enough to avoid it. It is a deep deception, from which a need of formulas to guarantee peace is born.

The French-German border has been the critical point where all the latest large wars in Europe were. For this reason, the European project houses the intention of overcoming, by cultural elevation, the eternal French-German dispute. An intent of cooling down this border through the creation of a wider space. Probably, if we would have asked the first instigators of the European unity, not strictly political, nor strictly utopian, to justify their initiative in a short phrase, they would have said: European unity is needed to avoid war in Europe; thinking, without a doubt, of the endemic wars of the past; thinking of the great deceptions of the fifty years prior; but also thinking of the new threats that existed in the continent at the time.

Someone wrote, with certain sarcasm, that Stalin is the great father of a united Europe. This is not so false: the other great driving force in united Europe's principles is the threat of Stalin's Soviet Union. Europe is united because of the war, and, furthermore, it is united because of Stalin. And this historical origin motivates Europe's embryo to be a determined way. In first place, geographically: it only reached the Iron Curtain and, therefore, prevails over the French-German axis, and a western nucleus completed by Great Britain and Italy. Secondly, in the military: Europe is born as an economic world potency, and not as a military potency because, in the face of the Soviet threat, it delegated its defence (and this "delegation" is, in part, a euphemism of abandonment) to the United States, with the savings that this entails in all senses. Third, in politics: Europe is born as a club of democracies which excludes the communist dictatorships of the East, as well as the military dictatorships of the South.

In any case, it is evident that the first united Europe is, mainly, fruit of the cold war. The coincidence in time is not by chance: the first steps towards unity are made parallel to the implicit declaration of the cold war, which is a war between powers, but also a war between blocks. And united Europe forms part of one of the blocks, to the point of generating suspicions of alignment in the ever neutral Switzerland, which, from a geographical, political and economic point of view, is more Europe than anyone else.

But unified Europe is also fruit of the memory of war; of the most recent memory of the endemic conflict between France and Germany; of the oldest memory related to its own ethnic and cultural origins: a great diversity of people over a limited territory that has been the source of conflicts which only could be resolved through a clash or a pact.

Europe's foundational heterogeneity, that dead-end street of the people that for millennia has been settling in Europe, commonly mixed over the same territory and often superimposed, is either resolved with a pact or it

slips into an open conflict. For centuries, the relationship between the people has been of conflict. Tired of wars, scared of the new one, disappointed by the illusions of peace towards the end of the 19th century and the decade of the 20's, and aware that they are losing strength in the world, some Europeans should see that the time of making a pact has arrived.

I remember that, in the middle of the Balkan war, after returning from the conflict zone, I had the chance of having conversations where I tried to explain, from an informative point of view, what was occurring. I created a map of Bosnia where all the Serbian, Croatian and Muslim enclaves were indicated before the war. It was a very complicated map, so much so that I call it a *moles* map. In a discussion, some secondary school students made the comment that a map that was so dispersed and fragmented would inevitably cause a conflict. I would tell them that in Europe a map exists that, if were seen correctly, seemed very similar to the one of Bosnia and that it was equally, if not more, fragmented and dispersed. I was talking about a map of Switzerland, more fragmented because diverse religions mixed, as well as languages and different levels of economic development. And that this was also the motive of conflict. I would tell them that the difference, in very general terms and with an educational will, is that the conflicts in Bosnia were resolved with gunshots and in Switzerland, they had been resolved by creating pacts. In a way, Europe's deep illusion of peace must lie in this dilemma, and opt for the Swiss way and not the Balkan way for managing its own diversity.

A dream of progress

United Europe, seen especially from some countries that initially were excluded, was a club of the wealthy. If I am allowed to say so with certain frivolousness, it was not clear if it was necessary to be rich for entering or they made you rich upon entering. This was the perspective, remembered by many people, which prevailed in the states of the south of Europe that were not part of the initial nucleus, among other reasons, because their political regimes did not allow it, and that they were poor countries in relation to the European Economic Community: Spain, Portugal, Greece... For the citizens of these countries, entering into the Community was a economic dream, a dream of progress and wellbeing. It was also a political dream: it was obvious that they could not enter until their own regimes were comparable with the other Community countries. Becoming part of a common market was perceived, in general, as an opportunity instead of a threat. Europe had the prestige of those clubs that you want to be a part of but they still don't admit you.

This perception, that lasted various years in the southern states of Europe, was also produced, in a certain amount, in the eastern countries, after the fall of the Berlin wall and the defeat of the communist regimes. For those countries, Europe continued to be an opportunity and a promise of wellbeing. I remember I had the opportunity of witnessing the independence

referendum campaign in Slovenia. To the surprise of many of the observers the campaign had a really scarce patriotic epic. It was not a campaign of national anthems, nor flags, nor national affirmation. The discourse of the secession parties was very simple: our economic future depends on entering the European Union; we will enter alone before having to drag along Yugoslavia. Slovenia was without a doubt richer than the former Yugoslavia. At the same time (although this belongs to another field of reflections) ethnically the most homogeneous. Its ties with Austria and Italy were tight. Slovenians voted in favour of separating from a Yugoslavia that started to foresee the symptoms of a future civil war, fundamentally for economic reasons and the yearning of prosperity and European progress. The same process is projected, at a certain time, over Hungary, Czechoslovakia or Poland in identical terms and with the same intensity as it had over Spain, Portugal and Greece.

The will of participating in the club of the wealthy, the need of coming out of a dictatorship and poverty were combined and seemed (maybe not with all the justice) two faces of the same coin.

And truthfully, the European Union was a club of the wealthy. But the same question remains: is it necessary to be rich to form part of the European Union or do you become rich upon joining it. It is obvious that the nucleus of the European Economic Community was a historically rich nucleus. Some of the great industrial powers of the 19th century are countries that have created the industrial revolution. Destroyed, in part, because of the war, although, with a productive infrastructure and, above all, a very high economic and industrial culture. The beginning of the process towards the European Unity, at the end of the war and at the beginning of the cold war, is indicated by a political decision with large economic repercussions: the United States needs a rich Europe, they think that a western Europe (the one that is now under their umbrella thanks to the new bipolar division of the world), depressed and poor, is a fertilised field for communism and, therefore, a strategic advantage for the Soviet Union. Because of this, the United States is directly implied in the economic reconstruction of Europe and, specially, in the economic reconstruction of Germany, the motor of Western Europe, but also an advanced border with the eastern block. The Marshal Plan is a plan that also encourages Europe towards unity.

Lets take into consideration that some of the countries that were left under the Soviet orbit are historically industrial powers, and they had also made their own industrial revolution. But in a way, communism broke their trajectory, making their economic structures obsolete, and their proposal into an objective equality more than of progress. The parallel evolution, but with profound differences among the two Germanies during the cold war, would be the example. As the war ended, the two Germanies were in similar situations, with the exception of a light advantage of what would be the FRG regarding the industrial concentration. But forty-five years after, when the re-unification is produced, the GDR (which is industrially the most powerful country in Eastern Europe!) contributes an obsolete industry, charged with social liabilities besides being ecologically more unsustainable. And after the

unification, a certain junction is produced between the two Germanies, but not a late repetition to the east of what was the German miracle in the west. The cultural differences, not of academic culture, but visions of the world and of value systems, are still visible, and not in a positive manner for the east.

In the façade of the united European process, a principle resides which in time has acquired more importance: so a political and economic unity may exist, there must be a determined homogenisation of the economic levels between the different territories; the great imbalances must be overcome. Therefore, from the beginning, united Europe has wanted to generate redistribution politics with the goal of making the rents and economic capacities equal in all the zones that form it. In the beginning, Italy was greatly benefited by these flows, that normally go from north to south; afterwards, the Mediterranean countries were incorporated in the Union; now, it must be the eastern countries. A cohesion fund is spoken about and in any case, resources are injected stemming from the most powerful countries and that go to the apparently most needy countries. This idea of a providing Europe, of a Europe that will drain resources from the rich countries to inject them to the not so rich countries, this idea of Europe as an economic solution for those who have the luck of being admitted into the club, has also fed, for years, the Europeanism in the poor countries, or less rich.

But now, we can still ask ourselves some questions that we will try to partially answer in later chapters, when we will also contrast this European dream with reality: Up to what point has the real progress of many countries that have been incorporated to the Union stem precisely from this incorporation? Up to what point is it not produced prior and for other motives? Up to what point has this systematic flow of resources provoked a public subsidy culture that nowadays has become an obstacle for progress?

A shared welfare model

If one of the basic principles of Europe's unification process was to fight against the imbalances between territories, included was also fighting against, or lessen, the internal imbalances of each one of the territories and each one of the societies. Built under the shadow of the free market and in contrast to the severe equalitarianism model of the communist countries, united Europe could not be part of this absolute equalitarianism, although it needed to create a shared welfare model, a model without deep imbalances. In part, because of religious convictions; in part, for the same reason that is behind the Marshall Plan: in the context of the cold war, there is no interest of a poor Western Europe nor, if possible, with poor people, which would be the fertilised terrain for communism.

Europe wants to build a state and society model that, without breaking the rules of the game, could fight the social imbalances and spread welfare. The two large political forces over which the Europe's unification process is built, Christian democracy and social democracy, share the idea of a strong intervening state, very present in daily life, that drains its resources of the

highest rents with the goal of spreading basic social services, making them available to all its population. It is what we call the state of welfare, which had its high point in the post war Europe, particularly, in the centre and north. Even if there is no need to say so, this is not the model of relation between the state and the citizen that governs the other great western society: the United States.

In Europe, the Christian democracy arrives through the social sensibility of religious and humanistic inspiration: the social democracy, because it considers that the state of welfare is the possible and desirable intersection among its egalitarian principles and the reality of the market. Everyone has noticed something: freedom of market may exist without political freedom; what cannot exist is political freedom without freedom of market. Keynes and his school of thought took charge of the rest. The most influential communist of the 20th century leaves the theory prepared that allows the governments an intentional intervention in the economy.

In Europe, especially in the post war, what we vulgarly call capitalism, tries to, and achieves, denying what for Marxism was a faith dogma: the society's economic evolution will make the rich even richer and the poor even poorer. The welfare state, with what it represents of capitalism, correction and reform, responds saying (and also with facts) that it is possible for the society at large to be richer reducing the social differences instead of deepening them. In some cases, paying the price of reducing, in some social sectors, the competitive encouragement, and the will of improvement through the effort that the progress motivation exerts.

Just some years later, the old Marxism, perplexed, seeing itself obligated to acknowledge that it has been this way in western societies and, especially, in societies of welfare state, will try to redo its discourse and substitute the individuals for territories: so that some countries can be more and more richer, and others, more and more poorer.

By the way, now we are here, for what the debate concerns. Besides, in my opinion, it is suspected that this affirmation is so fallacious and aprioristic like the one that referred to the individuals. Opposing the Marxist idea, that presented the wealth of the world like a limited cake where the wealth should be shared according to a principle of communicating vessels (if one side is going higher, it means that the other is lowering), the capitalist, liberal or social democrat idea said that the cake could be made bigger so that everyone's part increases at the same time. Maybe not all the increases would have the same measurements, but it would all be possible simultaneously.

In any case, we could say that in the European dream that formed at the beginning of the last post war era in Europe, not only was there a geographic organization, but a political and social model as well. To the idea of Europe, territories were being incorporated, not in the extent that they belonged nor according to its geographical space, in which they obviously always have been, but to the extent to which they were adopting the model. And the tests at Europe's door have not evidently been over the map, but over the political and social model, that is held by three pillars: the political democracy, the economic progress through an advanced free

market economy, and the state of welfare understood as a system spread out in this progress. With this recipe, European unity could be built and with this unity the endemic wars and Western Europe's decline could be avoided, a pillar of a shared civilisation with North America and other countries such as Australia and Central and South America, which Europe wants attract.

Also, this process develops at a time in which a very economist analysis of the social relations was hegemonic. The dominating interpretation methods agreed that the origin of the conflicts were the inequalities and the economic competencies, the clash of interests. Europe offered progress and welfare, because they soothed the social tension of economic origin. Furthermore, at the time, the participation in the genesis of less material conflicts was scorned: the identities, the ways of seeing the world, the cosmogony, the ideas. Europe started to articulate with coal and iron, and before being European Union, it was European Economic Community. Everything points to the economy. Now, we are realising that the economy is not everything.

Diversity articulation

Form the first moment in which the European unity project is presented, its founding fathers inevitably noticed the following: Europe was the space for diversity. Europe can only be if it is capable of articulating diversity. Sometimes, the United States of Europe is spoken about, in parallel to the United States of America. Or a certain parallelism can also be found between the name of the European Union and the Soviet Union. When the unifying process began in the middle of the cold war, Europe appears (above all from an economic point of view; not so much political; and nothing from a military point of view) like a third great universal power. United States, the Soviet Union and the European Union. In the names of the three great powers (China and Japan were still far behind, specially from our traditional Eurocentrism) the term "union" appears, or one of its derivatives, but what is evident is that what is being unified, the pieces of theses unions, are clearly different in each one of the three cases.

We take, solely as a symbol, a visible aspect but nothing less, such as the language. A traveller can cross the United States from coast to coast, from New York to California, speaking only English. A traveller can take a train in Moscow and arrive at Vladivostok only speaking Russian. If the same traveller wants to go from Lisbon to Warsaw, wherever he passes through, if he wants to communicate, he must change languages many times or use a common commercial language, which, by the way, is not spoken in any of the countries that he goes through. And language is just an example. However, it is obvious that the pieces that are united in the European puzzle have a much higher heterogeneity level than those that configure, or can configure, in the other large world spaces.

The states that make up the United States respond to territorial divisions that are not gratuitous nor by chance. They are the product of modern

historic realities, but powerful. The North-American space, immense in relation to an initially reduced population, produced specific characters from an also very diverse geography, but with common cultural and language roots that keeps the population much more homogeneous than in Europe. Canada has more internal heterogeneity, but with a relatively small amount of pieces. And NAFTA, the North American Free Trade Agreement, does not have the political ambition and the future aims as the European Union: it is a more conventional and specialised treaty.

Regarding the former Soviet Union, even the current Russia, in spite of having great internal heterogeneity (conflictive enough, as we can see in Chechnya), its structure is greatly more similar to ancient empires than to a co-ordinated and agreed one like the European Union is trying to be; it doesn't compare. Like the ancient Russian Empire, this space, that covers from Ukraine to Vladivostok, presents, in any case, a hierarchical heterogeneity, with a Russian hegemony under which other realities exist, but with a subsidiary roll. It could be said that Russia is free of the European heterogeneity problem, because it still doesn't have any project than remaining how it is.

For all this, the European Union project is, without any other possibility, a great pact for a new diversity articulation. Diversity may be perceived as an advantage or inconvenience. I remember many meetings with European movie producers that located the causes of the industrial audio-visual weaknesses here, in relation to Hollywood. A North American production is created with an internal homogeneous market, both culturally and linguistically, of almost three hundred million people. The internal market already allows an ambition and considerable expenses. On the other hand, any European production is created in a linguistic and cultural market that is much more limited and that, by no means, can it cover all Europe: a German movie is equally, if not more, foreign in Paris than a North American movie. This impedes generating an industrial framework in the culture industries as the one in the United States.

Therefore, diversity could be an economic difficulty, but also a cultural richness that becomes a virtue: a great plurality of voices. But in any case, Europe is what it is. And we can imagine creating it as a homogeneous space. Heterogeneity is its characteristic. And, depending on according to how it is viewed, the biggest and best characteristic of the European space. When someone says, out loud, that they want a unified Europe, disregarding the option of a homogeneous Europe as impossible and the far away possibility of a Europe that functions as a union of the people, what they really want to know is how fast its diversity can be articulated.

Many of the European cultural realities without sufficient acknowledgement, much of the hidden and invisible European people behind the wall of the states, participated, even if only for small instants, of the Europe that, since it had to be diverse, would end up being acknowledged and visible.

The European project had to include a more just and efficient articulation

proposal of the diversity. In first place, because if it did not, it would not work for an essentially diverse Europe, fragmented, full of people, languages, cultures, origins and stories. But also because it would not comply correctly with the objectives for which it was devised. I was saying before that the European unity is put into gear at a time in which the roll of economy and the interests of the origin of the conflicts were overestimated: it was said that it is the only real cause. In the second half of the 20th century, we have realised (or we should have realised) that behind the conflicts there lays a clash of interests, but also, problems in the management of diversity.

The Balkans, mentioned on various occasions, is a clear example. Those who think that wars only occur when oil is at stake, do not have it easy explaining what happened in the last Balkan war. We must admit that oil is extremely important; probably too much, without a doubt, and a change in the energy models that make us less dependent on fossil fuels would be a step towards prosperity in the world, as well as for peace. But oil can not explain everything. The clashes between identities, ways of viewing the world and ways of articulating diversity within the human species, they all are a part of the history of conflicts and their resolution. Europe's project must be one of a new articulation of diversity, because without this, it can not be a project of peace and progress.

This new articulation of diversity was also an opportunity for a more efficient organization of the governments. A basic unquestionable ascertainment exists: governments can be more efficient in small and attainable units than in large and centralised spaces. In the primitive idea of Europe, this was translated in the beginning to subsidiarity which meant exactly that: it is always better to resolve citizen problems in a close and tangible field, than in one that seems far. But this principle, combined with the need of acknowledging real diversities, could have pointed towards two more ascertainments.

The first, and more simple, the need of decentralisation. Certainly, it is not the same to administratively decentralise to bring the government closer to the citizens than to acknowledge the live realities of the people. But they are things that can go in the same direction, perfectly compatible.

The second ascertainment is that medium sized political entity governments are more efficient (and this has been proven in recent years) than the machinery of large states, that always tend to centralise power. In the last decades, small states such as Denmark, Finland or Ireland have proved their agility of adapting to new realities such as technology. And they have proved to be more governable spaces, closer to each one of their citizens, more flexible and participate more than states of a Jacobine model, some with vague imperial impact. The subsidiarity, the decentralisation, the acknowledgement of the people's reality, allowed to see a map of Europe in which, with an effort in imagination and realism, it would be possible to govern itself in a great common continental frame, but with diverse minor units, custom made for humans, agile and adaptable, where political participation forms are possible. All these objectives were different, but they could converge. To build an inciting dream of Europe was to search for a way

of advancing in these directions, also perfectly compatible.

A place in the world for Europe

In the history of ideas, it is not exceptional that certain interesting contributions, which can participate in a more complete interpretation of reality, are left un-legitimised and un-authorised when someone makes bad use of them or a maximalist interpretation and making this the only possible interpretation. For example, Marx provides us with an economicist and dialectic interpretation of history which, nowadays, no one can disregard. But when this has become a dogma, the only factor to interpret history and the present, forgetting any others, it generates perverse interpretations of the past and, especially, totalitarian projects for the future. With all the distances, when Huntington formulates his theory about the clash of civilisations, he is not saying something that, to me, does not seem all that true: we can not explain the conflicts of our time if we do not acknowledge that, in the side of friction between interests, there also exists other frictions between ways of viewing the world. When this becomes a univocal interpretation, when everything is tried to be explained according to the clash of civilisations, when civilisation is confused with religion (presenting, for example, Islamism as a civilisation), reasoning behind the logic is lost. Therefore, when someone tries to explain the current world (and act upon it) as if everything that occurs is a clash between civilisations, wrong solutions are taken.

When the idea of a unified Europe was developed, Spengler's ideas, expressed in his book "The Decline of the West", go through a period of discredit. The wrongful use on behalf of Nazism and the maximalist interpretations done by some totalitarians in Europe, at the time of using it as a source of legitimisation of their thought, achieve de-legitimising Spengler.

His basic idea was that humanity's history was the succession of diverse civilisations that also meant successive declines, then maintained, and still does, a great subterranean influence. And it is true that a large part of history seemed to fall into this scheme. What Spengler did not see right from his totalitarian and military lookout tower, is that civilisations, as well as the humans that have staired in it, can break their Spenglerian cycles. There are an innumerable amount of people that do so. Anonymously or resoundingly. We can find many people and families that, with their will, have broken cycles such as the famous three generations observed by Spengler. Europe, that within itself is not a civilisation, but that it partakes in a more general civilisation, the Western one, can also learn to break with these cycles, at least internally within the continent. Furthermore, this can be part of the dream, of the great opportunity of a unified Europe.

Europe had been the centre of the world until the World War II. Its end is associated – not only on the side of the defeated, but also on the side of the winners – to the uncovering that this central roll is jeopardised and threatened. A jump in the historic cycle has been produced. In the new

cycle, Europe has more possibilities of being history's stage (the chess board where the main matches are played simultaneously to the United States and the Soviet Union) where it is a protagonist or a player in the match. With or without the use of the word, Europe confronts the threat of decline. Words are not used as much, because they are a part of a rejected vocabulary. But in another sense, not the one used by Spengler, but in the idea of loss of importance in the world and the loss of a future horizon, the idea of decline, the threat of decline, the need of reacting, forms part of the intellectual landscape in which Europe's unity is generated.

For example, Britain's traditional distance regarding the continent (Great Britain has been more linked, in a special way, to the United States than to Europe) is compensated by Churchill's intuition that is extremely true: the end of the world war would mean the beginning of a generalised de-colonisation process in which the several European states would have to separate from their territories overseas. In a way, Europe's unity is the compensation for this considerable loss that represents the end of colonial empires and the beginning of a new form of an exterior influence, that some would later call neo-colonialism or imperialism, but then it was to have other main actors: the United States, but also the Soviet Union.

Europe had formed its universal leadership by controlling science and technology, as well as, thanks to some population surpluses that mixed in other continents, leading minorities or as immigrant masses. But this leadership was not European in a strict sense. It was Spanish or Portuguese or French or British or German or Dutch. And in a non-combined, contradictory and confronted way. In any case, The European states, one by one, were not in any condition to maintain not even the shadow of this hegemony.

One of the most terrifying evils perpetrated by totalitarians in the thirties in Europe was to force the exodus of a generation of artistic and scientific talent, in the benefit of the United States. Besides the physical extermination of millions of people, the totalitarians expelled a generation of musicians, painters, scientists, men and women of the arts and sciences from Europe. The North American cultural hegemony of the 20th century is physically reinforced with people educated in Europe and recently arrived from Europe. The American film industry, in its first stages, is done by immigrants, mostly Jewish, that came from central Europe, and that nourish companies, as well as directors and the actors of Hollywood's beginnings. After World War II, the artistic vanguard centre clearly goes from Paris to New York. But it is not only (nor mainly) the artistic and cultural vanguard. The same process is reproduced, and maybe with more importance, in other fields such as thought and above all in scientific research, especially basic investigation. In this period, the transference process of science, thought and research from Europe to the United States and, to less extent and also declining, to the former Soviet Union, was accelerating.

On the other hand, Europe maintained very low birth rates, which, without a doubt, are the cause and effect of the welfare that settled in the continent. But, at the end of the 20th century, European voices that augur a comfortable

future appear. Secondly, United States was made into a world power; the far east is the great factory for humanity, and Europe has become a large spa, a great historical and cultural theme park, where one can live well, which attracts a constant immigration that compensates its low birth rate and that does the work that Europeans do not want to carry out.

A cartoon, which also serves as a warning, talks about a Europe full of beer drinking retirees, to whom the new immigrants of the Third World pay their pension. It is not clear that Europe was alarmed by the cartoon: beer is very popular and leaving some jobs to the recently arrived compatriots does not discomfort the whole of the Europeans. But I do not think that Europe's unity process was made, or should be made, just to confirm this division of rolls in the world and this horizon, apparently comfortable, but sustainable with difficulty and, in any case, subsidiary for Europe.

The European mentality, at least in part, gathers (although it is denied) some of Spengler's thesis about the decline of civilisation. It attempts a form of reaction. It can not be desperate, in spite of having lost weight in the world and the new decision making centres are elsewhere. The European Union appears as an opportunity. Maybe the last opportunity against this decline, announced and suspected. Can it be said, in the 21st century, that it has been a lost opportunity?

It is possible that the European dream, in the strict meaning, has never existed. It is possible that it was dreamt for some years and even in marginal positions. But it also seems clear that Europe needs a dream. A dream that encourages will. A dream that can not just be a simple ideal of conservation of what already exists, conformist, that goes further than just welfare, That has difficulties and challenges, and, therefore, mobilising. That it pushed us to act. A dream of creating a united Europe, to recreate the west starting with positive values which we can all believe and that is definitely a useful model for the whole of humanity.

The European reality

The embryonic idea of the European Union, its apparently utopian formulation generated, as we have seen, expectations and illusions. Maybe not all a dream. In any case, the dream of only some. But fifty years later, some of these illusions have been dissolved by reality. Some hopes that were deposited over the construction of a united Europe have not culminated, maybe because the biggest one has not been fulfilled: the true European construction. Instead of talking about Euro-scepticism, we should talk about Euro-disappointment. And probably what has been disappointed has not been the idea of Europe, that maintains some of its moving potentials intact, but the concrete way of carrying out this process. If what is tried to do is to generate a real European dream (a will in which the majority participates in), for the first time, the real Europe that we have is not a sufficiently solid base.

Apparently, this Euro-disappointment has grown in the last years, and it is one of the climates that preside in the current acceptance process on behalf of

the citizens, the Treaty that must provide Europe with a Constitution. In the debates over the so called European Constitution, to which I have had the opportunity to attend to, I have found people that will vote yes, some that will vote no and those who will abstain. What I have not found are enthusiasts. The most convincing argument in favour of the European Constitution is greatly modest and of an extraordinary simplicity and pragmatism: "the Constitution is better than the Treaty of Nice", that everyone agrees was an exceptionally poor agreement. The argument arsenal in favour of the new Constitution does not feed on the enthusiasm, but on a far off possibility of what the process could have as a dream from its beginnings (of a firm will of building a Europe that is really united). "Since the Constitution represents a small step forward, even if it is very small, we can not say no", we are told.

But to find the roots of this relatively Euro-disappointment, of these watered down illusions, we should not go back to the work that has been done since the European Convention in the last years, we should probably go farther back.

We have to admit, naturally, that some of the circumstances that came with the birth of the European unifying process have changed. The most important one of all: the cold war has ended. This has even modified the map of the real Europe. The East, now that the iron curtain that separated us has fallen, is calling at Europe's door. Europeans now do not feel fear of that Soviet Union that made Europe protect itself under the United States' military umbrella. The economies destroyed by the war not only have been recovered, almost all Europe has had their own post-war economic miracle as well. A German miracle, in the beginning. An Italian miracle, concentrated in the north. But also, and even before the entry of the Community, a Spanish economic miracle. Not to mention the Irish or Finn economic miracle, so close together in time and so impetuous. Or the complete incorporation to modern economy of Portugal and Greece.

Paradoxically, Great Britain and France probably have been the ones that have had less economic miracles, have obtained less economic benefits, in spite of their condition of motors of the European Union as victors (real or auto-proclaimed) of World War II. For the rest, the construction of the European Union has coincided with a prosperity cycle.

The Europe of the 21st century is not the same Europe as the one in the middle of the 20th century. It feels less threatened directly. It is richer. It has driven away from the United States. Since the forties, it has received great waves of immigration from outside the continent; in some countries because of the effects of de-colonisation that has sent Asians, sub-Saharan, Maghribians from the colonies to the metropolis; in other countries because of the calling effect produced by a mixture of economic progress, low birth rate and the disdain towards some of the jobs that are socially essential but badly valued economically and socially on behalf of wide sectors of the European population. This causes a change in the notion of diversity applied to Europe. Fifty years ago we could talk, referring to Western Europe (Eastern Europe was another thing), of a mosaic where the pieces were diverse but each one had a determined interior homogeneity. Now, the same pieces have become

heterogeneous. In the Western Europe there are important groups of people that do not come from Europe with customs, habits, visions of the world and religious beliefs that were non-existent in the European landscape before. A crucial aspect that will be mentioned repeatedly from diverse angles. Europe's composition has changed. The map is different, and therefore, what is inside the map is also different.

These changes in Europe are not the cause of the Euro-disappointment of which we talk about. The causes of the Euro-disappointment are of a more general character: the contrast between what was expected from Europe, the pragmatic objectives for which the unification process began, and what we have had. We mentioned that the project of Europe was an expectation of peace in the continent; a economic progress perspective for all its territories; a state of welfare that generates an appearance of social balance inside each of the societies; a desire of articulating diversity in a new and different manner; and a need of maintaining the political weight in the world. In each one of these objectives there exists a clear gap between what was desired and what was achieved. In some of the objectives (the economic progress) the gap is small and disputable. In others, such as the invention of a new way of articulating diversity that would have the people's reality in mind, the difference is bigger, and with graver consequences.

The Impact of Sarajevo

In a previous section, we stated that if the process of the European unity had any goal, that was to unbury the war in Europe. After the Greek civil war, it looked as if the goal had been achieved. There were violent episodes in Hungary and Czechoslovakia, but in both cases outside the communitarian Europe, and terrorist attacks in Western Europe not only in Great Britain and Spain but also in Germany and Italy. But for an exceptionally long period, Europe was free of wars, against what had represented its endemic evil for centuries. That is the reason why the beginning of the Balkan war causes a terrible impact on the European public opinion. As if, suddenly, a stone had broken the mirror. Sarajevo is seen as the return of war into Europe. And the images of Sarajevo, of Srebrenica, of Pristina, of all the war in the Balkans offered on the news of the European televisions, looked like some sort of remembrance of the scenery of Europe in the forties. Lines of refugees, concentration camps for prisoners, ethnic cleansing... It had nothing to do with the images of the wars in the Third World that the Europeans had been watching on television during the seventies. The main characters were closer to us. In front of those images, we had the feeling that they did not come from outside. It was obvious that, for a European, they came from inside. In some cases, it seemed they came from our own past.

It is true that former Yugoslavia did not belong to the European Union. So this was, from the Union's point of view, an external conflict. It was, but it was taking place in front of our home. And, furthermore, the circumstances made it seem as if the doors and windows of our home were not closed and

reinforced. The rebellions in Budapest or Prague were taking place on the other side of the Iron Curtain, which was a strong and heavy political frontier. But the war arrived at the Balkans when the iron curtain had already fallen; when the Berlin Wall had already fallen, and when Eastern Europe no more further than an insurmountable line painted on the map. And the Balkans is Europe, from all points of view, not only from the geographical point of view.

I remember my stay in Belgrade immediately before the war, where I interviewed some Serbian nationalists that took for granted that Milosevic was more nationalist than communist. I got the impression there was great political tension. But, for me, the war was unimaginable: people in Belgrade looked extremely close to me, really influenced by the American and Italian mass culture, they had seen the same movies and listened to the same records as us. At that moment, they did not look like the natural protagonists of a war so similar to the wars fifty years before. It is clear that my impressions were wrong.

Sarajevo made an impact on the European opinion and caused the scepticism of the Union, because it represented the return of war to Europe, even though it was not in United Europe. But this was also due to the fact that the United Europe had not been able to avoid war or to stop it when it started. Eventually, the Americans were the ones who managed to stop the war by taking part in European matters once again. Even worse: the limitations and flaws of United Europe helped to encourage war. It was quite clear in real life: the theoretically United Europe did not have an arranged unique external policy in front of the Balkans conflict, quite the contrary. The differences between the affections and the support of different countries on the Union for each of the contenders and the fact that each State of United Europe moved according to its own interests in the Balkans, without any type of coordination, helped to start the conflict.

The war in the Balkans meant a deep weakening of the credibility of the European Union as a whole. Fifty years after the beginning of the process of United Europe, the alliance and support policies that had existed before and during the World War I were reproduced in the Balkans, as if nothing had happened. The Germanic world played the role of its historical ally, of its historical way out to the Mediterranean, Catholic Croatia, of which it immediately recognized the independence. France, like Russia, but in this case from outside the Union, made clear its position towards Milosevic's orthodox Serbia, understood as some sort of blockage for the Germanic influence to expand towards the south, in the same way as – at the beginning of the twentieth century – it was understood as a blockage between the main Germanic powers and the Turkish empire. Greece also played Serbia's game, an ally in terms of orthodoxy, against Croatia, but especially against the Republic of Macedonia, which was considered by the Greek as a territorial menace. Spain lamented the secessions of Croatia and Slovakia, considering that they could encourage closer secessions. Italy was worried about its minority in Slovenia and Croatia, without missing any occasion for increasing the influence – especially the economic influence – in the East.

Let me give you a personal but exemplifying opinion: in Serbia, Croatia,

Macedonia or Kosovo, during the years of the war, it was impossible to say that one was simply European. You had to give more details. Entering Croatia with a German passport meant entering the country as a friend. On the contrary, this same passport was not well seen in Serbia. The Grand Serbia flag hung in the Serbian hotels in Pristina, in Kosovo, and it was placed next to the Greek flag. In Macedonia, it was clear their hostility towards Greece; even some ministers from Macedonia asked me whether the pro-Serbian position of Spain had something to do with the fact that the Spanish queen had Greek origin. Paradoxically, the Macedonians were much closer to the British, whom they considered their natural allies. In the Serbian customs, the French and the Spanish were well seen. But if the Spanish passport was issued in Barcelona, the situation changed a little.

I am not talking about mere anecdotes. They are symptoms of the problem. Sarajevo generates euro-scepticism because we have not been able to prevent the return of the war to Europe. But also because, in the first big continental war crisis, united Europe does not behave as United Europe, but it behaves exactly in the same way as it did before the union. Each State makes its specific interests re-emerge, and they are opposed to other States of the same Union, and they adopt the alliances that come from the geographical policy of the confronted European States. France and Germany adopt contradictory positions again. Their external policies regarding the Balkans remind them of former distrusts between them. Sarajevo represents the war in Europe, but it is also something different: it is the proof of the fact that, as far as external policy is concerned, Europe does not exist. There are only separate States. The Union does not have any external policy. Each of the States that form the Union has its own policy, which often contradicts the policy of a neighbouring State, even though one assumes that they are colleagues in the European project. Sarajevo is the great disappointment in the most sensitive aspect of the European project, which was initially developed to become a united continent living – consequently – in peace. And all this in order to defend some specific interests, a bit mean, in front of a great project like the European Union.

Progress, imbalance, technology

One cannot have any doubt about the fact that the half century of European construction has represented – for the countries involved – a cycle of material progress and economic growth. It is not true that the European construction in itself has been the cause. Neither can we imagine that it has had nothing to do. The countries in Southern Europe, with the exception of Italy, trusted that the entrance in the communitarian Europe would help them leave their economic delay behind. That economic delay was due to their partial and globally late incorporation to modernity and industrialization. For these countries, the economic change was mostly undergone before their incorporation: tourism based partially on low prices and some industrial locations based also on low wages favoured this change. It is true that this was also favoured by the perspective of their incorporation to a common

European market. And it was consolidated by the imposition of the Union of rationalized policies and the control of the public budget, which made up for a given historical tendency for the state to intervene and to enlarge things. But these countries entered the economically unified Europe with half their homework done.

What we can identify as the most recent and spectacular economic miracle of Western Europe, the Irish miracle, also consists of two factors which do not necessarily have something to do with their taking part in the process of European unification. A special relation with the United States, by means of the Irish dispersion and – especially – by means of the language, has brought to Ireland many American investments, which coincided with their determination to use new technologies of information: in a way, Ireland has managed to find a shortcut towards modernity, without having to experience the stage of the industrial revolution. In order to be able to do this, its membership in Europe has been quite important: the American investments have always needed plants in all the places where they are settled; in Europe, Ireland has fulfilled part of this function. But this is not a reason to claim that it was a straightforward effect due to that membership.

The European policies to balance economy among the different territories and also among the different social sections can be considered generally satisfactory. The effect of the European Unity on the economic policies of some states with an inefficient, interventionist and inflationist tradition, have helped to settle – in their respective countries – an effect of economic rationality transformed into welfare. But these policies to restore balance have produced some sort of cultural effects, by creating conformist and relaxed mentalities. In some areas of Europe and in some social sections, there has grown the habit of subsidy, bearing in mind the idea that the state funds and the flows to re-establish balance between the most powerful economies and the weakest ones were not an exceptional and temporary mechanism, but a lifelong need, a durable mechanism.

It is evident that all the policies aimed at re-establishing social and territorial balance try to reach the goal of progressively reducing the distance between the powerful economies and the weak ones, until they defeat the initial imbalance. Consequently the difference must keep narrowing until the transference of resources is unnecessary. But, in Europe, there has often been the impression that this transference was an everlasting act of justice, that the money that a given country received would last forever, for the simple reason that they were poor and that the goal was not to reduce the distance but to balance the wages. The cultural effects derived from this broke up characters.

It had already happened in the territories and it has also happened inside each of them among the different social and productive sections. The idea of protection implied in the European model has created the image of some cautious paternal public powers, in front of which some sections and some territories only have to wait for their resources. And these sections waiting for the subsidy that they consider a right, like a prize for the simple fact of existing, are not necessarily the sections with more economic needs. For

instance, the chronic subsidy, understood as a form of patronage, has been established itself as a norm in terms of cultural creation and production. Many creators and producers have understood that the fact of dealing with culture gives them the automatic right to access public money, beyond the public profitability of the things they create or produce, beyond any idea of agreement with the public sector; and even beyond any need to attract the citizens' interest, which is the theoretical aim of their productions.

Culture is only an example of the problems that arise when the subsidy becomes a constant procedure, a chronic element. There are many others, some of them more economically important. It is clear that European agriculture has been especially protected, which has consequently produced some episodes of getting used to the subsidy, of expecting the public money automatically and without any risk. In this case, another big mistake of the European policies has also cooperated, shared by the United States as well: the agrarian protectionism in relation to the products of the Third World. On behalf of protection and help to the own peasants, Europe and the United States have closed frontiers to the agrarian production coming from the third World, which should have been the first source of economic development in these countries. This protection ends up becoming a blockage for the improvement of African, Asian or Latin American economies and it also becomes an invitation for the inhabitants of those countries to migrate. The situation may end being paradoxical. Protecting the European agrarian production can make someone who works as a peasant in Morocco or Ecuador leave his/her birthplace, where s/he would never earn a living, to end up working as a peasant in a European country. Instead of fixing the population in their birthplaces by creating economic expectations and welfare, they force people to migrate against their will, and this – inevitably – generates more important problems.

Present Europe is, as a whole, rich and thriving. Evidently, its policies against territorial and social imbalances have succeeded. But it is also evident that these policies have caused some problems, of the kind of this habit to the guaranteed protection, because it reduces the impulse of novelty, search and competition. The fact is that Europe had built the basis of its economic welfare thanks to a system that favoured scientific and technological innovation, a system that placed the countries in this continent on top of modernity. The model of welfare and protection made general after the World War II, which is parallel to the construction of the European Unity, has great virtues, but also a big disadvantage; it is based on the fact that Europe has given the avant-garde role in terms of search and innovation to the United States.

The American system, which in some aspects is more unfair than the European one, or at least less avant-garde and protector, has been better used to encourage the personal wishes of progress and improvement, which have meant – when put into practice – more risk, more investigation and more competition. This has been a feature of the American world from its origins, but it has been made especially evident during recent years.

Some of the European structures, such as universities, have stiffened,

they have become rigid and unable to adapt to novelties, precisely because of the application of these principles of security, maximum protection and equality. The European society, protective and secure, has generated few incentives for innovation, especially in comparison to the United States, but also to some Asian societies. So, the factors that made this general progress possible in that moment, and that later on should reach a balance, have not stopped, but they have slowed down, they have dissolved.

Europe has built a protected and secure society, and in many aspects extremely conservative. Security has defeated risk. The egalitarian protection has reduced competition. The precaution of the public powers has balanced the individual renewal, and that is why the true Europe, even though it is richer, has some alarms in its economic and cultural horizon. It is not the alarm of poverty or general impoverishment, nor the alarm of the existence of big bags of poverty inside. It is the alarm of conformity and delight, and the alarm of considering their own system as the most equitable and as a completely untouchable matter.

The States against Europe

In the same way as the process towards European Unity has generated, throughout half a century, positive expectations in many sections – often higher expectations than the ones which reality has confirmed later on – it has also caused distrust and mistrust in many aspects. For some European sections, the process of unification has been perceived as a menace to their welfare, identity and way of being. In a sense, it has been used as an argument against the European process which is similar to the argument against globalization: maybe it is necessary, maybe it is unavoidable, but it can be a factor for homogeneity, for losing diversity, for dissolving identities, at the same time that a new one is not created within the European space itself.

All the Europeans who felt comfortably settled (and there are many of these) in a present-day that guaranteed a considerable economic welfare and a place where their identities, languages and ways of seeing the world were perfectly recognized and assumed by the political power, could see the process of European construction with some ambivalence: it was a possible source of opportunities, but also of risks. They could win, but they could also lose.

The European process, by contrast, was being looked at with more interest, even with some degree of enthusiasm, by those Europeans who felt that they had more to win than to lose. Those whose level of economic welfare was under the average, or those who felt that their identities were not recognized, or assumed or were even fought against by the political powers on which they depended.

In front of these ambivalent tendencies, between expectations and distrust, the States have managed to appear in front of the European population as the only possible guarantee to build a Europe which, at the same time, fulfils the expectations of welfare and economic projection, without endangering

the interests and identities of the citizens. The States have come in front of their citizens as the main actors in the performance of the European construction, but – at the same time – as the guarantee of the fact that this construction will respect the diversities of the continent. But not all diversities. Not even some which were recognized and represented in the States themselves; even less those which did not have this recognition.

For a French, British or Italian citizen, the European project represented the opportunity of belonging to a wider space and, consequently, more competitive with the big world powers. But this citizen, even more their governors, was afraid that being European meant giving up being French, British or Italian. And for this reason, the States take the whole control of the process of construction of Europe, making clear what being European may mean and offering the guarantee that in almost any sense, this citizen will be able to keep on being French, British or Italian. They have made clear that there is someone - the States themselves - that takes care of their specific economic and identity interests.

