WORLD STATE, NATION STATES, OR NON-CENTRALIZED INSTITUTIONS?

A Vision of the Future in Politics

VICTOR SEGESVARY

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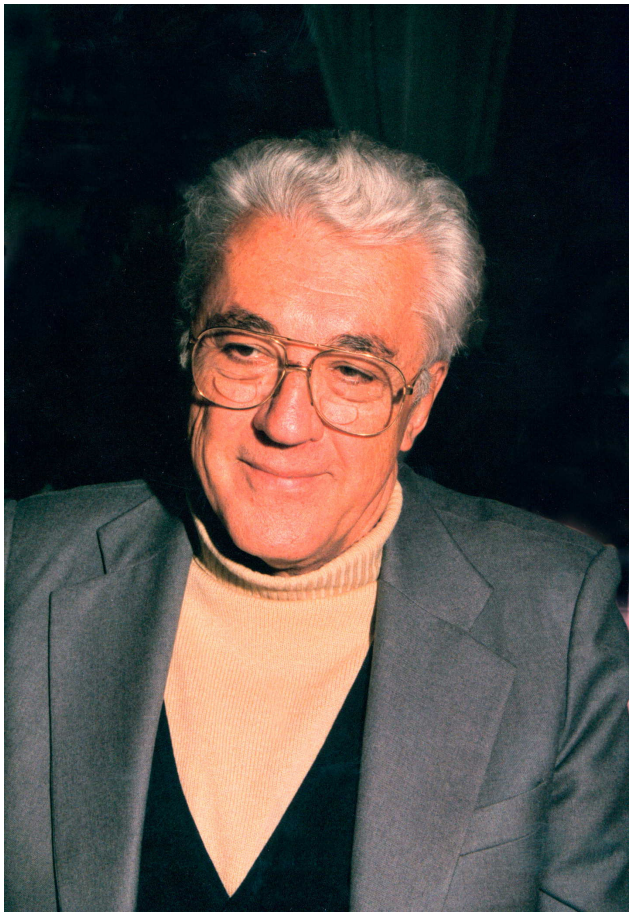

Victor Segesvary

TO THE LAND OF MY ANCESTORS,
TRANSYLVANIA

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INTRODUCTION

GLOBAL FRAMEWORK: THE DIALECTICS OF SPACE AND PLACE

This study places the problem of territorial state in the context of globalization and cosmopolitanism, trends that indicate that power less and less resides in a unified territorial location or in a single privileged institution. It is proposed to deconstruct the present structures of political and economic life, which are exclusively subordinated to the ordering principle and power of the omnipotent state. This will inevitably lead to the birth of a non-governmental, nonstatal political organization, based on the reality of a true civil society that is in constant dialogue at the worldwide level.[1]

It is useful to distinguish between globalization as a process, as an agency, and as a perceived outcome:

As a *process,* globalization stands for the tightening web of interrelatedness, the actual interconnectedness of events, activities, and people. It is the trend toward a greater integration of societies at a worldwide level.[2]

As an *agency*, globalization means that it is not solely a process which is pursuing its path in human history, but that, as a process, it must have its bearers which are the agents promoting its realization, the fulfillment of its promises. For this reason, globalization through market competition or cultural homogenization ("a creolized veneer of fake universality" Hagen 1998, 183) or whatever other force, is not just happening to humanity; all people – first of all politicians, economists, businessmen, scientists and the media – are actively contributing, intentionally or through the unintended consequences of their actions, to create a global world.

Finally, as a *perceived outcome*, globalization refers to how people experience this process – the so-called shrinking of space, the creation of a world society, and the definite disappearance of any differentiation, of any pluralism, in favor of a global homogenization of our lifeworld. People's perception of such an outcome depends, of course, on how one understands the term: whether it is a question of a potential or actual homogenization. Potentially it might be tempting because reference is always to promises, as in religious prophecies, of what is to come; in actuality, empirical experience determines people's perception of the predictions concerning global society, and the difference between potential and actual may be unexpectedly vast.

Unfortunately, globalization is mostly perceived in its superficial manifestations by the media as well as the public. However, as a multi-faceted, complex phenomenon, a process, it has at least four aspects:

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[1] Anthony Giddens recently also attributed the necessity of restructuring the political sphere, and in it the restructuring of democracy, to the de-legitimating effect of a more open information society. This restructuring would be done through the expansion of another form of governance and a changed practice of democracy. Giddens 1999.

[2] "In a sense, modernity is all about the stretching of social relationships. Writing, print and new modes of transport and communications are the technologies that enabled the corporation, the bureaucracy, the nation-state and now the globalised world." Loader 1997, 25.