Paradoxically, then, a process of European unity born from the perspective of the crisis of the State-nation, from the insufficiency of the State-nation, ends up strengthening the European states when becoming the only agents and the only means to exert the actual power in the Union. They have done this by leaving aside any political or administrative organization which is smaller than the States themselves: the villages, the regions, the Peoples themselves. All this doesn't exist in Europe, or it exists only to the extent that it belongs to the internal power reserved to each State. But they are not actors of the European construction. The actors include only those States that channel or not, depending on their own internal conception, the expectations of self-government of the most natural and smallest organizations that would also be appropriate to exert this self-government. The internal structure is a matter that depends on each State, and about this matter, Europe considers that it should not have any opinion: each State must govern its private space as it likes.

If we pay attention to the internal structure of the several European States, we will notice that most of them clearly belong, in some way or another, to a centralized model of French tradition. The Union members with an actual federal internal structure are a minority. In some cases, one can find examples of a given administrative or practical decentralization, but there are few examples of a true political decentralization. Maybe it is because of this that when these States cast their own internal structure on the European Union, they only have the option of a centralized Europe, ruled from the centre by a government that would be federal in theory, but that would have few federal aspects. If they had to choose between a centralized United Europe and a Europe formed by centralized States, they would choose clearly the second option. They do not consider the possibility of a true federal United Europe, a politically federal one, because their paradigm of political power is always centralized. That is the reason why the European confluence has been imagined and carried out only by means of the States, leaving aside any

other expression of political power in the smallest fields, precisely where the government can be and is more efficient.

This must have been another good lost opportunity to make all the Europeans join a bigger organization, in egalitarian conditions, bringing a problem of political and economic justice to the European Union, which inevitably will have to solve it in its development since the EU will not be able to indefinitely keep the discriminations born ages ago from the wars that were won by some and lost by others, the slave Peoples. The citizens that belong to these peoples are not recognized now and they are and will be a source of discord more or less peaceful or violent until they get this recognition.

But this process of European Unity has even been carried out without involving the citizens. They are not summoned to choose the writers of a Constitution for a new political space. The States meet and build the European Union. The citizens or their direct representatives are not the actors in this performance, but the States, the governments which were – in fact – chosen for a different thing. This is also one of the paradoxes (and not only a formal one) of the processes of referendum of the European Constitution: the referendums pretend to give the impression of a text that constitutes Europe on behalf of the citizens, when this text is, in fact, a treaty among the States. It is not the metaphorical and Rousseauian assembly of the Europeans what builds Europe, it is the meeting of the Heads of State and Government. The citizens are summoned to build what is already built, and only to give the image of a constitution built on the basis of the citizens' will, when – in fact – this is simply an agreement among the States.

This subsidiary role of the citizens is made evident in the actual operation of the European institutions. The news, the big changes, the breakthroughs and the recessions take place in the meetings of the Heads of State and Government, not in the European Parliament. The real power is centred in the meeting of the States. The same Committee, the theoretical government of the Union, has not been chosen, neither directly or indirectly, by the citizens through the Parliament, but it has been chosen by the States that elect the president of the Committee and suggest and censor their commissioners, leaving a completely minor role to the Parliament.

Sometimes the citizens are called to elect their representatives in the European Parliament, in an election with a traditionally low level of participation (much lower than in any other electoral process of each State) and with some eccentric results, even exotic. The analysts consider this is a reliable proof of the euro-scepticism of the population, and this would demonstrate that the citizens do not feel to be the actors of the unifying process of Europe, which does not deserve their trust. And this is true. In fact, even in European terms, what makes the position of each State evident as far as Europe is concerned, the place where the European policy of each State is decided, are not the European elections but the legislative elections in which each State chooses its government. If in a given State the European elections are won by the opposition, the European policy of that State will not change, because it will still be made by its government, through the actual effective channel which is the meetings among the States and not through the subsidiary and ornamental channel of the parliament. The abstention of

the citizens is not so strange: even though they are very much interested in the European policy, they know it is not decided in the European elections.

In previous pages we said that one of the bases of a hypothetical European dream that maybe never existed but that we have the possibility of establishing now would be to suggest a new way of articulating diversity. But Europe has not found this new way. It has decided to keep the old one: the diversity of the world is articulated by means of State-nations, which are the actors of the international policy. Europe has chosen to be built only through the States. It is not a citizens' community, but a mosaic of States, each with its own economic interests, with its priorities as regards external policy, with an official and established identity that they want to defend, often against the other European identities. The States have kept for themselves the power of the United Europe, promising the citizens that they would go forward towards a warm Europe, where everyone would be protected by the umbrella of a State that would defend them in case of a menace.

However, some Europeans have felt threatened by this unity and have decided to keep away from it. We are talking about those who considered that the advantages offered by this Europe were not worth the menaces that their own personality could bring. This phenomenon has not taken place only in the smallest countries, but also in some important sections of the big countries. They felt comfortable within their own State and, consequently, they have thought that Europe was a little bit unprotected. They did not notice that the whole world process of globalization leads to this lack of protection and this process is inevitable and unstoppable. The fundamentally conservative Europe has wanted to keep the warmth that each State gives it, before making up a new way of articulating diversity, which could be an example for the world.

This is another case in which Europe has chosen security instead of risk. And the States, the great protagonists, the only protagonists of the European Unity, have wanted and have known how to impersonate this ideal of security. Just a few have kept away from this ideal: only those that believe in a truly different Europe; or those who are not protected by any State. They are the only ones who have taken part in the European dream.

Economic power, political subsidiarity

This inability of the United Europe to overcome the unequally organized mosaic of States lies in the centre of many of its faults and in the fact that it has not achieved some of its apparent primary goals. We have seen how the differences between the European colleagues themselves about the future of the area also lay, to some extent, in the origins of the war in the Balkans (the return of war to Europe). We have seen how the resistance of the States and their concentration of power also lay in the origin of some of the basic democratic lacks of the Union: a subsidiary role of the Parliament, the election of the president of the Committee by the States, the concentration of power by the European Council, formed directly by the government of the

States, in front of the Committee itself... furthermore, this survival of the central role of the States has made one of the fundamental goals of the European union unattainable: to transform Europe into a planetary political power, a main actor in international policy next to the other big powers. Europe is, without any doubt, a big economic power, a great consumer market, a huge production area, but it is not a political power at the same level, it is not an essential referent for world policy.

On the international stage, Europe does not have an only voice. It has hardly ever spoken. And this is one of the reasons for its weakness. We have already seen that it did not speak with an only voice in the Balkans conflict, but with contradictory voices. It has also happened in the conflict of Iraq. It also happens in the Near East. The Balkans conflict, in front of the United Europe, half ended, it ended as far as a deep-rooted conflict like this can end, when the United States took part in a decided way. From then on, every time that the international stage has been dominated by a conflict, Europe has wanted to be more than a simple spectator, but it has had to resign itself with a subsidiary role.

In the Near East, the protagonists of the conflict admit the economic role of Europe, but they know and say that any significant advance in the resolution of their conflict takes place because of the direct involvement of the United States. For the Israelis, Europe is not a believable mediator in their conflict with the Arabian world, and especially with the Palestinians. Israel has the impression that the European position is not the same in all the countries of the Union, it is generally adaptable and it has systematically rejected any risk of confrontation with the Arabian world, due to their fear of the consequences that this might have, even inside the Muslim sections so important in some European countries. That is the reason why the Israelis, who are common citizens but also political leaders, believe that Europe has played with pragmatism in the Near East. It has played with *realpolitik*. Its goal has been not to make its relations with the Muslim Arabian world worse in any case. First, this is due to economic interests; second, to avoid the impact that this might have within Europe itself on some of the Muslim sections which are so important in some European countries like France or Germany. And this has settled in Europe an unconditional support to the Palestinians and distrust towards Israel, even though Europe shared with the Israelis a common cultural mould and the democratic character of their regimes. After several journeys to Israel, I have seen the reactions against the *intifada*, and in the interviews with Israeli political leaders, not only from the Labour Party but also from the Conservative one, I have been given the impression that Israel is certain about the fact that Europe has abandoned it, on the one hand, because the European external policy is the child of the purest material pragmatism and, on the other hand, because all the effects of the former anti-Semitism have not been overcome because it is deeply rooted in the European reality.

But if Israel thinks that Europe cannot be the referee in the Near East because it tends to favour the Arabian world, the Arabian world does not have the impression that the European support is especially useful for them either. It is true that they receive European money which is welcomed. But the Arabian

world knows that the key for the resolution of the problem in the Near East, after the cold war, depends on the position of North America and their ability to exert pressure on all the other sections. The moment when peace has been closer in the Near East has been when the United States has used, as Clinton did in the second Camp David, this ability to exert pressure. I had the opportunity to attend the Lecture on the Near East in Madrid. The European positions were less appreciated, in those moments, than the American ones, but even than the Soviet ones. When I had the chance to interview Arafat during his exile in Tunis, I did not get the impression that he was worried about the political position of the European governments. He was interested in the pressure of the European public opinion, but he knew that the only power which was able to mediate in the conflict was the United States. In other words, when talking with the Israelis I have noticed their disappointment due to the role of Europe. But when I talked with the Arabians, I did not get the impression that this role offered them great expectations either. They thought of it as the favourable role that a secondary actor was playing.

In Iraq, the public European opinion was clearly against the intervention in the conflict; the European governments were evidently divided depending on the degree of proximity with the American positions (surprisingly finding more support for President Bush's theories in Eastern than in Western Europe) and, in any case, the European positions have not had any impact on the conflict, with the exception of the British involvement, which precisely reflects a priority as regards the external policy that places the bilateral relation with the United States before the European dynamic.

The European governments which are further from the North American position have tried to show their differences as a conflict between their own pacifism and the North American wish of war. In fact, one could guess – by the position of some of these European countries – a conflict of interests rather than differences about the methodology they should use. It is not that Europe was in favour of peace and the United States in favour of petrol. Some European countries, especially France, considered that their access to the Iraq's Petrol was submitted to an implicit support of Saddam Hussein's regime, while at the same time they were afraid that the North American intervention would make this access more difficult. It has been written that any idea of European common external policy has been broken in the conflict of Iraq, as Europe has been divided into two pieces. At least, its governments. This division has favoured the fact that Europe has been one spectator, more or less, pressured by the conflict, in the same way as it was in the conflict of Afghanistan.

The absence of military power

Next to, or as a consequence of, its lack of a common external policy, there is another factor that lightens the political weight of Europe in the world: the lack of a common policy of defence. Europe is not, or it has not been able to be, or it has rejected to be, a military power. A menace of economic

punishment on behalf of Europe causes restlessness in any country of the world. But no one expects any other kind of pressure coming from the Europeans, they do not expect any other menace. Europe, as a unity, unlike the United States, does not have any repressive power from the military point of view. Some of the State members keep some, but inferior. Great Britain is an example without any doubt. France is another one, it has used it in very few occasions, but a lot of times in the field of the African French-speaking territories, its former colonial area. But in the case that Europe had a clear and defined external policy it would not have one of its traditional methods of establishment, a common and powerful army.

This lack of instruments can be valued as one prefers, but it is definitely associated with the idea of international political weight and world weight and it has different causes. Without any doubt, one of these causes is the lack of unity of the European external policy. I have the impression that there exists another important factor. The leading country – because of its dimensions, its demography, its centrality, its economic power in United Europe – is obviously Germany. And when Germany assumes any kind of prominence in military policies of defence, it causes distrust based on historical facts. The remembrance of the two World Wars, especially the second one, limits Germany in a psychological and practical way preventing it from moving its economic leadership to the military and political aspect. In a certain way, that is the reason why the United Europe is built on the French-German axis: because France, which has lost weight in many aspects throughout this century, becomes the counterweight of Germany, so that each contributes with its own active aspects and thwarts the passive aspects of the other. At some moment, France tried to offer, under Mitterrand's leadership, a common European policy of defence which was, in fact, the expansion and generalization of the French politics. The rest of Europe did not accept it.

Quite often, Europe has talked, ironically, resignedly or in a conformist way, about the role of the United States as a world gendarme, in fact, as the only world gendarme. Europe has tried to say that it is not interested in this role, that it is okay for Europe what the United States decides to do, and that the role of Europe in the sharing of roles in the Western World is limited to economy, diplomacy and culture. Maybe this is true. But we can also find ourselves living within a lie: as Europe cannot have this role, it says that it does not want it.

During the cold war, Europe was glad that the defence troubles in front of the Soviet proximity considered threatening by everyone fell exclusively over the United States. Europe invested on the economic miracle what it saved on defence. After the cold war, I do not know if Europe's renunciation to get a more active role in international policy – either as the European Union or the series of its main countries – is a vocation or a necessity. A necessity caused by the lack of union. A necessity caused by the German difficulty to acquire a more powerful role in terms of defence. A necessity eventually caused by an ascertainment: it is not clear at all that the European public opinions are ready – as the North American public opinion – to assume the risks and the cost of this role; risks and economic and human cost.

When the United States acts as a gendarme, its public opinion assumes what it involves: human casualties, expenses, decision, antipathies and rejection... It is not clear that the European public opinion, with the only partial exception of the British, could be able to assume it in the same way. It is possible that this is one more effect of that conservatism on its basis, of that habit of protecting themselves in their own homes, something which marks both the European politics and culture. It also may be false: it may be just the proof of a higher civism, and the wrong ones may be the Americans. But in any case, the lack of a public opinion which is able to assume the effects of carrying on its shoulders the responsibility of an active external policy, there is no possibility of an active external policy.

If one of the goals of the European unity was to make Europe a great power, to guarantee the weight of Europe in the world, this goal has not been achieved from the political point of view. In many cases, especially in the closest ones, Europe has tried to achieve its own role in the world politics based on establishing distances with the United States. This has given visibility to its positions, but it has not strengthened them. In conflicts like the one in the Near East or Iraq, the supporters of the position of the United States that are scattered around the world put the European positions down, because it was considered weak, born from a adapted and conservationist pragmatism that does not want any surprise and that is not able to assume its responsibilities. But those who are against the North American positions do not see this European distance as an expectation, but it is also understood as a strategic interested and adapted position on behalf of someone who, after all, is not going to do anything. The division of Europe in terms of external policy and defence and the lack of effective instruments to implant the little common policy that may exist make Europe become a non-influent agent with scarce prestige in the world political scene.

Europe knows that there is no external policy without strength, and that the economic power is only part of this strength. It looks ready to give the role of gendarme to the United States critically. It does not deny that a gendarme is necessary. It is interested and resigned to give this role to the United States and to place itself behind the other, in a given sense it places itself under the protection of the other. However they do criticize some decisions which are considered an excess. To what extent is this attitude of considering the need of someone doing the legal dirty work as long as it is done by others? It is dirty because it is morally arguable, but it is also dirty because it implies some cost and because it gets someone hands dirty. However you look at it, in this field of world influence, in the field of the policy euphemistically called defence policy, a difficult question that has already appeared in previous sections: the difference between the roles of the United States and Europe, a difference that, on the one hand, can open a crack in the western world. But it is also a difference of values, of ways of understanding society and politics, the role of the individual and the role of the State which may help us to think about the different ways towards a change of the European model, a change of the ways of doing politics in Europe.

SECOND PART

REBUILDING THE WEST

The West crack

During the last years, several observers have dealt with the topic of the crack of the Western World. The Western World has evidently enlarged the distance between Europe (especially the fundamental core of the union and specifically of Southern Europe) and the United States. After the World War II, the expression "Western World" described a given unity of civilization that included the United States, Canada, the Europe of the west of the Iron Curtain and some other realities born fundamentally from the Anglo-Saxon decolonization, such as New Zealand or Australia, or a reality born from one of the big components of the western culture, the Judaism, like Israel. About the end of the twentieth century, this western world had been divided. But in any case it cannot be said that the unity of civilization has been broken. A western civilization keeps on existing. However, it is in fact true that there has appeared a crack in this civilization.

Undoubtedly, the Western World is the child of many references: the classical Greek thought, the Latin world and the Romanization; of the Jewish-rooted religiosity mixed though Christianity with the Hellenistic philosophy; of the Medieval Christianity; of the substratum given by the peoples that come to Europe in different waves from central Asia, from the Celts, from the Germanic to the Slavic. But in a strict sense, one could say that the western civilization, as we know it, is the child of Renaissance and what it represents to place the humans in the centre of the Universe. It is the Renaissance which discovers the individual, which considers that the person is in the centre of everything, which starts deconstructing the medieval theocratic states and establishes the basis of a civilization around reason, science and technology. This civilization born in Europe is generalized throughout the world with the Europeans, experiencing a special continuity in North America where, in fact, the European population substitutes tragically and almost totally the natives. In Latin America, the superposition of the European oligarchies over some very wide native population, submitted to exploitation, ends up generating a civilizing mould which is considerably far from the European one, with different values. The Hispanic colonization which generates an over structure of political and economic power over the living traces of former civilizations and considerably populated territories does not bring the seed of the humanistic and scientific civilization that the Renaissance generates to America. Among other things, because the Iberian Peninsula itself which is advanced in the field of the Counter-Reformation and which, in the times of the Catholic Kings, has left aside Cisneros' Renaissance humanism, is not the place where this new civilization takes roots from the first moment either. On

the other hand, the native population, which is considerably abundant despite the exterminations, was the heir of very advanced civilizations as regards, to the artistic expression and the cultural complexity. However, they were very old-fashioned from a technological point of view, which was precisely the key for the European conquest.

Despite a superficial Christianization which often only involved changing the name of the former divinities, the values which represent the basis for the societies in South America are not exactly the ones that evolve towards a new model of society in Europe, especially in the centre and the north, where modern capitalism is born and where it evolves into a civilizing model based on rationalism and the centrality of the effort and the work themselves.

In an opposite way, in North America and, especially, in the United States, the Anglo-Saxon colonization exports this model of more rationalist civilization which values the scientific and technological contents. Some relatively not very much crowded territories, where at the same time the natives are considerably exterminated (which is even more significant because of the demographic weakness before the arrival of the Europeans), attract a big population that establishes the European values and models but without the corsets and the rigidity that the old Europe still has. In some sense, the values of the renaissance Europe, and even more the values of both the Europe of the bourgeois revolutions of the eighteenth century and the Enlightenment are impersonated in a better way in America than in the old world, because they find less obstacles and they do not have to fight against a former regime. With wide natural horizons and pioneer and frontier spirit, the Europeans who went to America are seen, more than those who stayed in Europe, as free individuals who want to choose their own destiny and are not limited by a strict social structure that prevents them from exerting their freedom and their dream of individual progress. The American Revolution, which is the European revolution taken to its maximum consequences, represents the consecration of this spirit.

So with diverse intensities and formulas adapted to the geography of each place, in the tradition, origins and corresponding ethnic mixtures, North America and continental Europe (especially the centre and the north) form – from five hundred years ago but especially from the eighteenth century – the process of civilization that we call the Western World. This continuity of the space of civilization is very clear in the first half of the 20th century, when it also has the first great breakthroughs in the field of communications, the maintenance of the migration flows from Europe to the United States (Irish, German, Russian, Italian and Swiss people) and a constant exchange of cultural expressions, from cinema to literature. The two World Wars, which origin lies on European wars generalized precisely by the involvement of the Americans, are just a proof.

Increasing distance

After the World War II, one can guess the first symptoms of a growing distance within the western world which is apparently continuous. For some of the parents of the European Union, the united Europe is just a way of distancing themselves from the United States. This is quite clear for some French thinkers who believe that the European unity will guarantee that Europe will not need a new American intervention again. This is also clear for some British who still dream of the survival of their imperial dream.

It is not accidental that one of the big impulses in the European unity is the crisis of Suez of 1956, in which France and Great Britain united (allied at the time with Israel!) mediate in Egypt, against the will of the United States and the Soviet union, as if the cold war did not exist and as if in the fifties we still lived within a colonial dynamic prior to the World War II. The crisis of Suez is a dose of humility for the Europeans and it ends partially in the signing of the Rome Treaty of 1957. At that moment clear the emergence of a crack in the western world is quite.

However, this crack is made evident in the last decade of the twentieth century when the cold war is over. It is possible that the narrowing of the crack has something to do with the end of this cold war and, consequently, with the end of the unifying effect that involves the proximity of a common enemy. And curiously enough, at the end of the cold war, the United States has become a reference for the territories to the east of the iron curtain, a reference more important than Europe. Without any doubt, these countries want to belong to the European Union, because they consider it as their economic and political future. But their target from the point of view of a model to follow is the United States which, more than Europe, impersonates the will that has fought against the communism that has left them aside from history after the war.

At the moment of the greatest political distance between the western European governments and the United States, the leaders of Eastern Europe – almost all of them grown within the opposition to the communist dictatorships and with a perfect ethical and political course like Vaclav Havel's – positioned in favour of North America. The Polish authorities, to give just an example, clearly aligned themselves around the intervention in Iraq, with the United States, directly supporting a policy designed to a great extent by the American conservative *think tanks*, without quoting the western European countries which were already aligned. And this is not due to a total ideological coincidence; it is because of the distrust they feel towards an everlastingly doubtful Europe. Eastern Europe looks at Western Europe only because of their urgency to leave the Russian influence, but this does not generate any proximity or feeling of common membership. They ask for the admission in the European Union. But sometimes it seems that they would prefer, if they did not have the geographical factors against, to become another state of the United States.

Probably, the causes of the distance between Europe and the United States are not strictly due to the situation. This influence that causes the separation

between Europe and the United States is not only due to the new events at the end of the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first century. The new events that take place give more importance and value to the different substratum, the diverse traditions, even the geographical, environmental or ethnic differences. These differences were directing us to the geological and differential history of the American continents with regard to Europe; to the minor but existing influence of the native substratum or simply to the distinct evolution between a colony and its metropolis. But, in fact, America and Europe start reacting in different ways in front of the same phenomena. The European left-wings have designed an anti-imperialist discourse during the cold war, and this is –to a great extent – contrary to the United States. This discourse looked intellectual and minor, but when the cold war ended, when Europe got the impression that it did not need the Americans so much, this discourse is perceived as more deeply-rooted than it seemed.

The events of September 11th in New York gave us some clues about the depth of this feeling and marked a sentimental distance between the United States and Europe. The Americans reacted in a unanimous way to the aggression in their own territory, there was an evident and measurable explosion of patriotism in which, with no doubt, the conservative instinct had something to do with and in any case it did not look like any of forms of local patriotism in Europe.

I was in New York a few weeks after the attack and I was shocked, despite being a European who is not in favour of the anti-American feeling, by the amount of symbols and flags and its total generalization. Unlike what the Europeans thought, the patriotism and indignation were even more evident among the minorities recently included within the American dream, and one could not guess any kind of impostation. The feeling of offence and the deep lack of understanding of the hatred and the fanaticism hidden behind the attacks was transversal in all the American society that experienced it – at least in the first moment – without any internal distinction.

On the contrary, Europe did not join this sentimental wave of indignation and the voices that attributed these attacks to a natural and almost legitimate reaction against the policies of the United States were neither few nor marginal. From Europe, it seemed that the United States was to blame because of being attacked and some media talked about the fear to the United States' reaction after these attacks rather than stating a true disapproval and condolence.

But the crack was made absolutely evident when the American administration decided to attack Iraq. The goal of this book is neither to judge this decision nor to consider the real causes, which in any case were, or could have been, the public justification. The lack of massive weapons on behalf of Iraq has been proved, even though it is not evident that this was the true cause of the attack. In any case, it was a matter of a geo-strategic war to get the control of a hot area of the planet: the Near East, which was important because of its situation and its petrol reserves. However, the war in Iraq confronted the American and European opinions, as it was proved by the European follow-up of the last presidential elections in the United States: the

candidate that Europe had adopted almost unanimously was forcefully defeated by a candidate that Europe disdained and could not understand. The leaders of Western Europe who aligned with the United States had to pay the price in front of their own public opinions, and the confrontation between the old Europe and the new America seemed to acquire an epic of family struggle. And it was, in some sense, even of a higher intensity than in other periods of the recent history, in spite of the fact that they were plating with something which was not so central in their own relations.

To the extent in which the distance between Western Europe and the United States has been made evident, especially with regard to the external policy, one could think that it answers the inequality of geo-strategic interests. Europe and the United States, without the unity of action forced by the Soviet presence, have discovered that their energetic, geo-political and economic interests are diverging or incompatible. I would say this is not true. On the contrary: for their new political enemies, for the new totalitarianisms of religious origin that want to decidedly confront the western world and its values (especially for the Islamist fundamentalism) the western world keeps on being a unity and they feel equally confronted with both the United States and Europe. In fact, they have acted against the United States and against Europe, in New York and in Madrid, and they have threatened other European countries, from Italy to France and Great Britain, which defended very different positions as regards their external policies in the Near East and which at the same time have very different models of relations with the United States.

This makes it logical to think that the differences in external policy between Europe and the United States do not have anything to do with the divergence of economic and geo-strategic interests but with a progressive separation of the models of society, of the values systems, of the views of the world. This does not reach the level of creating two opposed blocks of civilization (using, with reservations, the Huntingtonian vocabulary) but it does create a deep crack that, with no doubt, weakens the western world as a whole, and also those values which can still be considered as shared values and it makes its enemies grow strong: any kind of totalitarianism, but especially new totalitarianisms that have a religious origin. The breaking-off of the western world would be strategically speaking a disaster for all the resulting parts. It is not a desirable horizon for the United States, despite its strength as a great world power. And even less for the Europe that has rejected some of the essential instruments of a powerful external policy and does not want – under any circumstances – to pay the toll.

Widening the meaning of the word beyond its natural limitations, one could say that the differences between the European societies and the United States are cultural. When they look themselves in the mirror, the societies in the United States and Western Europe are different, and they show and remind their differences to each other. The United States looks down on the “old Europe” because America thinks that Europe is an opportunist and decadent continent, in other words, Europe is considered irresponsible.

Europe criticizes the United States because of its apparent ingenuity, its apparent ignorance, its apparent selfishness. Both societies admit they are different, they are based on alternative values. It is true that the differences between these two societies are infinitely inferior to the differences that separate the whole western world from other parts of the planet. But within the decompression of the cold war, within the new tension with other parts of the world and especially with the Islamic world, Europe and the United States realize that their paths bifurcated long ago, culturally from North America's independence.

The United States is the child of Europe. Even more: the United States is the place where many of the projects born in Europe can be carried out, it was impossible to carry them out in Europe because the force of history's inertia prevented this. But the fact is that there has appeared an enormous crack in the western world. The United States sees itself as the land of freedom, and it is seen simply as the land of the exaggerated individualism. Europe sees itself as the land of solidarity, of a collective net, and it is seen as the land in which the individuals are prisoners of the past and of a system that suffocates them.

One finds individualism in the United States and in Europe a given form of collectivism which is related to Marxism by means of social-democracy and to the Christian social sensitivity by means of Christian democracies. Two societies which are intimately sure about the fact that they are the most advanced and perfect model, the best social model that has ever existed in the history of humanity, the culmination of some kind of social evolution. Maybe there is a political system which is able to find the intersection of these two concepts, both valuable because of their essential content, and both desirable for humanity as a whole in the future. But we do not have this system. It must be created.

The weight of individual responsibility

If we had to define a unique distinctive feature between Western Europe and the United States, probably we would find it in this game between the individual and the collective, in a completely different evaluation of the individual responsibility. I remember a very specific and minor example that could illustrate this difference. After September 11th, the teleprinters informed that the North American authorities, the governors of various states, like California among them, were alerting about the fear of terrorist attacks in some of the most representative bridges of the Country. They warned the citizens, but they did not close the bridges or ban the traffic along any road. They simply shared that information with their citizens: if they got frightened by this possibility, they would stop using the bridges. If they considered that the risk was not existent or it was assumable, they would keep on using them. The authorities were simply warning them.

When evaluating this initiative, the evaluations were diverse and contradictory. We all agreed on one thing: no European government would have acted like this in front of a menace of this kind, they would have hidden

this information, they would have considered it a State secret and they would have banned the traffic along those bridges in the name of security. They would not have shared the information with the citizens, but they would have assumed the responsibility and acted in consequence. The United States authorities shared the information and did not act, at least in an evident way. They did not cut the bridges or ban any path.

Some considered this as a great irresponsibility on behalf of the American authorities: they were not doing their job, they transferred the responsibility of crossing, or not, the bridges to the citizens. The critics considered it an alarmist exercise and a resignation of their own responsibilities. On the contrary, those who were in favour of the position that the authorities had taken (just a few, by the way), admired the informative transparency, at least in this specific case, and the maturity of letting the citizens decide after being informed. But in any case, leaving aside the personal evaluations, it was made evident the existence of two models: an American model that completely believes in the individual responsibility but which demands that the individual has the mechanism and information that they need in order to exert it; and a European model in which the state assumes this protective responsibility towards the citizen, even though this protected citizen will never know about the menace against the bridges.

It is just an anecdote, but it is also the application of two different conceptions of society that may make some American ways of behaving difficult to understand in Europe and vice versa. Another example, less anecdotic: in Europe the permissive politics of the United States towards having firearms is really difficult to understand. It seems obvious, and it has been proved, that this American freedom that allows citizens to have weapons causes ten times more mortal victims than the preventive policy in Europe. I had the chance to carry out an important monograph about this issue. There I clearly stated two aspects. First, that the practical American system was worse than the European, it caused more deaths and it affected the level of delinquency. Second, the difference between European and American policies about having weapons went back to core differences, essential differences in their way of understanding the relation between the individual and society, the way in which American society accepted the toll of suffering a higher mortality because of the freedom to have weapons, because denying this freedom would go against the basic principles, against the core of their view of the world.

A study regarding the laws about having weapons concluded that the antagonism among these laws emerged from two different and opposed models of State: one, the European, defined itself as centralist and they stressed administrative matters; the other one defined itself as federal and highlighted the individual, that is to say, the American. In the latter, the responsibility of defence, as the responsibilities of serving the community, is placed on the individuals. The right to own weapons comes from the second amendment, suggested by the federalists in their eagerness to avoid the intervention of the State, the imposition of the criteria of the government over the individuals. In the European model, this responsibility belongs to the administration. From a present European perspective, keeping the freedom of

the citizens to carry weapons is difficult to understand. Violence is a monopoly of the State. From an American federalist perspective this is a consequence (a painful and not very useful, though) of a basic aspect of their political hierarchy, of their view of the world.

From Europe, the American policy about weapons is impossible to understand and we tend to explain it through the conception of the United States as a naïf, primitive country which has not left behind its view of the country as a place of frontiers and conquests of the West. We see the freedom to have weapons as the fossil of the Far-West or as a proof of the deeply conservative right-wing character of its civilization. But later on, radical left-wing philosophers like the Italian Toni Negri talk about it in the opposite way: the private possession of weapons would be a deeply revolutionary event, a way of weakening the power of the State, calling into question its monopoly of violence. From our perplexity, we consider it surprisingly conservative or surprisingly revolutionary, without paying attention to the links that this establishes with a conception of society centred in the ability of making decisions and the responsibility of the individual.

But these perplexities can also show an opposite side. On certain occasions, American friends have told me their difficulty to understand the indiscipline of European countries with speed limitations in the roads when the citizens themselves have to moderate their own speed. In the same way as it happens in the United States with regard to possession of weapons, it is obvious that exceeding the permitted speed causes many mortal accidents. My American friends were surprised about the fact that European citizens, even knowing the negative effects of exceeding the permitted speed, do not have any qualms when driving systematically over the permitted speed and they only stop doing this when they fear a fine or a ticket. On the contrary, in the United States the discipline of the citizens when driving under the permitted speed is almost unanimous.

In some sense, this is the complementary example in comparison with weapons. The Americans, from their evaluation of individual responsibility, do not understand that the citizens do not cooperate to avoid traffic accidents, which increase mortality. On the contrary, the Europeans tend to consider that avoiding accidents is, almost as any other thing, the responsibility of the government and that we do not have any individual responsibility on this matter: it is the government's job to do the laws, to have policemen in the streets, to have radars, to make people follow the rules.

Behind these two views of the relation between individuals and society, between the responsibility of the individual and the responsibility of the government, we find two conceptions of the State. And this is the origin of the crack in the western civilization.

On the basis of the most important differences, such as, for instance, those regarding the war in Iraq, there also emerge the vestiges of this core difference about the responsibility of each individual, about the things each individual must do or what we must not let the others do on our behalf. Some days ago, a friend of mine commented ironically that the measure of banning the installation of fizzy-drinks vending machines in high schools in

order to prevent the kids from putting on weight is typically European: the government in Europe is responsible for everything, even the silhouette of teenagers, even of their fatness or thinness, born from an idea of what is right and what is wrong. In the United States, this would be an individual responsibility, but it is also true that someone must be responsible (in a less generalized sanity system) for the consequences on health and economy of their decisions.

The individual and the government represent the two edges of the conception of the world. And in some respects this difference is previous and more central, more important than the big geo-strategic matters. This is the core of the crack in the western world.

Rebuilding the West space

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, Europe is experiencing an anti-American wave which, to some extent, is also an anti-western wave. The philosopher Pascal Bruckner, in an article published in "Le Figaro" after the terrorist attacks in Madrid, talked about the existence of some sort of expiatory will in Europe: *"we, the Europeans, the western people, have inflicted several offences to the rest of the world, by means of exploitation and colonialism, and this is turning against us. The western world would be to blame"*. But the Europeans would have metaphorically conspired to say that, in fact, nowadays this western world which is guilty by definition, would be represented in a more clear way by all the Americans than by ourselves. Bruckner states: *"within this penitentiary representation of our western fate, the United States would be the heir of a European imperial horror"*, while the Europeans would be watching the Islamist attacks without understanding them as one of the faces of evil, of totalitarianism, but seeing them as the consequence of a terrible misunderstanding, a product of the lack of dialogue, and basically as an answer to our historical guilt.

From this interpretation, the new European anti-American feeling would be the expression of some sort of western bad conscience, of western self-hatred, but also as a very practical formula to avoid the consequences. The new totalitarianisms, which are essentially against the western world because they go against the basic values of rationalism, laicism and freedom on which the western model has been based, would attack the western world as a whole. But Europe would answer by saying that what they are attacking is not represented by us but by the United States. As if, by leaving the train of western civilization, Europe could prevent the attacks that this civilization may suffer in the present or in the future on behalf of those who are against the model we take part in and we have created, including colonialism.

If this were a strategy on behalf of Europe, this would be completely absurd: in spite of the fact that the Europeans want to leave that train, the enemies of the western world and its values know that we belong to it. Frequently, Europe does not interpret the hostility of the new religious totalitarianisms against the western model in an appropriate way, because it tries to read them from our own language, from our own premises.

When the horrible attack to the Egyptian hotels in Sinai took place – crowded of Israeli tourists – some European media related it to an immediately previous operation of the Israeli army against Hamas in Gaza. According to the European logic which considers Hamas as a movement of national liberation with ideological, nationalist and laic consequences, we were in front of a conventional political episode. Someone who has been attacked and tries to defend. Someone who is trying to revenge the casualties caused by its enemy. But the press release in which an Islamist group claimed the responsibility for the attacks was attributed to the fact that they were in hotels equipped with casinos and discotheques, where the infidels (the Jews in this case) went to have fun desecrating the Muslim land.

Equally, Islamist terrorism is quite often interpreted in Europe as a conventional political answer to the intervention of the United States in the Near East and it is consequently considered that if Europe separates itself from this intervention, if it presents itself as an ally of the Arabian world, if it separates itself from the American politics, it will stop being one of the targets of the Islamist terrorism. They forget that the logic and goals of this terrorism are at a different levels which does not affect the western world because of its politics but because of its values and habits.

The French public opinion was surprised by the kidnapping of two French journalists in Iraq, because it considered that its position against the attacks of the United States made it immune to the Islamist terrorism. But in this case, the kidnappers were trying to achieve the derogation of the law that prohibited the veil in French schools. France believed itself their target or not depending on its policies in the Near East. This is an interpretation which follows the European logic. But for the kidnappers of both journalists, France is also a western country like the United States; but it is a weaker western country, less significant and lightly marginal. Sometimes, Europe acts as if it had left the western train, but those who see it from the outside know that we are still within the train constructed by the Europeans.

This is one of the reasons why, among many others which are so important or even more, for Europe and the United States it is essential to close the crack, which is deeper than a mere difference of perspective about a political intervention. The crack emerges from the interpretation of their own role; but it goes back to a basic problem related to the matter of their responsibility, of the role of the individual and the role of the government and the State. It is also related to the European and American responsibility as regards the construction of the global world; it has to do with the extent to which we are convinced about our own model and the extent to which we are determined to mobilize in order to defend it.

The enemies of responsibility are conformism, isolation and the cultural relativism that considers that things are not good or bad, but each culture or each civilization constructs its own moral, as valid as any other. So we cannot impose our idea of what is good (rationalism, democracy, human rights) to other peoples that may think that esoterism, clitoris ablation or the inequality of rights between men and women are good.

Europe is tempted by those enemies of responsibility. But the United

States also has its own temptations: the hyper-responsibility which leads to unilateralism, the Machiavellianism of the intervention which does not care about the goodness of the methods when it has established the goodness of the goals...

Between United States and Europe there exist deep differences of concept which they need to overcome with some sort of bridge. It has to do not only with the more or less significant anecdotes that we have explained so far but also with some worldly important matters. For example, the position of the public opinions about the war in Iraq. In the United States, the population knew perfectly the information and points of view which were completely opposite to the governors that have led to the war in Iraq. In spite of the fact that they could know these opinions and they paid altogether, in a collective way, the consequences, they have supported these governors again in the elections. On the contrary, European people have not been shown all the possible points of view about the war which was not supported by the European governors or the media groups. However, Europe has opposed the war and the American governors in a decided and almost unanimous way.

We are dealing with two deeply contradictory behaviours which must be born from contradictory bases as well. But Europe and the United States need each other and the western world has a role to develop within the world. Sometimes, one gets the impression that Europe is glad with a distribution of roles that would show the different attitudes of the public opinions: the United States makes the war because they have some vocation towards it, and Europe tries to mend the damage. But it is not very clear either that this role distribution is made in a conscious way. It seems that each part distrusts the other, even though they need each other.

The United States and Europe must reconstruct the western world. But maybe one of the ways to achieve this reconstruction need Europe to reconsider some aspects of its model of society, which nowadays are very far from the American model. After World War II, Europe constructs a welfare society which has great virtues, but is also asks some basic questions. Its model, which gives all responsibility to the government and frees the individuals of all responsibility, has brought some important practical problems. We do not have to copy the American model in Europe. But it can be used to think about the general validity of the European model, about its flaws and limitations. The European contribution to the reconstruction of the western world – which is really necessary – could be some corrections in the direction to follow. We could do this while waiting for the United States to make their own contributions and approximations.

A welfare State

Parallel to the process of European unity, each of the States of Europe has been creating – especially after the World War II – a new and unknown model of society which has been called welfare State or, in some cases, provident

State. This model was exported to Canada but not to the United States. It is a model of which Europe is especially proud, to the extent that most of its feeling of superiority towards the United States is based on this achievement: *"we would say to the Americans that we do not only have more history, more sensitivity and more culture, but we would also say that because of all this we have managed to establish a model of society which is fairer, which has less inequalities and exclusions."*

For the Europeans, this welfare State is the logical consequence of their own history and of what we could call a more humanistic view of social reality: *"as persons are more worthwhile for us, we have built a system which guarantees the basic needs of everyone, so that nobody is left outside, nobody is excluded"*. On the contrary, the American competitive system, which is closer to the law of the jungle, leaves the weak outside, and it only allows the survival of the strong. For the Europeans, the American individualist system would follow Darwin's theory, whereas we would have managed (thanks to our taxes which guarantee the minimum social needs of everyone) to pay Darwin's theories off and to build a more charitable (despite the word being hidden with euphemisms) and fair system.

So far Europe has never perceived critically this social model born from the existence of a provident State, from a State which worries about everything for us, from a State which guarantees if not the generalization of welfare at least a redistribution of wealth which guarantees some universal minimums.

The European debate has not been focused on whether this model was good or bad, perfect or perfectible, but on whether this welfare State was sustainable or not, without showing any critical perspective against the supposed neo-liberal attempts to reduce it. But these supposed attempts did not question the goodness of the system either, but they warned about the impossibility of keeping this system eternally. In colloquial words, the debate was not about whether this welfare State was good for us or not, since everybody thought it was. The problem was whether we could pay it or not. The problem dealt with the question of a society in which the birth rate was quite low and the population was getting progressively older, with a higher life expectancy, having to guarantee mid-term pensions, which is one of the most remarkable features of a welfare State. And not only the pensions but also the unemployment subsidies, education, transport and, especially, health, the real sticking point.

An old society which turns its age pyramids upside down is a society that asks for more assistance and more health expense. The Europeans have started to talk about whether we could afford to keep this system recently, while we were criticizing the Americans for having an excluding private health system which is not universal and is, consequently, unfair.

In the next chapters, we will deal with the question of ageing and the demographic pyramid, but it has already been said that the critique of European society regarding the welfare State is focused on its sustainability, on whether we could afford it or not. There was no discussion at all on whether this welfare State and the resulting society created positive or

negative values, on whether it pushed our societies towards conformism and indifference. We noticed that an isolative individual attitude (which is not exactly individualism) was growing in our societies, the values of civism went backwards and the civil society weakened. We saw and see all this, but we do not relate it to our model of the welfare State.

Throughout the last century, there have emerged important alarms from an intellectual point of view against controlled – and to some extent cancelled – societies, from the public powers. From “1984” by Orwell to “A Happy World” by Huxley, science fiction has warned about the dangers of an interventionist State which builds societies to scale. But these warnings focused on the horrible experiments of political totalitarianism that punished Europe in the thirties, from Hitler to Stalin, while we considered that political democracy made us immune to the risks that an extremely interventionist State could cause.

The State's responsibility

The existence of the welfare State, of the provident and protective State, that the Europeans feel so proud of, is related to a basic concept that we already mentioned in the previous section. According to the European model, the common good is responsibility of the State and not the individuals. Let me express this in joking terms, that is to say, in exaggerated but not false, terms. In our welfare State, the citizens sign a contract by which, in exchange for our votes and taxes, we do not have to worry about any political matter and we can focus on our individual interests.

In exchange for our vote and our taxes, the State guarantees education, health, transport, culture, pensions, subsidies... the State carries on its shoulders a minimum welfare for all the citizenship and we are freed of having to think about it. It works as our accountant, who cares for us and our interests related to the public space, and it says *“Do not worry about anything, just vote and pay and we will worry about everything for you. We will worry about predictable and unpredictable matters. Let us worry about everything: education or health, we will worry about your health and your culture; do not worry about floods or earthquakes, the State will. You are not responsible for anything, you are only responsible for your individual things. Only the State is responsible for the public space and all what happens there, even if this affects you. You have the right to claim whatever you deserve according to your own interests and, let's say, selfish needs that correspond to you. The State will mediate. The State will reconcile them with your neighbour's needs, to the extent that they may be reconciled.”* And if at a given moment you think that what you get in exchange for your vote and your taxes is not enough and it would be, in fact, more economical for you to buy health, education, the transport you use and the culture you acquire in the free market, instead of paying it with your taxes, then the State offers its studies and adds *“probably the welfare State is not profitable for us, for each of us, but in our societies there is a growing number of people on the verge of*

poverty and marginality, and they would be excluded and left out of the system if the welfare State was not there to protect them". As it happens in the United States, this is added in a low voice.

In these studies, the verge of poverty and the exclusion are measured in a specific way, taken the social measure as a basis and not the minimum needs. And in evidently comfortable societies there are, according to these studies, huge bags of poverty and risk of exclusion which are almost invisible in real life. But the concept is clear: *"the difference between what you pay and what you receive helps us guarantee social peace. Or, if you prefer it, the good conscience of fighting against inequalities and exclusions"*.

I not it seems a joke. But it does not seem to be a false description of how the system works. It is not a sarcastic description aimed at ridiculing it either. The system, let me repeat it, has great virtues. The State carries on its shoulders the responsibility for everything, for all events. In the field of the Welfare State, the old Italian saying *"Piove? Porco governo!"* acquires a new sense. In its origin, this might seem an expression of popular anarchism which blames the government without any apparent reason for everything, even the rain. But in the welfare State, the government has claims the self-responsibility for everything, even the rain. It has persuaded the citizens not to worry about anything, the State will solve everything. Maybe it is not responsible for the rain or the draughts, but it is for the effects of this on each citizen that belong to the responsibility of the government and the public powers. So, the citizen who looks angrily at rain will join a demonstration against the government or will sign a petition to receive a subvention for the crop that he has lost because of the rain, or he will complain about the fact that due to the rain (and the government unable to predict this situation and to build shelters in the street or to widen the sidewalks) he has been late for work. And he will be right within the logic of the Welfare State.

All this belongs to the agreement. This is what the government has promised in exchange for it, vote and taxes.

The core of all this is the responsibility of the State. What the specialists, when they talk as we did some pages ago about the laws of having arms, called *"administrative-centred and centralist model"* as regarding Europe and *"individual-centred and federal model"* regarding the United States. The social conquests of the welfare State do not deserve any sarcastic caricature. But the Europeans, apart from being proud of their model, should also think about the objections that it may have, in order to predict them and avoid them without the need of totally modifying the model. The main problem lies in the fact that if we reject all responsibility giving it to the State and we free the individual of this responsibility, we will evolve (as we have already done to some extent) from the protective State to the paternalistic State. And the paternalistic State has the same objection as all paternalisms: by treating the citizens as children, they end up being children.

The general good monopoly

In practice, the exclusive responsibility of the State in public space, foundation of the Welfare State, ends up producing a monopoly of the concept of "general good" on the administration side, of the State. In practice, of the politics world, of the politicians. They end up showing themselves and legitimizing themselves as the only depositaries of this concept, which in principle should be a shared property of the whole society.

Apparently, all citizens must be interested in the general good, because each one is part of their society. But in the European model, citizens delegate these issues, as something mandatory, to the political class, which will end up practicing a sort of monopoly. Politicians are, in this system, the guarantors of the general good, the only and exclusive specialists of the general good.

An important politician explained it to me in a strictly descriptive way, without valuations. Let's imagine any town: the businessmen of the town think they need a road for the products to be sold abroad, and the wider the better for the trucks to arrive faster; ecologists do not admit the road because it would harm the landscape; the farmers do not want the road to go through their crops, although they would benefit from it, but as long as it goes across the other's crops the owners of uncultivated land want the road to be near the place where they have a land for construction. Etcetera, etcetera, etcetera. Each one sees the conflict from a sectarian point of view, from the perspective of the defence of their interests or to obtain a concrete good that is favourable to them.

Who arbitrates all this? The politician is (in theory and in practice) the only one who sees it without having to defend himself nor being able to defend any sectarian good. The politician is the one who evaluates the participation of each one of these partial interests and who dictates a resolution founded on the general interest: having or not having the road, the amount of lanes, the location. Each one has gone to the public space with their interests under their arms. The politician has done it (alone) with a conception of the general interest, with an idea of the general good. This general good will try to stamp on as few particular interests as possible. He will try to conceal contradictory interests. He will try to find the central way, so that good for some does not mean bad for the others. But at the end, he will end up deciding in the name of the general good.

Each one will act in this public space, with a concrete role: businessman, carrier, ecologist, farmer, landowner... Some of them will answer to strictly materialist and individual visions of the world (landowner), or to ideological visions of the world (ecologists). The only one who will be above all, the professional of the general interest, will be the politician.

It is true that, in this description of the operation of things in a welfare western society, politicians do not make a bad impression. I repeat: it is the sincere vision given to me by an important politician who believes in his job, who respects it and believes in the need for politicians. He recognized that not all politicians act that way but sometimes that the politician who should watch

over the general interest has, in fact, certain private interests or is in favour of sectarian interests for economic, ideological or similar reasons. There are politicians who do not arbitrate in the name of the general interest, but in favour of the owners, because they are owners as well, or in the name of carriers, for them to bring benefits to the election campaign; or in the name of the ecologists, because there are many of them in the town and their votes will be necessary to win the next elections. That is to say that sometimes the politician violates his/her own conception (always subject to discussion) of what the general interest should be for corruption or demagoguery or for being electioneering or because he does not know what else to do. But in these cases they would not be doing their job well. They would not be good politicians. Doing the job well, in today's frame, would be evaluating with honesty all the options and arbitrating in the name of their own conception (subjective and always ideological) of what the general interest is.

Nevertheless, the problem of the system is not only the politicians who do not do their job well. It is a problem that may appear. And the system must generate control mechanisms to avoid these types of deviations. Laws and courts are control mechanisms more or less efficient to avoid arbitrary actions or eccentricities, but depending on the way they are applied they do not avoid the problems of clientelism, demagoguery or being electioneering, which are specific defects of the democratic system. Defects much lesser than the ones of an authoritarian system, where arbitrary actions do not even need to appear to be something different in order to be effective, and where the local boss or autocrat does not need to explain actions to anyone.

But in any case, a system in which the public authorities monopolize the concept of general interest and general good does not seem to be the best imaginable system. And not only (and above all) because politicians may misuse this monopoly. These would be the bad practices that my speaker, the politician, was the first to denounce. It is because the general interest monopoly definitely takes away the commitment of the citizens to the public good (which is partly theirs) and it takes them to not participate to what we have called, colloquially, "carelessness", to the practice of selfishness perfectly legitimized. It also takes them away from the dialectic defence of their own interest in relation to the others', in the meeting point of the general interest, and in the discussion with the ones who have a different interest or idea.

The problem of the chain that we have established in Europe and which joins administration responsibility, welfare State and general interest monopoly, is that it keeps most citizens away from public space. With the general interest monopoly, the State is our parent, and possibly, a bad parent. This, when it is obvious that politicians, by definition, have more difficulties to be, let's say, good parents (the ones who deeply know the daily realities), than what the citizens have because they know what is convenient to them and they can even link it to what is convenient for the general good. But above all, it corners the citizens into the role of children, the role of the ones who need somebody to make decisions on their behalf and who is invited to lean, without responsibilities or participation, in a comfortable,

protected and riskless place.

The citizen's resignation

Delegating all responsibility of the general good to the public authority invites the citizen to resign from any collective responsibility. There is somebody to take care of that. There is somebody who is professionally dedicated to it, who is paid from our taxes and receives the payment for doing it for our community. The politician turns into the citizens' employee to watch over the general good. Released from this, the citizens can dedicate themselves exclusively to the defence of their individual interest. And the citizen, invited to this comfortable delegation, resigns from his/her participation and concentrates it in voting every four years and paying taxes. He has fulfilled his/her part of the deal.

The citizen's resignation does not mean only a poor political participation. It also invites them to a low social participation or, in any case, to a sectarian social participation, that does not affect the general good. When the politician I was talking about in some previous pages explained to me the example of the town that needed a road, what is amazing is not how naturally we accept the fact that the politician is the guarantee of the general good. What is surprising is how naturally we accept that all the rest, the owner, the ecologist, the farmer, have all the right and almost all the obligation not to think of it; of setting on the table only their interests. This is what really is worrying. This forced resignation.

A first example: Due to some totally domestic problems, related to traffic and the cleaning of the city, several political positions thought it was necessary to make a public call to civism: the city will never be clean if the citizens practice the civism of not making it dirty, and traffic will never be fluent enough if citizens do not drive civically. The mayor of a big city made some comments to the mass media in this regard and the answer was as immediate as convincing. What did he think he was doing? Other political positions from the opposition, several journalists and some citizens came over him because they considered that call as a way to elude his responsibilities as a mayor, of transferring his responsibilities to the citizens.

The mayor is responsible for the city being clean and, therefore, he must place bins, hire sweepers and have all the necessary provisions and measures taken. And the same thing with traffic. If the citizens want to be civic, better, nobody will scold them. But they cannot be forced to be civic. It is not in their responsibilities. The mayor has the obligation to pick up the papers, but the citizen does not have the obligation of not throwing them out.

Each time a politician has made a call of this kind to civism and citizens' responsibility, he is transferring his responsibility to the citizens. I remember paradigmatic, extreme cases, as the hard reproach against the public authorities in cases when the citizens have drowned after taking a bath in a day of high tide, even when the beach had a red flag on it. But, if the responsibility is never the citizen's but always the public authorities', the

administration should have a device to save people who takes a bath with a red flag. Each time the administrations have told citizens that something, whatever, depended on them, on their civism, on their help, it is always welcome, but not mandatory. It must be appreciated but not demanded nor can it be counted on.

Very often, politicians complain for this impossibility of mobilizing the citizen, of getting him/her involved in the general interest and the general good. They are partly right. But so are those who criticise politicians who make these calls, because they are proposing a partial revision of the contract. The implied contract in the welfare society gives the general good monopoly to the public authority in exchange for releasing the individual citizen from all responsibility. We cannot partially revise it, only for the benefit of one party. Either we reissue the contract or we cannot make unilateral claims. If we give back the responsibility to the citizens, we must also give them back the decision making capacity, we must offer them new channels of real participation that go beyond paying taxes and voting every four years. If we do not modify the contract, we are in fact telling the citizen that he/she has the right to be uncivic, the right to go under his/her own convenience and defend only particular or sectarian interests. As long as he/she does not break the laws or prohibitions, he does not have any obligation to watch over the cleaning of the city or its traffic fluency. The town council will provide the sweepers and the municipal police. He has the right to be indifferent towards the general good because we have agreed that this task is part of the duties of the administration and the politicians.

The relationship between the welfare State and the individual has something of feudal interchange. The State protects us, but in interchange, it accumulates all the authority. It actually accumulates it only during limited periods, between election and election. But in interchange for its absolute protection, during all these periods, the citizen is released from all collective worry and at the same time he is disabled of any direct or indirect intervention, which is not even considered. The protection offered by this welfare State is total and goes beyond the catalogue of minimum services that we consider as social justice.

During these last times, some administrations have changed the name of their departments. The old teaching departments have changed to be called Education and the Sanity departments to Health. It is a way of visualizing the absolute meaning of the protection offered. It is not that they give the teaching services through the school, but that they take care of our education, by land, sea, air, through school, television and any teaching media. It is not only that they offer us sanitary services at the hospital and outpatient departments, it is that they take care of our health, what we eat, what we consume and naturally also the sanitary system.

The welfare State does not legitimize only in providing public globalised services, but it is literally a system of "social security". We have seen in previous chapters, when we commented the defects and virtues of the European system: it is, above all, a system that offers securities to its citizens.

Even though the price of security is paid with the coin of participation, freedom and the creative risk or innovation.

Turned into minors, into children whom it is necessary to protect, the welfare State does not ask us for anything, nor demands anything, and in exchange for that it promises us practically everything. The motto of any governor in a welfare State is "We are doing fine". Always. In everything. The governor, the politician of the welfare State must be optimistic as an obligation, because since he is responsible for everything, anything that is not perfect is against him/her. An election campaign in a welfare State is the confrontation between somebody who says "We are doing fine", who is the person ruling, and another one who says "We are doing bad", who is the person who wants to substitute the ruler in the administration. The government discourse must be triumphal by force, because the commitment is the absolute protection of the citizens. And oppositions, in the political logic, are condemned to be destructive, to find everything wrong.

The responsibility has been taken away from the citizen. But in exchange for it, he has been promised the solution to all the problems. If any of them is not solved, it is the administration's fault. Either for not acting well or for not planning well or for not predicting well. The citizen is innocent above all. The citizen has right for everything, except for feeling responsible for the general good. Alain Finkielkraut talked about the "thought's defeat" of a certain tendency of western societies, the welfare societies, to make citizens childish. Being treated as children. Answering as children.

New protests

Somebody may say, with all reason that this pact between an administration that takes care of all the collective responsibilities and some citizens induced to have only particular interests is not as pacifist as it may seem. That each day protest phenomena are produced which indicate tensions in this pact and that, in fact, they constitute alternative channels of citizen participation. It is true. But even those new types of protest belong to the sharing logic (or even better, non-sharing) of responsibilities which characterize the welfare State. The new type of protest is usually the expression of disconformity with a measure taken (wrong or not) in the name of the general interest, but which confronts the interest of particulars. And, habitually, this new type of protest does not propose an alternative reading of the general interest, but simply claims that the interest of some concrete particular interests are not rejected or sacrificed.

Let's see many of the protests with a territorial sign that the countries of Western Europe faces. There is a type of equipment that is necessary to the general interest, but that is a harm or obstacle for the ones that are forced to accept it. It could be an equipment of any kind: jails, incinerators, rubbish dumps, wind power plants... But they could be even equipments less hostiles, which in a different time would have been considered a symbol of progress:

roads, freeways, tunnels. The most frequent type of protest is the one that says "not in my house". Actually, behind this type of protest there is usually a reduced nucleus that proposes a total alternative to the system. So total and so absolute that is not practical either, and that cannot be an alternative action of government in a medium term. But what gives power to the protest mobilizations in Western Europe is not this generic alternative, this totally contrary reading of what the public interest is, but the expression of a particular territorial interest. There are no demonstrations to make jails disappear from earth. They are against their construction here or there. The demonstrators do not have banners that say "No jails", but "We do not want jails in...", wherever it is.

We are, therefore, in the logic of the welfare State. The citizen does not feel invited to expound his/her personal thought of what the general good must be. He/she protests that in the name of the general good that we know is competence of the politicians, his/her individual interest is stamped on, that something that bothers him/her is built next to his/her house. Its existence does not bother him/her. He/she is not against jails, on the contrary, asks for them and knows they should exist.

Sometimes, the equipment he/she fights against is even good and associated to a progress cause with good press, as for example, the wind power plants. But he does not want it next to his/her house. Do it, of course, but in another place. *"Build more roads, because the road system is collapsed and, besides, I want to go in my car, I have the right, it corresponds to me. But do not build the road in a place where I have to hear noises or where it damages the landscape that I like"*. The confrontations between different conceptions of the general good are produced in the field of politics and they have the politicians as the stars. The one who is against a road map for a country that has been drawn by a political party in behalf of its conception of general good, is another political party which draws another road map in behalf of another conception of the general good. But all this happens in politics, in Parliaments, in the politics pages of the papers. The citizen mobilization is not in behalf of an alternative plan of roads (or jails or rubbish dumps), but for the defence of a certain valley, the interior way of the town, of a detour or junction that affects us personally.

It is not a way to illegitimize the demonstrations. On the contrary. There are demonstrations that are totally within the logic of the welfare State. Politics, the administration and politicians have promised to protect us, to protect our interests and conceal the individual interests in the arbitration for the general good. Protesting is the only way we have to express that our particular interest has not been respected enough. That in this arbitration we have not been heard enough, being conscious (but without this being assumed from the welfare State) that the perfect arbitration does not exist. That the jails, the rubbish dumps and the incinerators have to be in one place or another.

For this reason, in the field of politics, the ones who are in the opposition, the ones who promise us that they do have a conception of the collective interest that agrees with our particular interests, always propose ways out

through elevation, ways out that (on the paper) will not stamp on anybody's interest. A government from politics, from the general good monopoly, tells us that they will build a jail next to home. We, from the particular interest, demonstrate and tell them to place it where they want, but not next to home. Then, once again from the politics from the ones who want to be the administration, once again on behalf of the general interest and the general good, we are told that when they arrive to the power they will not build the jail next to our house, or next to anybody's house because they have a magical formula that makes possible the lack of need for jails. They have a "new culture of safety", while they are in the opposition that will make possible to fix the circle: to serve the general interest without stamping on the particular interest. Naturally, when the ones in the opposition go to the government (and the ones in the government to the opposition) the roles are exchanged. The government always imposes itself above some particular interest, and the opposition always promises a magical formula to allow all the interests to be compatible all of the sudden.

It is so obvious that these new types of protests are carried out (in the logic of the welfare State) from the claiming, legitimate and legitimized of the particular interest, which formula is sometimes to deny the right to the existence of a general good if their particular interest is not respected. It is the philosophy of the roar blocking as a protest, among other types of demonstrations. Who protests, who feels damaged the particular interest, is telling us (sometimes literally) that if the administration does not respect his/her particular interests, he does not have the obligation of respecting any particular interest of the rest of the citizens either. When a road is blocked, the ones blocked are not the representatives of the administration, but the citizens who go through it without any relation to the problem claimed. But the new type of protest considers that if somebody feels harmed, he has the right to fight the general good. If he has a problem and the administration does not solve it, he also has the right to cause a problem to a third citizen.

The administration will always be the one to blame, because the administration has guaranteed that it will watch over his interests, and it has also guaranteed the other citizen that he will be able to go through the road without problem. The Spanish Baroque had found a rhyme to relate the prevalence of the particular interest over the collective: *"I am warm and people laugh"*-. The new protest says that if I am not warm, nobody should be warm. If I have a problem, everybody should have one. The world cannot continue quietly and happily, without harms to anybody when my particular interest has not been taken into consideration.

These types of protests are not the denial of the foundational pact of the welfare State: the monopoly of the direction of the general interest on the side of the administration, what we called "administration centrism", against an American "individual centrism". On the contrary, these types of protest are according to the game rules of the welfare State. They confirm them. There are politicians of diverse sign, with the obligation of thinking in the general good. They fight, discuss, deny, they try to attract us in order to vote every

four years talking about the general interest. And there are some citizens who have been released from thinking of the general good and who only have to worry about what is convenient and interesting for us, who must avoid being harmed in our interests in behalf of the general good, and who, in any case, will vote when we have to. It seems obvious that with a scheme like this, with such a concentrated responsibility, with such a constant invitation to the resignation of our worries for the general interest, a society has a problem. The European societies have a problem.

Alternative ways

The examples may be more or less anecdotic, but the important issue is not at all. Conformity, passivity, the option for a protected comfort seem to be the most important stops for the generation of a European dream that is able to motivate. The European unity process has disappointed or limited its ambition for this social conservatism, deeper than the political conservatism that leads to the preference for the security over the ambition. Also, in a certain way, this model that annuls the individual responsibility towards the general good is what has opened a crack in the West, what has separated the European model from the American, and it is, therefore, the cultural foundation used to explain and justify other more important discrepancies. And the feeling is that this conformity and this passivity are in the basic codes of the welfare society that we have created, full of values and virtues, but which in the practice acts also as an invitation to the citizens' resignation for any collective responsibility. The welfare society is, in part, the gold cage which Europe has been shut in.

On one side, we have a public space, the one of the general interest, that is the State monopoly and which, therefore, is the field of a political class more and more professionalized and, in consequence, endogamic. On the other side, we have protected citizens accustomed to delegate the solving of their problems to the public authorities, citizens who have been promised security and stability in exchange far standing out of the way of the public space, invited to selfishness and indifference. It is obvious that this leads to a kind of divorce. This divorce provokes conformity and carelessness in some sectors, but uneasiness in others. There are segments of the European society with some conception of the general interest, but without the channels to express it in the perfectly defined and marginalized political space that we have created. There are sectors that feel pressed by this permanent invitation to take care of their own business and not feeling any kind of responsibility for the general good.

Possibly, this uneasiness is what explains, in part, the dissatisfaction of the European population towards their own present and predictable future, in spite of the welfare and protection levels that have been achieved. The American world offers its citizens an individual dream, but since the individual is the centre of society there, to some extent the individual triumph becomes the best way to participate in the collective responsibility. Europe does not

believe in individual responsibility. It offers the individuals a personal horizon of wellbeing and comfort, that is why it does not have (in a system where the responsibility of the general good is the State's) a collective dimension, a general dimension. Perhaps the uneasiness of the European population that has been detected by several opinion polls, especially among young population, and that is not justified by the level of the material wellbeing, is the effect of the lack of a dream, the lack of a collective epic, the lack of a project and a horizon. But, for sure, it is mainly due to the consideration that the ones who have personal responsibility of the administration of the general good do not do it well. And they do not have concrete proposals to change the system, system that has drowned the power of initiative.

The flourishing of the non profit organizations experienced in Europe could be a symptom or an effect of this uneasiness. The general good is property of the State and politics. The person who has a minimum personal vocation to participate in the general good (wrong or not), does not find the channels to project this will in the political space. He, then, looks for another place, an imaginary space where it is possible to overcome the eternal invitation made to all Europeans to lose interest in the general good. It is indeed a substitute way. It is a way in which the concept of representation disappears, where it is possible to create a social mirage behind an organization that, in fact, does not represent anybody. It is a way with great deficiencies and dangers. But perhaps it is the way that we have forced by not permitting the citizens participation in the political construction of the general good. And then they look for ways, more or less illuminated, more or less mystic that offer the citizens a dose of epic and hope in the collective space which is not offered by professionalized and immodest politics or citizens centred in taking care of the most immediate and personal material interests.

The protector State, the Welfare State, which seems to be the maximum expression of the European world, parallel to the process of confluence of the European States, ends up being a factor of uneasiness and conservatism. The protector State is a permanent offer of security and comfort. But it discourages citizens from participating in the public space. And, also, in the name of a demobilizing equalitarism, discourages them from an individual dream related to self-improvement, competence, education, which is perfectly alive (perhaps too alive) in the American world.

And it is not necessary to look at the American world to model a harmonious relationship between citizens and government. In Europe –we have to repeat it exhaustively Switzerland and specially Finland are a model of participative citizens in the public space, they have placed the authority in their cantons and villages together for all that they are concerned.

This way they have kept participation and capacity to defend personal and family interests in some collectives that are close to them and allow communication and the achievement of confluences. Nobody cheats on anybody.

More than in North America, the States, those relatively small European collectives of such close example, show us where to find an alternative way

to overcome the slovenliness of responsibility on behalf of the citizens.

If the issue is creating Europe and rebuilding the West, we should probably change the theoretical basis of our welfare State. Not all the benefits, nor the whole model of universal aid, particularly not the education model, if it is not to increase it, but this theoretical foundation that establishes that the responsibility of the public space is only the administration's and the government's, which condemns the citizen (pretending to be releasing him) to be subject to the personal or sectarian interests. A change of values is necessary, which can only be probably through an education change, but also a change in the way we understand and practice politics.

Once more, it would be necessary to find the way to make the two western political systems converge, because although they are opposite, they both have complementary virtues and defects. At the present divergence point it is not easy to find the convergence. Probably, the formula to overcome the crack that is getting wider between the two principal components of the West is not trying to fill it but making bridges.

New politics

The old saying says that democracy is the less bad of the government systems known. This means that it is a system clearly preferable to any type of authoritarianism, from the ethical point of view as well as from the practical point of view: the risks of any despotism, even the illustrated despotism or those which were justified as an unavoidable step towards the mass emancipation, are much bigger, and the wickedness done by totalitarian and despotic regimens are many more than the ones done by democracies. But the saying also tells us that democracy is not a perfect system and that, therefore, there is a margin to make it perfect. Also, democracy has risks and defects that we should be able to overcome without giving up its great virtues, more than the ones of any other political system.

Some of the risks of democracy that have a universal nature are produced practically in any democratic regime of the world, beyond the values system and the world vision related to democracy. The Greeks had detected that democracy, even the ridiculous democracy that they could have is very sensitive (but totalitarianisms are even more!) to the power of demagoguery, of what we call today electioneering. And this even though the Greeks could not even imagine the consequences of the praise of public opinion and, therefore, of the electoral group, offering them distorted visions of reality, lying or choosing from reality what is more convenient, almost buying their vote or bribing it with easy and stimulating concessions, even if they may be inappropriate. Clientelism, electioneering, demagoguery are risks that are present in democracy.

In the advanced democracies, another increasing risk is what we can call demoscopic democracy, where the direct queries to the population and the full convictions of the governors are substituted by constant studies of

opinion. In these demoscopic democracies, the governor, the politician would not have a personal conception of the world, an ideology and a programme to be offered to the citizens calling for their support, but he would model his positions depending on the results of the opinion polls adapting in order to please the electors. This risk of a democracy with plasticine politicians, without opinions or projects of their own, who with the wind direction, seems to have been detected by the electors, who, in some recent election processes seems to have preferred politicians with strong convictions (though very debatable) over demoscopic politicians.

The American elections of 2004 seem to have been an example of this reaction. In the campaign, Bush presented himself as a politician with values and convictions (I insist, very debatable), but above all he presented Kerry as a changeable, opportunist politician, perhaps not totally unfairly. Bush won the elections with advertisements as the one showing Kerry surfing (the metaphor of the demoscopic politician, whose movement depends on the wave) and changing his mind with the wind changes. I do not mean that the two roles are accurately attributed, nor do I mean that Bush has convictions and Kerry really is an opportunist. I only try to say that, sometimes, the electors prefer to chose the politician they think has convictions, although they do not totally agree with him, than the politician who is unable to communicate the feeling that he has them, although perhaps he does.

Anyway, these risks of democracy are general and the democratic system tries to fight them with their own election laws. For example, in some countries the election laws have established big circumscriptions and very proportional regimes with close lists, to avoid the local bosses and give power to the parties' regime, traditionally weak. It is the case of Spain, with the Constitution of 1978, after an authoritarian regime and the experience of the small circumscriptions in the Restoration, which nourished the local bosses. On the contrary, other countries, such as Great Britain, have preferred systems with very small circumscriptions, obviously majority, where the personal profile of the Member of Parliament is more valuable than the party he represents. Who gives the votes is the Member of Parliament, not the name, nor the ideology of the party. Finally, most countries have chosen, as Germany, mix systems in order to try to adapt the advantages and avoid the inconvenients of both election systems in their fullest expression.

But, besides these general problems of democracy and of the systems that each one can generate to diminish them, the European political system has specific problems, related to the issue we commented in previous chapters: the existence of a welfare State, which accumulates all the responsibility of the public good, and which takes the citizens to the defence of their personal or corporative interests, and to a participation that is centred in the vote every four years. As we said, this principle (which also differentiates the European politics from the American) has generated two circuits that do not meet, that go in parallel directions. On one side, the political world, more and more professionalized and endogamic. On the other, the whole society, the citizens, what we call civil society, which has been taken away from the

management of the general interest and the general good and that, in any case, looks for it through ways out of politics.

Politics as a job

A very important politician told me that in his profession (let's give it that name) a unique phenomenon is produced, a phenomenon that does not happen in any other professional field: the game rules demand the destruction of the opponent. Part of the job of the politicians is to destroy the rest of the politicians. There is, indeed, competition in all professions. In all professions it is important and necessary to compete in order to get a name in the limited places of excellence. But in the game rules, as we understand it, the job itself is to present their own proposals and the programme and the world vision that they defend (in a very ambiguous way, sometimes) but also to discredit even personally the other politicians. In the extent people, not only ideas, are chosen, the political fight becomes a fight between people, not only about ideas. The goal of the political debate is keeping the power or substitution of the power. In both cases, the political debate motivates doubting the capacities or even the intentions of the opponents. And, obviously, denying them all the recognition, at least while they are ruling, while they participate in what we could call the political market, while they are in competition with somebody.

These very strong game rules of politics lead to diverse problems, from the collective point of view. It represents the group of society that feels being ruled by capable people, with a higher education and a great service vocation is convenient. And among the people who have these characteristics, we chose those who have the world vision that is more similar to ours, who defend values and ideas we agree with. But the strength and the destruction capacity of the people in politics causes effects that take us apart from this goal:

- A horizon of confrontation that can lead to the personal destruction can be dissuasive for many people who would have political capacities. In other words, it scares away from politics, it takes away from politics, prepared and educated people. It hinders vocations that would be socially useful. People who would be willing to assume responsibilities and use their time and effort in the government or in the political debate are not willing to suffer the destruction and discredit processes that come with it.
- The strength of the political confrontation causes that, sometimes, people who have their vocation and capacities intact may be discredited or burned out. Societies consider as paid off politicians who could still be perfectly useful, but who have been worn out for some extremely abrasive game rules.
- Politics is reserved to those people who are willing to go through the very hard personal proofs implied, who are not necessarily the most

prepared or the most capable. Then, a professional circle of politicians is created which is absolutely differentiated from the rest of society. In this circle, there are people with a political vocation that is so strong that they can resist the inconveniences of the wearing out (being capable or not), but also those people who detect in politics a professional option which they do not find outside it and to whom the wearing out environment is not important. Thus, vocational politicians must coexist (usually in inferior conditions) with professional politicians without vocation and only for the personal interest.

- The impermeability between the world of politics and society makes it difficult to enter this circle of the professional politicians, vocational or not. But it also makes it difficult to get out of it. That who has been in the politics world has a very difficult social reinsertion (consciously using a term of the penitentiary language) and in consequence, very often, politicians who have completed their circuit in their political life, who have given the best of themselves, do not have any kind of exterior horizon and they must stay indefinitely, from one position to another, simply because there is nothing for them outside.

All these risks are, in fact, the application of the general problem to concrete cases. The European system has given the general wealth monopoly to the State. It has clearly marked, therefore, the limits of politics, it has created a wall around politics. State/politics and individuals/society do not meet. They only get in touch every four years in the elections or they crash when a political action carried out in the name of the general wealth steps on an individual interest. The two spheres are independent, and in a certain way there is the feeling that politics (which is also destructive and abrasive) contaminates society.

The game rules of European democratic politics, very strong, help making the problem worse, a problem that is initially the coexistence (with a frontier almost impermeable) of the world of politics and society. The very hard life inside the politics circle, the apparently mandatory nature of the destruction of the opponent, the constant and unbeatable presence of demagoguery and electioneering, are the reasons for the fact that the mechanisms to gather the political staff, which get to the government, do not guarantee that they are the most capable. Of course, capable people with political vocation and with knowledge and intelligence to arbitrate in favour of the general interest get to the power. But the game rules, exceptionally hard, leave on the way many others who would have those abilities. And sometimes they place in this position somebody who does not have these abilities but who has the necessary strength to pass the filters. The political class is then isolated in a profession without a way out, that contaminates everything, that is perceived as a suspect by society and where a special form of anthropophagy is practised.

Democracy continues being the least worse of all political systems, by default. We have generated more mechanisms (election laws, complex Parliament systems) that have improved this least worse regime. . But there is still a lot of work to do. We still have to modify the way of doing politics, the

game rules, the ways to gather the political staff, the mechanisms to get in and out of this circle, the participation ways and the social responsibility ways, in order to improve democracy.

Citizens exclusion from politics

The impassable frontier that separates a political world holding, in exchange for all the power, the baggage of responsibility, and a social world where the individuals are only responsible for themselves, causes a double collective problem. On one side of the frontier, the politicians', cause all the problems, consequence of the endogamy and self-destruction that we just mentioned. But on the other side, it causes no minor problems. Summarizing: human resources which could be useful for the general good are wasted, and it causes the frustration and ultimately boredom in those people who wanted to assume some kind of responsibility regarding the general interest, who feel that political life will not give them the opportunity to do it (or maybe it will, but at a very high price that they are not willing to pay because it affects their personality), and who do not find an alternative way to channel that participation that would give them a certain epic dimension and a challenge or an ideal that would go beyond the individual interest.

European societies have developed a wide nucleus, wider than ever before in history, of educated people who have succeeded in their professional activities and who have capacities and intelligence to participate in the public space, in the management of the general interest. But this management is monopolized by the State, by the administrations and, therefore, by a closed and defined political class, inserted in political parties which fight between themselves to substitute each other. These civil personalities, with business, professional or academic history, which would not be so far away from what the public management represents, with experiences and knowledge valid to be supplied to the community, do not have any mechanism parallel to the strict political life to participate in the decisions and management of the public space.

In more graphic words, either they "enter politics" or they continue condemned (in spite of their aptitudes and experience) to stay apart from the general interest and circumscribed to the defence of particular or corporative interests.

If they want to participate in the management of the general interest, they must pass the frontier, enter the club and dedicate themselves to politics. And, therefore, they must be subject to the game rules: mutual destruction, party settlement, difficulties to go back to the professional, academic or business life of origin.

There are many examples. I have met Europeans with an extraordinary academic path in the United States who, with civic sense, but having acquired an American perspective of politics that does not work in Europe,

have volunteered to collaborate in their countries with the mastery acquired in their profession. They have understood that entering politics, in the European meaning, meant paying some tolls that they had considered at the beginning that they were minor and only functional: Settling in a party, accepting a public position, entering the politics game. Only when they have been inside, they have discovered, with astonishment, that the anthropophagic dynamic of political life did not respect their academic value and that they were object of the same destructive fury than the rest of politicians. They also discovered that they were entering a stormy and complicated world, from which they did not find the way out.

Because, in the European scope, the one who comes back to society from politics carries a stigma, he is a suspect. The same society who, officially, in the public discourse politically correct, invites the citizens to participate in politics, punishes the ones who have done it with a stigma of non-neutral and partisan that makes it difficult to go back to civil life and always in worse conditions than the ones they would have had if they had not entered politics. Except for the case where this return to the civil life is a camouflaged way to continue in the politics logic.

These people I refer to came from a North American environment, in which the frontier between politics and society is much smaller because politics does not have the general wealth monopoly. On the contrary, citizens, individually or organized, are also main characters of the general interest. Therefore, with a frontier that separates less, jumping in any of the two directions is possible. Perhaps it is not easy, but it is possible. On the contrary, in the European society you must enter politics (and the expression itself is significant) if you want to carry out any kind of public service. And when you are in, you are stuck to its net from which it is very difficult to get out. This way, the talent wasted for the public life is huge.

The itinerary which the people I mentioned have gone through can only be explained in the extent that they have gone to the United States and that, therefore, they did not know the game rules of European politics. The idea that a person who has dedicated his life to business, or research, or to manage a law firm, can dedicate eight years of his life to be mayor of his town, or to participate in the design of education or research public policies, is habitual in the United States (and a little in the Anglo-Saxon world, which is in the middle of the way between the United States and Europe) but it is impossible in most of the European countries. If he does it he will become a politician and he will be on the other side of the frontier.

This impossibility of access has considerably impoverished the European politics. Few people want, in these conditions, "to enter politics", "to get involved in politics". The popular wisdom that uses these expressions shows politics as a closed box. This has hindered the renovation of ideas, the incorporation of knowledge, widening up the point of views. The personality of prestige that is in the public space apart from the political dispute, who gives his personal knowledge, who commits (at least for a while) to the management of the public space from his civism and talent, does not exist among us. In Europe we have the ones who do politics in a party, professionalized, and the rest of the citizens. Either you are on one side of the

frontier or on the other.

A European citizen, regarding his relation to the public space, has three options: either he enters politics or he works for a non profit organization, or simply accepts the invitation to not worry and takes all the opportunities to have a good life individually that are offered by this society. That is to say, either he looks for the general interest through the marked path or he tries to find another way or simply stays apart from the general interest. An invitation to hedonism and carelessness. Who stays on this side does it without any right to the intervention in the space of the general interest. He is condemned to a certain form of silence.

The role of civil society

For some time, the term "civil society" has entered strongly in any kind of public speech. Civil society is mentioned in opposition to the political society, to describe the group of entities, associations, foundations, companies, institutions in which citizens are spontaneously organised, apart from the public institutions, from their own wishes and affinities. The civil society is praised by everybody as the organization form of society, as an intermediate space between citizens and the State, but anyway closer to the citizens, independent from the State.

In some towns and territories that considered that the State had a hostile attitude towards their cultural, economical and social interests, the civil society has become a real alternative skeleton through which society has provided itself with the instruments that seemed necessary to help their cultural expressions, solve their aid problems or carry out their activities.

Theoretically, Europe values its civil society very much. The work group created by Romano Rodi to deal with issues referred to the common identity of Europe concluded that the economy will never be the motor of the European unity if it does not have the political unity and that the political unity will never happen if it does not have a common identity which will come from the existence of a European civil society. Therefore, the civil society seems to be the base not only of the operation of each one of the European societies but even of its confluence process.

In previous chapters, we have seen that in the European model the State has the responsibility of the collective interest. And it is obvious that the civil society, by definition, also has the responsibility of some concrete aspect of the general good. Therefore, though the European public discourse praises civil society aloud, in practice, there is a dysfunction between the role of this society freely organised and the monopoly that the public administration, politicians and bureaucracy practice on the space of the general interest. Consequently, this leads in practice to distrust from the administration towards the civil society, which in the European case has been emptied of contents and has become a subsidiary of the political society. Through its subventions politics, but even more through politics of absorption of all kind of initiatives, the political society has relegated the civil society to a subsidiary role, complementary, in a second term.

While in the United States foundations, associations, civil initiatives apart from the State have an important influence in the cultural, education or sanitary life, in Europe the official discourse is that all those scopes are part of the State's action field. Therefore, if the civil society acts, it does provisionally in substitute tasks, waiting for the State to act. The State is considered to be in charge of this space to guarantee equality minimums for all the population and, in any case, if civil society acts it would be to offer a plus to some segments of population, something that is not necessary (if it were, the State would provide it) but that can be accepted if it is offered. A kind of consolation prize.

In the United States, the patronage and sponsorship laws offer great tax advantages in the acting of the civil society. In Europe, regarding foundations and entities on the side of the administration, there are different practices and sometimes contradictory. In some countries, legislation has been getting closer to that of the United States'. In others, there are still very strong filters on the activities of these types of initiatives. Sometimes, these restrictions and distrusts are not only consequence of an ideological position against the civil society, but, above all, a system to avoid that, through these initiatives tax collection or its transparency is lost. In many countries, the distrust towards foundations and non profit entities has not come from the Culture Ministry, but from the Finance Ministry.

But, in all the cases, from the most open to the most restrictive, in Europe the State establishes the frame in which the civil society must place its resources and efforts. Very frequently, the civil society is very participated in. In the United States, the civil society is an influence way on the government decisions. For example, most *lobbies* act through foundations.

In some zones of the South of Europe, where the transitions to democracy have been relatively recent (Greece, Portugal, Spain) there were very powerful civil societies during the dictatorships, which in many cases supported their own culture, but also the social aid or the civic activity when the lack of interest or the hostility of those dictatorships did not act or acted against them... When democracy came, new public institutions, conformed in the womb of the European welfare State, they went to the civil society, thank it for the job done when there was no democratic State and assume the functions that this society had carried out.

I have been to many ceremonies of foundations and entities in which the political representative has thanked the civil society for all it has done but has announced that from then on the political society would be the one to do it. In many towns and cities, the concert cycles organised by "Joventuts Musicals" or a local association, started being organised by the Town Council, the Regional Council, the Counselling, the Ministry. The political society considered that the minimums of the cultural offer for all the citizens, the minimums of aid, education or sanitary offer were its responsibility, and that if society had considered it for a while as its responsibility, it was due to exceptional circumstances, happily overcome. The rest of Europe where

these circumstances to be overcome did not exist, had arrived before. Unevenly: this conversion to State is very deep in the French case and less in the British case. But there is a transversal model of conversion to State that goes across Europe.

In fact, we are before what we commented in previous parts. Contrary to the American model, the European model places all the responsibility (and all the power!) on the public institutions and releases the citizen from responsibility and power. The individual citizen and the organised citizen. In the United States the motor of the cultural life is the private money, which thanks to the tax incentives, acts as patron of the activities. The orchestras, for example, live off private money. In Europe, the orchestras live off public money. If tomorrow there is no public money in the European culture and everything had to work with the money of the companies, foundations and private sector, we will be practically without any kind of cultural offer. From the cinema to classical music (almost with the only exception of books), all the culture in Europe rests on the public sector. Even the civil world, entities and associations call on the door of the public sector in order to obtain resources, so that they end up being in the best of the cases the application instruments of public politics supported by public budget.

The American model is a model mainly private. Therefore, in its essence, of an organised civil society. The European model is a public model. Therefore, centred in the political society. In Europe, there are (also unevenly) co-ordination spaces. In some places more than in others, there are coordinated entities, schools, hospitals. But in many of these places, the co-ordination is not perceived as a virtue, but as a failing of the system. Co-ordination exists in the extent that the State is not able to handle it or in the extent that the State must administrate a heritage of the past in which there was this civil initiative and it would be inappropriate to erase it suddenly. As a luxury that can only be allowed when the universal minimums are guaranteed.