First, the most impressive of its manifestations is the instantaneousness of transactions between financial markets or the expansion of world trade believed sometimes, wrongly, to produce worldwide market integration.[3]

Second, it is evident for everybody that globalization is also characterized by such recent phenomena as various types of transnational movements.

Third, fewer people recognize that globalization in reality is nothing but a hegemonic trend which is intended to extend to the whole world the civilization of the West with its materialistic worldview, its opulent and, simultaneously, impoverished lifestyles (such a view of the global age is supported by the argument that globalization is, in truth, an age-old process). This conceptualization of the globalizing process – a self-realizing prophecy – is also seen as the advent of a cosmopolitan world culture, perhaps under the umbrella of the imperial republic (Raymond Aron) of the United States,[4] which means that people on all other continents will have to copy the achievements and failures of our modern culture.[5]

Finally, *fourth*, the consciousness that the inevitable *other face* of globalization is the opening up of a planetary perspective on co-existing civilizations, just begins to throw light on the darker side of the projected Western civilizational hegemony. This revelation will make it indispensable to initiate a dialogue among the different great civilizations of the world in order to avoid a clash of civilizations.

Already much has been written about the first two aspects of globalization mentioned above. The third, which renders inescapable a civilizational dialogue, is recognized by most observers and approved by many. The fourth perspective is the least known but will constitute the background stage of this study, as it is the only way leading to an understanding of other cultures through civilizational encounters.

The global scene resembles, notwithstanding the wishful thinking expressed by die-hard universalists, to a global theatre but not to a global civilization. The global world is one in which, in accordance with Roland Robertson's formula, the particular penetrates the universal and the universal penetrates the particular (Robertson 1992, 100),[6] because peoples, regions, ethnic groups, cultures "can only distinguish themselves

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[3] Market integration designates, in fact, a complete degree of interdependence. It is useful to note concerning this thesis of the globalizing creed what Kenneth Waltz wrote recently about it: "From 1914 into the 1960s an interdependence deficit developed, which helps to explain the steady growth of interdependence thereafter. Among the richest twenty-four industrial economies (the OECD countries), exports grew at about twice the rate of GDP after 1960. In 1960 exports accounted for 9.5 per cent of their national GDPs; in 1900 that figure was 20.5 per cent. Finding that the level of interdependence in 1999 approximately equals that of 1910 is hardly surprising. What is true of trade also holds for capital flows, again as a percentage of GDP ... Finance capital moves freely across the frontiers of OECD countries and quite freely elsewhere. Still, with the movement of financial assets as with commodities, the present remains like the past. Despite today's ease of communication, financial markets in 1900 were at least as integrated as they are now." Kenneth N. Waltz, "Globalization and American Power." *The National Interest*, No. 59 (Spring 2000), 46-56; quotation is on 48.

[4] "Comme les dominations du genre ou d'ethnie, l'impérialisme culturel est une violence symbolique qui s'appuie sur une relation de communication contrainte pour extorquer la soumission et dont *la particularité consiste ici en ce qu'elle universalise les particularismes liés à une expérience historique* en les faisant méconnaître comme tels et reconnaître comme universels ... [La mondialisation] a pour effet, sinon pour fonction, d'habiller d'oecuménisme culturel ou de fatalisme économiste les effets de l'impérialisme américain et de faire apparaître un rapport de force transnational comme une nécessité naturelle." Pierre Bourdieu and Loic Wacquant, "La nouvelle vulgate planétaire," *Le Monde diplomatique*, May 2000, http://www.monde-diplomatique.fr/2000/05BOURDIEU/13727.htm; *emphasis* added.

[5] Or, according to Anthony Smith's very probable description: "What a 'postmodernist' global culture is more likely to resemble is the eclectic patchwork we are witnessing in America and Western Europe today – a mixture of ethnic elements, streamlined and united by a veneer of modernism on a base of scientific and quantitative discourse and computerized technology ... The revival of ethnic myths, memories and traditions, both within and outside a globalizing but eclectic culture, reminds us of the fundamentally memoryless nature of any cosmopolitan cultures created today. Such culture must be consciously, even artificially, constructed out of the elements of existing national cultures. But existing cultures are time-bound, particular and expressive. They are tied to specific peoples, places and periods. They are bound up with definite historical identities. Those features are essentially antithetical to the very nature of a truly cosmopolitan culture." Anthony D. Smith 1997, 329-330.