As it happens in many other things, the value that acts as a motor of this European conception of the Welfare State, the State's monopoly of the general wealth, of the reluctance towards civil society and any model of co-ordination, is a principle of equalitarism. The base of the system is a theoretical guarantee of equality from the State. This conception of equalitarism would be, without a doubt, very debatable. In Europe, from the French Revolution, equality among people has become a great political goal, perhaps the most important of all. But "equality" is an ambiguous term. People are not equal, neither in wishes, nor in interests or capacities. We can be in favour of equality of rights, but we cannot be in favour of cloning human beings, of making them uniform in order to make them equal. Equality is the contrary of inequality. But it is also contrary to diversity.

Further on, when we praise diversity, we will criticise the equalitarism that has controlled a good deal of the European ideologies during modern times, the radical equalitarism that was in the base of communism. But also the stabilizing equalitarism that is in the base of the Welfare State and that

usually makes equal in a descendant way, as it happened more strongly with the Eastern communism. A good deal of the criticisms to our present educational system can be founded in this equalitarian obsession, which at the end is unfair. Because, as an old liberal proverb says, there is nothing more unfair than trying to make equal what is unequal.

All these theoretical foundations of our European model can be debated. But anyway, the price paid is the lack of interest of the civil society parallel to the shyness of the individuals. The individuals and the civil society are told that they are stepping on a limited land, that they are invading competences and responsibilities of the State. There is where the welfare State establishes the destructive system from the sense of responsibility –of the civism- of people, and this is the worst mistake. But the State, always jealous of its prerogatives, tends to increase them. Paradox: it demands civism where the State itself destroys it.

A demand for epics

Throughout these pages, we have seen that there is an important crack within the western world which separates Europe from the United States. Also, we have seen that the origin of this crack is not foreign policy nor geostrategic considerations, but probably the differences in foreign policy are the effect, the symptom of a difference of society symptoms and, at the end, what makes both societies at the side of the Atlantic different is the value given to the State and the individuals role, and the value of the responsibility towards the general good. Related to this, the differences between the European and the American evaluation on the policies about Iraq and the difference between the fact that in Europe the orchestras are paid by the State and in the United State by private money, are not two subjects without relation, there is a common train. And it is difficult to be able to rebuild the West if there is no confluence in such an important issue, with effects on fields so apparently away from each other as international policy or financing of health and culture, going through the policy on particular weapon possession.

In this political dichotomy, which is the correct model? To which model should we lead? Each one defends its model with arguments. For the Europeans, our model is more equalitarian, fairer. To the Americans, theirs is more competitive, it trusts more in individual people, it is more free.

Indeed, it must be possible to find intersections. But the origin points are very different. They both have defects and their full application leads to excesses that are difficult to assume. The weight of religion in the American model seems to be an objective problem, even though their Constitution is very advanced regarding freedom of religion. In the neoconservative thought, which seems to dominate the current American politics, there are factors of religiosity and maquiavelism highly debatable. But on the other hand, Europe has not achieved a clearly functional model either. We have

seen on the last pages the disadvantages applied, for example, to the way of doing and understanding politics.

The European welfare model denies the prominence and the responsibility towards the general wealth to the citizens and society. Without collective responsibility, only worried for the material wellbeing, the European world has entered a discredit of the effort. Against the present American model, but also against the own foundations of the hatching of the western civilization it belongs to. The educational system, cultural values, the world of the mass media show us a proposal in which easiness has an implied praise and personal effort is discredited. Leisure is terribly identified with easiness, though it is obvious that the way to culture is usually a long and difficult way that demands a personal effort, an ascetic via –in the meaning of worked and of laborious nature- to fully enjoy the more complex cultural productions. Leisure is the kingdom of easiness, and the European civilisation has a tendency to leisure, to consider that work time is a divine punishment, to release work time in order to invest it in leisure without effort, which can end up being boring. Against boredom, the proposal is hedonism. And if it does not work, nihilism.

Half joking, I said some pages before, that a European citizen only has three options in his relation to the public space: entering politics, joining a non profit or getting bored. We have seen the meaning of entering politics. The shocking cult to the non profits as a new way of participation crashes with many gaps: they have great virtues but –often- false representations are given and they can end up being a new expression of the politically correct. But there are few people who join. Most people in Europe are simply apart from the public space. The result could be getting totally and consciously bored. We could also say, and it would be the same, paradoxically, having fun: taking the option of what we have called leisure, looking for the strictly personal satisfaction as long as the relevance in the public space is forbidden.

But the term “boredom” has not been picked at random. Every society, at any time, has a certain need for epics. Every society needs, in a way or another, a collective dream, a challenge, a quête which makes daily life alive and works to awaken its energies. The American model has worked – and this is its great success- to reveal the energies and potentials of their individuals. The American dream, which is individual, but with collective effects, because the individual is, in the end, responsible for the general wealth has, allowed citizens coming from different places of the world, and specially Europe, released, free, with a certain cult to the personal effort, to build a power that today has almost the hegemony of the world. And they have done it with a human resource offered especially by Europe. As if the Europeans, specially the Anglo-Saxons who went to America, found in themselves all their potentials filtered by the old rigid European structures.

And Europe today? We have commented that there is not a European dream, but that there could be. Will there be, in place of it, if there is no dream, wish of being voluntary power? In the individual field, fun, hedonism.

In the collective field, boredom.

I said that I did not choose the word at random. Boredom, through the French word which better catches the meaning, the *ennui*, is one of the main characters of the European culture from the beginnings of the 19th century to the World War I; George Steiner has studied this very well in his essay "Bluebeard's Castle".

This period of the history of Europe is similar in several aspects to our time. Europe lived a long period of peace, only broken by the Franco-German war (or Franco-Prussian) of 1870. It was also a period of economic progress, of wellbeing (badly shared, in present terms, but better shared than it had ever been so far), of trust in the future. Somebody talks about a European garden. Others, of Europe understood as a spa. But that Europe did not offer any dream to its youth, any horizon. And the word *ennui* becomes the centre of a whole culture, of a whole world vision. Baudelaire is perhaps the maximum expression, but not the only one. There is Mallarmé. The word *ennui* is repeated throughout his poems. And perhaps we find the most barbarous expression of that boredom in a terrible verse of "Le voyage" by Baudelaire, when he speaks of finding "a desert of boredom, an oasis of terror": "*Une oasis d'horreur dans un désert d'ennui!*" The horizon of boredom is so terrible that even horror seems an oasis. Better terror than boredom.

A generation of Europeans, in a comfortable and hedonist time like ours, got bored, or thought it got bored. It did not have a dream. And from boredom, from that *ennui*, it thought horror was preferable. It called horror. And the bad thing of this attitude is that horror, when you call it, comes. And it came in a 20th century, from the other disappointment of Sarajevo, the first, the one of 1914, an avalanche of horror that were the two World Wars, Auschwitz, Hiroshima, the Gulag, the totalitarianisms.

The bored Europe assisted, fearless, the generation of totalitarianisms, which had nested in it in first place, and with an extraordinary power. Because, as an old observation says, Europeans spend all day saying that totalitarianisms fly over America, but at the end it always ends up landing in Europe. *L'ennui* brought horror. The sixty years of the European spa, placid and comfortable, bored, were the culture medium where the embryos of the most terrible explosion of horror formed. Then, they talked about the culture discomfort and the wish of death. Everything from *l'ennui*. Everything as a prologue for the horror.

I do not get this reference from a cyclic conception of history that makes us believe in mechanical repetitions. But as a warning I do. A bored Europe, a Europe without a dream, is an indifferent Europe that may assist the apparition of new totalitarianisms, of new embryos of horror, without getting upset, only asking how this would change their weekends, how it will affect their wellbeing.

In the European lack of emotion before the Eleventh of September in New York, there is an anti-Americanism already commented, but there could also be this type of indifference towards new forms of totalitarianisms, at least

while they do not affect us directly.

For sure, in this type of unanimous, but selective, pacifism that dominates Europe today, there are good feelings and positive attitudes. Anyway, personally, I prefer as a motto for a demonstration, "Against wars" than "Against the war". Because, nowadays, there is not only one war in the world, Iraq's, but many more. True pacifism would condemn them all. To condemn only the Americans' war and to be indifferent towards the rest would not be pacifism but anti-Americanism. But even in this generic pacifism, there is also, in a certain scope, some kind of tendency to isolation, to leave things in the hands of others, to not assume responsibilities. In the present Europe, there is a feeling of non-interference that is heir of an old tradition of maquiavelic pragmatism which fed the Pact of Munich between Chamberlain and Hitler; which also fed the Vichy spirit; which fed all the shut eyes before the news of the Holocaust and the news of the Gulag.

If the evil is not so present, if it does not attack us every day, it is possible to coexist with evil. If it only asks for small things which do not affect us much, it is possible to give them to it. Perhaps because, at the bottom, the hegemonic European thought is convinced, As Pascal Bruckner said, that they would not be more than a misunderstanding, a wrong interpretation of the wishes of the oppositors, a deficit of dialogue. Or perhaps, because from a penitential feeling, a part of Europe believes that the time has come for the West to pay the wrong that has caused through history, destroying the lost paradises where the good Roussonians inhabited.

Here is where it seems clear that there must be a rebuilding of the West, a full assumption by the Western side of their fundamental values, and this must imply believing in the responsibility of the individuals towards the general good. Towards the general good of their societies, their countries, and also the planet. Believing that, as people, as individuals, we have collective responsibilities that go beyond our personal, sectarian or corporative interests. Is this the American model? It is the foundation of the American model, though this model has had deviations that are not necessary to share.

But this rebuilding of the West seems to be the only solid base to try to generate the European dream, to look for the European unity to be more than a mosaic of States marked by the conservatism and the search for economical wellbeing only. To try to generate a good resolution model in the issue that today is the centre point for Europeans, which focuses (though only politically incorrect) their worries and which will be the central debate in coming years: the demographic changes in Europe, the aging process of population, and the new immigration that comes from out of Europe.

Immigration problems

Some years ago, I belonged to a parliamentary committee of studies on migration and I remember that some commissioners were constantly told off because they talked about "the problem of immigration". Those who told them off, in the name of political correction, argued that immigration should not be considered a problem; using that expression was a way of

transforming reality into a conflict from the beginning; immigration was a fact and, in some respects, a chance; thanks to immigration many people reached new horizons that allowed them to have a better life; thanks to immigration, foster homes became rich from all points of view, from the economic to the cultural point of view; the massive movement of people was one of the positive features, once the balance had been made, of our times.

I truly believe that these comments were full of good intentions. But I think that they referred to a non-existent or minor phenomenon. They talked about migration flows caused almost by curiosity, by a vocation to migrate as a happy adventure of people who want to discover new places. And they spoke about migration as a happy welcome, without tensions, as the ambassadors from other lands who come to give us the present of their customs and their way of understanding the world.

From political correction, those who defend that immigration is not a problem come to say that people are lucky to be able to migrate. I answered them that it is a shame that people must migrate. Because I have the impression that most migrations are not due to their eagerness to know a new world, but to the dramatic events by which some people feel expelled from their world (because it denies them some economic or cultural horizons) and are forced to go to another one. Migration is not a party but a need that many people regret and they would not like to experience.

In the same way, I did not share the idea of immigration as a party of mutual cultural fertilization, what some people have called crossbreeding. The existence of a high percentage of immigrated population is seen as problematic by an important section of the foster population. I do not think we have the right to tell them that this is a sinful perception, that this is some sort of hidden racism. Explicit racism in Europe has been fed from the negative effects of political correction. There has existed a politically correct discourse which said that there was no problem, but a great party to celebrate diversity. There has existed a racist discourse that said that there was a problem and that the only solution was the exclusion. We have missed another democratic and central discourse to say that there is a problem but the solution to this problem is neither xenophobia nor exclusion.

If there is no political discourse to offer solutions between the politically correct discourse used by the Parliaments and the racist discourse that one can hear in bars, we are inviting everybody who perceives immigration as a problem to join xenophobia. The increase of xenophobe parties in Western Europe has taken place from the electorates of democratic and left-wing parties which have used political correction in their public discourse. Xenophobe parties have not been fed from an intellectual racism created in a laboratory, from people ideologically certain about the genetic inequality among races, but from daily problems and from the fact that these problems have been denied and hidden by the official status.

Xenophobe parties have grown in labour sectors of labour towns, with voters who dealt with this new immigration every day and who have not been offered a discourse which was not heavenly, which acknowledge their problems and which suggested democratic and positive solutions.

So, here we will talk about the problem of immigration, because we are aware that this is a reality with some problematic aspects for people who take part directly in the process. This is a problem for those who must leave their homes against their will, often moved by the economic necessity, but also to a certain extent due to restricting societies which close many personal horizons. This is a problem for foster homes which must create new difficult rules for this game. It is true that sometimes, from these problems, very positive results emerge. People usually talk about the positive effects of migration and crossbreeding, of the positive aspects of the arrival of European exiles to Latin America and especially of the Catalan and Spanish republicans in the thirties. And vice versa: in some Scandinavian countries with little immigration flow people have mentioned the positive aspects of Latin American exiles, especially coming from Chile, with a high education and eager to get involved in the new country. But one must not forget that these two possible positive results are the product of an undesirable tragedy: exiles are exiles against their will, they do not leave their homes because they want to know a new world. And in these cases, the exiles had a high education which became a very positive aspect in their foster countries.

Immigration is a problem and it is the effect of previous problems, from which it derives as a symptom: there exists undesirable migrations, forced by the circumstances, because in their countries of origin there are economic and political problems that force or invite people to leave; there is migration because western societies, by combining a low birth rate and a high life expectancy and some of the cultural factors and the model that we talked about in previous sections, have experienced a process of ageing and have given up taking care of some sections of the labour activity, especially the hardest and most undesirable ones. There are migrations (which always have a dramatic component for those who experience them) the societies where immigrants come from have been unable to fix their population and because the societies which receive these immigrants offer jobs that no one wants to do. This supply and this demand fit together, but in a difficult way with human and social costs.

First, there is the cost of making some people leave their birthplace when they do not want to do it, they are only moved by necessity. Second, one faces the cost of foster game with unclear rules which sometimes generates in certain societies saturate problems with a critical mass that is difficult to integrate, and with the problem of a theoretical model about the future of Europe which has been accepted by all our societies. We are not talking about the map of Europe or the great constitutions but about daily life in any European city.

Setting population

If we look at migration from their dramatic point of view, as an involuntary movement of population forced or favoured by the circumstances, it is obvious that the first goal of a policy of migration must be the attempt to

avoid them or reduce them to leave only those which are completely voluntary, which do not cause tensions. Migration is born from some sort of double game of communications between geographical areas, which are close enough and which, in this moment, may refer to any area in the planet. There is migration when the economic expectations between two territories are different, and the birth rate rhythms are also different, with all the demographic pressure that this generates.

Regarding our surrounding countries, in the widest sense, Europe has the two potential differences. On the one hand, it offers personal horizons for those coming from outside, it offers wealth and welfare expectations higher than those in their birth place and it keeps a birth rate clearly inferior to the birth rate in those places. These are the exact conditions for a massive migration, which is potentially problematic for any power that gets involved in one way or another.

So, the essential aspect in any European policy of migration consists of trying to fix the population in the strongly populated areas around the continent or which have some relations with the continent (usually post-colonial relations) and that transform Europe into a natural target of migrations.

Europe must be objectively interested in the economic development and the political evolution of the countries along the south coast of the Mediterranean, for example, Turkey, Magreb and, especially, Morocco. Europe must get interested in the economic and political stability of the East, with Russia and all its area of influence as the centre. And especially, the Iberian Peninsula (but also the rest of Europe because once you cross the doorway you are within the Union) must be interested in giving a positive economic horizon to Latin American countries, which are not essentially those of the Southern Cone.

It is harder to imagine the Europe's role in front of the large Asian countries which generate migration, such as China (the highest originating country of immigrants in the world), India or Pakistan.

Eventually, Europe should be interested in the big problem of humanity, Africa – where there are few hopeful lines of immediate positive evolution – finding a way of overcoming its present dramatic situation. But, one must know, in this case, that intervention is, in the most favourable hypothesis, a long-term intervention.

In any case, the interest of Europe is the economic progress of these areas, but also their political evolution, because the exodus of population are not only due to an economic necessity but also to a lack of perspectives and horizons in which politics takes part. Furthermore, it is possible that a true economic development of these areas cannot be separated, in any case, from the establishments of political competent, serious systems which are reliable for the international economic and political organizations.

It seems evident that the first priority, in a policy to fix the population by means of compromise with the economic and political development of the region, is the south coast of the Mediterranean. Magreb, headed by Morocco, is the place of origin of most of the immigrants coming to the most

Western areas of Europe. Turkey has been, and is, the originating country of immigration in Germany. Apparently, in these two countries one may get the conditions that made some of the economic miracles in southern Europe possible some years ago: they are attractive tourist places; their immigrants make them stronger by means of European capital and they represent a good place to establish European industries in sectors which employ cheap workers who do not need much experience. Spain was not so different in the sixties. Morocco and Turkey, with the European support and with these conditions (which they share with Tunis to some extent), may be an example for the Islamic world to see the economic advantages and the general welfare that it means to cooperate with the western world. This may be an example for Algeria, which is one of the other countries with a high rate of migration in Europe due, to some extent, to the power of its French colonial past.

Certainly, the migration from the south of Europe to countries in the centre of Europe in the sixties was a transient migration that dreamt of going back to their birth places and that, if they did not go back, at least they integrated culturally without any difficulty. It is not clear that Turkish or Magrebian migration follows the same path in the present. The Dutch policy of migration was based on the idea that foreign workers were not going to stay, because they wished to go back to their places of origin, and they did not realize that this population arrived to the country to stay there. And this has been the key for later problems. But in any case, Turkey and Morocco must be the example because they are the place of origin of many immigrants, they must be the two paradigms of a positive evolution in the south of the Mediterranean. So far, they are partial examples, both as regards political evolution and economic evolution. But they are our cards.

This will to help as much as possible, to invest whatever is necessary on the Turkish and Moroccan experiences, brings a clear question onto stage: does this imply their entrance into the European Union? We will talk about it later on, in the chapter that we will devote to the limits of Europe, but in any case the question is open. The official opinion of the EU supports to open the door to Turkey. But most European population believes that this denatures the project of the Union. France, which (unlike social-democratic Germany) distrusts the entrance of Turkey, has claimed that if the Turks join the Union there is no reason why Morocco cannot join it. Geography (the small European territory of Turkey) is not a good reason to distinguish both cases. We would enter a difficult problem.

However, Europe must find powerful mechanisms to help Turkey and Morocco. Not as Union members, but as external favoured colleagues. Probably, they have created some excessive expectations regarding Turkey, and they do not match the general view that Europe has about the limitations of the project of the Union. Probably, Morocco and Turkey should be our allies to articulate a space in the South of the Mediterranean, this space would follow the pattern of communitarian Europe. But it is true that, in this case, the Union has got itself into some trouble that will be difficult to overcome successfully.

In a sense, the case of Russia is parallel. The eastern immigration has different features and it shows, consequently, other kinds of problems; maybe they are not so sharp. But here we also find the problem of the limits of Europe. The union needs a strong, stable and developed Russia, but a Russia which is outside the EU. In fact, the Russians have never asked to join it. But Russia deserves to lead a wide space that partially corresponds (leaving aside the Baltic republics, which belong rather to Poland and Scandinavia) with the former CIS not only because of its demographic weight but also because of its history.

The democratizing and western movements of Ukraine generate a great affection, because they are aspects of modernity and political evolution. Must Europe help them? They demand to be as similar as possible to the western model, maybe more to the European model than the American one, as it usually happens in Eastern Europe. And this goal is convenient for us. But it does not seem reasonable that the Union reaches Russia. These movements must be the tool to achieve the evolution of the whole world around Russia towards a model which complements the Union, about some very similar bases of civilization, they probably have a federative structure but this time it helps to build a world organized in a totally positive way.

In fact, it also represents that the European Union must serve to achieve this: to offer the example of a new organization to the world. An example which helps to articulate some areas of strong historical tradition, like those we find around Russia. The goal of Europe should not be to become a part of the world which is organized in a completely different way in comparison with the other parts. Its goal is not to widen outside its limits (these limits are not only cultural but also geographical) to become some sort of planetary giant. The goal of Europe is to offer a useful model for the construction of other spaces which go further than the limits of the already existing States, and they have a natural area of development marked by history and the community of interests.

These two cases would be the closest and most remarkable ones. In Africa, this would be the great question, a very difficult question of very slow development, in the best case. Latin America shows better symptoms of progress, but it is a place where the interest of the United States is also very evident. But in all these cases, like in the South of the Mediterranean and Eastern Europe, the political and economic compromise of Europe to reach stability, the economic progress and the political evolution towards the individual freedom is not a disinterested and charitable act, but it answers the European needs, in all senses, but especially in the demographic sense. A rich Europe cannot live surrounded by a poor world; and even less surrounded by an excessively crowded poor world. If they do not change the map, there will never be high enough walls or powerful enough filters. Neither the laws nor the frontier controls will be able to stop these dramatic migrations which are neither happy nor eager to discover new cultures. So, our first goal must be to fix the population.

A continent without children?

But the conditions to avoid undesired migration do not consist only of fixing the population in its birth place, by means of giving them economic welfare and social horizons so that they do not need to leave their countries. It also consists of a certain balance among the demographic rhythms of the different societies. At least, it seems apparent some reduction of the demographic growth of the developing countries. But the differences, for example, between the South coast and the North coast of the Mediterranean are still too large. The birth rate in the South coast is being reduced, but as regarding the North coast, the whole of Europe, we will experience an absolutely unique phenomenon in the history of humanity: the loss of population (apart from their ageing) which originates from a birth rate which was unable to keep the growth of population at a zero level.

The ageing of European population is caused, to some extent, by an extremely positive factor: the wonderful lengthening of our life expectancy, which is twice the life expectancy as a century ago. But it is also due to another worrying factor: an extremely low birth rate. Warning about the problems of this low birth rate has been some sort of taboo for years. It seems something typical of the religious conservatism, which was against contraception and the arrival of women to the public sphere, especially to the work force. But now, it has become a general reflection intimately related to the future of Europe and this reflection is done from all political and social perspectives.

Why has Europe experienced a wonderful fall in its birth rate precisely during the years of economic progress after the war and precisely during the years in which the essential part of the Welfare State – which is the core of our model – was being constructed? There are probably objective reasons. For example, it was due to the access of women to the work force and their change within the social role, generally speaking. It was also due to a general law of demographic transition which would allow all the countries to reduce their birth rates when they improve economically and they reduce their mortality rates. But Europe has gone further than any other continent. It is a society full of security, optimistic in the face of the future, a society which lives a wave of welfare and peace and which would give their descendants a very positive life horizon. A society like this should have more children.

It is quite probable that the birth rate has something to do with the objective reasons related to the economic expectations and also with the housing prices and the labour field. But in order to establish the real causes of this low birth rate we certainly have to bare in mind the subjective reasons: what one might call the collective mood, what we were analysing and described as the lack of a dream, beyond an individual horizon of comfortable life and non-productive leisure.

The analysts of the fall in the European birth rate mention two types of causes. They talk about the relation between the level of income and fertility at a moment when the income has reached the highest levels, but it is not

established as a clear and universal formula to link both concepts. It is mentioned, and it seems reasonable, that one objective cause is the presence of both members of a couple in the labour field and the new female role as regards family life. Some experiences in Scandinavian countries talk about the solutions of the strictly economic aspects of the problem.

But there still exists some other causes which are not economic but related to the standard of living that one might mention among the objective certain reasons of the fall in the birth rate. For example, one of the most important objective causes has been discovered, the commercialization and distribution of new contraceptive methods which have become generalized in the developed world and which have had an impact on the birth rate without any doubt; especially if we compare it with the countries where contraceptive methods are not generally used. One might also consider an objective cause of the reduction of the birth rate the loss of weight in Europe of religious tendencies which do not support the use of contraceptive methods and which defend a natalist doctrine or at least a doctrine that goes against birth rate control. These tendencies within Christianity have not modified their positions during the last years, but there is no doubt about the fact that they have lost social influence, whereas outside Europe (especially in the Islamic world) the religious tendencies even more strict about their opposition to birth rate control have even won supporters and social influence.

All these would be, in one way or another, objective causes from an economic, social and idealistic point of view. But, as we have already said, analysts also talk about subjective causes. They talk about a society which does not want problems or compromises, a society which rejects to carry any burden and has fixed its horizon at an individual level and which considers children an obstacle for its own fulfilment. I insist that these are subjective causes. So, they may perfectly be bad interpretations of reality. Avoiding problems lies in the logic of the loss of personal responsibility to benefit a strictly recreational view of the world.

It is obvious that there are links between psychological mood and birth rate. But these links are sometimes complicated, even paradoxical. One of the pieces of information which has impressed me more about the Europe of the end of the World War II is the high number of births that took place in the refugee camps where the survivors of the Holocaust had ended. I was shocked. A disappointed human group that had suffered to an extent that is difficult to explain, that could be tired of living and do not see any kind of horizon had either the longing of life or the strange expectation or even the will to revenge against death which was necessary to have children immediately after being freed. Literature has told us the desperation of those people in wonderful tales by authors like Imre Kertesz. In some cases, some survivors of the refugee camps have ended up committing suicide lots of years later, sometimes because they felt guilty about their own survival, like Primo Levi. In spite of this, that generation decided to have children in the refugee camps immediately after the war.

This contrasts with the low birth rate of rich Europe, with the reduction of the birth rate which has been parallel to the rise of prosperity. Maybe this is one more sign of that conservative and fearful Europe we were talking about. It is conservative in real terms, in the deepest terms, not only in the political discourse. In present Europe, the citizens do not feel involved within the common good, within the general interest, within the collective future, but they have been relegated to their private interest. Another feature of this Europe may be its not wanting to have children. But, in any case, this low birth rate is the key for the future of Europe. And it is clear that in order to win a reputation we cannot wait for new disasters that promote a new reaction such as the reaction of the survivors of the Holocaust, but we must generate some economic and social conditions which favour this reputation. We must also generate some medical conditions, as science will offer at a mid-term future for sure. But above all we must generate a dream, a specific ideal, a collective ambition for the future and a feeling of shared responsibility towards this future. In order to carry out this change of mentality we must invest all our expectations, as always, on education.

In the United States, with a birth rate superior to fourteen per cent, and an increase of population of 0.5 per cent every year, the analysts have made more direct calculations to prove that with our birth rate in Europe and the long life expectancy we have reached, the European welfare State will be economically unsustainable. There will not be enough working people to pay the pensions and the sanity of all retired people. But the model is not only based on its economic sustainability. The low birth rate is the first cause of the immigration coming from present young countries, such as those in the South coast of the Mediterranean. The demographic difference attracts population, but it also makes this population of youngsters and children from outside or their direct descendants have a very high percentage in comparison with the whole population. The diversity matters (that we will analyse later on) cannot be dealt with focusing only on how much migrated population there is within the whole population. One must also look at the percentage in schools, among youth, in the recreational young world. The dimensions are different. And it is necessary not to be alarmist or xenophobe but to warn about a source of routine problems when dealing with these proportions, like those that some of our cities are already experiencing.

In any case, it seems obvious (and it is no longer taboo to claim it out loud) that a balanced future for Europe requires a higher birth rate, not only concentrated on the higher fertility of immigrants, who adapt quite quickly to the demographic rhythms in their foster countries instead of keeping the birth rate from their birth places. Some demographers state that the end of the twentieth century has meant a change in the demographic tendency of Europe, but it does not reach what we call the replacement levels. They think that, for a while, the birth rate has been kept temporarily depressed because of the existence of a gap: the increase of the age at which European women have their first child. When we overcome this gap, we could reach some stability as regards the birth rate, but we are still talking about very low levels.

It is possible. But the predictions about the future are always risky. And in social dynamics, the theoretical laws do not impose themselves over people's will. It is not written anywhere, or by any infallible law that Europe must recover a higher birth rate. It is not a phenomenon we can wait for without doing anything, as if it were unavoidable. The mentality changes (having education as a background matters again), also a basic aspect in all this.

World demographic transition?

But an increase in the European birth rate, as a balancing and stabilizing element, is only part of the problem. The question is whether there is some sort of parallel confluence between the European demographic rhythms and those of the surrounding countries which are the origin of our present immigrants and maybe of the future immigrants. If, apart from a given increase in our birth rate, there is no parallel control of the birth rate in Islamic countries in Northern Africa, against their religious leaders and also in Sub-Saharan Africa, the differences of population power will keep on putting pressure at Europe's gates. This reasonable control of the demographic growth and the birth rate is supported, many times, by the reformist governments, which realise that a moderated birth rate favours progress. They are also favoured by all the perceptions of environmental sustainability that agree that it is not possible to keep a constant growth of the population of the planet as we did in the twentieth century, which started with 1,600 million inhabitants and ended with more than 6,000 million.

I remember that several European specialists and I were invited to Haiti some years ago to suggest town-planning and cultural policies. The dialogue was interesting and the interlocutors were full of good intentions. But all the interveners agreed that none of the policies that we could suggest, not even the most basic ones, would be compatible with the demographic explosion of the country that made their cities explode. No town-planning project or cultural programme could endure that huge demographic pressure. The main problem in Haiti, in this sense, was the overwhelmed mentality. If they did not control it, they could only alleviate the other fields in specific situations.

When the demographers made up the term "demographic transition", they implied that there existed a direction in history, an only path that embraced from the primitive societies to the modern ones. According to this theory, the present situation would be explained by saying that we find societies at different stages in the different places of the world, these societies would be in different stations of the only possible itinerary. While Europe would have already finished its demographic transition, the developing countries would not have managed to finish it and the poorest countries in the world would be at the first stage. The demographic transition would consist of going from primitive societies, where birth rate and mortality are high, to advanced societies, where birth rate and mortality are low. In the middle of the process, as mortality is controlled before controlling the birth rate, the demographic boom would take place, the accelerated growth that we have lived during

this last century.

In fact, in recent years there have been some data which seems to prove, at least partially, the demographic transition theory. In Morocco, one may notice a very strong fall regarding the birth rate in city populations, which are stronger every day in the country, and even a small backward movement in the birth rate as regards rural population. During the first years of the twenty-first century, the number of births in groups of one thousand inhabitants has decreased from 24 to 22, this fact would confirm this tendency. However, this number is twice the number in Spain, for example. Here, it has been increasing very slowly throughout the same years. Parallel to this, the level of migration in Morocco would have also been reduced, in a slow but continuous way. In Turkey, in order to use the other country of reference for immigration in Europe, the number of births in groups of one thousand inhabitants has been reduced during the first years of the twenty-first century from 18 to 17, consequently following the same tendency. And immigration would have practically stopped. The tendency in Algeria would be similar to the tendency in Morocco, but with an even lower birth rate.

This tendency towards the present reduction of the number of births would also take place in Black Africa, where many immigrants in Europe come from, but they would keep considerably high numbers: over thirty per mil in Senegal or forty per mil in Gambia. It would also be over forty in Guinea, but it has been growing there in recent years. As regards Latin America, the number of births is decreasing in a country like Ecuador, where in the last four years births have been reduced from 26 to 23, but – on the contrary – the number of emigrants raises a lot. Colombia also sees its birth rate reduced at a slightly inferior level in comparison with the level of Ecuador, but in this case it keeps its level of migration stable (despite being considerably high). On the contrary, in all more complicated countries in America or Africa such as Haiti or Burkina Fasso the birth rate has remained stable at a high level during this same recent period (over thirty or forty per mil inhabitants) and it is not possible to design any limitation plan.

The theory of demographers claims that there exists, consequently, a path that all countries are following, even though some are more advanced than others and some are still at a first stage. The closest countries, which are the source of our direct immigration, would change towards some sort of limitation of their birth rates and they would be at a very advanced stage in their demographic transition. But these linear conceptions of history, in which each territory must follow a specific direction to end up reaching the same place or the place where more advanced countries passed some centuries ago, do not always work.

In so called social sciences, the laws or theories are sometimes used to explain things approximately afterwards, making the events more or less violent to fit them within the theory. They cannot be used to make any predictions. In natural science, laws do not only describe what has taken place so far, but they also predict quite certainly what will take place in the future: the law of gravity allows us to state that the apple will fall on the

ground, and not only that it has so far fallen on the ground. In social science, theories are simple descriptions of events which have taken place and which have happened simultaneously without distinguishing the causes and the effects. This very same thing happens with the theory of the demographic transition.

Apparently, the increase in the standard of living, the incorporation to modernity, the higher mortality rates end up causing the reduction of the birth rate. But there also exists some other factors for sure. A theory about population based on how resources are produced, especially food resources, may not be adapted – in times of more primitive technologies – to a world which is able to generate much more food, thanks to innovative technologies... We cannot see the world as a group of trains travelling on the same directions with the only difference that some of them are more advanced than the others. Sometimes, when the western world pays attention to the Muslim world uses a non-risky interpretation that states that this world is still in medieval times before the modern separation of the State from the church. So, this is just a question of waiting, or – if we can do it – accelerating our train to get to the next station as soon as possible. But the personal experience about Islamism in some countries of the Near East makes us see it as a perfectly contemporary movement which is sometimes related to the new technologies: an answer to present problems and an attempt to tell us that their world is not at a previous stage following our path, but it is established in the present following a different path.

In this sense, the idea that there exists an only journey towards demographic transition seems too risky. In this case, there might also be shortcuts, delays, dead lines or alternative lines that lead to different places, because – apart from the factors that we have mentioned – there are some other variable factors, like ideological factors, or a change in the weight of religion, that may break a tendency that was born from the evolution towards city societies and the acquisition of a specific welfare economic level. If the weight of religion against controlling the birth rate in Islamic countries is higher every day, if the economic evolution gets stuck (due to or as a consequence of the weight of Islamism), instead of reducing the birth rate, we might find an increase.

In social science, there always exists the variant of people's will. Will can stop inertia or make it go faster. Europe cannot simply wait for a demographic transition to balance population and to stop migrations with folded arms. It depends. It depends on what happens in Europe, but it also depends on what happens in the rest of the world, on what the governors from other countries do (either reformist or involuntarily). By observing what has happened so far, one cannot predict anything. We can try to make some political predictions: it seems evident that a cooperative action between the western world and the reformist governments of those countries that want to develop to improve their economic expectations and to control their birth rate can help to stop migration. The Chinese example, with its flaws and its virtues, shows that the political control of the birth rate is possible; at least to a certain extent.

It seems, anyway, that the clear interest of the western world is to experience in the whole planet a demographic balance which would be associated with a growth in the economic balance. This is happening in an encouraging way (but it is neither an irreversible nor a final situation) in the countries immediately around us. But it is not happening so strongly in a second circle of surrounding countries that would be at a previous stage and it does not happen at all in a third circle of surrounding countries.

The result of all this, in the most optimistic hypothesis, would be that the newest immigration would start coming from further countries which would cause an increase in the difference of habits and customs. But the most pessimistic hypothesis, the hypothesis of a political involution, an economic stagnancy or simply a slow process which is not clear whether it is linear and universal, could even stop the demographic transition and the economic development of the closest countries and make some waves of immigration emerge, with the corresponding difficulties for the immigrants themselves and for the foster societies.

In these terms, the problem that we are talking about would not be generically a western problem, but it would be a specifically European problem. The United States is in a different situation, a less problematic one, and it comes from another tradition as regards the rights of immigration. After all, it has been a country of immigrants and it has generated an involving mould for people of very diverse origin. The American model towards immigration has been traditionally very criticized from Europe: it has been considered a segregating model, in which communities lived separately from each other but they kept a common public space. Now, Europe pays new attention to how the American crucible worked, because they do not have their own successful model. It will also be necessary to plan the reconstruction of the Western World and the common use of experiences and opportunities regarding this matter.

The effects of ageing

The ageing of European population, with a life expectancy over 75 years and an average age of forty years (whereas in a country like Algeria the average age of the population is of twenty years), not only affect immigration. This is the main attractive effect for the youngsters from countries around Europe, since there are job vacancies in those fields where no young European wants to work. But there is much more than this. We have already mentioned that it seems a menace for the sustainability of the pillars of the Welfare State, which is the system of public pensions. And it may also be the basis for a deep cultural change. During the last years, Europe (but also other more advanced countries) has increased its life expectancy, but the active life of people has not been lengthened (even the contrary). This leaves a great amount of old people who, in many cases, are still perfectly able to carry out a useful job within society, but who live in a European culture that promotes leisure and

has considered that the aim is to work less hours a day, less days a year and less years a lifetime, and this pushes us towards long unproductive periods.

The perspective of our societies ageing has generated a new European debate which started with the most strictly material aspects (who will pay our pensions?) but which has moved to aspects regarding customs and the conception of labour life and society itself. While young people's incorporation to the work force takes place later, because of the generalization and globalisation of a long period of education, older people are rejected in this world relatively early. The line in between is narrower every day, but especially there are fewer people in this line. This is the narrowest line after the *baby boom*, during a period of low birth rate, before the new migration movements and the increase in the birth rate start filling the schools again. Can we base all our productive system on this narrow line? Can we afford the luxury of dispensing with the aptitudes and abilities of a growing generation that has experience and is still able to live an active life? Our conception of the world, the conception we have repeated throughout this reflection, a conception in which the individual is freed from social responsibility and invited to personal entertainment, will it be able to understand and accept a lengthening of the labour life? We have been looking forward to retiring early for years, will our society be able to delay retirement without a deep change in our view of the world?

There exists a caricature of the immediate future of Europe which transforms this country into an old people's home which is run by young people from the Third World who pay the pensions of a large generation of old people by working. This generation of old people spends more money on assistance and health than young people. The most alarming ones opposed this image to the image of a physically close world (for example, the Islamic world) where religion widens its range of influence, where religious authorities are against any kind of control of the birth rate and where some extremist totalitarians imagine that a favourable demography represents their biggest political bomb. Today this is not the description of reality. But this image is creating some kind of myth in the western world (and also in the East?), a myth that feeds fear and on which many distrusts are based. The supporters of the old Spenglerian concept of decadence often identify decadence with ageing and the fall of the birth rate. In any case, the perspective and image have dug a hole in the Western World, which knows more than ever that demography will write their future to a big extent.

But the concern of the Western World about the effects of immigration does not include, over all other things, a demographic concern. Due to the low birth rate, the ageing of population, of the strong immigration, Europe has the impression that it is living within a new and unknown situation. Europe has always been considered the continent of diversity. But, especially in Western Europe, this historical diversity has been understood (right or wrong) as some sort of mosaic. Europe was a set formed by several pieces, each with its own colour, its own language and identity. In Central and Eastern Europe, these

pieces existed in the same way but were mixed on the territory. Sarajevo was the metaphor. Now this idea of European diversity has been shattered. Each of these pieces has become a mosaic within themselves. What was previously outside, from a European point of view, is now inside. Views of the world, habits, customs, religions, languages which were the image of the other, maybe still are the image of the other, but the other among us.

When many Europeans answer the surveys by saying that the most worrying aspect for them is immigration, they are not talking strictly about immigration, but about many other factors. They are not only talking about people coming from outside to carry out the jobs that they do not want to do; or the need of foreign youth because our population is growing old. When they say that they are worried about immigration, the Europeans mean that they are worried about their identity, their culture, their view of the world; they are worried about integration or non-integration, by the model of coexistence with a new reality, by how people with very different views of the world, customs, goals, expectations and identities live together. The problem of Europe is, as always, how to articulate diversity in a new and unknown way. But Europe must face a new conception of diversity, a new diverse reality that we find under the generic label of immigration.

THIRD PART

PEOPLES OF EUROPE

The unavoidable diversity

A brilliant demographer, who is not Malthusian at all, told me on a television programme that the great success of the human species on earth was the existence of six million people in the planet, and they were all different from each other. And she insisted on the fact that they were "all different from each other": each had their own face, their language, their concerns and their expectations; they had their own way to see the world, with their individual and collective identity.

The success of a species lies precisely in the increase of the number of individuals, in widening their physical space, in spreading across the earth. But the specific success of the human species also lies in the fact that its different individuals are aware of their differences. A species with individual awareness, where a person is much more than a cell within a social body or an ant within the anthill, is successful because it is not based on clones but on each individual – as the wonderful warriors of the Chinese tombs – having their own physical, intellectual and moral physiognomy. Our success lies in the fact that we are a lot and all different. But our success is not due to our diversity which is also a feature of all other species, but it is only due to our awareness.

By means of language and intelligence, the ability to make tools and to accumulate and transmit information, the human species has been able to adapt itself to almost all natural environments of the planet, with more effort to adapt itself to the most unfavourable ones consequently needing to invest all their power. Thus, human diversity is parallel to natural diversity, the way in which human beings - whatever their geographical origin is - adapt themselves to the diverse conditions of the planet. Peoples of the same origin, moving to places of the earth where environmental and climatic conditions are different, have created new diversities. Diversity is a characteristic of humanity on earth, it is related to history - of the individuals, the families, the People - and genetics, but it is especially related to some aptitudes as a species that allow us to adapt ourselves to different circumstances and to change according to them.

There are many reasons to consider Europe a place where diversity emerges in a very clear way. European population is born from the number of different peoples mainly from central Asia. They arrive to the south and the east of the Mediterranean first, and then they move across the Eurasian peninsula of Europe. The genesis of this diversity would be both long and exciting to explain. But what we are worried about is its effect: Europe is a continent where many people live and have lived; there is a huge plurality of languages, of cultural levels, of habits and customs.

In general, Europe is diversity, but within a limited and specific range. Europe takes part, as we have already seen, with more or less chances, in a unique process of civilization, the western process, and it has generated - together with diversity - some common values and characters. This western civilisation, which has reached the other coast of the Atlantic or even the Pacific and the Indian Oceans, crossing countries like Australia or New Zealand, has a European origin and it has been taken there by the Europeans. This has spread and widened European diversity in the world.

The European project, in the sense that it might have been, but has not been a dream, but also in the sense of the practical resolution of routine problems, cannot run away from the essential goal of articulating diversity. Maybe this is its main challenge and its main virtue: united Europe must be a new way, without impositions or conquests, of articulating diversity; of joining all diverse aspects without preventing them from being diverse, but making this unity more than a simple and apparent name. If Europe represents an agreement, a junction, a deal, one can only make an agreement and join the others by accepting difference.

The big European question is our way to administrate this diversity; a diversity which, firstly, includes constituent people, each with their own identity and their way of being and understanding the world; a new diversity which also comes from the new immigration that brings new views of the world, new traditions and new habits inside Europe, all of them seemed too external a some time ago and, to some extent, these shared values can be contradictory.

When we talk about administrating diversity we do not refer only to the big matters regarding principles: how to organize Europe so that it is neither a centralized power born from the forced dissolution of the people forming it - or a mere superposition of already existing States. It is not a common economic space either. Administrating diversity also means paying attention to how European institutions work from all points of view, especially the linguistic and ethnic point of view, and the point of view of the People. It is obvious that now, and for a long time, Europe cannot work with an only language, and this implies a very complex process of translations and interpreters... And there are many other practical problems like this one, which refer back to a both problematic and virtuous diversity. This is, in fact, a basic element of the reality that must be answered by the European project.

What is not diversity?

For some time now, the word diversity has become a commonly used term within public language and even a politically correct word. There are diversity parties, diversity studies, school subjects to understand diversity. But when a word emerges so strongly within the public discourse, it inevitably becomes polysemic. Not everybody refers to the same concept when they use the word "diversity".

Sometimes, the word diversity hides an idea of lack of identity, of

mixture without priorities, of colourist exoticism, without referring to any notion of values. Diversity ends up being an advertisement of different colours. But the word diversity may also imprison, in a certain way, each individual within their own diverse feature, carrying and being forced to keep their own diversity over their individual will. Diversity would then be like a prison, a condemnation. The term is used in different contexts and with different meanings, with the consequent confusion that this causes.

For us, and regarding those aspects we want to talk about in this text, there are three concepts that would be, so to say, the enemies of the idea of diversity itself. Three concepts that confront this idea. Three conceptions which are not diversity or which deform diversity. These concepts are egalitarianism, racism and cultural relativism.

1.- Egalitarianism .- For some political and social ideologies, the main goal is equality among all people. The Jacobean born from the French Revolution whose motto is "Freedom, equality, fraternity" is egalitarian. Communism which is justified as a formula to avoid inequality and the lack of equity among human beings is egalitarian.

Both political positions historically distrust any form of diversity and they have practised homogenization and uniformity as a path towards equality. For these ideologies, the opposite of equality is not necessarily diversity but inequality. So, in theory, their fight would be against inequality among people regarding their rights and opportunities, considering that inequality means injustice. For them, in practice, diversity ends up being suspicious because they consider it as a possible source of inequality, and consequently of injustice. It is easier to construct an egalitarian world in a uniform world than in a diverse world. Thus, the political regimes inspired in Jacobean or communist ideals have generated very centralized and powerful States regarding individuals, and these States were looking for the maximum uniformity among citizens in the name of equality.

Linguistic, religious, identity diversities have been fought against in the search for a *new man* – what in Stalin's regime was called *the Soviet man* – and this search would leave all former diversities behind, all products and sub-products of the ancient world, of the former regime for some, and the bourgeois and capitalist regime for others.

What Chinese communists called cultural revolution was in fact – from an egalitarian perspective – a revolution against culture, understood as a place for diversity. The revolution in favour of the uniform, understood as reality and metaphor: they even achieved that all people wore the same clothes. And eventually, they only managed to uniform clothes, not people, even though that was their goal.

In present Europe, the nostalgia of former communist ideals has moved backwards, after the discredit of Eastern regimes. In the East, where these regimes were suffered, have moved further backwards, even though the minor nostalgia is still alive among those who felt protected by the former regimes: furthermore, there are still some political sectors derived from the

former communism which are still active to recycle their political staff rather than to keep their ideology. Some politicians like Milosevic, who comes from former communism, found a role in the new democratic politics by being paradoxically nationalist leaders, but keeping their totalitarian view.

Among western public opinion, there is still a late-Marxist thought that considers that the good communist ideal was betrayed – or not – by the so-called true socialism, but their egalitarian goals were, and keep being, valid. And it is even more powerful, among western public opinion, the legacy of Jacobean theories, which entered the European State-Nations from France to Italy crossing Spain, and these theories promote equality.

Egalitarianism has been in the theoretical façade of the welfare State, even to the extent that some countries have achieved some dreadful results in the evaluation of their educational system: their students proved to have scarce mathematical knowledge, scarce knowledge about science or even difficulties in reading comprehension, and they have said that maybe the system is not good and it does not produce excellent students, but at least it is quite equitable and definitely egalitarian. They have preferred to reach equality at an average level or under this average rather than having inequality where it would be possible to stand out and to have excellence.

Even though the word diversity is fashionable, in Europe the ideological egalitarianism keeps on being strong and fighting this diversity, because this egalitarianism equals diversity and different rights; because it considers that the best way of guaranteeing equal rights for everybody consists of the fact that everybody must be as similar as possible. They brought some powers together in the name of equity, of Jacobean theories and communism; they generated interventionist and homogenizing States; they strengthened paternalistic States which treat their citizens as minors; in short, they fought against diversity. Europe is obsessed by egalitarianism and it is eager to pay the toll in order to equal everything at a low level, and this Europe will not be the Europe of diversity. They claim that this will be a fairer Europe. In the best case, it might end up being the *happy world* predicted by Aldous Huxley, but it would be a homogenous, sad, boring Europe in exchange, as it happened in the USSR.

2.- Racism .- In a strict sense, racism is a theory which supports a basic and immovable difference among human races. If we update this definition, we could say that this theory supports that, taking polygenesis as its basis, races have different genomes, and consequently different origins and different powers. This idea has completely been denied by science.

From a political perspective, racism supports the superiority of some human groups over others, of some races over others. So, theoretically racism accepts the existence of diversity. The negative side is that they organize these differences hierarchically and they believe that, once diversity is established, this settles different values which are insurmountable and definite. This makes them believe that there are social sections which are genetically less prepared to reach evolution; they would have some genetic deficiency which their culture and civilization would make insurmountable.

Racism sentences part of humanity to subsidiary positions and reserves the other part for leading positions. It is based on the idea of superiority and inferiority, mainly on intellectual superiority or inferiority. For others, these two concepts refer to moral superiority or inferiority. For example, for one of the most terrible forms of racism that has ever existed in Europe, the anti-Semitism, Jews would not be an inferior race in terms of less aptitudes, but it would be a race with huge aptitudes that used them in a morally harmful way.

Racism establishes a hierarchy of races depending on their intellectual capacities, and it rejects what it considers inferior races, reducing them to the *apartheid*. Racism, which hierarchies are based on moral criteria of good and evil, ends up asking for the extermination of bad harmful races.

Apparently political racism would not be an enemy of diversity, but it would understand it perfectly, it would be one of the bases of its doctrine. But for this kind of racism, diversity would imply hierarchy, superiority and inferiority, good and evil. And this is what makes racism the enemy of diversity: it is associated with some hierarchies that science has proved to be false. It is true that genetic heredity forms our personality, our character and our aptitudes, but the human genome is the same for all individuals and all groups. The fact that humans are different does not imply that any person is naturally undesirable or that any group can be condemned to a subsidiary role that leaves them out of evolution. What we must keep is the idea that, from the same genome, evolution – moulded by people's will and the surrounding circumstances – causes diversity.

Acknowledging all diversities, even ethnic diversities, does not imply that some sections of the population are genetically unable to achieve some specific goals and to carry out some specific tasks. But this does not mean that everybody is the same and has exactly the same aptitudes. Individuals are different and there are some individuals who are better prepared to play football or to develop mathematical theories. And this happens because, apart from their heredity, they have more or less exercised their organs and physiological systems.

Sometimes, in order to fight against racism, egalitarianism has tried to deny what is evident: inequality among individuals, inequality among people's abilities and possibilities. In order to fight against egalitarianism, racism has tried to prove that these differences and inequalities regarding aptitudes come from some sort of biological determinism. Diversity avoids egalitarianism because it knows that people are not equal but diverse and it avoids racism because the biological determinism has no scientific base: potentially all humans have the same abilities.

It is true that egalitarianism and racism cannot be paralleled. Egalitarianism is a wrong idea which has been used to commit some crimes. Political racism, as we have described it, is a criminal ideology which ends up either in the crime of exclusion or in the crime of extermination. And, while egalitarianism is an explicit attitude in present Europe, racism is an implicit attitude, hidden often behind more or less fashionable matters and which sentences whole groups of people to be buried under topics or contempt. Egalitarianism is a

public ideology. Racism, in general, is secret or unconscious; it normally appears under a camouflage cover. But egalitarianism fights against diversity by means of negation while racism fights against diversity by means of destruction, pollution, exclusion and political prejudices.

3.- Cultural relativism .- Cultural relativism differs from egalitarianism because it acknowledges and values diversity. It believes that diversity is good and we must take care of it. It is also different from racism in the fact that it avoids any hierarchy.

Cultural relativism claims that there are many cultures in the world, each has a different view of the world and even a different moral organization, and consequently there are no absolute values outside the cultural context. Democracy, human rights, laicism, for example, would be western values and they would only be valid in the western world. Other cultures have their different values and we must neither export our values nor be sensitive to theirs. There are no universal values, but all values are relative, they are the product of a specific historical and cultural context. We have the Declaration of Human Rights. Some cultures consider that hitting or mutilating women is acceptable. This is our culture and that is their culture, as good and as valid as any other: one is valid for some, the other for the others.

Cultural relativism, which emerges like a thought related to anti-colonialism and against euro-centrism, claims that the world is divided into cultures and all have the same value. This was a discourse to make the colonialist intention of sending civilizing missions to the Third World illegal. For cultural relativism, these operations were illegal because they were substituting one culture for another one, when none was superior. But beyond this situational use, what cultural relativism tries to do is deny the existence of all universal values. There would only be the values of a richer more powerful and militarily stronger culture that would try to impose themselves over the others.

Jean Daniel told us a conversation with Claude Levy-Strauss, the French anthropologist who represents to some extent this cultural relativism by analysing primitive thoughts and discovering a high level of sophistication in them. As Daniel says, Levy-Strauss' life was devoted to study diversity and to claim the equality among the different cultures. Daniel asked Levy-Strauss whether he believed in universal values and he answered no. But he thought it twice and clarified – textually quoting Daniel – that “at the end of my life I must recognise that the western world invented a critical thought that allows the separation between reason and faith”. From here on, he admits that this intellectual progress that allows making independent judgements, “is desirable for all humanity”. By following a more or less complicated path, Levy-Strauss himself, the apostle of cultural relativism, establishes at least a universal value, a value which clearly comes from a specific tradition and from a specific geographical area, the western world, and claims that it would be good to generalize it and make it universal, to spread it around the world.

In present Europe cultural relativism has an important presence, especially as regards some positions about the coexistence within Europe itself. Some so-called multicultural models are in fact relativist models: from the idea that all cultures have the same value, then we have to mix them or let them mix towards a positive crossbreeding. Cultural relativism denies the idea of universal values – since everything is relative and it refers only to one culture – but it also denies the idea of a culture of reference, of a common or central cultural trunk, which in this moments it is present in the French debate under the name of *valeurs republicains* or in the German debate under the name of *leitkultur*.

Sometimes, cultural relativism hides behind the ascertainment that the universal values of western civilization – human rights, democracy, freedom, critical thought, the separation of reason and faith – when put into practice are not always assumed by the western civilization itself. It is possible. But in this sense, the ending of Levy-Strauss' declaration to Jean David was quite beautiful. In that declaration he acknowledged at least one western value which was worthwhile over the others. Levy-Strauss said: "the only thing left for us is to wait for the western world to deserve itself". It should act as the western world, not only in proclamations but also in facts.

Cultural relativism admits diversity and consequently it seems compatible with the praise of diversity. But it denies the existence of universal values and it denies the possibility of a common culture, of a territorial culture of reference. Everything is worth the same as everything else.

On the contrary, there is an alternative view in which there is the possibility of the coexistence among great values that we want to consider universal, and a huge planetary diversity of cultural expressions, of traditions, of habits and customs, that enrich the planet with their variety and respond to the adaptation of different environmental, geographical and economic realities. Most of these universal values have been born in the western world, but some other traditions which can perfectly share them have taken part in their fixation. This would be, for example, the formulation that an Arabian writer from culturally French expression and reference like Amin Maalouf would use: universal values; local and diversified cultural expressions.

But the cultural relativism of the planet presents a second practical problem, apart from the negation of the existence of universal values. It is also used, when put into practice, to transform any cultural difference, any difference of knowledge or competence into differences of point of view – all respectable and all equally valuable. It hides under the label of cultural difference what, in fact, is a difference of cultural level. "The defeat of thought" by Alain Finkielkraut, a critic of cultural relativism, pays attention to both phenomena. On the one hand, the moral equalization of any kind of behaviour, because if there are no universal values, everyone is free to do whatever their culture says. On the other hand, the negation of any possibility of hierarchy within the cultural background, because everything is the same as everything else and everything is the result of the culture of the person who talks or does something.

Sometimes, university teachers have told me that, as an effect of this so-called cultural relativism, they have met students who, after a masterly class have raised their hands and answered: "what you have just told us is your opinion, but I think exactly the opposite". And this has happened not only to literature or history teachers, but also to natural science teachers, biology teachers or physics teachers. Cultural relativism allows the students to equal themselves to the teacher. Everything is an opinion, everything is a point of view, everything becomes a different culture. Even in those aspects that seem not to accept relativism, like scientific knowledge; even more in those fields where differences are perfectly licit and necessary – the interpretation of history, art and society – but there are situations where the opinion of the teacher – built throughout years of acquiring knowledge, data and reflections – cannot be paralleled with the opinion of the student who has just heard that for the very first time. For cultural relativism everything would be a matter of point of view, of opinion, of culture; negating that there exists differences regarding the level of knowledge, the possibility of evolution and learning.

Cultural relativism, when hiding differences of level of knowledge and of competence behind the label of opinions of the same value, does not invite to learn or to evolve or to acquire knowledge. Cultural relativism invites to stay in our own position, considering that it is the genuine expression of the personal point of view, and this enriches the world with a higher diversity of points of view. We are not saying that the student cannot have a different opinion from the teacher. We must say that – and this is the metaphor of a more general attitude – in order to defend a different opinion, the student must know as much as the teacher. Because there are some aspects of our own culture which can be relative, but some others cannot because they are simply a difference of education and evolution. And it is obvious that, when dealing with sciences, the degree of relativism decreases getting closer to zero. One can have more opinions about the interpretations of the economic flows than about the fact that the earth turns around the sun. The negative side of cultural relativism is that it promotes conformism and it does not encourage evolution, learning and the increase of knowledge of those who are behind others; they are allowed to hide behind the relative character of culture.

The Europe of the languages

An expression of cultural diversity, moreover of diversity in cultural expressions, could be called linguistic diversity. There are many different languages because evolution has diversified them, but also because they have adapted to the environmental geographic and climatic differences of the world. There are many unique languages because there are many unique worlds, and for that reason, as Steiner says, 'whenever a language dies, a part of the world disappears.

For most of the linguists, the languages in themselves do not have a different values; they have potentially the same possibilities if evolution takes

place. There are no languages with only the capacity for abstraction, nor languages that only serve to name concrete things; there are no languages specially destined to become vehicles for universal communication, nor languages condemned to be local. All have the possibility of evolving just as all the human systems and organs naturally evolve.

This evolution of the languages, intertwined with the history of the People and civilizations, gives some the instruments to speak about a certain topic --scientific or technical-- that others do not have. In addition, the literary culture throughout the centuries adds an abundance of nuances and different expressions. Evolutions have been diverse, but the possibility of evolution is not denied to any language. Theoretically, all languages could become universal, allowing for a discussion of quantum physics and extending the variety of their topic range.

Romance languages are an evolution of Latin, but in no case one supposes that Latin is a more primitive, simpler, or less valuable language than Catalan, Castilian or French. Latin was able to expand to the northern border of the Mediterranean. Precisely for that reason it fragmented: when a language extends over a diverse territory, with different linguistic and ethnic substrates, each with different geographic realities, it ends up breaking itself. If educational institutions and contemporary mass media did not act like modern instruments of maintenance and cohesion, the Spanish in Latin America would also break apart, as well as the Arabic between the Atlantic and East India and English in its vast linguistic territory. Even so, a visible process of fragmentation still takes place, at least in the colloquial languages.

Returning to Latin, it expanded across the Mediterranean, but one did not extend, for example, the Etruscan language. Thanks to this, a very vast world could communicate, and a great technical and civilization progress was possible that left solid foundations for the languages that were later born from Latin. But the vast diffusion of a language is not the result of its ability to evolve, but stems more from the conquests or economic power of the People with which it corresponds. As Nebrija said, 'the language was always a companion of the Empire. Being as it is the Empire.' This has simultaneous positive and negative effects. It can shift languages or make them disappear, but it also offers new possibilities of communication. If the Etruscans had preserved their initial predominance in Rome, today the Italian languages would be otherwise. Moreover, perhaps the Etruscan language, with a long cultivated culture, would have arrived at a level of evolution higher than that with which it died.

Europe today presents a considerable diversity of languages. The languages are so numerous that, in addition to being spoken normally by its natives, they have behind them the great instruments of survival that corresponds to our time: schools, written literature, mass media, and access to new technologies. We could say that the European common identity, paradoxically, is its linguistic diversity. The collective identities quite often tie in with the language, perhaps because it is one of its most visible components. A map of the languages of Europe would give us an approximate map of its different regions.

It is true, however, that the correspondence between the maps would

not be complete. There are segments of Europe where language has become the main distinguishing characteristic, and others in which it has not. In the Iberian Peninsula or central Europe, the link between language and region is quite clear and it would almost be possible to say that the language is the obvious mark of each People. But Ireland has a common language with England, and they do not form a single absolute union: the Ireland of the north the two communities historically confronted — Protestant unionists and Catholic republicans — can converse perfectly in English, because the differentiating characteristic is another one, of a religious-political nature. The regressive use of Gaelic is impressive, indeed, because this political factor is not considered distinguishing.

In the Balkan Mountains, the Serbs and the Croatians —as well as the Muslim slaves of Bosnia — speak the same language, although now for political reasons one double denomination has prevailed, according to some smaller particular characteristics of each variety and according to if, it is written in Cyrillic or Latin characters. Also in this case history and religion have considered more symbols than the language. But sometimes what is distinguishing it evolves throughout time. The relationship between Austria and Germany helps exemplify this, and in the case of the Flemish: Flanders is a part of Belgium, with which it shares its religion Catholicism. However, it shares its language with Holland. Throughout history, there has been one strong distinguishing characteristic or another, depending upon how important or valuable each of these ideas was deemed.

The myth of the Tower of Babel portrays linguistic diversity like a divine punishment, but also as an obstacle that men must overcome in order to make progress through cooperation, just like it was with the Tower. In this sense, Europe has been spoken of like Babel. The linguistic diversity is an added difficulty, the shared necessity of an expensive system of translations and official issues, that they always end up leaving the margin to which would also have to be official by number of speakers and cultural history. Now, it is a difficulty to construct a unique European cultural market that allows the international companies of the continent to obtain an economic power that the companies of the United States can obtain within their own markets. Actually, according to the myth of Babel, the European Union would be a new Tower, in which man is condemned to the confusion of languages, to the linguistic diversity.

But against the myth of Babel, the evidence that linguistic diversity is the natural counternarrative of human diversity, of ethnic diversity and, in the end, natural diversity. It has been the instrument through which humans have adapted to practically all the corners of the planet, and they have been able to write, to imagine and to transmit this diversity to the world. Under a Babylonian conception of languages, Europe is not possible: The Tower will never be finished. Under a conception in which each language represents a vision of the world, a historical experience, a collective identity, Europe is possible. The technological resources of communication have made it possible it for ten countries, and soon for twenty-five.

It is certain that languages, which are an extraordinary patrimony, can

also hinder communication. A Europe and a world in which each individual was isolated by its own language, without bridges, would prevent any common project and would imprison the people in its mother tongue. But, the advantage is that the languages can be learned and can therefore accumulate. They also translate, pending the knowledge of more than one. The future of the languages of Europe depends upon the conservation of the native languages, but also upon the polyglotism of the citizens. At the moment, English is the international language within Europe and between Europe and the rest of the world. Therefore, European linguistic policies, besides preserving the mother tongues, must guarantee an extensive knowledge of English. From this, the possible and now necessary polyglotism. And the maximum paper for the translation, with the progresses of the automatic translation and the fundamental role of the translators.

The Europe of the ethnic groups

The word "ethnic group" receives bad press. We have already seen how racism, which has the vindication of biological superiority of one race over another, has contaminated absolutely all conception of human diversity and has made difficult finding the precise terminology to speak of a diversity that is obvious, that we know exists, that we do not want it to be confused on any scale with kindness, the potential evils or capacities of anybody, but which we do not know how to label without being called politically incorrect. The word "ethnic group", in this sense, has been lucky in topics apparently separated from this one controversy. For example, *ethnic music* is spoken of naturally, whereas before it was referred to as *folklore music*.

But it is certain that the term "ethnic group" is also used according to its deeper meaning, that is to say politically, if so desired. During the conflict of the Balkan Mountains, ethnic maps of Bosnia were used calmly and effectively to mark the zones of Croatian, Serb or Muslim predominance. They were not religious maps either, because in each one of the groups, there were people without conviction or religious practice, yet they appeared ethnic. They spoke of ethnic confrontations and ethnic parties, to the degree that the Bosnian electoral map was not divided into parties of right, left, liberal, or social, but into parties that corresponded to each one of the communities. Furthermore, much emphasis was given to the processes of "ethnic cleaning". Although in this case, with the exception of the Albanians, we always speak of Peoples of the Slavic ethnic group. Therefore, when we speak within Europe about other ethnic groups, we speak as if these ethnic groups stop at our doors. But, when we speak of the interior communitarian Europe, any reference to the ethnic groups creates restlessness and social discomfort.

Geneticist Luca Cavalli-Sforza published in the nineties an excellent work entitled "Who We Are. A History of Human Diversity." Cavalli-Sforza's book is a complete denunciation and rebuttal of any initial racist character. But

indeed, in the chapter that it dedicated to a concrete way against racist attitudes and theories, Cavalli-Sforza defines the existence of a type of human reality, which is in fact the basis of his work on human diversity. These human communities, called as such because — he, like the old anthropologists, uses the word "races" — are "a set of individuals that have a common origin and therefore, a certain genetic similarity, that is to say, a character inherited through biological means. They can also conserve or not a certain cultural identity, that is to say, they can maintain common traditions, a common language, and a political unit, or they can lose some of these factors. Cultural identities are generally transitory, the most time durable being genetics".

Probably we would have to classify ethnic groups the same way Cavalli-Sforza classifies races. We are in a land where the names of things are not the same, where there is the initial difficulty of establishing each term's meanings. Cavalli-Sforza strictly uses the term "race" to talk about the human species. We would be speaking of considerable morphologic differences, and this would give us a reduced number of races, leaving us with only those with qualifying aspects. The ethnic groups would have very small morphologic differentiations, almost nonexistent. The People, German Volk, would be fundamentally a historical and cultural product, linguistically. Different People would fit within the same ethnic group, and the term "race" we would have to be used sparingly. The terminology is variable and debatable, but the existence of human diversity is evident.

In his book, Cavalli-Sforza draws diverse genetic maps of Europe. They are in fact maps from a very concrete genetic characteristic, evidently smaller, in an ocean of similarities and equalities. But it is possible to establish this type of map, without the need to give it more credit. Luca Cavalli-Sforza, a scientist with strong antiracist convictions, is absolutely suspicious in this meaning, and considers that there are genetic differences between populations, even between the populations of Europe. Often, this establishment has been reason for ridicule or an attempt has been considered an attempt to vindicate a certain form of "blood purity". It would be absurd. But it would also be absurd to deny the data.

Consequently, when we make the description of the European diversity, we have on the table linguistic elements, religious elements, customs and traditions, different historical evolutions. But also different ethnic substrata. None of these elements is sufficient to explain the diversity by themselves. None of them can be left apart either. The conceptual rejection of racism and the moral rejection of the crimes that have been committed in their name force us to be very cautious in the explanation of the ethnic diversity. What it cannot force us to do is to ignore it. It seems that if we recognize the existence of ethnic groups we are calling for confrontation. But I have the impression that this prejudice is a part of the great prejudice that exists, DES of the extreme equalitarism, against the same notion of diversity.

Diversity is, certainly, a complication. But it is an inseparable part of the human nature. We said it in the beginning: the cause and the test of our triumph like species. But diversity demands civilized forms of management.

The linguistic diversity, the cultural one, also the ethnic one does not condemn us to violence and confrontation. It is a source of conflict -human existence and the human relations are always sources of conflict-, but conflicts can be solved to shots or with pacts, with agreements, with formulas. I retake a comparison that I used in the beginning: the map of the Balkan Mountains and the map of the Alps, as much if they watch DES of the linguistic, religious or ethnic point of view, they have great similarities in spite of its great diversity. The mountains are always places for encounters and mixtures. But a linguistic, religious and ethnic map of this nature can result in an example of military war badly named ethnic as the one occurred in Bosnia, or an example of federation and Pacific pact of the diversity like in Switzerland. The problem is not diversity, nor ethnic diversity. The problem is always how we manage it.

The People of Europe

The sum of history, languages, identities, customs, worldviews, religions and beliefs, all on a diverse ethnic substratum, is a product of migrations and population movements throughout the centuries. It draws a map of Europe that is neither a physical map nor a political map. In some classic encyclopaedias, these two maps appear with, what they called the European Peoples map. The term has long been debated. With these types of questions, the rhetoric is never neutral, but rather contains and denotes ideologies. Perhaps through it all, "People" is the easiest word to consent to.

To speak of *People* would be, then, to talk about a human group with an affinity towards a cultural identity — namely language— customs, history, a world viewpoint, independently of which is the political or administrative recognition of its reality.

The *People* would form one person from the group by which the individual would feel represented, even at the very least politically. Like the family, the *People* would be a field of appurtenance relation that we can call natural, at least in the pre-political meaning. It is a place of recognition and identity: distinguishing characteristics in which the individual feels identified and recognized.

The significance of each individual in the *People* takes many forms, depending upon the situation, depending upon the distinguishing characteristics that each *People* has. In some cases, it is blood ties, an inevitable property, that is product of the community within which one was born, and from which one cannot freely leave. When belonging to the *People* is based on blood, the birthplace ends up being indifferent or it even becomes secondary to the will. This is one of the most primitive, less evolved conceptions of *People*.

In other more evolved conceptions, the *People's* distinguishing characters happen to be different. In some cases, it is land: one belongs to the *People* in which one was born, the ultimate tie into citizenship would be through the Earth, the ground, the land. An emigrant, according to this

theory, could resettle in another *People*. In other cases, the distinguishing characteristic that denotes membership is the language. It can therefore be acquired and are accessible for people born outside of this one *People*. This opens the door towards more evolved conceptions of *People*, that has to do with free will: it is the member of the *People* that wants to be a member, who wants to feel like part of the *People*, and who in fact has decided to feel like part of the *People*. But it is only possible if some distinguishing characteristic is shared: nobody chooses their *People* in a catalogue. What one can do, through free will, is maintain their citizenship and resign to it indefinitely, or move to an area that is possible and accessible, and even furthermore maintain this feeling of belonging between two *Peoples*.

All these conceptions of *People* are pre-political, they do not have anything to do with the passport, with citizenship or tax collections. The political or administrative citizenship has its own mechanisms of membership. It is legally sure so that a judge can settle down it with comfort, who is and who is not citizen of a State, who has the citizenship. Citizenship happens through other links, which we have already seen are not homogenous: not all *People* define equally their preferential distinguishing characteristics nor, in highly evolved *People* is there a unique and shared criterion for citizenship.

It would be extensive to put examples to each case, and we would find all. The *People* define themselves by the language, which you can learn, or by religion, to which you can convert. Only as an expression of the complexity of these ties to citizenship we can show the example, which perhaps one of the most complicated of all, of the Jewish *People*. Who belongs to the Jewish *People*? It depends upon who defines it. For the Church, according to the most classic interpretation, it is one who professes the Jewish religion and who is the son of a Jewish mother. For the Nazis, it is he who belongs to the Jewish race (which does not exist), religion cast aside. They were thus assassinated during the Christian holocaust for the fact of being Jewish, because for the executioners the Jewish *People* is not a religion but a race. But then is there a Jewish race? Black Jews exist in Ethiopia, blacks and blondes exist among the Ashkenazi and people of colour and curly black hair among the Sephardic. The definition of a race is indeed not physical. Some lay Jews say today that to be Jewish he is to belong to a cultural identity, forged by history, by religion, by memory, by blood...and by anti-Semitism. Ben Gurion, at the moment for trying to solve for practical reasons the metaphysical dilemma of who is Jewish — which needs to be solved in Israel because the law allows all Jews to return to the Holy land— said that he was Jewish when he knew and felt Judaism. That is to say, who would want to be Jewish: it is an act of will, but on certain foundations. Being as such, it does not stop at a principle request, what really exists is the Jewish *People*.

But it is necessary to repeat that the notion of *People* is pre-political and pre-administrative. Sometimes, in some European political traditions, the term *People* ends up being synonymous with the term nation. In these times, nation and state would be two different things: the nation would be a scope of natural property, and the state would be a scope of a political and administrative property. Therefore, there could be multinational states, because nowhere is it written that the nation and the state must agree. In

another European political tradition, nation would not be the equivalent of People, but indeed of state. Therefore, nations would exist or cease to exist according to if they have or do not have a state or state status. Then, the term "multinational state" would in fact not have meaning, with the only possible exception of the confederate states.

In any case, these two traditions, so different that quite often it is impossible to engage in a dialogue about them -that is if they do arise in a conversation, that they are truly understood- they could share the notion of People how to pre-political organization and, previous to the State. In these two traditions, the nation would be the People elevated to political status, a People with a political project and will to become a state. For some, the nation is the People that wants to be a state. For others, it is the People or the Peoples that have attained it. Both would also accept that a state can include diverse Peoples, and both would now consider that the real actor of policy is not the People, but the State-nation.

It is clear that in these issues one of the main difficulties is finding a unanimously accepted common terminology. This complicates debates that in addition are essentially nominal: how to define each reality that is perceived. Perhaps among all these terms with which we contemplate human diversity, the two least ambiguous and more widely accepted are People and state. More ambiguous is the concept of nation. We all know what a state is: a political and administrative unit. We also know what a People is: a community with shared characteristics, especially in the linguistic sense, but also culturally and historically. Each person knows of what state it is a citizen. It is only necessary to look at one's passport. Citizenship in People is more difficult to define. This is because free will must be present, in a certain sense, like in the family. But indeed "People" has similar characteristics, concerning communal interests and good relations, which turn into a formidable cell of the government.

In this frame, Europe presents a map of extremely complex diversity. As mentioned before, we could presently make a clear and simple map of the states of Europe. We could make a map of the languages of Europe, which is already being debated, because there are many multilingual territories where sometimes the nation's own language has been replaced by the official language of the state or sometimes they coexist. We would also find in many cases in which science would distinguish languages in a different way from that of politics. One example is Serbian and Croatian, politically separated, yet considered a single language by science. We could make a map of the European Peoples, but the difficulties would be greater still. In many areas, we would find mixed People. We would find People that identify themselves with a state; others that demand it; others that neither have it nor demand it. But even with all the difficulties to put it on paper, we know that this map exists, that Europe cannot be understood if one does not think that it is a mosaic of Peoples.

This diverse Europe is in fact a Europe of diversities. The Peoples of Europe would not be isolated phenomena and absolutely

compartmentalized, but complex products of history, culture and human biology. Even the Europe of Peoples would create a complex map of similarities. Distinctly coloured maps, if we noted similarities based upon language, history, religion, and ethnic group. This complexity, which is already seen in the map of State-Nations, the only objective map that can be made of Europe, although unstable, shows its enormous changes throughout the last century.

Three Earthquakes in one Century

It is possible to say that the State-Nation is a European invention that has been exported to the world. Even to parts of Africa, the Far East and Latin America where state borders are lines drawn on maps from distant offices or correspond more to colonial distributions than to continuities or geographic discontinuities. Throughout the centuries populations have settled on predetermined territories.

Since Romanticism, the People and the concept of a People's soul, a form of modern State was constructed on the continent that tends to identify itself with the nation. The construction is slow. Even the European reality of nineteenth century has more relation – aside from the creation of modern States through national will in Italy and Germany with the imperial spaces than with the generalization of the State-Nation.

Europe begins the twentieth century dominated by empires—from the Russian to the Austro-Hungarian, thanks to the strong European presence of the Ottoman empire—but with the existence of national projects with romantic roots formed during the previous century, in which liberation of the nations has been seen as a natural continuation of the appearance of the 'I' and of the emancipation of the individual. It has been the century in which Byron has gone to fight alongside the Greeks for national reconstruction from the Turkish empire, and the century in which the name of a romantic composer such as Verdi – acrostically converted from Vittorio Emanuele Re d'Italia has been painted in the streets in name of Italian Risorgimento liberation from the Vienna power. These national causes, in search of its political consecration, have progressively grown in the nineteenth century under the veil of a return to deep origins, to the spirit of the people, and against the imperial artifices.

World War I and the proclamation of the Wilson doctrine from the United States consecrated the State-Nation model in Europe, that the decolonization process has spread worldwide. The empires had been defeated in central Europe. Empires that had represented prisons to the People, now represent the coup release to these imprisoned People, through the practice of its right to self-determination, and to the phrase that summarizes the nationalisms of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries: one nation, one state. The idea, forged in the nineteenth century, is that each People must acquire a political awareness for itself and, consequently, to become a nation, in the first great transformation of the twentieth century European map. The first of the

earthquakes.

In the confusion between the People and nations of eastern Europe, in some cases these national States are in fact more or less forced marriages between differentiated People, but in any case they seem like more nationalistic states than the previous empires. Czechs and Slovaks are joined in a united state and the Slavs of the South also constitute the unified State of the Serbs, the Croatsians and the Slovenes.

In any case, the doctrine of North American president Wilson transfers the model inspired by the French revolution and which western Europe had already adopted to central and eastern Europe, the State-nation. Of the state in which, along many lines, is agreed upon the administrative and political structure with an identified ethnic and sentimental substratum which forms the People.

The application of the Wilson doctrine, which is, after all, the state doctrine that was formed throughout the twentieth century, must have offered to Eastern Europe a stability and a continuity that the previous imperial structure did not offer. It was not so, exactly. World War II already demonstrated the instability of the map of the world — but especially of the European — which arose from World War I. At the end of World War II a new map of central and eastern Europe was drawn. It is the second earthquake of the borders of the twentieth century, that peculiarly is not the deepest or the one that considers the greatest modifications, except the one to extend the Russian-Soviet empire towards the west, to divide Germany and move Poland.

The cold war congeals this eastern European map for some time, put under another logic, but the moment the cold war ended the map drawn in 1917 profoundly changed again, in the third great transformation of European borders in the twentieth century, which gives birth to new independent states and all apparently deepened the Wilson doctrine: a nation, a state. It also causes the divorce however — either through amiable means or by force — in States like Czechoslovakia or Yugoslavia, constructed by the addition of apparently compatible People, and incorporating subjectively the Russian empire, who were until then Soviet, to the process of dismantling it into the pieces from which it had been built from eighty years back during the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman empires in Europe.

This third — and so far the last — earthquake in the European map is the result of the fall of communism, of the failure of the Soviet Union as the great world-wide power. The Cold War is in fact the Third World War. It brought the United States and the Soviet Union face to face, which developed through diverse regional wars all over the world, but was also a military, economic and ideological race between the two great powers to maintain or throw off their supposed parity. In the Eighties, if not before, it is clear that the United States won this war, that they were able to break the military parity, thanks to having previously broken the economic parity. The American system has more power to maintain the momentum of the arms race, its ultimate push being Reagan's "War of the Worlds"— without forgetting to present this as being for the benefit of its population. Andropov and later Gorbachov, both from the

Soviet secret services, were conscious of this defeat and threw in the towel. This is what allowed the fall of the Iron Curtain. Combined with the internal crisis of the communist regimes, especially in Poland, under the impact of the western political model, but also from the Catholic Church's action through union solidarity.

In any case, the third earthquake of the European borders in the twentieth century is the result of the fall of the Iron Curtain. And if the first earthquake was promoted in some way by the United States, through the Wilson doctrine, then the third also needed the North American impulse and inspiration. The fundamental piece of this border change is without a doubt the German reunification. Helmut Schmidt recently reminded us that the unification was possible thanks to the impulse of the United States — and of own western Germany, naturally — against Russian reluctance, but also the impulses of France and Great Britain. Therefore, this border change, signifies the expansion of United Europe towards the east over the rest of the Iron Curtain. This stems from German desire and American participation but against the opinion of both great patrons of a communitarian Europe: England and France.

In conclusion, throughout a century the number of states in Europe has multiplied, trying to approach the still greater number of European Peoples. Of the three great earthquakes in the European borders, at least two have been processes of fragmentation inspired by nationalism. They have looked for a reduction in the measurement of the states to adapt them to the measurement of the Peoples. The Cold War was a gap in this process, fundamentally because during this European period it was the chessboard of a world game that only the United States and the Soviet Union played, and therefore, while the game lasted, the borders were untouchable. This was also due to the fact that, as a result of the balance of the terror, for some years Europe generated a dynamic of blocks. A dynamic in which, over the fragmented pieces of the State-nation, there was a politically important umbrella which allowed the solution of many conflicts through elevation.

It is obvious that the eastern world worked like a unified block, perhaps with some dissidences – e.g. Yugoslavia, Albania— but with a dynamic of blocks as much in the political aspect as in the military and economic ones. It was the Europe articulated around the Soviet Union, without the possibility of secession — the hard repression and revolts of Budapest and Prague demonstrate this -which had their own common economic space in the Comecon, but mainly it shared a communist regime and was militarily in the Warsaw Pact under Soviet control. Apparently, in the West a European Union was generated, militarily tied to the United States through NATO, with its own common market and its own political coordination. It was a political coordination more lax than the one of the East, but not inexistent. The thousand plans generated by Italian politics to systematically leave the most powerful Communist Party of Western Europe —and apparently more moved away of Moscow— out the government also answers to these political limitations of the cold war. But in any case, in both sides of the fall of the curtain, for years, and because of the fear and of confrontation, there were dynamics, not of fragmentation, but of addition, of confluence in two blocks.

More voluntarily in the West, more forced by the arms in the East. But in both cases the cold war not only froze the dispersion dynamic that existed before and that returned to exist later, but also led Europe to walk towards an opposite direction. In the West, towards the Europe Union.

It is after the cold war when, perhaps for the first time in history, the two tendencies coexist simultaneously in the same space. One, that aspires to accommodate the States to the maximum limits of the People, tending to generate a state for each People. The other that invites to a confluence in a common space, economic and political, in these States would have to yield an important part of their sovereignty. Until today, history seemed to go only in one direction or the other. At the moment of designing the post-war periods, in each peace conference after a war, there is a tendency of each People to generate their own mechanisms state. At times the military has a tendency to come together and to work in a logic of blocks. After the fall of the Berlin Wall, for the first time, in a peace situation, Europe seems to have in its interior two simultaneous tendencies. And the intuition that is only the sum of the two tendencies, its concentration, will allow surpassing some of the traps of its recent history and of the general crisis of the State-Nation.

The State-Nation crisis

Already for years the crisis of the State-Nation in Europe -and even more outside Europe- has been proclaimed, but the symptoms of this crisis are so little noticed, no weakening, no backward movement, that perhaps we must replace the word "crisis" by some other. Perhaps we would have to speak of the limits of the State-Nation or its disadvantages. And to do it in first place in Europe, in order to later extend the reflection for the whole world, where this European model was exported to and was useful to draw all the political maps of the planet. The State-Nation is the concretion of the nationalisms political ideal of the 20th century, which claimed the agreement between State and nation. A State for each nation, against the prisons of the Peoples that were the empires, which contained a considerable number of nations under the dominion of the one of them with more power, which especially controlled the empire's mechanisms.

The basic principle application of the national State — a People, a nation, a State— which is what we in Europe call nationalism, has caused very serious practical problems, mainly in two types of situations. One, in the extensive States constructed already throughout the Middle Ages and especially in the Modern Age in extended territories where diverse People live. The other, in those spaces — mainly of central and Eastern Europe— where diverse People coexist in the same territory, mixed, as long as their definition as People is not territorial, but tied to other characteristics, such as language, religion or ethnic origins. In both cases, the State-Nation has arisen with a certain degree of violence, sometimes symbolic, sometimes physical and very intense.

When one has said that State and nation — People — must agree, some western States of long historical tradition, but that constructed their unit through the existence of diverse Peoples, make an effort to homogenize all the People of their interior, to uniform them. From the state, they want to construct the nation. And this is the greater nationalism. Nationalism thinks that State and nation must agree. Therefore, looking for the State from the nation is nationalism at the same extent than making the nation from the State. Following the Jacobine model, but already with foundations in the prevailing maquiavelism of 17th century, some States of Western Europe begin their effort to obtain that all the People of their interior are reduced to a single linguistic expression, to an only form to be governed. To an only cultural identity. This process crosses modernity and takes different forms in each State. It also obtains different results.

It is the formula of the great absolute monarchies from end of the 19th century, but it is also the formula of some illustrated projects of Jacobine sign. The State already has defined limits, drawn often by additions of dynasties, and consequently more or less federalizing *avant la lettre*, previous to modernity. But in modernity these States try to become Peoples, to unify People. To construct the French People, we take as example, where there were Breton, Corsican, Occitane or Basque Peoples, naturally alongside a French People strictly speaking. It is the model followed by France, Spain, Italy or Portugal, with a different internal diversity in each case, but with a common objective: that in the end it is possible to speak of a single People, a single nation and a single State. France is probably the more complete example of this process. It is not the process of Great Britain, that constructs to a modern State —and politically centralized —, but not by the negation of the existence of a Scottish or Welsh People, next to the English. On the contrary, which is not constructed is a British nation, but a United Kingdom — this concept of Union sends to Federation — constituted by diverse People.