[6] As Nancy Fraser so well summarized it: "Here one would abstract *both* from unique individuality and from unique humanity to focalize the intermediate zone of group identity. The most general ethical force of this orientation would be

in the context of difference" (Hagen 1998, 180). Any identity needs an opposite; any affirmation of particularity needs its contrary. In fact, the universalistic dream of cultural homogeneity dates back only to the European Enlightenment, but in the Westphalian order, as Manuel Castells well summed up, "the territorial differentiation of the state" represented "the principle of universal equality, while organizing its application as segregated inequality" (Castells 1997, 2: 274). Religious and cultural pluralism, which characterizes all other civilizations and most bygone ages – a sort of ordered heterogeneity – as well as the dominant polyethnicity of multinational empires of the past, prove that there are alternative solutions to the creation of a world culture.[7] This is the reason for Hedley Bull's praise for a certain neo-medievalism, for shared sovereignty and the possibility of "multiple overlapping institutions and practices" and "criss-crossing loyalties."[8]

Globalization also stimulates the dialectics of space and place, and through this dialectics the local redefines the global.[9] In all its manifestations, however, globalization tends to show that sites of power are less and less defined by a territorial framework or a single, privileged political institution and more by cultural determinants and relational interdependencies – made possible by the technological means at humanity's disposal (for this reason frontiers are becoming more and more porous). The fragmented parts of civil society will, through global interdependence, again be linked together; this will be a process of re-territorialization through the invention of non-traditional organizational options.

If territory is the physical aspect of the life of a community, then it is a constituting element of the community's identity as well. During the evolution of Western modernity people's relation to territory was completely transformed – without, of course, negating the role of territories as the physical grounding of a population's life – because territory became constitutive of their identity as the state in which they lived, and, as such, of their identity as members of the interstate system:

> When cultural difference was formerly underpinned also by structural boundaries, these have now given way to boundaries which inhere in the mind: symbolic boundaries. This transformation constitutes an important qualification to concepts of mass society, and has been manifest in the widespread assertion of sectional identities in the last twenty years (Cohen 1986, 17).

The global evolution in the West, however, took a different turn in late modernity through a move away from the dominance of the territorial perspective. This was reflected by Article 1(3) of the Charter of the United Nations, which declared the necessity of international cooperation in the economic, social, and cultural fields or in such efforts as the promotion and encouragement of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction as to religion, language, race, or sex. The weakening of the role of territory in the existence of states and interstate cooperation was even more underlined in such domains as the advanced technology exploration and exploitation of areas of relative inaccessibility like outer space or the seabed and ocean floors. The first signs of the advent of a post-Westphalian order, revealing the principle of territoriality inappropriate and inequitable, point to a gradual separation of territory and jurisdiction and to a collectivist doctrine of the use of public goods, deemed common to all mankind.

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something like this: we owe each other behaviour such that each is confirmed as a being with specific collective identifications and solidarities. The norms governing these interactions would be ... norms of collective solidarities expressed in shared but non-universal social practices." Quoted in Waterman 1996, 59; italics in original.

[7] "The great cities of Asia and Eastern Europe adapted to this sort of permanent poly-ethnicity by allowing a series of religiously defined communities to exist side by side ... Chinese and Indian cities also accorded extensive autonomy to enclaves of foreigners as a matter of course." Quoted from Ralph Della Cava by S. H. Rudolph in her "Introduction" to Suzanne H. Rudolph, and James Piscatori 1997, 8. One should not forget, as a striking European example, the city of Naples, home to all Mediterranean people, cultures, and religions.

[8] Bull 1995, 254-255.

[9] The more readily the reality of the world becomes accessible, the higher the probability that individual or territorial communities will combine characteristics of the global and the local in a unique way, as pointed out in Mlinar 1992, 2.

The same evolution is evident in the economic sphere as Henderson and Castells expressed it one and a half decades ago:

> The logic and dynamics of territorial development are increasingly placeless from the point of view of the dominant organizations and interests. At the same time, a second territorial process grows in importance ... "community" social relations and socio-political mobilizations continue to operate, for the most part, according to local, place-oriented logic ... The new territorial dynamics, then, tend to be organized around the contradiction between placeless power and powerless places, the former relying upon communication flows, the latter generating their own communication codes on the basis of an historically specific territory (Henderson and Castells 1987, 7).[10]

For this reason, the "unbundling" of territoriality, to use John Ruggie's expression (Ruggie 1993, 171) is a development that already started. The only question is which direction this development will take in the future: toward a so-called world state, a government for the whole of mankind, or toward a complete abandonment of the state formula as political organization and a complete abandonment of the classic, universalistic vision. The erosion of the Westphalian order of sovereign territorial nation-states is a fundamental aspect of the globalizing trend, which also means that a post-Westphalian order emerges, simultaneously, based on non-territorial forms of political and economic organization. As McGrew writes, "territorial systems of democratic accountability" – in the era of globalization – "no longer necessarily coincide with the spatial reach of sites of power;" thus, globalization renders obsolete the democratic system prevailing in the nation-state (McGrew 1997, 12-13 and 21).