But still the application of the State-Nation concept has been more problematic on realities of the central or eastern Europe, of which Sarajevo is the more visible paradigm. The dynamics of these very wide zones has entailed the presence in the same territory, sometimes in the same city, communities diverse languages, religions, cultural identities, that felt like part of different People. There are zones in the centre of Romania where each town, even the smallest, has three very differentiated names: in Romanian, in German and Hungarian. It is a sign of the coexistence in that zone, and a sign of a totally mixed form in the territory, not cantonized at all, of diverse People. When a State-Nation, which would want to make the administrative structure and the People agree, rises in these territories, on which People it is constructed? And what we do if some feel part of another group of People in the same territory?

In eastern Europe we have seen throughout the last century how territories where groups of different Peoples were vindicated as a part of the state of each one of these groups. And we have also seen that when one of these territories has been part of a State-Nation, the minorities that would

correspond to other People have often gone through marginalization situations that have forced them to move. When episodes of open ethnic cleansing have not taken place, which demonstrate the will to culturally turn into uniform a certain territory, according to the majority, People from which all cultural economic or even linguistic model must be taken,. The war of the Balkan Mountains, mainly in the zones of mixture of Serbs and Croats inside Croatia or Bosnia, or between Serbs and Albanians in Kosovo, partly respond to this model.

After World War II great forced movements of population took place: for example, good part of the German communities located in the East of Europe from immemorial times. In other cases more or less spontaneous migrations have taken place. The Saxon population of Romania has diminished in a remarkable way the last decades, because of the migration.

This type of situation, with mixtures of Peoples and linguistic communities, is not strange in central and eastern Europe. It affect the eastern borders of Italy -- with a Slovenian minority in the zone of Trieste and with German language regions around Bolzano -- and is general in all Balkan Mountains, beyond old Yugoslavia. The application of the State-Nation as a concept in these zones has led to separation (often dramatic) of populations.

The State-Nation only feels totally comfortable in the internal homogeneity and not always knows how to solve the problem of minorities. But when inside a territory the relation between majorities and minorities is not clear or when, for historical reasons, a territory is perceived like national home of more than one People, the conflicting situations are multiplied. Independence or division processes have only been peaceful when they have been in accordance with ethnically homogenous territories, with a clear division between Peoples and territories. Thus, the independence of Slovenia or the agreed separation of Czech Republic and Slovakia.

On the contrary, in Balkan Europe, the maps of Great Hungary, the Great Croatia, Great Albania, the Great Serbia, the Great Macedonia, Great Bulgaria... are habitual. They are maps with all the groups that belong to each one of these People, although they are outside their state limits: the Hungarians of the Serbian Voivodina or Romania, the Albanians of Kosovo, the Serbs of Croatia or Bosnia, the Croats of Herzegovina... If these imaginary maps, which are maps of certain more or less explicit territorial vindications, are put on top, they leave great intersection spaces, that is to say, conflict spaces.

These malfunctions that have ended up in enormous tragedies do not seem to have solution with universal application and without more compensations of a State-Nation model. On the contrary, the generalization of this model has caused indeed the intensification and the outbreak of some conflicts. But the People have the right to a political and institutional recognition. The recognition of this right, without implying population transferences nor tensions between majorities and minorities, demands a complementary system: the existence of a wider space in which they can all reunite. It was, in a certain meaning, what used to happen in the old empires, but then it was by force and conquest.

The European Union, if it takes a certain structure, if it is able to harmonize the tendency to fragment the space in order to adapt it to more natural realities — the Peoples — with a tendency to the confluence and the agreement, could be the way to solve these problems by elevation: creating a wider space of agreement, that is Europe. A form of organization of the space different from the State-Nation, but not opposite to the Wilsonian principle of the People's rights. It is not the European Union that now exists, but it could be another Union, rising from a great project and a great pact from the will of the present Europeans.

Exporting the formula

The model of State-Nation born in Europe has become general anywhere in the world, riding on the European colonialism, but still more on the decolonization processes. The application of this model in zones of the world where the relation between the People and territories was even more diverse than in Europe, has caused all kind of problems. In general, the problem of new States, often born with discretionary borders more related to the colonial distribution of the world than with the human reality of the territories, have also wanted to construct their nations in a custom made manner, to invent nations where diverse Peoples existed. And this has meant -in part like in Europe itself— that the minorities or the different groups that lived in these territories have had new problems. A good part of the recent conflicts in Africa or Near East is related to these problems.

It is like this in Turkey, which has become a State-Nation after being an empire that ruled very diverse People. This directly caused a movement of internal homogenization, of turkisation of the territory, from which they are expelled or exterminated members of minorities that had lived with certain tranquillity in the empire, like the Armenians or Greek or in a different scope, the Kurds. But the distribution of islands of the eastern Mediterranean between both resulting State-Nations, Greece and Turkey, caused serious transferences of population and has left the conflict of Cyprus still opened. It is not the only case. We could speak of the division between India and Pakistan at the moment of the British decolonization. Or of the existence of two national projects different on the historical territory from Palestine at the end of the British rule. Or of the dispute over the State between Hutus and Tutsis in Rwanda after the retirement of the colonialism. Or of the artificial character of the Iraqi State-Nation, that in fact is the sum of Kurd, Sunnite Arab and Shiite Arab population, who represent differentiated identities, or over which an Iraqi identity has been tried to be invented...

Complex, mixed societies, which had lived in relative stability under foreign powers or superstructures that did not seem to come from a national spirit, enter crisis with the application of the universal mould of the State-Nation, which implies that one of the group of People present in the territory keeps the state as a standardization instrument that will be used against others. Or that these diverse People dispute over the State, aware that it is

the most powerful machine that the societies have created.

Europe exported the problem, with the State-Nation, to the places where it established colonies. Now it would have to export the solution. A solution that is not in any case a kind of world-wide government, occupied in fact by the assembly of the States of the world, as the UN has wished. This could be a good frame for the encounter between the States, but it is not a structure of overcoming of the problems created by the States. The European Union cannot either be the regional UN. The European Union can be a system to solve in Europe, by elevation, the practical problems that has involved the political space organization exclusively through the State-Nation. And therefore, facing the entire world, a proposal to organize the space through new wider units, of more federal character, that surpass the State-Nation.

In the middle of the Eighties, in an interview in Jerusalem with the person who was president of the State of Israel and Minister of Labour Education, Isaac Navón, I requested a theoretical solution from him for the Arab-Israeli conflict. He answered that his model was the Benelux. That is to say, a space of three States practically unified in the economic scope, with free circulation of people, some common policies, perhaps even with extraterritorial citizenships. This Benelux of the Near East would be constituted, in his opinion, by Israel, the Palestinian State and Jordan, which in fact form a geographic unit – they compound the old Palestine -- and which have complementary economic interests. He even insinuated the possibility that, within this Benelux, an Arab from Nazareth, in Israeli territory, could have Palestine nationality, while a Jew from Hebron could have Israeli nationality. I commented to him that it seemed to me absolutely utopian. He said that if a solution was asked of him, this one was it: someday we will get to this wider and shared space. He already knew that at the moment it was impossible. But he suspected that it was the only solution, someday.

This solution by elevation of the most encysted and most important conflict of the world is an invitation also to the European Union to invent new ways to articulate the space, which works for us and for everybody, because it seems clear that our European model must project itself towards the outside, but to be able to do so, it must have limits. We must know where Europe ends.

Europe's Limits

When we see the map of the successive extensions of the European Economic Community first, and afterwards of the European Union, it is impossible to avoid an ascertainment and a question. The ascertainment is that the entrance of new countries has certain resemblance to the entrance to a club: it is necessary that the interested party requests it, but also that it demonstrates that it fulfils certain conditions. Apparently, the aim of the club is to become greater, to expand. But not at any price. Not every one who requests it, enters. But evidently it is necessary to request it.

Some countries that could enter, that fulfilled all the requirements,

did not enter until they were convinced that it was convenient for them: Sweden, Finland and Austria. Others that could enter perfectly, are not in because they do not want to: Switzerland or Norway. Iceland has not even ever asked for it. Others could only enter when they fulfilled the conditions: Greece, Spain and Portugal, in one first stage, and all the countries that have entered coming from the block of the east, in the extension of 2004. Some countries are waiting, but they are already accepted, such as Bulgaria or Romania. A country that is waiting, but conditions have been imposed on it, and therefore it has not passed the entrance examination, is Turkey. Croatia has the recognized situation of country candidate. Macedonia expects to obtain it soon. Yugoslavia and Albania still go one step back. Countries as Morocco or Israel have demonstrated their interest to integrate themselves, and in fact Morocco has asked for it openly.

The question, consequently, is: what is requested, in the examination? Or, if it is preferred: which are the limits of the European Union? Are they geographic, political or cultural limits?

We have seen throughout history that there are political limits: countries that were doubtlessly that geographic Europe has not been able to enter the Community until they have fulfilled political requirements. But will any country that fulfils the political requirements, wherever it is in the world, be able to participate in the European Union? Until now, the countries that have been integrated may or may not surpass the political tests of access, but they had approved, at the same time of appearance, tests on geography and culture. All the countries of which have been discussed until today belonged doubtlessly to geographic Europe and all had a certain cultural similarity, within the European diversity. They all participated in a limited scope, within the possible diversities. But there are cultural and geographic differences in the ones that are calling at the door that had never been considered so far. Will it be enough to say "no" to them? Or is it that the Union does not have other limits than the political one? The possible integration of Turkey is the one that raises this questions with all the force and all the controversial capacity.

If Europe was exclusively a geographic reality, some of the countries that are at the entrance would not fit in this map. We have commented it before: the Urals divide Russia in two, which is only partially a European country. Could only the part of Russia that is to this side of the Urals, hypothetically, enter? The Dardanelles and the Bosphorus mark the South limit of Europe. That leaves within Europe only one small part of Turkey, whereas the greater part is outside. Would only a piece of Turkey have to enter the Union, districts of Istanbul? Evidently, according to geography, Morocco and Israel do not have any option to enter the Union, although they play at the football or basketball Euro cup, and sometimes they even win it. On the contrary, Byelorussia, Ukraine, but also Albania and Yugoslavia are doubtlessly Europe. Therefore, they would be geographic candidates to be part of the Union. But, would it make any sense that Byelorussia was in the Union and Russia was not?

It is obvious that geography is not the only criterion. But if it were, it

would make things even more complicated, it would divide countries in two pieces and it would take us to a map of the political Europe that would not have anything to do with geographic Europe.

But Europe is not an ethnic or cultural reality either. It has never been. Between Sicilians and Laponians there is no significant historical bond, they have rarely participated in a common space, until today. Europe can only be an idea, a concept. If it is an idea, a concept, the examination of entrance to the doors of the Union cannot be done just holding a map. It is necessary to contrast the motor idea of Europe, the concept of civilization to which it is bound and the reality of the candidate to enter.

Some have located the nucleus of this idea, of this concept, in religion. Europe would be a Christian club. Therefore, neither Turkey nor Morocco could enter. What would happen with Israel? It is not a Christian country, but the Judaism that has been created in the last two thousand years in Europe, has been a component of the European identity. And if the examination for the entrance is of Christianity, were approved by Ukraine, Byelorussia, Russia itself, but also Georgia and Armenia? Not to mention the Turcoman republics of the south of the old Soviet Union, although historically they have been bound with Russia. I do not have the sensation that the examination to the front door of the EU is religion. Although religion is certainly related.

A political examination? Geography and religion apart, would it only be a matter of asking the candidates about their political regime? In conversations with Turkey that has been the impression so far. The only question was whether parliamentary democracy and a homological respect to the human rights existed or not. Turkey already goes towards this direction. So does Morocco, more slowly. There are problems, such as the Kurds in Turkey. But if these problems are solved, the political examination would seem to be approved. But many Europeans consider that this is not the only examination.

An examination, then, of economy? Certainly, in order to enter Europe a free market regime is necessary, next to a political democracy and of a certain degree of economic development and budget rigor. There is, without a doubt, an examination of economy, that is not only on the economic capacity, but on the solution and the reliability of policies. But this entrance examination has already been approved by countries of the Eastern Europe which have the GIP far below the average of the Union. The Gross Inner Product of Latvia or Lithuania only gets to the fourteenth part of Luxembourg's. Unemployment in Slovakia multiplies by nine that of Holland. Hungary's inflation is five times higher than the French. Yes, sure there is an economic examination, but the minimum score is relatively lax.

The speech of the bureaucrats has caught the deep indefinición on the limits of Europe and has looked for ambiguous formulas that they will have to allow the politicians to do as they wish. Or, more politically correct, to manage each situation in a flexible way, according to the situation interests. The work group created by Prodi Roman, with Michel Rocard at the head of it, to fix positions on the European identities, said it as complicated as it could: "if

Europe is not a fact, but a work that must be carried out, eternally fixed European limits - internal or external - cannot exist either. Also, the borders of Europe will have to be always renegotiated. They are not the geographic or national limits the ones that define the European cultural space, it is rather this last one the one that defines the European geographic space, a space in principle, open".

With this definition, Turkey, Morocco or communist China may enter or not. But even within the consubstantial ambiguity to the sort, some observations can be done. First, that geography is not the centre of the issue, although it is not possible to violate it indefinitely. Second, that the centre of the issue would be in the so-called "European cultural space". Or, if better, Europe's identity. To put the word "cultural" in the middle is already an ambiguity: there is no more polysemic word in the world, object of more contradictory definitions. But, deeply, there would be the ascertainment that Europe is, above all, an idea. In order to participate in the European construction, even in this so lax and pragmatic present form, so coward, it is necessary to participate in an idea. We just need to find what this idea could be.

Rationalism, democracy, laicism

In the Fifties the economic way to carry out a European construction was chosen, which at the end will have to be necessarily political. With the years, all the actors of the European construction, even those who have the most modest and less ambitious idea of it, have realized that this one cannot be the only way. And that Europe cannot be created strictly from politics either. To write a Constitution, to proclaim that Europe already exists, is not to create Europe. The practice of power, the administrative decisions of a centralized bureaucracy are not enough. Creating Europe, everybody has realized this, demands in the first place defining it and fixing a motor idea, a concept. The authors of the report on European identity we spoke about before wrote: "economic integration does not lead to political integration by itself, because the markets are not able to produce a politically string solidarity". What can produce, then, this solidarity, beyond the interests? The feeling of belonging to the same scope of civilization, the certainty of sharing common values. What we called the idea.

Europe has built a model of civilization shared with the rest of the West that is based on common values. In the last years, cracks have come out in the interior of the West, some of these values have been lived differently, and we have already commented to what extent the different way of conceiving the individual responsibility and the role of the State that exists between Europe and the United States create distance. But once the differences are established, we can also establish similarities. This Western civilization, through the long roots that take to us to the Greek, Latin or the Jewish-Christian world, is constructed mainly from the Renaissance and it is confirmed with Illustration. These two moments have two common referents: the Reason and the

human person. The Renaissance, and also Illustration, place the human person in the centre of the universe. And the human person illuminates this universe with the light of Reason. Humanism and rationalism, these are the pillars. The rest, in a certain meaning, is the development of these two central values.

In the first place, a civilization that locates the human person in the centre of the universe stops being a theocratic civilization. The divinity, the religiosity, the revealed truths, yield the central and public space, retiring to a private or communitarian sphere. Therefore, religion and the State are separated. The laws do not come from religious rules. The civil churches and powers become different things. It is not an easy process. It advances very slowly and in some points the process was not completed until not long ago. But it is fundamental. The Catholic Church is reluctant, in some countries and some scopes, to accept this backward movement to a more private sphere, after centuries of being installed in the political sphere. But it ends up happening.

And what is placed in the place that religion has left free, not through their disappearance, but through its retirement to the private sphere? The Reason. From this substitution, the West creates what Levy-Strauss calls the critical thought, the critical reason. If the human person is the centre of the universe, politics drifts towards democracy and the formulation of human rights that want to be, that came out to be, universal. If the reason is the instrument that illuminates and guides, it is possible to develop the scientific and technical spirit, with the development of the well-being that it implies. The sum of humanism and rationalism creates a new society. Religion does not disappear by force, it is not persecuted, it has its private place, but it is not the place of law and politics.

Separating religion from politics, Church from State, is the consequence of the orders of the Reason and the valuation of the individual. But it becomes the foundation of a new society, different from the previous ones and the other societies of the world. Although the words are often ambiguous and they are subject to different interpretations, we will call laicism to this separation. Laicism is not opposite to religion. It simply draws a public, central space, away from religion. For example, a society like North America, which is enormously religious, that is impregnated of religiosity, is also a society with a great religious freedom, which comes from this model of laicism. In Europe, laicism is lived in another way. But it is the nucleus of our model of civilization. Because we are not only speaking of the role of religion in our lives, which would be the most important subject but not so central. We are speaking of new foundations, rationalist and humanist, of our social space.

In France, in the name of the laicism, they have wished to install a system where the state school, lay scope, is not compatible with the exhibition of any type of religious symbol. Perhaps in other countries the veil nor crucifix nor Jewish *kipah* are considered so central. Personally, it seems more important to me that the clothing, that all the children have the same education programmes, that nobody is excluded from the education programme for a religious reason. I am more concerned about all the

children practicing gymnastics and music in the school, if our programmes think that gymnastics and music are good for all, than their clothing. But this is not the central issue. The central issue is the beginning. And the beginning is the separation between a religious, private and communitarian scope, and the public scope of rationalist vocation.

The laicism principle is so important in Europe that the European Parliament vetoed one of the commissioners prepared for the Commission, the Italian Rocco Buttiglione, because he had said publicly that his private convictions led him to be in opposition to homosexuality –just for saying it and without all the shades–, but that his public performance as commissioner does not consider it, because his intimate convictions are one thing and law is another. And the commissioner must serve the law. These manifestations would be, in principle, within the lay frame. But Europe considered –it is debatable if abusively or not– that the simple fact to proclaim it, to exhibit it publicly, already broke this indispensable laicism from the public powers.

Which can be, then, in the same language of the experts summoned by Prodi, the foundation of this European solidarity, in which not only collective but also individuals can participate, and that is stronger than the policy and the economy and which —according to what the own commission— "must be stronger than the solidarity that unites or would have to unite all human beings"? Perhaps a common tradition, common roots, a shared feeling of belonging, but in the base of all common values, created by this history and this shared evolution. And these values are the natural humanism and rationalism, and its derivatives: democracy, human rights, scientific and technical spirit and laicism. This is the common foundation. This is the idea of Europe: these principles located on a territory and a history. This marks the limits of Europe, inwards and outwards, which perhaps are not so lax and so permanently negotiable as sometimes it is indicated. If Europe is something it, is an idea. And if some specific idea has based the modern European civilization, from the Renaissance until today, passing through the Illustration and the romantic revolution, passing through the industrial revolution and the scientific revolution, it is the individual, the person as a centre, and the confidence in Reason.

It is certain that, in practice, Europe has not always acted, far from it, to the light of these principles and these basic values that humankind has contributed with. It has been indeed in Europe where forms of totalitarianism have arisen to reduce the value of human life to nothing. Primo Levi, in his work "If this is a man" places the base of Nazi *lager* in turning people into things, in taking away their human condition. Also in Europe esoterism, maquiavelisms, visions of the world absolutely moved away of the empire of Reason were very popular. But Europe has always known — even when it has been seduced in a high percentage -- that these performances violated its tradition and its nature. That they were shameful and undesirable. When the western values are vindicated, the performances of the West in all the minutes and the seconds of history, nor the practices associated to

colonialism, nor totalitarianisms of European roots are not vindicated, neither would be possible. Principles are being vindicated which sometimes Europe has betrayed, but which it has proclaimed more often. Sometimes in contradiction with its own acts. In the terms of Levy-Strauss, we must vindicate the West that deserves itself.

Questions about Turkey

Nowadays, the discussion over what Europe is and what it should be is an empty controversy, strictly conceptual. There is a need for a response to these issues to make imminent and concrete decisions. Turkey's request of entering the European Union poses, with more clarity than any other case, the need of a definition. Is Turkey Europe? Depends on what Turkey is, or what Europe is. Until now, we have only asked ourselves what is Turkey? If it is democratic enough, if it respects human rights, if its politics about the Kurds is acceptable, if there is a sense in having a law that penalises adultery. But to answer these questions about the present, we must also answer what is Europe? Therefore, in the end, the debate over Turkey's future within the European Union is an aspect of debate over the future of the European Union, over its nature and over its conceptual limits, not only over its physical limits.

It is curious that in the debate over if Turkey should, or not, enter into the European Union, often, the firm supporters of accepting this expansion are those that defend Europeanism less, the ones that have traditionally been more Euro-sceptical. The United States would want Turkey in the European Union, as well as the British. In both cases there are important strategic reasons. They consider that Turkey is committed to the defence of the West, in the times of the cold war in the face of the Soviet Union, now, in the face of the Islamic world. A defence that, in modern times, has two meanings: besides of the conventional, that of the example of a Muslim country that, when it wants to integrate in the western world, is well received and valued. Therefore, North Americans and the British consider that entering in the European Union is a prize that Turkey deserved and that it is convenient for the Turks. And that a stable Turkey is also convenient for the western world which confirms its bet on the western world and satisfied with its relations with the world.

But it also seems clear that the British and North American governments – and no less than their respective populations – do not have a great interest in a strong Europe, that goes deeper in its internal ties. In a certain way, the supporters of an extensive Europe are contrary to those that support an intense Europe. To maintain a high intensity, what we could call, in the terms of the Prodi commission, a Europe with strong common and differentiated solidarity ties, is made more difficult when extension is gained. And the contrary, not extending or extending with restrictions, controlling the extension is a bet on intensity.

The former German social democratic chancellor, Helmut Schmidt, in one of his reflections about the convenience of Turkey's entry into the

European Union, presents many reasons for scepticism. Schmidt tackles economic, political and immigration problems: "up to now, the German society has not been able to carry out a true integration of the Turks and Kurds that reside in our country". He was also referring to the strategic problems that the admission of a large and very populated country with a high birth rate entails, a country with great conflicts at its borders with the Caucasians and the Middle East. But when Schmidt lets his disapproval of this admission be clearly seen is when he highlights that the strategic objective of the Turkish entry to the European Union "does not belong to the European Union, but to the United States. Washington has insisted on this for fifty years". He insinuates that a European Union that reaches Turkey would lose intensity in its internal ties and, with it, the capacity for taking action. It would simply be reduced to a free exchange zone. It could have a relevant role in international politics because it will need internal cohesion.

It is true that Turkey allows posing this debate. Modern Turkey's history is an attempt of Westernisation in its customs and in its vision of the world, from the Muslim tradition. It is also a history of loyalty to the west, from a military point of view as well as in the positioning between blocks. Turkey, or at least part of the sectors that govern Turkey and that have governed since Atatürk, wants to be Europe. And geography and history have given it a place in Europe. But the existence of the Ottoman Empire, the Turkish seen as the other, for centuries became a unification factor of Western Europe, the contrary archetype. The Mediterranean folklore has dances and legends that oppose Turks and Christians, the north and south, the European world and the eastern world, created, sometimes, by westerners to a point, with myths such as that of the harem and exoticism, well explained by Fátima Mernissi. The Turks are in Europe's imagery, but are seen as the other.

If Europe is over all an idea, the idea of a Europe that can also include Turkey is a more lax idea, less compact, in which the whole of what is shared, is thinner, than that of a Europe without Turkey. This does not mean that it is impossible, just that it is different. And probably less ambitious, less studied in depth. If the great task of building Europe is to strengthen and affirm what all the citizens have in common, it is obvious that a Europe with Turkey strengthens and affirms fewer things. Therefore, in Schmidt's terms, it goes from being condemned to being something similar to a free exchange space, an economic community, a meeting of interests. An Islamic revolution does not need to be produced in Turkey and a de-Westernisation process. Evidently, it is worse if this occurs, or if the human rights requirements are not met, or if the Kurd minority's rights are not acknowledged.

The paradox in the relationship between the European Union and Turkey is that Europe is interested in the Turkish experiment doing well, which, to a point, Kemal Atatürk began and that has been modulating along the 20th century. It is a process that not only deserves western sympathy, but we are risking a lot in its success. We need a stable Turkey that settles its population, than can be an example of progress and freedom combined for the whole of the Muslim world. To achieve this, integration expectations have been generated in the Union. But, on the other hand, the integration of Turkey

to the European Union reduces the ambition horizon of European unity, it reduces the intensity of the project and it dilutes the maximum common divider that all the territories that participate in the project have. Probably there are forms of collaborating with the success of the Turkish experience and of combating any involution danger that are not of the integration in the European Union. Better said, there were, from a theoretical point of view. When entry expectations have been generated, when Turkey has been told that there was no basic problem, but that those important problems that could be resolved, the refusal of permitting the entry has turned into a form of disdain. It is the paradox in which Europe has installed itself and that at this time seems difficult to resolve in a satisfactory manner.

Many of the practical questions that arise over Turkey's entry may also be posed from a theoretical point of view about the entry of Russia, although Russia has not requested entry, and therefore does not require an urgent response. Serious questions are being posed about Russia regarding the quality of its democracy.

The actions of the Russians in Chechnya are not acceptable from European parameters, and much less those of the Turks in Kurdistan. The problems of taking the borders of Europe to some of the most unstable regions on the planet are even more obvious in the Russian case than in the Turkish: Europe would have a border with China or with Mongolia. Russia, as well as Turkey, posed proportion problems to Europe: it was not about small countries with little population, but big demographic powers that would occupy the first places in population ranking of the Union. If entering the Union means open borders, both cases pose important problems regarding immigration in Western Europe.

All these reasons make the expansion towards Turkey, as well as Russia, un-advisable. Although, probably, an expansion towards Russia would affect less – Affecting it more – to what a united Europe could have as a shared identity. The difference, being important, would still be less. And it does not seem that Russia has an interest in forming part of the European Union; although, by size and population, an expansion of the European Union towards Russia would mean, depending on the point of view, a Russianisation of Europe. Remember, with all the distances, the horizon drawn by Georges Orwell in his famous and pessimist “1984”, when he imagined or feared a world divided into three great super-states in confrontation: Russia, that had eaten up Europe; United States, that had integrated the British Empire; and the Asian world, surrounding China. Just fiction? But the admission of Russia poses a problem of equilibrium. Fortunately for Europe, the issue is not over the table at the moment, and there isn't a Russian non-adhesion price to pay, as there is with the non-adhesion of Turkey, after having been promised and later have put conditions that were needed to be complied with.

The Islam evolution

We have said that modern Europe is born, mostly, from the separation of the

church and the state. This allows the birth of critical thought and makes humans and reason – and therefore, human rights and democracy – occupy a place in the public space that religion had occupied before.

The rest stems from this: religion is not pursued in the name of secularity, the citizens coincide in the same public space with their own integrated beliefs, but the rules of the game of this public space are marked – at least in theory – for reason and democracy. Religion has an important role, specially if it understands and adapts to the new sign of the times, but not in the private and community sector. It is not the Law. The idea of sin and the idea of illegality do not coincide. Legality comes framed by values and human dignity, by Reason and by practical convention. Not stopping at a red light is not a sin, but it does break a rational convention and it is also illegal. Civil law and religious law have established different fundaments. And civil law is what governs social life. Religious law governs the private life of those who wish to accept it.

It is obvious that Christian churches never saw this displacement of the public space with sympathy and they resisted as much as they could. But it is also obvious that they have, on the most part, accepted this logic, that they can not consider new any more. It is the case of the Catholic Church, the clearly hierarchical Christian confession and probably also the one that has had, through history, the most vocation for public intervention, although the national orthodox churches in the Greek and Slavic world also have participated in public space.

Christianism was born precisely to be a religion of the states. It could even be said that the Judaism split, in the heart of where it was originated, was produced to go from a closed national religion in the limits of a population to a religion with universal vocation, which is prepared to be the religion of an empire. In a manner of speaking, Paul and the Hellenistic influence make Constantine's actions possible, who could not have been able to adopt Christianity as an imperial religion if Paul would have remained at the heart of the Jewish population.

In any case, Christianity, in all its forms, including the Catholic and the orthodox, has been separating, with more or less enthusiasm, from the worldly posers and has renounced – although there are always minorities that are willing to reclaim it – to make the religious law into civil law. In general, the separation of churches and states has been consummated and the churches have renounced to organising the social and collective life. They are now content with suggesting to its followers models of an individual, familiar or community life. Judaism, the other religion with importance in the definition of Europe, already had to make this transformation forcefully many centuries ago: they could not expect, from a Diaspora that made them a minority everywhere, to organise all the social space, and therefore it generated through the Rabbinic Judaism a way of private and community religion, where the centre of religious life are the associations of the followers, the communities. The Judaism from before the Diaspora was a national religion, linked with a worldly power. But when this power disappears, it stops being it.

And only with the creation of the State of Israel have trends reappeared that want to make the religious law into civil law for society.

Islam has not needed to make this conversion, partly forced, that the Christians and Jewish had to make. It is historically a majority in the areas where it was implemented, today, Islam is not a religion for private or community life, it aspires to organise and inspire social life as a whole. The so called Islamic parties have, in their political program, the conversion of the religious law into civil law. The Iranian revolution had this objective and they complied. They generated a religious police, which is physical evidence – as it was in Europe before modern times – of the confusion between the civil and religious space. The religious courts judge civil offences, confusing, therefore, sin in the religious sense and the offence in the administrative and legal sense. The practical and also theoretical and conceptual retrieval of Christianity towards the private and community sphere has not been produced yet in the Islamic world. Sometimes, it has been said, as a metaphor, that Islam needs a Vatican council. Or maybe it is us that need Islam to have a Vatican council. Understanding that in this council the Catholic Church accepted this new role that modernity attributes it and clearly stated its resignation to be a world power.

It could be said that Islam is not like this. But it can not be said that this is an exception. Islam has not revised its theoretical and practical positions to be compatible with modern Europe values, which are founded in the separation of states and church and the separation of civil and religious law. In this sense, the political project of the Christian-democrat parties and Islam can not be compared. The Christian Democracies are groups of Christians that make politics like citizens, from their convictions, but do not expect religion to be the base of civil law. The Islamic parties have this programme. And the majority of Islam appears today as a religion with vocation of ordering collective life, and marking public space.

It is not about creating any kind of Islam phobia. It is about searching, if it is possible, an intersection between Islam understood as a religion of the people and the European values of laicism and the separation of religions from public spaces, how it has had to be done in the case of Christianity. And this marks the relations between Europe and Turkey, and it marks the relations between Europe and Islamic Europeans, which are at a high percentage and growing.

The hope was that Islam that did not represent the social majority, that must share the space with other religions and not from a pre-eminence position, would generate this reading as a private and community religion. This is surely occurring in some cases in Europe. But the contrary is also occurring. Also in Europe many Muslims, with a difficult relationship with a secular society that they do not understand and that they consider to not be understood from them, that would want to change, from the roots, starting with their religious convictions, have made their positions radical and have drifted towards some form of political Islamism, of conservation of Islam in a

political program. Confronting Europe's reality, Islam can - even simultaneously - walk towards its symbolic second Vatican or get into a radical spiral that confronts it with the basic values of the European system.

Europe must take in, and can take in an Islam that could be understood in not such a far off way as Christianity and Judaism is understood in Europe: as a private faith, that has expressions in the individual, family or even community life. But it is incompatible with an Islam that denies the secularity of the society, the separation between religion and the state, human rights and democracy, the values that we have defined as minimum common European values. The problem with Muslim populations in the interior of Europe is finding an intersection between the secular values of western modernity and the private religious values that exist in Islam. There is no intersection between this laicism and any project that we normally call Islamist, as there also would not be one with a catholic or fundamentalism that expects the courts to judge and the Parliaments to legislate with the Bible in their hand.

Amin Maalouf is the Lebanese writer with French roots who we have spoken about, he says that Islam has felt assaulted by modernity and has sought refuge in prior conceptions to this modernity, in conceptions of the times that it felt strong and potent. For Islam, modernity has brought a decline, because it has not been able to adapt to the technical and scientific civilisation that has given Europe and the western world hegemony, maybe because it did not carry out, when necessary, the separation between the civil and religious sphere, even when having a high scientific and cultural development. Therefore, Maalouf continues, Islam has installed in a sensation of defeat, but over all, in a sensation of incompatibility with modernity's values.

This is precisely the problem, If Europe is an idea, a concept, it is of secularism. This does not mean atheism nor obligatory agnosticism, but the preservation of a public space in which we have placed reason and the individual as references. Everything that fits in this concept naturally fits in Europe. All the present religions in Europe have made the effort, not always voluntary or enthusiastic, of being able of fitting within this frame. Now it is Islam's turn.

The pre-eminence of “republican values”

It is clear that the holders of values, of visions of the world, of languages, of customs, of traditions, are not the territories but the people. Therefore, there aren't any languages, or territorial values, only individuals and in any case, collectives. But a society needs cohesion factors to articulate the diversity of the individuals. It needs reference values, a common base that guarantees the continuity of society and not a simple and invertebrate sum of its people. We have mentioned that history has made Europe a continent of the people each one with its own characteristics and a will to preserve them. But the new immigration, although the fall of communication and other barriers as well - more limited than they appear in the sector of cultural producing and

consuming - of globalization can be seen by these people as a threat to the continuity, as a dissolution and homogenising factor.

If we consider that European diversity is a wealth that must be preserved and not a punishment to which we must resign to (or not), we must provide the people of Europe, cells of their diversity, with practical and theoretical mechanisms for maintaining their distinctive features, modified because history has always modified them. But not erased from the map by decree. The practical instruments have to do with the political power and we will comment on this later. The theoretical instruments have to do with the acknowledgement of the idea of a common base, what the Germans called reference culture and the French, republican values, that is the same as the acceptance of the fact that between different customs, languages, world visions and traditions that can cohabit in a territory, there are some that belong to the shared central base, that have to do with their foundational values and therefore, deserve special treatment, not exclusive nor excluding. No monopoly, but a central role, acknowledged and accepted by all.

This is clear in the case of languages. It is obvious - and positive - that no one can aspire to live normally and with good social integration in Paris if they can not speak French. The immigrants on Ellis Island, before entering New York and the United States, received education in two aspects: English and the Constitution. Language, which besides being a communication instrument, is a container of identity, and the Constitution, understood as the rules of the practical game, but also as a space of the foundational values of society. It is not about integration, but more simply about being able to live normally in European societies, the recently arrived are required to speak the language of the society that receives them. In general, nobody debates this. Sometimes, there is a debate on what language this is, but the need to learn it does not admit a discussion.

But, is it only the language? We mentioned that in New York it was language and the Constitution. This occurred in a young country such as the United States, where the common base is scarce and where belonging is defined in terms of citizenship and acceptance of theoretical values. In Europe, that is the continent of diversity, based precisely on diversity and the will of preserving it, the people must have mechanisms for guaranteeing the social cohesion and its own continuity, more or less transformed. It is language, metaphorically it is Constitution, - that in the European case it is not a constitution but civic values and basic political principles -and it is the acceptance of a minimal package but essential of customs, habits, attitudes and conventions.

The conception of the public space of cities, squares and streets, of what can be done and what not, of what cares corresponds to the citizens which are not the same in all of Europe, but it is less similar between Europe and, for example, the African world. Well it seems that the social conception, coexistence, makes it reasonable that all the inhabitants of Europe to adopt a similar conception of the use of public space. Some daily conflicts have been produced in some European cities precisely because antagonist customs exist referring to what can be done in a public square. Also with this,

in this civic conception, there should be a central common base. Later, in their homes, each individual will do what their traditions dictate, with restrictions. They are announced by a liberal theorist, the Canadian Will Kymlicka, in a chapter that is called "the limits of tolerance". No community can impose themselves over others, but they also can not oppress its own members. The society in its entirety has a right to confront the community that, defending its traditions, tries to impose itself on others, but also when it denies individual freedom of its members.

Jean Daniel recently mentioned the crisis that can be observed in France regarding the prestigious and politically correct term "tolerance". Why isn't tolerance enough in the face of social change being produced by immigration? Jean Daniel responds: "because this just simply created a juxtaposition over the same national soil, communities of customs and different ethics without stopping to think if they are remitting to a common moral principle, to some projects and common memories". Maybe this phrase is complicated, but the conclusion absolutely is not: "suddenly, in the other spheres it has been discovered, after thirty years, that a nation is not built only on tolerance, only communities are installed". Obviously, this ascertainment does not invite us to intolerance nor fanaticism. It invites us to the acceptance of a common base of values, but also of language, future projects and, in Daniel's terms, of memories, of an established memory. And to reserve intolerance for only one thing: anything that confronts the central values of European civilisation, reason and individual dignity secularism that lead to democracy, human rights and secularism. This is incompatible with any European project, from the most faint and fragile to the most ambitious, generating a European dream for the future.

A federative model for Europe

Through the last fifty years, the European construction project has been the product of enormous inertia, in which mistrust and practical hopes mixed; hegemony will and isolation will. An inertia caused by the force of the states, which have been the only real builders of the European construction and that presented themselves to the citizens as the only existing guarantee of balance between unity and respect of diversity. An inertia that has allowed to adapt to the general changes in politics of the last fifty years; approve expansions of the European nucleus; assimilate, in part, the effects of the fall of the Berlin Wall and the end of the cold war. An inertia that, now, does not know very well how to give an answer to all the requests of new adhesions that would expand the European space, but that would also dilute the ties that can unite Europe.

This inertia of fifty years lead to a text of a European Constitution which is really a treaty between the states and that confirms and celebrates the model at the same time that it offers roads to its evolution without great alterations. And it is this text, that is perfectly coherent with a trajectory of prudence and possibilities, to which we are now asked to vote, favourable or

not, in the countries where it will be submitted to a referendum. Meanwhile, we are warned that, in reality, the only possible vote, for those who believe in one way or another in Europe, is yes, and that *no* is a vote for a non-Europe, for a return to the prior Europe of the fifties, a Europe of states without any other relationship between them but the good and of bad neighbour relationship.

But are we sure of all of this? Do we choose between this Europe or none? Or do we accept this Europe of the states and inertia as built or do we have to renounce to any other model for creating a Europe that is similar to the one so many Europeans have dreamt about and which the new Europe does not satisfy? What should one vote if he is in favour of a united Europe, but over substantially different bases as the inertia of the last fifty years? Now, in the face of the referendums or parliamentary debates over the Constitution, it is precisely the moment to ask ourselves what Europe we want. Now is the time of returning to the roots of the process and see that besides the current Europe and non-Europe there are other possible and desirable ways. Maybe it turns out that the most desirable seem, at the moment, the less possible. But even the most prudent possibility needs to think about a future that acts as the leading dream, it needs a horizon. There is a sensation that the European inertia, during many years, has not wanted to pose any questions about a wider or farther horizon.

It has been made clear in prior pages that the European dream, the horizon that can allow creating Europe, is not strictly a question of a political model, of a political formula of relation. On the contrary: the political formula is the result of the application of a base concept, it is a mechanism at its service. It is not a technical nor judicial debate. Nor is it a political debate, although it seems so because it is a debate over power structures, but also over the values that move societies; it is a debate over competency and responsibility divisions, not only among institutions, territories or powers; also among other people, and between the people and the institutions.

Therefore, when in this chapter we state that what is convenient for Europe is a federal model, we are not speaking only about an organization formula, but a concept of society. The term "federalism", like the majority of political terms, has been used for diverse, and even confronted, purposes. At the same time, countries as different as Mexico and the United States are proclaimed federal. Countries that formally are federal, in practice really are profoundly centralised. In some political languages, those which supposedly are "federalists" are the largest supporters of uniformity and Unitarianism. In other places, federalism is understood in a certain way, as a minimum and agreed co-ordination of practically independent political entities. There are also states in which federalism means an administrative decentralisation that has nothing to do with political acknowledgement of diversity or with the division of political power.

For the purposes of what is dealt with in these pages, we deduce that to federate is the contrary of centralising. Therefore, federalism would be a

formula for giving a common framework to differentiated political entities, but also a formula for preserving diversity without falling into antagonisms. To federate would be to put together that which is diverse. And a federal conception would not only affect the relationship between the states, but it should also be applied in all the areas of political life. Because the base of this federal conception would be - in a North American way, in part- the trust in the people and the distrust of centralised powers; the acknowledgement of individual responsibility in the public spaces and demanding this responsibility from the people.

Federate, coordinate and centralise

Although the words used in the political language end up being ambiguous, the debates over the names of things are rarely innocent. In 1957, the Roman Treaty creates the European Economic Community, a name that is perfectly descriptive and transparent: it is about trying to create a community, that is a confusing term and less aggressive, over an economic base. In 1992, with the Maastricht Treaty, the former Community becomes the European Union without the economy reference and substituting "Community" for "Union". This term is more difficult, but it does not configure a clear political idea. It is a term that has been used in such diverse and contradictory political uses as the denomination of the United States, the Soviet Union, the Organization of African Unity or for a United Arab Republic that has not been completely unified, that had to unify Egypt with Syria and that ended up being the name of a clearly homogeneous and identified country such as Egypt.

But the first people who formulated the idea of a unified Europe used different names, which meant that they had different ideas. Some spoke about creating the United States of Europe. Robert Schuman said that what was needed was to create a European Federation. The term "federation" has been used on occasions, for example in Germany, projecting over Europe their own Federal structure. Going back to the old ideas of Schuman, specially from the German social-democracy, it has been said that Europe would have to be, not a European Union, but a European Federation, built on the image of Federal Germany. These same voices tried to immediately calm down its community associates telling them that in this Federation, the State-Nations would not dissolve.

To centralise or to federate, this is the European dilemma. It is possible to centralise and, therefore, to grant authorities to the European Commission, generating a great state and bureaucratic machinery and a European political class that is specialized in governing what we now call Brussels. It is also possible to join federating, organising a European space around a common framework with very well distributed authorities and with a conception of subsidiarity between that European Federation and the political units that are considered appropriate and, among them, municipalities. It is not only a matter of names nor only a matter of what the Brussels' government is like. They are two philosophies, two mentalities.

If the aim is to have an efficient Europe, capable of offering not only well-being, but offering a great project that guarantees the role of Europe in the world and makes it a model of respect towards diversity, the convenient philosophy from these two is the federal philosophy. But this means more than just changing the name of European Union to European Federation. It implies as well regenerating politics, simplifying the administration and providing with efficiency the government of concrete things. It also means to go further: to check the values on which the European society is founded; not to give up the welfare State, but to transform the welfare State into something different from a protector State that turns its citizens into minors. In conclusion, to return the sense of responsibility to the citizens, especially, the responsibility regarding the common good, the general interest which the State has monopolized in the European model. And this means, in part, to value the effort and the self-improvement as a way form of true progress.

The moral of Central and Northern Europe, more than the moral of Latin Europe, tended to consider work and effort as the key to individual success and to the progress of Peoples, as the path that everyone had towards not only well-being, but also the meeting of their collective responsibilities. This moral of effort only took root in some areas of Southern Europe, but it was the basis of the great progress of Europe during the 18th and 19th centuries, when there was trust in people, Reason and individual effort. If Europe gives up on these values, still central in American life, we can consider many of the inertias of the past fifty years as winners and we will stop the European evolution progress.

A federal but conformist Europe is probably impossible. But if it were possible, it would not be a great advance either. In a Europe where the aims of people were simply to live the best way possible and with the minimum effort possible in a paternal State, it is indifferent if it is federal or centralized. Or not: perhaps it could only be centralized, because the real federalism, the deep one, needs the individual responsibility of people in its basis. Choosing a federal or a centralized Europe is not only deciding what we want the European leadership to be like. It is also deciding what its basis is like and how the stratum between that basis and the federal leadership are built. It is in this sense that the main proposal is a deeply federal model, though the term is discredited due to its excessive and frivolous use by the self-claimed federalists who, In fact, are camouflaged unitarists.

Anyway, it is clear that the European Constitution that is suggested to us, or more exactly, the project of constitutional Treaty, does not answer to these federal principles. We may say that it is a federalising instrument, because the term has blurred so much that it works for almost anything. But the radical redefinition of the idea of Europe, from top to bottom, which would be implied by assumption of a federalist ideal, has not been done.

In the dilemma between federalism and centralism, between the French model and a model perhaps only ideal because nobody represents it in an absolute way -even though there are aspects in Germany, Switzerland, Finland or the United States that must be considered-, the European

Constitution positions among the Constitutions of French origin, with its unquestionable virtues from the historical point of view, but also with the defects of the obsessive egalitarianism, of the scarce value of individual responsibility and the constant tendency to swell the State, which means swelling the central authority and its bureaucracy.

Switzerland, the United States, Germany

All the experiences of the federal States truly existent and that behave as such can offer positive horizons to Europe. The federal channel has led to better managed States, with more capacity to manage their inner tensions, with more vigour to confront the future. It is the case of three States from which Europe can partially take model when deciding its future, and a proof of the need of choosing the federal instead of the central channel. This would be as well the case of another remarkable example such as Finland, to which we will refer when discussing the advantages of the small and medium size People in the new Europe.

1. - Switzerland. - The Helvetic Confederation is one of the few examples of real and historical Confederation. It is not a unitary State that is configured and decentralized in cantons, but a group of cantons that decided to build a perpetual pact of mutual defence in the 13th century. Through the years, new associated cantons added to this initial nucleus of the confederation: they go from the three initial ones to eight in the 14th century; there are 13 in the 16th century and they reach 26 in the present.

There is no doubt that this exceptional regime is a consequence of the particular Swiss orography, a country of mountains and valleys, in the meeting point of diverse languages, religions and People. Through the first millennium, this landscape generates very compact human nucleus, relatively reduced in scale, with a political organisation and customs very deeply rooted in a belonging feeling to each of these People.

Only as something curious, we will mention, for example, that in another mountain landscape with People crossing the Pyrenees, the *Pariatges*, that create the peculiar political situation of Andorra, which have led to the present existence of an independent State, are signed practically at the same time that the Helvetic cantons are confederated. And another valley of the Pyrenees, the Vall d'Aran, signs the *Querimonia* that confirms specific political institutions for the Aranes people only twenty years later. The Alpine valleys, as the Pyrenees, with strong personality, with communities with particular and very deeply-rooted government forms resist standardization and value their freedom and their decision making capacity. They generate original forms to preserve.

Switzerland is one of the interesting examples for the EU from the political point of view because its confederal creation is very similar to the building of Europe. A voluntary joining of cantons to an initial nucleus, with consecutive expansions and with another very important similarity: These cantons had,

from the beginning, diverse Peoples with diverse language and -later on with the presence of Protestantism- diverse religions.

If we project a map of languages on a physical map (with German, French, Italian and Romansch), a non coincident map of religions and a map with the economic levels of income, we will find one of the most complicated scenes of Europe. And in spite of this -or thanks to it?- Switzerland has become the paradigm of stability, true pacifism and well-being that all the Europeans are looking for.

Apparently, all the data applied to Switzerland may point to conflict. It is located in the junction of three very powerful worlds, as the German, French and Italian. Their populations, because of language or religion could feel more identified with their neighbours than with their Swiss compatriots: A Swiss from Lugano is more similar, in appearance, to a person from Milan than to a citizen of Zurich. Not intervening in external wars for long time may have dissolved any feeling of belonging. We know that usually wars are factories of patriotism, as shown in Europe by the World War I. In spite of all this, or thanks to all this, Switzerland has harmonized different Peoples without the need to generate an impetuous chauvinist patriotism and without important tensions.

The cause, or perhaps the effect, of this social model so stable has been a truly remarkable federalism. The decision making capacity of the cantons is enormous, the federal government has a diluted role and lives in extreme discretion -who remembers the name of any Swiss leader of the last century? - and political life develops efficiently and without ups and downs. The confederal regime allows constant practices of direct democracy through referendums and popular queries, beside the traditional neutralism, the Swiss defence policy deeply involves its citizens, gives them responsibilities on the public patrimony in terms that are very different, in practice, from the ones of the United States, but are not so distant in concept: security is a collective responsibility there as well.

The fact that Switzerland is the way it is and that it works so well is good news for Europe. It is true that there is a scale difference. It is possible that one of the keys of the Swiss system is the dimension: of the country and of the cantons. In some European States, speaking of cantonization has always had a disdain tone, as if the Swiss cantonalism were a provincial localism, vision-shortened, a little coward. But, as it happens, the Swiss formula is being analysed as a good solution, even for conflict situations. In the middle of the Bosnia war, some international experts speak of the possibility to cantonize Bosnia as the only way out of the crisis. Or some Israeli intellectuals had considered, in the moments when the Israeli-Palestinian conflict seemed to run around only when defining Jerusalem's future, the cantonization of the city as Switzerland, but in this case, by neighbourhoods. Europe, obviously, is a different thing, a different scale. But the Swiss experience is one of the best mirrors that we have and a positive argument in favour of a federal channel.

2. - United States. - The American federalism is a political organisation and authority distribution system between a federal government and some

federated States with many competences. But, above all, it is a political philosophy, a relationship model between the individual and the State. As a political organisation, it is surprising from the European point of view how such a joint country, with a strong patriotism and a powerful international role is, at the same time, so decentralised regarding decision capacity. In this issue, American politics would have some similarities with Switzerland: the States, as the cantons, sort out most problems that affect people's daily life and they are also the framework for direct democracy practices, popular query and referenda to the citizen's opinion of a binding nature. If we analyse the nature, frequency and the influence of this type of plebiscite in Switzerland or the United States, on one hand, or in France and Spain, on the other, we will realise they respond to very different conceptions of politics. In federated States, authority is very decentralised and distributed, although the United States has a deep presidential regime. Perhaps due to the fact that its international role is a different one, but also due to a deep conception of the political event linked to the individual decision.

The personification of decision in the president, not the bureaucratic system or the faceless State, is nothing more than an emanation of the American way of doing and understanding politics.

But the American federalism can offer examples further away from the European model, and consequently more suggestive, in a more general field. We have mentioned this in several opportunities. Some authors refer to the American society as the great individualist society, where the dream of freedom is deeper, but also, as compensation, the demand of responsibility. Other authors state that the individual is not exactly the main actor of public life, nor the State, as in Europe. Between these two is community, the organised society. Hegel considered that in the United States there was no State, only an individual interest and a passion for freedom. In Europe, the State is always above society. A welfare state, protector, represented by royalty, militia or bureaucracy, usually legitimized by religion, but always above society. On the contrary, in the United States, society would be above the State, on the highest point of the pyramid. In the United States, religion was and is very important for collective life, though not above but bellow it; not as a power over the city, but as a way of living and organising from community.

The American sociologist Daniel Bell raises this question: if there is no State, what is there? And the answer would be double. There is probably the only complete civil society that there has been in history. And there is something else that is not exactly the State: the government; a government, in Bell's words, as a "political market, an arena on which interests fight and agreements can be reached". The difference is enormous. The relationships between the individual, civil society and authority are absolutely different.

Therefore, we would have two substantially different State models: a European centralist conception of government and administration and an American federal conception of community government. Some experts have applied these two radically different conceptions to the four pillars of modern State. Regarding the police, one model involves police officials; the other,

armed individuals and a chosen sheriff. Beside the State's military corps, a militia; the popular jury before official judges; elective administrative positions before administration of officials.

3. - Germany.- The Federal Republic of Germany is without question the leader country of the EU, at least from the economic and demographic point of view, though not as much from the political point of view. We have mentioned this in previous sections: the EU rises with the end of the war, in a time when all Europe distrusts (with reasons) a too strong Germany. The foreign powers distrust so much that divide it into two. But its European partners retain that distrust as well, practically until today. That is the reason why Germany cannot be considered as the political leader of the process before the rest of Europe and that is why a supplementary role is given to France, which is not in economic or demographic conditions to argue the German leadership, but which perfectly complements the guarantee of a controlled and counterbalanced Germany, a kind of Germany guardianship, for its excesses in a recent past. And that has been the beginning of the French-German axe which, even in the most strained moments, is the centre of European politics. And this has also caused a compensation of the German tendency to apply a federal model – similar to the Republic's model – to Europe, with the French tendency to centralised models.

German federalism has obtained, and not only during the most recent period of history, excellent results. It is possible to say that Germany obtains in the periods of more or less federal structure what it will lose later in its centralist and imperial adventures. Germany has progressed when it was divided or when it was organised in a lax way which allowed its multiple units to develop economically. On the contrary, the uniting and centralising periods, several German Reich, have provoked strained situations for all Europe, from which Germany was the most harmed.

The German space has been occupied by hundreds of small urban states or principalities, with a great importance of the cities; by a confederation of kingdoms and dukedoms, and finally by a federation of *länder* which, without being a consequence of totally different identities and with aims of total independence, are a reflection of very defined personalities, as Bavaria, for example.

Therefore, German federalism, contrary to the Helvetic confederalism, would not offer a diversity articulation model to Europe, but it would offer a very efficient organisation model, with a strong territory autonomy, with a very balanced and dialectic relationship – though full of conflicts and tensions – between these territories and the federal power, and with a decentralising spirit which is the constant alternative to the Europe construction model. Germany also has an open federal model, in constant ebullition that is discussed every once in a while and this proves that a federal system is not founded on a constitutional competence distribution, once and for all, but on a negotiation relationship between the *länder* and the federal government which is never-ending, because there are always new matters on stage.

The example of Finland

We have mentioned that Switzerland, the United States and Germany are interesting examples for Europe, when valuing positively a federal system as complete as possible. We also stated that Finland, which is not a federal State, may be partially considered as another example for its great municipal autonomy, consequence of many centuries of operation as small cities that acted indeed as a confederation, with a great capacity of decision. The Finland traditional government system (usually under a central, distant and strange power, Swedish or Russian) is founded on these small local entities that have kept their role until today. But Finland works even better as an example in a different direction: to illustrate the suitability to the government of the small and medium-size political units with a very simple structure, a great social and cultural cohesion, and an enormous adaptation to new rules of the information society and to new technologies.

If we analyse Finland's history and geography, the favourable conditions to become a good positive example are obvious. It is one of the youngest countries in Europe, with a double meaning: it was the last European territory repopulated after glaciations, and it is also one of the most recent independent European States, only since 1917. As the case of Switzerland mentioned before, Finland as well is at the intersection of two powerful worlds which compete for its belonging, the Scandinavian world (with Sweden as historical leader) and the Russian world. But contrary to Switzerland, geography has not provided Finns with deep valleys where they could defend themselves through their independence centuries, but their territory, in fact, has always been open to the political control of one or the other until this century.

From the 12th century the control was Swedish. The Swedes imagined Finland as a stopper for the spreading of the Orthodox religion. Therefore, Sweden, since the Protestant Reform, impelled Lutheranism as the official religion in Finland as well as in Sweden itself. Lutheranism, majority but soon a private and communitarian religion, has had little influence on the definition of the Finnish public space.

From the 19th century, Finland starts to be part of the Russian Empire, but with a great autonomy. With the Russian Revolution, it proclaims its independence, but the first half of the century is convulsive for the country: attempts of a coup, a lost war against the Soviet Union over Carelia, circumstantial alliance with the Nazi Germany, Soviet counteroffensive... In World War II, half a million Finns died, a very high figure, and a very poor country and principally agrarian was devastated. It also ended up in a situation of relative dependence from the Soviet Union that was defined with the term "Finlandisation", which would mean apparent independence but subjected to the Soviet Russia decision. The economic recovery of Finland, which is out of the Marshall Plan for its special relationship with the Soviet Union, is slow at the beginning of the post-war period and it only starts to bring visible results during the past decades. Not without tensions: the great Finnish

debate is still about the use of nuclear energy and, traditionally, there have been high unemployment rates, even today.

Therefore, history has not been placid for Finland, nor during this century. The ethnic substrate could also have been a reason for tension. The north has a Laponian population with Mongolian origins, and another one ethnically related to the central Asian steppes. A Finnish population strictly speaking settled in the south, with scarce or no connection with the Laponians, with a language of the Hungarian and Estonian family. In addition, there was the presence of a Slavic population in the centre, in Carelia. These three populations have gradually blended and there is still a Swedish minority to be added to it. The diversity of ethnic origins has not become a cause for practical problems, but it has rather generated good relationship ability towards the surrounding countries, Slavic as well as Germanic, and a strong pacific and negotiating vocation.

The Finnish world, accustomed to the foreign domain, but with a great autonomy, based mainly on its towns and cities, has generated a great adaptation ability. The adverse and extreme weather has also motivated the conscience of work value, a vocation for neutralism and a remarkable social and solidarity feeling.

Oddly, then, a difficult geography and a convulsive history have provided Finns with the characteristics for a perfect adaptation to the demands of present and probably of the immediate future. A population over 5 million inhabitants, with a generous recognition of its minorities (Swedish is official, though only 6% of population speaks it) and with a very simple but deeply-rooted direct democracy system, make possible a stable and efficient rule. The importance of work value and a strong social sense that is not mediatized by any religious fanaticism have created an inner environment of progress and well-being in which Finland is usually taken as referent for advance and neutrality in the man-woman equality.

The cohesion of urban units, the old villages in the middle of a majestic and hostile landscape with low population density have transformed these natural units of coexistence into the main actors of politics and economy. The social feeling of the Finns, the importance of everything that is collective in politics and economy, has not been an ideological imposition through an egalitarian revolution. Therefore, a certain socialising tendency does not come up from the spreading of communism or a contemporary egalitarian theory, but from the existence of strong social cohesion bonds, village by village which corresponds to a population without marked social inequalities, confronting common challenges caused by the weather and geography. On this matter, the story of the well-known Finnish company Nokia –not by chance dedicated specially to information technology- is very illustrative. Nokia is the name of a company, but it is also a city created during the 19th century around a paper factory. The parallel evolution of the city and the company until becoming the great present power is a specifically Finnish story that results from the particularities that make Finland being an example. With problems: a high unemployment rate that acts as an immigration inhibitor; an energy shortage that causes a debate on nuclear energy in a country with an elevated environmental conscience.

What does the Finnish case offer Europe as an example? In first place, the adaptation ability of small People, of small States, to new times. A limited population allow-though it does not guarantee- the good government, the use of direct democracy and the control of the political class. An inner structure not strictly federalised, but with federal inspiration, in this case of towns and cities, distributes power and makes it accessible. A powerful and cohesioned identity feeds social sensitivity and sense of belonging. This strong social feeling generates sense of responsibility towards citizens, individuals and communities in the management of the general good and the general interest. Finland fights through a specific way –different from Switzerland and America, but with similar results- the principal problem of Europe: the resignation of the individual citizen and the organised civil society before the general good and the total cession of the general interest administration to the State.

In addition, there are some characteristics that are part of the Finnish example and which would be consequence of the previous ones: the good government, partially due to a useful and appropriate scale; on the other hand, the social value of work and individual effort; and finally, the public interest for education and new technologies.

Finland is the leader in the education system world evaluation. According to its political people in charge, the advantages of the Finnish system are a considerable public expenditure in education- above 5% of the GDP-, but above all a great investment in teaching staff and its training. This leads to a free and generalised system, which is in the present a city council's competence. The people in charge add, quietly, another piece of information that is not irrelevant: contrary to what happens in other European countries, the Finnish school has not have the impact of immigration. In fact, as we have mentioned before, it has (as Denmark) one of the lowest immigration rates of the OECD.

On the other hand, Finland is the most advanced country of the European Union regarding internet access, with an average of telephone lines and PC far above the figures of the whole Union. As in Ireland, the economic growth of Finland has not been produced through the conventional itinerary which would pass through an industrial revolution in the 19th century, but through a shortcut which has led –from certain industrial infrastructure- to the new information technologies. And it is clear that Finland's dimension, its type of government, its natural social sense have helped to establish and cover that shortcut.

The government of small Peoples

The United Nations Development Programme publishes every year a ranking of the countries with the highest human development. It is calculated from a data combination on public health system, education and GDP. The 2004 ranking is headed by Norway, followed by Sweden and Australia. The *Economist* magazine also develops every year a ranking of the countries according to the quality of life, in which we find the participation of factors as

diverse as political stability, economic well-being, expectancy of life, man-woman equality, security or weather. The most recent edition, 2004, is headed by Ireland, followed by Switzerland and Norway; though these are countries in which the weather must be below the average. The *World Economic Forum* also publishes its ranking every year regarding economic competitiveness of all the countries. The 2004 list is headed as traditionally by Finland, followed by the United States and Sweden.

Comparing the results of these indicators can be very illustrative. They are not only economic power indicators. They reflect quality of life and future perspectives. The economy participates as well as the public health system, education, communitarian life, work capacity... We can also think that it is a list where the government quality is evaluated, because a good deal of the indicators refers to fields that improve with a good government and they do not depend on history or weather, but on the appropriate decisions of the rulers.

In first place, we see that Europe is well represented: it heads all the rankings. But it is not all Europe. Oddly, the European countries south of the Union are very present: Norway and Switzerland, Finland and Sweden. And all the mentioned European countries have a common characteristic: dimension. Ireland has four million inhabitants; Norway, four and a half; Finland, a little more than five; Switzerland over seven; Sweden, nearly nine. All the European countries so well classified on these lists of development and future perspectives are in a strip of population between four and nine million inhabitants. The bigger European countries are, the farther away on these lists. Is it a coincidence?

Let's also see, just as a curiosity, some ratings that can help us understand, confirm or deny these impressions. Some, very distant in concept from the previous ones and that weigh up less well-being and more the good government. *International Transparency* has a less rate of corruption by countries. One more time, it is headed by Finland, followed by New Zealand and Denmark.

Let's see who spends more than 3% of its GDP in Research and Development. They are, in order: Sweden, Finland and Japan. With the interesting peculiarity that in Sweden as well as in Finland –and in the United States– more than seventy percent of this investment is carried out directly by the companies. These two countries are the ones that are, consequently, also ahead on the ranking of number of patents per inhabitants.

Rich but unsupportive? *Foreign Policy* elaborates its corresponding ranking of development assistance in the rest of the world. The effort of each country for the development of the others is weighed up. The first of the world are Holland and Denmark, tied, followed in third place by Sweden.

We could continue with all kind of reports. We can mention at least one very important, perhaps the most important of all. The PISA report evaluates education by countries and compares the mastery of maths, natural science and reading comprehension of the students. Finland heads the ranking on the two latter and is second on the former one. Hong Kong, Korea and Japan

are together on the top of the list.

So many coincidences cannot be accidental. In each field there are, without question, concrete causes for countries as Finland, Sweden, Norway, Ireland or Denmark head such varied rankings: the Finnish expenditure in education, the American investment in Ireland or the great democratic tradition of Denmark. But the repetition of these same countries once and again for such different indicators takes us to another cause; or more than one. Anyway, it is clear that in the present world relatively small countries, solid and with a population between five and ten million inhabitants, are types of units that motivate good government, the efficiency of institutions, social cohesion and, therefore, the good operation of the political system and the economic well-being. And this is the measure of many People in Europe. Obviously, more People than States.

If we only had in mind reasons of efficiency, we should wish that units which federated in Europe would be as close as possible to this operative scale that brings the best results in contemporaneous government. It is true that in a political map, efficiency is not everything. There is the importance of history, feelings, identities. But it is also true that if we bring together the map of a European Federation and a map of the European identities, we would be closer to these practical units than we would with the present map of the States.

A common European Framework

Humankind in general and Europeans in particular have had to stop writing in great solemn codes a complete vision of the world, a complete and perfect order that should guarantee a sort of collective happiness. The negative side is that, very often, on behalf of these great totalizing abstractions, of these great projects of perfection, sometimes with good intentions, concrete people have been affected, the individual has been sacrificed. Sometimes this absolute vision has been sustained by a religious idea, a divine inspiration. Others, with a human ideal, supposedly scientific. Practically in all cases, religious and lay, the offer of a better future life was implied in exchange for certain sacrifices in the present. The punishment or immediate repression and the promise of a future life should keep the present order. From Jesus to Marx, these totalizing visions, these spherical projects of emancipation have proclaimed absolute principles but they have also been useful to exclude everything that would not fit the totalizing vision. All Messianism, religious or lay, have promised certainties (a few times achieved) and have supported exclusions.

This vocation for great immutable and solemn codes, full of fundamental principles participates in the will of proclaiming Constitutions and, very particularly, in the will of generating a Constitution that creates the European Union through the Convention and treaty between the member States. In a way, its principal utility is to solemnize; in this case, to solemnize what exists

already, to build on a practice marked by possibilities, inertia, some fears and some ambitions more or less minor, the appearance of a constituent process, of a sort of great meeting of Europeans that suddenly decide to constitute a European Union, as if what we have does not exist and would be created *ex-novo*.

The idea of this constitution comes to Europe in a peculiar time of its history. On one side, in a time of well-being. Europe is today one of the richest and most advanced societies in the world, with a cultural, scientific and technological heritage, which is probably the highest point of civilisation that has been achieved in history. Europe is seen as an opulent and citizen's protective society, to the point of being the destination of considerable migrations coming from abroad. But Europe also lives a time of uneasiness; it is conscious –and the rest of the world as well– of a decline, of a loss of prominence, but above all of an inner mood where the exhaustion of a model is guessed. Europe is a rich society, but it is not a satisfied society. And perhaps many Europeans suspect that a moment has come –the last chance– for a reaction that redefine Europe's role in the world, but defining as well, Europe's inner life.

Is a European Constitution necessary? Some have believed it is, in order to legitimize a practice. Our vocation for Solemnity and absolutes, this fondness of codes – when laws have more influence than constitutions, and sometimes, regulations more than laws– has crystallized in a text that rejoins previous texts and which most citizens will approve or not without bothering to read it, according to situational or partisan positions. We will live, thus, some processes that, if they have any virtue at all, it will be to set a minimum debate on what Europe we have, what we need and what it could become. Exactly since this debate is set, even away from the Constitution and its referendum, on this text we wished to formulate a proposal, as far from the present practice and inertia, as it is far from a European Federation of Peoples.

Real federalism

But, with this Constitution, with another or none, if we create a European federal field –with any name– and we maintain some federated authorities below, also under any name, we should define minimum distributions of authorities and minimum aims. A deep alternative to the present system would demand to study in depth and to concrete a new way of government. What we would like to do from this text is to settle some general principles that may be useful to define this European common framework and over which a system change could make a spin.

The general proposal of a Federation of European Peoples. This would mean, in first place, to transform European institutions in a real federal direction. The current European institutions are built on the total convenience of States. The presidency is a representative position and it is known that its authority is

owed to the States and that it is necessary to consult them constantly. The Commission is not a real government. The Parliament is not a real Parliament, among other things, because it does not assign nor control the executive. Any European Constitution or any common framework should suggest widely open the reformation of the institutions in order to provide them with real authority in the exclusive competences of the Federation and with democratic legitimacy, which it does not have now, and to adjust them to a real federal vision of Europe. It would not be conceivable that in the United States the truly decisive organ were the Assembly of governors of the States or that, in Germany, the president of the *länder* decided federal politics.

The balance of real authority between federal and federated institutions will depend on European politics priorities. In a federal system as the Swiss, which practically has no more foreign policy than the support to its multinational companies, the figure of the president of the Confederation is very discreet. On the contrary, in another federal system of a country with a very important foreign policy as the United States, the figure of the president does not only concrete authority, but it is its main icon.

The Federation should promote, in addition, a global simplification of the administration. The creation of a common European framework should make Europe's administrations lighter, not add one more to the existing ones, as it is happening. Each federated State should organise itself as it considers appropriate but from the common European framework it will be necessary to control the increase of administrations and bureaucracy, multiplying intermediate levels. The citizen must know what corresponds to whom in order to avoid excuses from the administrations arguing responsibilities on others. And simplification of levels should come together with the establishment of light administrations, not overloaded, avoiding proliferation of bureaucracy, to which Europe has got accustomed to for centuries.

Usually, the claim for a Europe of the Peoples against the practice of a Europe of the States has been made from the sentimental field, from the nationalism, for historical and identity reasons more than economic and political rationalism. But today, economic and political rationalism is the best and most solid argument to advance towards this direction.

Processes of growth and generalisation of the most astonishing well-being of Europe has been produced in its small and medium-size States, such as Ireland and Finland, Norway and Switzerland, which do not require to be in the EU, where they are afraid of perhaps being secondary partners beside the big European States. They have proved that it is not necessary to be in the Union to take advantages of this medium size and the proximity to the EU. Denmark, a country always at the door of the Union, doubting whether entering or not, beside its enormous German neighbour, also participates of all the positive rankings.

When Ireland surpassed Great Britain regarding per capita income – the second highest in Europe, after Luxemburg- as well as the well-being and quality of life levels, something broke in Europe regarding the value of its States' dimension. In the context of the industrial world, in the 19th century and

a good deal of the 20th century, a large dimension was an advantage: some big internal markets, more or less protected, and a favourable synergy. But now, the market is the world, or at least, Europe. Ireland has been a historically poor country, of immigrants, that recalls the famines less than a century ago. Taking advantage of its privileged relationship with the United States and the importance given to new technologies, Ireland has become a rich country. The relationship with Great Britain, the biggest power of the industrial society that we are leaving behind, has turned around. It has been a revolutionary fact, the symptom of a historical change.

Above all, in the inner EU, the medium size has become a strategic advantage. The inconvenience of not being a large country is compensated with the Union. And some virtues associated to small dimension show up: versatility, agility, cohesion, communication ability... and the invitation to compete against rivals (but friends) of the appropriate dimensions to do it. If it were possible to make a map of Europe with strictly rational criteria, without the need to answer to the distrust of the large States nor the imperatives – which should not be so imperative- of history, we would have a federated Europe consisting of government units around the five or ten million inhabitants and each provided with a strong personality and high social cohesion. This would be the most rational today.

The large States, heirs of a past that was more favourable, are today transatlantics of very difficult manipulation, usually anachronic, full of bureaucracy and with defensive and conservative attitudes. A century ago, reason was in favour of the large States and against the small nations, without critical mass to survive in the open air. Then, the only thing in favour of the small nations, was feeling. Now, and probably in the years to come, the reasonable option is the federation of the Peoples and political units of small dimension in a great solid and coordinated European space. What supports large States is not rationality, but feelings, inertia and sometimes fears.

Therefore, a federal Europe. And what should we federate? What is convenient, by economic logics and adaptation to the real diversity of the continent (which we have stated is a good preserver, accepting the creation of a united Europe would also mean the creation of a stronger European identity), would be to federate cohesioned political units with a strong personality of medium size as represented by the small or medium-size States of Europe or the German federated *länder*. A Europe built –if it were possible to do it in the laboratory- with more or less symmetric pieces around this dimension and they corresponded not to random partitions of territory, but to pre-existing realities, groups of affinities of language, customs, and world visions that in general –and only with few exceptions that can always be seen- have a dimension of this type. The People, already existent, in the real Europe.

The European unity has not and will not be created in a laboratory. The European States, especially the largest ones, will not suddenly accept that rationality and political governability take them to a radically new conception of political space in the continent, because the large States have also generated sentimental and political dynamics that consolidate them.

Therefore, the operation is not simple: it is not enough to protect it from rationality and adaptation to new times, but it is worth it to realise how the situation has reversed in some decades. Half a century ago, we would have diagnosed that the head was in favour of the large States and the heart in favour of the small nations or Peoples. Today, the head is in favour of the small Peoples and only the heart defends the old large States. But it is also true that the head is in favour of the small Peoples as long as they are able to integrate harmoniously in a larger space which would provide them with unity in some essential elements. We will try to establish them in a further section.

An articulation of Europe through the Peoples in units of small and medium dimension would offer possibilities of complementarity and wider autonomy than the ones offered by the present States, among other things, because they would be more symmetric and compact units. They would also offer more possibilities of direct mechanism for public intervention: Let's not forget that democracy, but science too, come from an urban political context of city-states in ancient Greece. A Greek world as a confederation of these city-states with a lot of cultural communication among them but with great decision autonomy and something similar to an inner paleo-democracy could be considered as an interesting antecedent for Europe building. Today it is also useful to go to these smaller and more natural units where it is possible to propose direct consultation forms, but also more simplified forms of administration, less bureaucratic and with fewer levels of the existent in the present, through the large States

Perhaps due to this, Europe's citizens – and specially the more Western Europe, where the large States are accumulated- have a conception of space that is called regional and local, the closer space, as its place of maximum identification. Manuel Castells mentions the values world opinion poll conducted in the late 20th century. In them, Polled people around the world were offered the possibility to identify, proprietarily, with one of these four levels: worldwide, continental, national/state or regional/local. The ones who identified with the first one as world citizens were scarce everywhere, only 2% of the total. The ones who answered the question with a continental belonging –Americans, Europeans, Africans or Asians- were a few more, but still small quantities: 15% average. In the average of all the polls, the most abundant answer was regional/local, with 47% of the total, while the identification with the State was 38%.

But the place in the world where the regional/local identification was higher was South Western Europe, with 64% of the answers, followed by the North Western Europe, with around 70% as well. The rest of the world was much farther and almost in any case above 50%. In other words: Western Europeans answer more easily with the name of their region (in European terms) or city than with the name of the State to which they belong. And even more with any of these two names than with Europe. Therefore, we must have some intuition when we place our identification not only on the most sentimentally warm space but also the most practical to obtain a government that hears us and answers to our interests.

The large and small collectives have their advantages and their

inconvenients because of their excessive or insufficient dimensions. A federal formula solves this problem. A federation can be as large as it wishes because the economic convenience and the acquisition of a bigger entity in a globalised world call to big spaces. But at the same time, it can enjoy the advantages of the small collectives regarding administrative management and coexistence between people of affinities of culture, history, language and tradition. It has been proved that these units are much more efficient and flexible than the large States of Jacobean mould. When these collectives –these Peoples- have not been there, as in the case of the United States, they have been artificially created. Europe can spare itself this process.

Regeneration of the political system

As we have been discussing along previous pages, a first common need of Europeans, parallel to the building of Europe, would be the regeneration of the political system; the way of doing politics. And this means, unavoidably, checking the forms of cooperation of the political class and of election of the governors and representatives. Probably, I would like to say, if the process worked out, eliminating the concept of “political class”, so long as to obtain an accessible system for citizens, which people with capacities and aptitudes could enter to and come out from, without the need to be submitted to the weakening and the inertia of the present politics.

We have already mentioned that this occurs, in a certain extent for a deep value change that takes in citizenship –individuals and civil society- in the management of the general interest and that avoids its monopoly by the State. But value changes are difficult. Without question a global alternative to the political system is necessary. But, without covering all possibilities of proposing this global alternative, there are relatively simple measures at immediate reach even for the present system, with all its shortages. The most tangible ones are related to the electoral laws and, therefore, to the process of governors and representatives' election.

- To regulate the proportionality of the electoral system, in order to avoid the infinite multiplication of the number of parties and coalitions represented in the parliaments. This multiplication – product of the strictly proportional systems- at the end erases the basic notion of the difference between Government and opposition, and it stimulates the raising of small parties specialized in one only subject more or less marginal or the raising of clientele parties and with minority vocation.
- To guarantee the balanced presence of the whole territory with compensation mechanisms of strict proportionality. The principle “one person, one vote” cannot take us to the contrary meaning that only the areas with dense population would have representation. All the European territories must have political say and this will be easy with smaller units and relatively reduced electoral circumscriptions. It is necessary, as many legislations are doing and especially Germany's, to look for a balance between proportionality and territorial

representation. This means a bonus to the less populated rural areas.

- To favour direct election systems and the person. This means to make the open lists prevail when it is about parties' lists in which it is not mandatory to vote for each and every candidate, but the elector can choose according to his or her personal trust. The governor or representative chosen in open list knows that he or she is the depositary of electors' trust, not the party, and therefore, he or she is the one who must report and meet commitments.
- To widen the spaces of public administration that are not submitted to the parties' logic and, therefore, to the alternation effects. A political change should only affect a minimum part of public officials in charge of giving political orientation to the government's action, but not to wide sectors of the administration that provide technical knowledge. This does not mean that these positions must be immovable or everlasting. On the contrary, they must be considered as professional and they must be assigned according to professional merit with the possibility of revoking them. This would allow the flexibility of relationship between society and State so that capable people could come in and out of the public sphere without going through filters and links to the parties' life.
- To watch over a correct training of the professionals of the administration and politics through specialized studies. Training for public duties has many specific aspects that are not only related to the good knowledge of the laws and procedures but require a deep training on people. Obviously, the practice of politics cannot be limited to people who have been submitted to this specific training –because this would mean turning politics into a professional force even more distant from the whole society- but it does sound logic that some specialized studies –following the French example, although not very closely- can provide politics and administration with more capable people and with more specific knowledge.
- To guarantee the inner transparency of political parties in decision making as well as in financing. A European model in which, in theory, financing forms are very restrictive but the parties concentrate a great deal of authority has led us to a sort of double moral; the same double moral that causes politics to be badly paid and public opinion to be shocked by the politics' salaries and the parties' expenditures. If what is visible is neither logic nor reasonable, things will happen secretly.
- To favour the direct democracy practice in concrete issues in which –in political units of a more natural and practical dimension- citizens can be asked his or her opinion on issues that affect them. It is, in part, the Swiss model of referendums, but at the same time it is the model of the United States, where the presidential elections coincide with a good number of specific referendums that are sometimes very significant for States.
- To simplify and concentrate electoral processes in order to avoid the feeling of continued election campaign.

In short, politicians' management must change to be the signing of a public agreement with absolute transparency. An election programme is an agreement proposal; the elections, a way of signing it. Commitments are mandatory and they must be the object of serious monitoring. The closer we get to this definition, the more regenerated politics will be; a regeneration that does not cover all the possibilities and the need of a more radical redefinition of the system.

Commitment to values

Some fundamental values in European society should not be left to the changing designs of each federate government, and should not be optional, so to say, inside the federal structure, but instead they should be shared and protected by the Federation.

That is especially true of education and school, particularly in such an important area like mass media, above all public ones. We tend to entrust school and mass media with the promotion of a set of moral values and refusal of another, as if those institutions could shape thoughts, as if it was enough to link a given value or wish to the powerful loudspeakers which are school and mass media to enforce it. Fortunately, history proves that it is not so. Dictatorial rulers have enjoyed full control of those mechanisms for decades — in Russia, Chile, or Spain — without achieving to shape all citizens under an ideological cast, as in "1984" by Georges Orwell. But without going to such extremes, we can hardly deny the central role of school and mass media in transmitting values and visions of the world. European institutions should watch over the quality of education, as much in extension - without aiming at egalitarianism at the bottom - as in contents.

Laicism, basic severance between Church and State, is one of those constitutional values, which means transversal and federal. If any federate state cannot accept on whatever ground this basic principle, it has no place inside the European Federation, which is founded on those principles, source of others which we have already analysed in previous pages: Civil law, democracy, human rights, universal suffrage, equality in rights for men and women. No state can be a part of the Union and not accept and carry out universal suffrage, or not respect human rights. The severance between civil law and religion, between Church and State, is even more evidently necessary, because it is the motive power behind all those other principles.

Leave to attend school with a crucifix, a veil or a *kipah* may be a matter for discussion, and each federate government may issue rules according to its own tradition. But the laicism of common education programs, the scientific and rationalist point of view which must preside over those programs, excluding from them any religious or semi-religious points of view on the world, is an inexcusable duty of every federal-controlled State, because it must be guaranteed in the European ensemble. This does not mean that religious knowledge must be removed from school. It is a kind of general knowledge needed to understand the cities and museums in

Europe, the pictures from the Renaissance, the gothic cathedrals, the Alhambra in Grenade, the books by Kafka or the holidays and customs in our calendar, or our gastronomy. But school cannot be a field of proselytism in its common programs.

It is plain that laicism cannot be used as an excuse for religious prosecution, or religious freedom as a refuge for organizations and beliefs which promote hate and destruction or even practice it in any way, not even among their own followers. Aside from that, each citizen, each person shall adopt his or her own beliefs and attitudes towards religion.

This commitment to laicism has a positive parallel: The devotion to scientific and technological thought. Our civilization, inasmuch as it has put Reason at the centre of public space, has been able to achieve a scientific and technological progress which other stages of civilization, where central values were religion or sacred power, could not. So, the restoration of science and technology as only forms of essential knowledge is basic to our world, and allowing our citizens to achieve a good scientific and technical education is a part of watching for the quality of our educational system.

Moreover, scientific and technical development have lent Europe any significant advantage it may have had, and Europe's economic future (and so the future of its welfare and wealth) depends on a strong concurrence in this area. Ireland and Finland have proved that it is possible to achieve a high level of development in information technologies without having gone through a full industrial revolution. It is an encouraging thought, but also a disquieting one. If revolution of knowledge could only be achieved through industrial revolution, Europe would have a long advantage on the rest of the world. Other countries would have to go through a period which we have already left behind. But Ireland and Finland prove that not every train must pass every station.

Europe's history proves yet another fact: Sometimes trains pass by without being taken. In Middle Ages, the south of Europe was the richest area in the continent. In the 13th century, Sicily was famous as the richest area in Christendom. Cordoba or Baghdad were splendorous cities, and the cities in the north of Europe were far from their riches or degree of civilization. But many of those cities and areas which were rich up to the 16th or 17th centuries do no step on the train of big changes in economy and mentality which took place at the time. They missed it, and the cities in the north of Europe took it: the train of the industrial revolution, just before the economic new trends which give birth to capitalism. Europe, on the whole, takes the train of industrial revolution, and that is the reason of our present riches and welfare. But now another train is passing: the revolution of knowledge and new technologies. If we miss it, we will stay behind, just like those rich cities in the 17th century which did not understand the changes taking place at that moment.

It is a duty of the European Federation to prevent losing this train as a continent, as a part of a civilization of our own making. Europe as a whole must stay at the top of the scientific and technical field if it wants to weigh in the future. If it does not, the negative consequences may not be immediate,

but the source of our future welfare and weight in the world will disappear. This leadership in the scientific and technical field (or co-leadership besides the USA and the Asian world) can prevent the decadence of Europe, much more than any issue over birth rates or political power. We know that in the last decades the dynamism of the USA in that field has been superior to that of Europe, because from its very independence it has developed a central interest for scientific and technical knowledge, sometimes much preferred to the humanistic knowledge, while in Europe it has been the reverse. We just have to look at the list of scientific Nobel prizes obtained by the Americans and compare to the literary ones. But Europe has to re-evaluate scientific knowledge and get over a certain incomprehensible "techno-scepticism" which has asserted itself among its public opinion and feeds some of the less sophisticated forms of ecologism, and put science and technique again at the centre of its set of thoughts.

Diffidence towards scientific progress, towards the possibilities of research and opening of new fields for science and technology has often been fuelled out of religious prejudice (God's handiwork must stay superior to man's) or a misunderstood ecologism. That is disastrous for Europe, and the federal government must coordinate all states to prevent the loss of scientific and technological leadership through education, through university and research policies and relationship with companies.

Conclusion

Possibly the most terrible sentence I have read on present day Europe has been stated by philosopher and sociologist Agnes Heller, when she said: "Old Europe is like a corpse whose hair and nails, which are riches and cumulative knowledge, keep on growing while the rest is dead". It is a terrible sentence, because this macabre metaphor makes a point which we all share: the certainty that Europe, in its ensemble, or the main states of Europe individually, led a historical drive of enormous strength in the past. Europe created a model of civilization which discovered individuals, enthroned Reason and put it at the centre of public space, allowed the birth of critical thought and, with it, of scientific and technical progress.

This extraordinary drive gave Europe a planetary leadership and an internal explosion of riches, creativity and strength. It also brought Europe to the blind alley of most terrible destructions. But in this old Europe we remember the might of a living being, while our new Europe keeps showing the riches, the welfare, the comfort and cosiness, maybe more than ever, but lacks that youthful vitality it used to vaunt. We fail to find in it this same drive anymore. And then we remember this metaphor which Agnes Heller brought to the utmost consequences: Maybe these riches and welfare are but the inertia from the old drive, when the engine pushing it forward has already stopped. Maybe we are just living on the income from this old strength, which does not push us forward anymore.