This trend would result in the creation of not territorially but culturally defined political entities, with the help of the available (and always more perfected) information and communication technologies. It would mean that in place of a worldwide unitary political institution the evolution would be toward a multiperspectival polity, embracing already existing or to be created non-territorial, transnational links of all sorts, McGrew's "communities of fate." Such an approach, vindicated here, would aim at the establishment of non-governmental entities "decentered, yet integrated space-of-flows, operating in real time" (ibid., 172). Interdependence will be replaced by interconnectedness. According to Jones, interdependence only occurs when people simultaneously require some territorially external developments in order to achieve their objectives. "Mere interconnectedness ... does not carry simple, uncontested, or irreversible, implications for other important conditions" (Jones 1995, 94); interconnectedness means a freely admitted need for cooperation.

In a way, it is also possible to see this unbundling of the territorial concept as a failure of the hitherto dominating universalistic trend because the ideology of universal values challenges the fundamental principle of the interstate system. It is really an irony of history that, at a time when in the orbit of the Western civilization euphoria reigns as people believe that liberal democracy and human rights are achieving global legitimacy, the underlying political system of the Western expansion crumbles. This is the result of a conflict between utopia and reality: the understanding of democracy as decentralization and respect for the principle of subsidiarity on the one hand, and, on the other hand, of the understanding of human rights as the major tenet of the opposition between civil society and the modern state. "'International order' and 'international solidarity'," as Carr once remarked, "will always be slogans of those who feel strong enough to impose them on others."[11] Globalizing interdependence is not favorable to the territorial perspective. As the dialectics of globalization extends its sway over different parts of the world, the territorial principle of nationality gets gradually weakened, and the search for a new organizing principle starts: "Fragmentation is a dialectical

[10] In his monumental work about late modern society and informational development, Castells reformulated this point of view: "Yet identity is becoming the main, and sometimes the only, source of meaning in a historical period characterized by widespread destructuring of organizations, delegitimation of institututions, fading away of major social movements, and ephemeral cultural expressions. People increasingly organize their meaning not around what they do but on the basis of what they are, or believe they are. Meanwhile, on the other hand, global networks of instrumental exchanges selectively switch on and off individuals, groups, regions, and even countries, according to their relevance in fulfilling the goals processed in the network, in a relentless flow of strategic decisions. It follows a fundamental split between abstract, universal instrumentalism, and historically rooted, particularistic identities." Castells 1997, 1: 3.

[11] E. H. Carr, *The Twenty-Years Crisis 1919-1939*. (London: Papermac, 1981), 87.

response to globalization," wrote Clark in his review of globalization theories, indicating that many consider globalization "as Westernization or as the spread of modernity." In consequence, fragmentation can be viewed as "resistance to the 'hegemony' of this set of ideas and institutional practices" (Clark 1997, 28).[12]

If there is a chance to de-construct the dominant political institution of modernity, the nation-state, it will be in Europe, where Western civilization was born, because

(1) Within European culture a series of different identities, though based on shared values and perspectives, represent a self-reflective plurality never surpassed elsewhere on the planet,[13] and

(2) As a consequence of the European pluralistic culture, it is in this part of the world that culturally conscious minorities, obliged to live in the iron-cage of nation-states, exist in the greatest number.

In a global world, new political forms of institutionalization will have to be created, completely different from those of the modern state, and such an effort will be unsuccessful if it duplicates at regional or planetary levels the present statal and democratic structures.

[12] "Resistance to all pervasive forces of modernization along Western lines ... ," wrote Walker, "has become a major characteristic of the twentieth century. Concepts of autonomy, nationalism, and pluralism have come to challenge the assumed universality of progress towards the 'civilization' of the West." R. B. J. Walker 1984, 183.

[13] "The kind of universality that Europe represents contains within itself a plurality of cultures, which have been merged and intertwined, and which provide a certain fragility, an ablity to disclaim and question itself." Ricoeur 1992, 119.