In a certain sense, the project of European unity is a reaction against this

suspicion, but in another it is a confirmation. Seeing the drive of the USA, and also of the Asian world, a prisoner in the middle of the cold war, Europe could only regain its place in the world through a process of unification which gave it the critical mass it needed to compete with those new economic and political powers and renew its foundations in depth. But Europe starts this stage of the run with the weight of diffidence, conformism and taste for individual welfare.

What should be a revolutionary process to create a new and unheard of reality has slipped into a very prudent confluence of states, founded on economic interests, presided by an egalitarian ideal and a permanent invitation to each individual to concentrate on his or her own good without any concern for general good, since a provident State will take care of it.

Europe turns into something very much like a greenhouse, heir of those smaller greenhouses which are States, designed in order to keep the citizens inside from the risks of external inclemency, always protected, without any need to worry. And in this Faustic pact between citizens and State, the State gives every protection and obtains every power in exchange.

The Europe of welfare is also, even today, the Europe of an undetermined and insubstantial uneasiness, the Europe of a dull state of mind, unable to enjoy everything it has, always asking for more, maybe because each citizen believes he or she has a right to everything promised, to full protection, to full insurance. Those would be symptoms of senility. In front of this situation, we could say, not just that Europe has aged, but that the whole system which leads to the present European reality shows signs of fatigue, of senility.

The Europe of present times gathers many positive heritages together, many civilization powers with deep roots, which in the last 500 years have been accelerating. We descend from Greece and Rome, from the old Mediterranean civilizations, from the Nile and Near East. We have come so far that we seem to have lost our drive. It seems that the new impulses in the world come from other countries with younger grafts, as if a sizable part of our heritage had blossomed nowadays in North America and in civilizations as far from our own as the oriental.

But a few centuries ago, Europe invented and put in the centre of the world a basic and fundamental tool: Criticism. And among the heritages of humanism, rationalism and unprejudiced thought is the belief that the future is not predetermined, that there are no inexorable historical laws, no inescapable godly designs after the style of old Greek tragedies, only the willpower and effort of people. In a certain sense, to the Western world, willpower is the motor of history.

As Agnes Heller says, is Europe dead? Does it or does it not possess this willpower? A Constitution is supposed to be approving expanding to the East up to the very gateway of Russia, discussing about the incorporation of Turkey, keeping the Euro on a very high par with the USA dollar; the demonstrators in European cities underline that the Western world is divided, that Europe and the USA do not walk side by side. It would seem that Europe is very much alive. But are these symptoms of real life, or just nails and hair

that keep on growing? Is it an engine still pushing or the inertia allowing the car to run still a few meters downwards, when the engine is already stopped? Heller's metaphor is much scarier, because a dead body cannot resurrect, but engines may be started again. A car can even get a new engine when the old one is broken down.

Some things must be kept and delved on, some things which are very much our own. For example, the laicism of our public space against the challenge of new totalitarian regimes of religious roots. Europe achieved an essential transformation which now can be offered to humankind: The severance between civil and religious law, between Church and State. It took divinity and God-given power from the centre of the public arena and put people and reason in their place. Which is to say democracy, human rights, science and critical thought. Laicism is but the first step in that transformation. This cannot be constructed in the least as religious prosecution. It just means that religion must leave its public stance and stay at home, whether individual or shared, in consciences and private lives; it means that governments are not guided by religious law when ruling and legislating. It is a trait to be carefully kept.

Let us go one step higher. A change in values. A change in politics. A prevalence of rationality and humankind. An acceptance of diversity, but without racism, obsessive egalitarianism, or cultural relativism which do not admit universal values or territorial cultures as reference. From all these mixed elements springs a political proposal in the strictest sense of the term: We need to create a new Europe, freshly invented on new foundations. Braver, more resolute. It must be an example to the world, of the way various willpowers can be united without imposition, or differences be structured without centralisms, or individuals be given a role without leaving them absolutely unprotected against inclemency. This could be a really federal Europe; not the federation of national states we are offered, but instead a federation which contemplates real differences, the weight of history, the various sense of membership, transcending territorial conflicts and old confronted nationalisms. That is indeed possible.

But we might insist in another kind of example, which reinforces our idea. Small lands, more or less natural units, with common features, a strong social cohesion, a distinctive makeup, a chance of a democracy that is more direct, tend better to good government than old and discredited big States. Small lands are more agile, more adaptable, and better suited to implement the changes in the so-called society of knowledge. Finland, Denmark, Switzerland, Sweden, are examples of that. So it is a matter of good sense, and not strictly sentiment, to build Europe from this small-sized units, *länders* of new Europe. This federate Europe should serve as an example and a model to other federations in other parts of the world, like Arabian countries, Slavonic countries, Latin America, or maybe the great problem of humankind, Africa.

Europe invented the national State and exported this concept to the world. The national State gathers old imperial experiences, filtered through romantic ideals and exaltation of individual souls. Nowadays, the patriotism of old

national States has a lot to do with longing for old greatness and fear of new realities. Big, Jacobin-style, centralized national States are seen as the protective greenhouse in a world which goes towards an unforeseeable globalisation. But national States are an overage concept. They are too big to respond to the needs of an efficient, agile and adapted government, too small to play a role in a one-stage global world, where only few actors can fit.

Against the excessive size and artificiality of old national States, let us promote the government from lands, municipalities, regions, agile and efficient units, with which people feel a sentimental bond of membership. Not the proliferation of old patriotisms, sometimes even chauvinisms, related to national States, but the sense of bond to one's own space, to our closest reality, where a great proportion of our everyday problems are solved. Old national States have grown too big, let us federate Lands, deep-rooted realities which are also easy to rule and close-feeling.

But the idea of a federate Europe is useful even against this world turned into a small-pieced puzzle, because those national States, which are too big for everyday rule, are also too small to respond effectively to a global world asking for a concentration of actors and a suppression of frontiers. This is the greatness of the European project: It must combine in a single process the advantages of being big and being small, the advantages of being different and walk side by side, the advantages of deciding things from close up and also playing a role in the great decisions which affect the whole planet.

And all that must be freely chosen, through willpower and projection, not imposed or levelled up. We must not be absorbed forcefully into a greater unit; each one of us must enter from its own responsibility into a shared reality, in which we are all different, but enjoy the same rights. Nor the egalitarianism of willy-nilly uniformity, nor the isolationism of living side by side without bridges or coordination.

If a European dream can exist, this must be it. A new Europe, changed from inside, overcoming the temptation of a placid decay, showing some kind of useful way to the whole of humankind.

Matadepera, August — Bamako, December 2004

ANNEXED

The Divulgaré Library, when selecting texts with an option to win the Prize Catalunya Fundació Privada - 2003, and finally conceding it to the work of Vicenç Villatoro, has considered with great interest the chance to develop the issue proposed by the author: "Human communities: Created or constitutionalised?", taking advantage of a happy coincidence, the proposal from the Convention to write a Constitution for the European Union.

True to the cultural goals always pursued by this Fundació, its criteria are never influenced by any previous ideas from any political trend, or of any other nature. With objectivity which can only ever be relative, the Fundació tries to present issues of general interest, which may promote debates on current and live questions, always related to history as a gathering of empirical knowledge, and science as a creator of new one.

But in this instance, we consider the book to be fully coincidental with the remarks of Mr. Jordi Pujol, included in the prologue written in deference to Mr. Vicenç Villatoro, noticing only one difference. In our opinion, the negative vote to the European Constitution by France and Holland is a positive point because it will allow people to consider other options which are suggested or proposed in the book.

The diagnosis from the author about Europe's situation in our present-day world, during the full development of globalisation, is accurate from our point of view in general terms. We hold this to add to the intrinsic value of the book, apart from its timeliness of it just before the first draft of a EU Constitution, and the apt treatment of the issue. But our interest has been moved by the quality of other works which, though less descriptive or detailed about the diagnosis of the issue, are also full of estimable values which deserve prizes too. We have contacted those other authors and gathered the driving ideas to synthesize them, and offer them in this epilogue in a non-literal and anonymous version.

The interest to publish these little texts is born, apart from pointing out some divergences with the prized work which may open the door to debates, also because certain exposed ideas expand some concepts already touched on in the book, and some of them raise proposals to treat European problems before its Constitution.

We want to express our thanks to those authors. We believe that their disinterested cooperation to the book has been very important.

THE CREATION OF HUMAN COMMUNITIES

Culture and civilization are not synonymous, but they are inseparable factors from human evolution. At the same time, they prove that Darwin only discovered the creative power of evolution, a discovery limited by observation on inferior species and the study of morphological changes in them while adapting to various environments.

The observed changes, remarkable as they are on specimens placed in places distant from one another and very different climates, should have brought to consider the evolution of human species. But we find only some

small disagreements with the prevailing theories at the time, all of them creativists. His objections to those beliefs, rather than ideas, were held as unseemly remarks from a naturalist.

The evolution of the theory of natural selection, centred on human species, has turned the tables, not only on the theogonic philosophy of creation, but also on some parts of Darwin's own theory of evolution.

From Creation as in biblical Pentateuch or Torah, through Creation as in "Theory of Species" by Darwin, up to Creation through neodarwinist evolution, the definition of Earth's creative power was never defined, and now, synthesized, forces us to consider that civilization, transforming hominids into humans, is a single process, unavoidable by the evolutionist nature of our species and by its genome, already detected but still mostly unknown.

Since this genome is common to every human being, evolution through selection consequently attains a status of evidence. Otherwise, from absolute equality, human beings might have evolved, not a cloned equality which would have lead to an aberrant life, but a modulate equality which would have given happiness to every human, avoiding Huxleyan-style bliss, although the map of human genome allows us to fantasize with utopist systems, even more perfect than the one invented by Huxley. Thus, the idea that human beings were born for the purpose of being happy would be confirmed.

Since its constitution as species, humanity has developed a single evolution process, just the same as other inferior species, and this genome allowed us to develop a conscience. Thanks to this, and through another parallel process (culture), human beings got out of bestiality and over the stages of savage life and barbarism, achieving civility, evolving in a different way, depending on the environmental conditions they developed in, thanks to an amazing process of linked syncretisms.

From this point of view, this process is a single one. Various civilizations, one after another, form an only civilization process befallen on Earth. Culture, considered as a process of human cultivation, parallel to the cultivation of plants in agriculture, is also a single process, converging with civilization in a co-dependency which makes them a paragon of evolution through selection.

Evolution also exists in other species, but it affects only its instinctive and sensitive parts, with a minimal neuronal intervention which made humans superior to any other vital system on Earth.

And just as our ancestors and present-day humans cannot avoid existing or having existed, neither can they avoid taking part in the selection process. No philosophical reality or abstraction can release human beings from competition. Only death can free them from this fact of nature.

Circumstances and willpower create an ability to evolve in every human being. Instinct takes also part in it, though not a decisive one like in irrational animals. The ego and the circumstance is an inescapable reality. The "I" – the "us" – step into the highest class of existence.

This mechanism is absolutely natural, just as the functioning of physiological systems and organs. Exercising them or not, each of them separately or as a whole, shall make a difference in capacities, achieving a

more or less dynamic evolution.

There is not such a thing as a community will. At the most, we may develop associate wills. Each individual is indebted to themselves. They have an unavoidable duty to love themselves, to be egotistical. The positive evolution of humanity, at any period and during them, is achieved through the cultivation of each individual, independent from the rest. To avoid or ignore this reality in the name of any "higher feelings", any idea or theory, is to deny human nature.

It is only possible to cultivate a sense of association. Hominids discovered that it was convenient for them to cooperate in order to hunt bigger preys. Maybe their shouts during the hunting started the configuration of vocal cords to create language. Human communities which learn to associate, without trying to turn into the same thing, evolve farther and better, and the individual who exercises intellect and learns to combine thought and feeling in the right proportions, can bring the best to the community and obtain personally a fuller satisfaction from life. More culture means more satisfaction, in every circumstance; it can even be said that circumstances depend on the culture of each individual. This is so universal that it defines culture as a single concept: The action which brings anyone to a fuller and better evolution.

We can still speak about "different cultures". This perversion of speech shall be particularly damaging to people with a low cultural level, who shall accept in the end that their culture is just different, and so lose the stimulus to evolve further, to acquire more culture, that is to say a better knowledge of realities, deeper conscience and stronger humanity.

.....

The European Union is a community to be created, and it must not only be a gathering of State-Nations which only goal would be to encourage its development and its economical harmonization. Moreover, this would be hard to reach without the Union being involved in the globalization movement, which, at the end –in spite of having bad press- is the real factor that boosts the world economy, with growth crisis and deep changes in the relationships between States and between big groups of human beings that were created with more or less intentions, as a consequence of the furiously-paced 20th century which was marked first by extremely destructive wars and by successful scientific improvements. They changed the life of the entire humankind, though they deepened the gap that separated its different components, a gap that caused clashes and conflicts that were interpreted in different ways.

When European people reject the first Constitution proposed by their current organisms, which were all happy with the project because the Constitution had become a reality and would be sealed to face the future, it was not because of a really commendable reason such as considering the need of another Constitution. Another Constitution, aimed at creating a

Confederation of European Peoples, which were able to mix up the national patriotism of all the countries and to make its way towards a true Union that were able to turn into a solid Bloc in order to collaborate with the United States in a project that would give consistency to the globalization movement, and that would release the Union from its contradictions and its errors that occur precisely because of a lack of project and because of its anarchic development promoted by organisms which are not bad because of what they are — multinationals — but because they lack an intention that only a global-scale government can have.

That is the reason why the opposition is divided, its initiatives are contradictory and is unable to choose valid alternatives. The improvements of the European Union have gone slowly because its managers have forgotten the ideas of its first promoters, they have constantly and exclusively thought as the nationalists they are. Over the last fifty years, national politicians who belong to the Union have always been in conflict, in spite of the marvellous results obtained by the organism itself. The idea that the Union was and still is an inevitable first step towards a global government, and that each step is done towards the right direction and is going to produce immediate profits, is still alive. Those fifty years were lost in order to create the feeling and the idea of a European community, based on the belief that forming part of this community does not imply giving up what each People is or want to be.

One agreed and franc No vote is missing for Europe to stop being a divided group of states, resulting from the suppression of the former Empires and decolonisation. This agreed position, which was possible but failed, was destroyed because of various reasons: the NO vote to immigration; the obvious intent to promote a Franco-German hegemony under the auspices and inspiration of France; the industrial relocation that puts in danger the social accomplishments achieved by governments which are conscious of the impossibility to maintain them while the Third World does not evolve and cannot afford, at least, a little part of the well being reached by the First World thanks to technological improvements and not to governments; to the disagreement between the ruling classes and the ruled classes who are fed up with the sclerotic policy of these sclerotic politicians who are unable to modernize it; and, between many other reasons, the opportunist action of these politicians, from various parties, from the Right to the Left, who, noticing the opportunities offered by the NO vote, went ahead and defended it in order to pursue personal and political advantages. That's why it is quite hard to know if the voters motivated the dissident politicians of their parties, or, on the contrary, if the politicians mobilized the negative voters. All that explains why the group of the No voters was so solid because of its number and why there was a fragile or nonexistent link between its components. Thus, the Constitution does not have any alternative. It was rejected, considered as antidemocratic because of the way it had been written and it had been proposed, and anyway unusable to lead Europe towards its federation, for which it would have been necessary to abrogate it before. The majority No vote has been clear and franc. It is the result of many diverse negotiations and oppositions.

The referendum was not only a plebiscite on the European Constitution,

but also a research of criteria concerning the ones who devised it, who wrote it, who supported it, and to a certain extent, also the politicians who fought against it. The No vote was a huge failure of the system for the ones who perceive its defects and inadequacies without having the opportunity to propose another better and adapted text. Only the failed politicians have this opportunity.

Europe missed the opportunity to launch the process that would turn it into a human community that the Occident and the entire world need, even if, undoubtedly, another organism could replace it.

Today, the European Union is an orphan, without parents or guardians to lead it. However, they will not be the four big countries that keep on negotiating and bargaining their powers in the Union thanks to the miserly Nice Treaty nor the other big country, England, which, in the name of liberalism, wants to dissolve Europe in a big market that would not require any economic sacrifice from its members. This market would not only allow but encourage the patriotism of the ancient State-Nations and would require an English mediation between the European Union and the United States, which would be the only positive aspect, ideal if it were done by an English country that would only be associated with the EU, with the best economical advantages, but without interfering in the creation of a European community that, with the years passing by, may attract the English again as it was the case before.

.....

THE SCHOOL OF LIFE.

From the remotest origins of consciousness, humankind has thought up a wide variety of association forms. Its complexity increased together with cultural level, and lead to democracy. Both the system and the name were invented in Athens through a more than millenary process, and since then everybody wanted to be a democrat. But the egotistical nature of humankind has perverted the word. It was indeed born perverted: the democratic citizens of Athens, fair-thinking and privileged, considered as "democratic" a system which naturally accepted slavery because it was not known.

Present-day democracy, forced to regulate contracts between human beings inside communities of hundreds of million people, must necessarily be representative. By logic and experience, the quality of the representatives or counsellors, whether in a private society or in a great political federation, will determine the degree of success or failure for each association. That is why a proper choosing of representatives is essential for the good functioning of a democratic system, and this choosing cannot be accurate if the elected persons are not well known to almost every elector, and so the distance between them is established. There is guilt in this fact, but not one person can be singled out for it. The guilty part is the System: A lack of education, a lack of knowledge on the part of the representatives, and a lack of mutual knowledge

between representatives and represented people.

On the other side, periodical elections are not enough to effectively control and criticize the actions of a government, and representative power has turned into a property of the current government and, in a way, also of the opposition party, even though there is no connivance between them to damage the electorate, without evolving like a great share of the citizenship has. The divorce of both parts results from two divergent evolving processes; the evolving process of governors has been endogamic and terribly conservative inside and out, and the evolving process of governed people has been exogamic and constantly renewed by means of a spreading culture.

There was more matter and conceptual content in the Roman senate, not only during the Republic, but also under the Empire, than there is now in almost anyone of the so-called democratic Parliaments, and more initiative and passion in the Convention of French Revolution than in the new draft of a Constitution for the European Union. This Constitution is paradoxically thought of to prevent any changes at all. Sheer political comedy. States want to keep on being old-style States, without considering that our changing world asks for new political formulae and a proper reorganisation of contracts between governments and governed people, to achieve a peaceful coexistence of citizens and citizenships which are different at almost every level: Economy, politics and culture.

The European States, bound to formulae of the past, are acting just like they always did. They are trying to achieve a good coexistence among different people through squashing their diversity, and they fail at it as always, since diversity is connatural to people and communities, starting from family units. It is plain that they cannot, or will not, see that the easiest way to dress a Constitution for Europe is to articulate in advance the indestructible diversity of natural communities, which in Europe are fortunately well-defined. The norm must be the same for eventual territorial unions probably required by the needs of globalisation, and where those natural communities do not exist, they must be artificially created, as they did in the USA. The bigger the community, the bigger and deeper the decentralisation required.

On the other side, it is not advisable, or even possible, to change the mental and sentimental complex of human beings. The base of the great planetary communities, up to a single world community, must not only respect, but encourage the individual personality of each individual, of each family, of each people, of each and every natural political agent. Those communities which are unrecognised Empires - China, the ISC and Islam are the most significant - must follow this same trend of rationalism, always respectful of the nature of things, whether big or small. And big States must do the same.

To break residual Empires and great States, which are artificial entities, usually created through wars, must not be an excuse to divide people. On the contrary, it must be a way to cohesion through the will for freely chosen association.

Individual freedom, necessary ground for a good coexistence, has been

achieved through culture. Human globalisation is a continuous and unstoppable process, and just as it is not possible to rule the whole world from a single podium, not even one in stages, down to family communities, there is no chance of agreement without an admission of free choice in the frame of a pre-established order, a written or tacit contract, in families it does usually exist. It is yet to be established among peoples.

.....

LANGUAGE AND THE WISH FOR EQUALITY

Demagogy, besides being at the frontispiece of politics, has gotten into other spaces of modern life. The attribution of quality to a person or a community is very gratifying, besides being gratuitous, and so people are getting into the habit to praise everything, praiseworthy or not.

After this trend, some linguists assure that all languages possess the same quality, and all of them can express every idea and communication. Reality shows quite evidently that the opposite is true, without need for arguments. The inadequacy of the over 200 African Banton languages, all of them morphologically agglutinant, proves it with meridian clearness.

The answer of egalitarian linguists is that all languages are "potentially" equal. This sentence is deeply Darwinist. It is true that each and every language can achieve the highest level of quality through evolution, like people and each one of their parts.

If those underdeveloped languages are not destroyed in the future by a new set of colonists or guests bringing a flexional language, and a Banton language develops, it might achieve a level of quality which would make it universal. That might happen, for instance, if climate circumstances would concentrate Europeans on Africa, and a native language from a region was adopted, language and literary academies created, and a process alike or parallel to the one developed in Eurasia, from India to the Urals, from the north of Africa to America through Europe, which means almost the whole geography of our planet, where every language is flexional, evolved from the Sanskrit brought by Brahmins to India, and by the Arian emigrants from central Asia to the four cardinal points of the world.

This example we proposed would only be possible if a new Ice Age forced Europeans to migrate south. Another (more plausible) example would be a language halfway between flexional and agglutinating ones, like monosyllabic Chinese. This country is proving that mimic pays, not only because of its geographic and demographic size, but also because of its human qualities, among them the habit of hard work brought by Anglo-Saxon emigrants to America, nowadays quite reviled in the Western world. If the initiative already started in Japan, which substitutes ideograms (already scarce) with alphabetical writing, succeeds in China, Chinese language, modulated through a system of phoneme placing and uneven tones of pronunciation, might adopt a complex system, based on the technology of

computers they so passionately love, and turn their language into a universal code. The reversion of values through evolution, which now is based on production changes and economy, could bring them to a cultural change of great proportions.

But all those hypotheses revolve clearly around evolution. A big step forward from China would not be enough to switch the centre of cultural development, without a paralysis of evolution in the Western world and a substitution of values. All of which is possible.

During barbarism, languages were imposed and evolved following military victories and domination. In the civilised world, languages keep on evolving, but through scientific and technological progress instead, with subsequent economic strength. Political liberalism which will probably follow economic liberalism in China could bring about changes in the leadership of globalisation. And it shall undoubtedly be so, if the Western world devotes itself to prayer, and the Chinese to work. Two or three centuries bear very little weight on a civilisation process which must be counted in several billion years.

The European Union spends a lot of money in written and oral translation because of all the languages that were declared official. Fifty years spent with this system, which did not want to deprive any of the jealous patriotism of its own language, would have been enough to implement one unique official language — undoubtedly English because of its development throughout the world and because, moreover, it is easier to learn and to speak rapidly, even if it is not with the depth of native English speakers.

This unavoidable task has to be one of the priorities of Europe and of the world, disregarding the fact that countries where people speak English are more than sceptical pro-Europeans and clearly Anti Europeans.

.....

TEACHING AND EDUCATION.

The globalisation movement brings necessarily with it some agglutinant movements of smaller groups. As we have seen, the extinction of Empires, and the difficulties the States face to survive, are due to the fact that they do not offer the necessary conditions to forge a new world order which might regulate those movements. The force they put to use for its constitution and maintenance – war in its different versions depending on the available weapons – is not adequate to the cultural level reached in the part of the world retaining the most important military power. This system has reached its decadence.

Europe has lost its operating capacity for the present stage of dominance through force, but its common will must work to prevent being put aside in the international concert which leads to globalisation. Its arm is culture, and present day education has resulted in a youth right out of the school of master Epicure. Just the opposite of what is really needed.

Human beings lose faculties in old age. Human communities, thanks to the heritage chain, may never get old. The fact that civilizations, every one of

them, got old in the end and were overcome by more dynamic ones, does not turn it into a natural or written law. Their creators and keepers simply lost their willpower. Installed in their own comfort, they have not been awake to new willpowers born in other lands, following the very same example they gave when their willpower worked. In the past as in the present, syncretism must function in every new arrival of new human forces, and human beings build on existing foundations, uniting their forces instead of substituting the old to establish a new one.

On the level of education, this lack of generational bond is easy to see. In the Greco-Roman civilization, Aristotle embodies this dysfunctional heritage. He owed his erudition, like Darwin did in modern times, to an intellectual personal effort. He collected herbs and created divinities, he thought out politics and meditated on models of civilisation, allowing for discriminations which seem abhorrent to our current perception. His activity was many-sided, and really profound in his time. He is clairvoyant enough to distinguish between education and learning, and above all the cultivation of an ability of thought. In his Academy there were no professor and pupils, but a Master and his Disciples, which he cultivated towards thinking, rather than knowing (erudition).

Indeed, this aspect of his anthropological idea is the most important one because his lack of knowledge in the cosmic and biological realities led him to aberrant theories. Moreover, these theories, together with other similar ones of his master Plato, have made it more difficult for knowledge to evolve, have conditioned religions and delayed the general evolution of humanity.

Two millennia later, in our country, the little-remembered Carles Pi i Sunyer, teaming up with Dr. Soler i Damians — Sports and Ph. Ed. Commissioner — kept working on an educational project through the Spanish Civil War, where both the teacher and the disciples had to exercise above all their ability to think, from which, they said, Catalan people could overcome the cultural servitude which had been politically imposed on them, and degraded the character of their people, laborious as forged by the stony soil of their country, and meditative as is fit for people forced to endure centuries of submission from passers-by or settlers.

His eyes turned to Czechoslovakia and an old deep-rooted organisation like "sokol", brought up to date by his contemporary Tomás Masaryk; also to the English tradition of boy-scouts, deeper and wider than its Catalan counterpart; and finally to the Minyons de Muntanya at their worst, when both organisations united temporarily to create the Clan Escolta Monitor, a name chosen by their own leaders, innocent but transcendently intended.

In that third decade of last century, genetics were reduced to little more than the study of hereditary transmission, and the effects of technological evolution which tied up electricity, electronics, informatics and television were evanescent. In spite of all that, an idea insisted in distinguishing education from learning. The project consisted in standardizing learning and singularising education. The available mechanical means

hindered the development of this educational system, even more revolutionary than the Institución Libre de Enseñanza. But only the result of Spanish Civil War ended it.

Up to our twenty-first Century there is no other Plan like that one. Current technology would allow us to develop it with great ease, and to enjoy an exceptional board of teachers. Video lessons rigorously updated, produced and distributed in every ambit of Earth, might teach magisterially every knowledge there is.

What should still require personalized attention is education outside the family, still constrained by means of time and money. But the extraordinary economy of teachers which would not have to teach in person anymore what stands in texts, written in order to be developed by teachers, would give the system leave to train teachers which would leave the sentimental aspects of education to the family and teach their pupils personally, in a way that does not exist in any education system nowadays in use. (Something similar is carried out in Finland)

These teachers would be specially trained to pay attention to their disciples regarding age, in groups of three-year' spans, and classrooms where the number of pupils would be kept as low as possible; there would be attested programs which would allow to classify pupils in groups, by their natural tendency to synthesis, erudition or action. The first group would cultivate imagination, the second group would cultivate methodology and the third group would cultivate meditation, always in cooperation with parents or tutors, persuading and counselling the pupils towards activities which would mark the education most akin to their characters, taking into account the indications obtained with a high degree of efficiency. They would complement education with knowledge, a universal language learnt from an early age, mathematics with analysis according to each degree of learning, and practice on the fields marked by teacher, family and pupil. All that would start at the age of 3 years, just out of the nursery where children would have already begun learning; then in mixed classrooms up to the age 11-12 years, and from then on in separate classrooms until they were ready to start high school, where they would reserve a proper length of time to follow education with the same teacher, until their admission in university colleges.

On the other side, it would be necessary that the pupil could choose between public or private learning and education (the latter one at their expense), but at the same time unifying the matters of examination for all the branches of learning established by each country, and submitting those exams in rooms where every school should converge, also the private ones, free to choose their own education plans, but never losing sight of the exams which would touch on matters determined by public school term after term, in a centre specifically created to issue new and successive education plans, which would naturally be strictly laic.

The access to learning and high school would require an aptitude exam. Those who had not achieved the cultural level designed for primary education, would have to keep on studying for another term, or longer, until they achieve it.

So, we would have masters and disciples from 3 to 11 years old, in three blocks (3 to 5, 6 to 8, 9 to 11), coexisting for a period of 3 years as those old and despised schoolmasters who forged so many worthy citizens, but with materials and resources unimaginable 70 years ago.

During Primary learning and education, exams would be continuous, and their results kept in a record, developed by the teacher and controlled by the parents or tutors, until the pupil came of age.

During Secondary learning and education, there would be only an area of Humanism, imparted by the same teacher, which would follow on the education received from the previous Primary teachers.

The record, reserved to the family or tutors up to the coming of age of the pupil, would show not only the aptitudes acquired for several activities, but also the achieved degree of skill for those aptitudes.

The University reform would mainly consist of creating new careers, adapted to the social transformations.

It would start by normalizing a Faculty of Ecology. At the start of the 20th century, and well into its twenties, Ecology, though existing with this same name from 1868, when Ernest Haeckel thought up the term and its contents, was not present in the mind of the pedagogues, much less in the minds of politicians. The thematic diversity of Ecology has grown complex in the last decades of the 20th century, and the prevailing idea has been maintenance of the ecosystems, and only much later incidence on the human ecosystem.

In that sense it can have an excellent application nowadays. A wide number of human activities have been normalized by university faculties in the past century. The more decisive one, governing political and natural communities in any existing form, has been left out of any normalisation. Special schools for diplomatists and public administrators are not useful to create governors.

To the selection of human characters which an "Aristotelian" school of teachers would offer, we might add a University which would normalize the learning of good government, and in a few generations would ameliorate it in a parallel with society as a whole.

The government of existing communities is now at the hands of professionals from every branch of learning. None of them is specifically formed to bring their task to term, probably the most difficult, but in any case terribly transcendent. And so it can (and does) fall into the hands of people which are little suited for it, or not at all.

While all this is happening, governed citizenship is constantly evolving, and evidencing the divorce between government and citizenship. Many citizens from every social and intellectual class possess criteria which are more rightly adapted to the times we live than many governors.

The vital and intellectual effort of politicians and governors is extraordinary. All of them, without exception, especially heads of State. In 1 or 2 terms the effects make themselves felt on their appearance, and after leaving office the recovery is evident.

Why this lack of will among the governors, since nobody else can change the situation? Why do they not move further, and, with no loss of prerogatives or danger to their personal position, take the initiative to ensure that their successors be ideally formed for their jobs? Maybe the answer is inappropriately simple to the importance of the question: It is the pressure of the job they must attend to in a system where government always falls on the top people.

Government devours governors. Now and then some people appear who are able to stand the physical and mental strain, but on the whole they hardly manage to struggle through, not getting to change the situation, but hardly to maintain it.

To be a governor, the most needed ability is a great synthesis power. It is probable that politicians usually have it already or develop it while filling their office. Think of what those same people might have achieved if the teachers who had taught them, after detecting this quality, would have cultivated it, and if a formation in the right disciplines would have created at last people apt for leadership. Imaginative people are not only needed in governments and ministries, but also in any other activity, particularly in teaching and education (as "didaskalos" in Athens). Think of what Aristotle might have been, if he had the knowledge of any university professor of our times!

It is quite evident that a system which destroys wise and pragmatic individuals, instead of creating them, is essentially in the wrong. A change in that sense might alter the negative sign of human development. It is not enough to possess bits of knowledge procured by learning. We need an education as imagined by Aristotle, and reinvented by many Pi i Sunyer who existed and maybe still exist, without a place in the battlefield where the fight for power is only Machiavellian. This would be possible if the roles were reverted so that education would reach a real autonomy and create politicians, preventing them to decide on the educational models.

Scientific rationality applied to technology creates people who, without having any special abilities for synthesis, make wonderful citizens, useful in any professional field. An education where teachers taught values to their pupils from early age, which were rational as well as convenient. Considering the state of the Earth and of the current humanity is what will definitely make a real democracy possible. Professors trained by new Soler Damians, without needing new Aristotles adapted to the actual trend, who rarely appear in all the fields of activity — and who are going to end up wiping out because of the general process of cultural elevation — are essential for the leaders to possess the necessary faculties, that will be much less numerous if they rule citizens who are conscious of the established realities for every new cultural situation reached.

The State of Earth and of humanity requires flexibility in lots of social aspects, particularly concerning peaceful coexistence between different human beings. This flexibility produces contradictions that must be accepted in various fields of activity. But as far as Education is concerned, without prohibiting proselytism of beliefs in the families or in non-violent groups, a totally inflexible system must be established. Scientifically established realities

must be communicated to all the human beings according to their age. Thus, those who receive contradictory teachings due to proselytism of beliefs will have the opportunity to discern between the reality and esotericism in their lives, at any moment.

.....

THE SYSTEM

In every moment of history, human beings live through crucial situations, which are always transcendent because of the consequences of every decision taken. Now we are living in a contradictory situation: An enormous amount of individuals and peoples have achieved an undisputable welfare, and despite that, both the most fortunate in the cultural and economic sense and those who have not reached this welfare are feeling unsatisfied and vaguely fearful, conscious that our present world is deeply and seriously flawed. It is a certain apprehension to be subject to occult powers, higher than the power of humankind as a whole.

The flaws are in the system, and bring us to think that a better future is impossible without an essential alteration of a system which, instead of generating peace and tranquillity, generates conflict, not atrocious like last-century wars, but more frequent over the whole span of our planet.

Logic brings us to think that this situation will be overcome by the force of evolution, even if the dominating powers in the system tend to maintain it, and prevent its transformation. Maybe a change in the system will not be sufficient to overcome the contradiction of our present times, but it surely is indispensable. Pointing out the contradictions of the system is not enough. It is urgent to set the ground for a different one, suitable to the current state of Earth, including humankind.

In Europe the contradiction between welfare and discontent is maybe more patent; a sign of it may very well be a maladjustment of the cultural evolution of citizens, as opposed to the morose evolution of the system, which evidently brings it along the path of decadence. Our insistence in pointing the error of the path Europe is following joins the same insistence from many thinkers in the world, from countries which keep on evolving dynamically, and other countries which are nowadays in a worse situation than us to join the modern technological and scientific current, but show at least a will to progress, which is ultimately the most essential factor for success.

An evidence of slovenliness, lack of imagination and maybe of pluck, is the proposed draft for the Constitution of European Union. There is not a single new element from former constitutions; on the contrary, it is the most complex and inoperative Constitution ever issued. The late French convention – a significant name given to the chamber which drafted this Constitution – was maybe the most discussed in the whole history, and right out of an absolutist regime. The current one came from a secret negotiation among an excessive number of members, in a situation where democracy shows that it really is

democracy, and without any intervention whatsoever from the people who are the very exponent of democracy, voters.

It is ridiculous that such a simple thing as gathering data from federal constitutions in the whole world, and the emendations to update them, has not even been considered. These data can be succinctly pointed out.

A) ORGANIZATION CHART.- Instead of the thick woodland of a list of articles, fresh taken from a constitution several centuries old, and taking into account that the Union needs great simplicity and clarity to be understood by some hundred millions of non-constitutionalist people, four inescapable levels of government might be established: municipalities, regions, states and federal government. Those four levels would consist of the following posts:

PRESIDENCY.- Including Commissariats for Demography-Migration.

VICE-PRESIDENCY.- Including Commissariats identical to the Presidency ones.

ECOLOGY.- Inc. Commissariats for Culture-Education and Learning R+D-Ecosystems – University.

ECONOMY.- Inc. Commissariats for Budget – Finances – Tax Policy – Tax agencies – Cohesion Funding.

WELFARE.- Inc. Commissariats for Family – Environment – Public Care – Foundations – Civil Society.

JUSTICE.- Rules and laws –Tribunals – Penitentiary policy.

PUBLIC WORK - Commissariats of Federal Works – State works – Tourism –Woodland Cultivation.

DEFENCE.- Commissariats of Earth Army - Navy – Air Force – State Detachments –Police Dept.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS – Commissariats of International affairs – Interstate affairs –Intercommunity Affairs - Intermunicipality Affairs.

PRODUCTION - Commissariats for Energy – Industry – Trade – Farming and Fishing - Mining – Transports.

HEALTH - Commissariats for Medical and Hospital Attention – Physical Education and Sports.

WORK - Commissariats for Employment – Employers' and trade unions Affairs – Bureaucracy.

In big cities, Commissariats might be divided in Secretariats governed by

bureaucrats. In smaller towns, each post might include one or more Departments.

INTERSTATE COMMISSIONS – Formed by the managerial heads from every department, acting to solve conflicts about domains at each level of Government Cabinets and Parliaments, and conflicts between States and Federal Government.

INTERCOMMUNITY COMMISSIONS – The same principle, applied to lower levels of government.

MEDIATORS.- With ministerial status. They would be speakers for each level of Government at the highest level Chamber or Parliament.

SPECIAL AGENCIES.- Waste disposal – Water – etc...-

From this organisational chart, Rules and Constitutions are to be developed and ordained properly in Departments and Commissariats.

B) DOMAINS.- Fixing domains for each and every government level. Town Councils – Community Chambers – State Parliaments and Federal Parliament. Maximal attributions to Parliaments and their equivalents. – Single Chambers – At each domain level the responsibility must be exclusive, shared or delegated.

Determination of domain for every post at their proper level. A strong federal Executive, only controlled by Interstate commissions, in everything related with International Policy and Defence. Intervention in matters of shared responsibility with States: Economy – Ecology.

Other domains would be a responsibility of state governments for any matters of state range. The same would apply to community and municipality governments, with a wide freedom for legislative and executive action in any domain.

The domain assigned to each level of government would be the same in the whole of the federal range. The actual text might differ in any two municipalities, communities or states. The harmonisation between any agents of government, particularly among States, must be free-willed, and it might even be accepted that they contradict each other, as long as they all comply with a Basic Federal Rule, which, apart from proceeding rules, will determine some general principles from the Departments of International Policy, Defence, Ecology and Economy.

C) ELECTIONS.- The renewal of the System, in search for a perfect democracy, rests upon post elections.

— General elections by universal suffrage on predetermined dates every 5 years. Normalisation of plebiscites during electoral periods. Taking part in general elections would be enforced, although the penalties for guilty people would only be the loss of political rights inside their own municipality. The right to vote would be determined for 16-years-old, 18-years-old, and full rights at 20-years-old. The right to eligibility would be determined according to age for each government level. Free adscription to political parties or societies, stable

or circumstantial, to run for elections.

— In General Elections all the posts at the four levels of government are subject to polling. Nevertheless, each Party or Association may concur on every government level, or just at the municipality.

In those five-year elections, the lists would present two sections. On one side, electors choose a major and lieutenant major; president and vice-president and mediators, for each level of ministry. On the other side, they choose the representation charges, which are aldermen and MPs. The results on each municipality are the ground for the constitution of City Councils. After the constitution of City Councils, each one will bring up their representatives and voters to the constitution of higher governments in turn: Community, State and Federal. This process should be terminated inside a month.

— At the municipality level, the party obtaining a vote majority turns automatically into the Government group, while the second one at the polls is established as Opposition. Other candidates can freely join and negotiate with each of them, so that the power balance between Government and Opposition is clear during the whole term, and to prevent fragmentation and multiplication of political forces. If no party obtains an absolute majority, a process of conciliation for posts and political programs – on the condition that the changes in programs can only affect the range where the conciliation is being achieved – until a Government group and an Opposition group are settled.

— The presentation of a candidate to elections forces to present a program for each level of government, which must include a budget proposal for the first year of their term. Programs must contemplate every range of government. They would be enforcing and any change in them, either by addition or suppression, shall require an agreement from the opposition and force a plebiscite.

— The development of political responsibilities require a good formation, competence and solid criteria. Maybe there is no objective universal system to detect these qualities in people, but age is an objective element which allows us a good approach. It would be desirable that public appointees had an specific formation in the Faculty, and some minimal age limits for the main posts would be established.

The object of those deep transformations of the system would be a renewal of politics and politicians, preventing them from falling prisoners to demagogy, increasing their credibility and their trustworthiness in the eyes of citizens.

COMMON REGULATIONS.-

Before drawing up the regulations for each municipality, each region and each State, a specific common regulation must have been negotiated for

the whole Union, without being obliged to reproduce it in every regulation of the different levels of government. This regulation will have to be applicable for the whole area. It must cover the basic aspects for the creation of the Union: education; internal and external economical cohesion; foreign policy; defence; election and referendum system.

This regulation has to be the base and the entire content of the Constitution, and the only thing to be respected by the state and region Constitutions, and by the municipal regulations.

The rest of competences, even if a harmonization, as large as possible, would be convenient between the government entities, the freedom to determine them and develop them will be complete, following the same regulation as for the Union level, and with a descending order: States will have a regulation for their area, as well as regions and the municipalities.

For the general five-year elections, the parties will be allowed to propose change, to complement or to remove some of their corresponding regulations.

PLEBISCITES AND REFERENDUMS.

In the current state of the Union, or in a similar state in the future, the existing political parties would act. They would present their projects of Constitution for all the government levels, in a unique referendum. They would follow the system to eliminate the ones which, having received less favourable votes for their project than the other ones, and not having reached a coalition agreement with any of these ones, would revert their votes to the winner party and to the one considered as the opponent on a proportional basis according to the votes obtained by each of them. The government program for the session would still be presented by the two parties, the one of the government and the one of the opposition.

The municipalities would appoint their delegates, the one of the government and the one of the opposition, to the Regional Chamber, each gathering the valid votes to elect the regional government and the corresponding chamber, following the same process to appoint the State government and chamber and, finally, the Union government and chamber.

As far as changes in the Regulations and in the Constitutions are concerned, the referendums would always take place on the same day as the general elections.

In this work, an abridged model of State Constitution is presented. It corresponds to the regulation exposed above. We think that, because of its easiness, it could be useful as a basis to launch debates on an eventual European government organization, particularly if an agreement was signed to tend to a Federation because there are regions in all the European countries with different names such as regions, provinces, districts, etc., even in countries with a little surface and a poor demography, which are the most numerous. As far as States are concerned, it would be the People identified and to identify, the thousand-year-old communities, which could start an extraordinary loyal game of competition.