PART ONE

LAND, TERRITORY, AND NATION-STATES

CHAPTER ONE

SPACE, PLACE, AND TERRITORIALITY: BASIC CONCEPTUAL VARIATIONS

1. Space and Place

The following considerations concerning space, place, and territoriality are based on the firm conviction that there is a reality that exists independently of our awareness. But, and this is a most important qualification, through our consciousness reality appears in terms determined by our cultural world. If space and place, a difference of scale, are interdependent, this is due to our perspective; their interplay is a fundamental fact of human existence, because human beings have always had a special relationship to the land on which they lived. Space is coextensive with nature and is one of the constitutive elements of the universe. Therefore, the usual juxtaposition of nature and culture is an error because culture, as the sum of man's creative capacities, exists within the cosmos, that is, in the cosmic space, but is not subject to the laws of nature as things and objects are in physical space. This is the inexorable sense of human freedom.

When we speak of public or private spaces in life, these are determined from a particular point of view; places, though located in overall human space, have to possess specificity due to their culturally defined meaning and particular significance. Space is real, not socially constructed;[1] place, on the other hand, is a mental product, i.e., a product of cultural imagination,[2] but for this reason not less real – for us.[3] Robert Sack, therefore, correctly defines our particular, spatial perspective as a multidimensional, relational framework.[4]

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[1] Robert Sack wonderfully describes the reality of nature: "Nature consists of elements and forces that would exist and operate without us, and which apply even to those parts of nature we have harnessed and altered. Rivers can be channeled, hybrids cultivated, and genes engineered, but the laws of nature cannot be breached. Once we are all gone, rivers will still flow, water will still freeze, and living creatures – even for the ones we have engineered – will follow natural laws of physics, genetics, and evolution." Sack 1997, 79.

[2] On the role of the mental in human existence and man's cultural possibilities see Segesvary 1999b.

[3] "Physical space is not the same as life space, experienced by every animal species in a specific and, at least among humans, in an individual way, too ... [Human spatial behaviour is] strongly dependent on the individual's cognitive maps of the environment. Such a map could be defined as a convenient set of symbols which we all subscribe to and employ, resulting from our specific and individual prejudices and experiences." The author adds that "cultural patterns of different societies offer different means by which spatial perceptions are developed, refined, and ordered." Malmberg 1980, 5.

[4] "The relational framework considers four major overlapping factors – forces, perspectives, place and space, and self – and maps out their dynamic interconnections. Our actions depend on the forces that affect us, including nature, meaning, and social relations. Each is a very general kind of force, as when we say humans are influenced by the force of nature, or families are being torn apart by the force of society. But these realms of force include within them specific types. Nature, for example, contains the force of gravity, of electro magnetism, and the subatomic weak force. Social relations include the force of law, of social class, and of a parent. And meaning contains the force of word and ideas ... We must also include among the realms of forces ourselves as agents and, most important, the force of place and space. How these are interrelated and how the place and space of geography function as a force that affects the others is a basic

This relational interdependence of space and place does not imply a causal effect precisely because it is a relation and not a process, but constitutes a sort of organization of diversity.

If objects and events of the physical universe and of the human worlds have an extension in space, they are nevertheless transformed into phenomena within a place through a particular meaning and symbolic significance that individuals and groups give to a landscape, for example. Place, called by Giddens a *locale* (Giddens 1984, 118-122), represents the contextuality of action "in which meaning is attributed to acts and events through communication and interaction with limited numbers of people ... locale is the core geosociological element in place" (Agnew 1987, 26 and 28). Place, therefore, means a location, inserted into the larger context of territorial society, an appropriation and transformation of space and nature in which human interaction takes place. A place, or some places, and a community are frequently linked to each other, as Agnew rightly saw "one place or 'territory' in its differentiation of other places can become an 'object' of identity for a 'subject'" (ibid., 27-28).

Spatial extension "implies some mode of differentiating human collectivities from one another" (Ruggie 1993, 148). This is the sense of place, defined not by geographical location but by reference to a shared attachment to a place, itself a differentiated part of a global framework. Place is the context of all events in our lifeworld, of all interactions of human beings:

> The fact that places combine the unconstructed physical place in conjunction with social rules and meaning enables place to draw together the three realms [nature, meaning, and social relations], and *makes* place constitutive of ourselves as agents (Sack 1997, 33; italics added).[5]

Another way to attribute a triple meaning to place, in addition to Sack's above quoted definition, would be to look at it as (1) *locale*, the setting of social interaction, (2) *location*, a geographical area inserted in a wider territorial perspective, and (3) *sense of place*, which refers to the relationship of human beings to the place where they live linking identities, especially national identities, to the land or the earth on which people are born and in which they are buried.[6] People are attached to a place (here-feeling) because of the particular way they mentally and spiritually perceive it, whereas cosmopolitanism can be only a feeble source of belonging as it hovers somewhere in the infinite Euclidean or the infinitely extensive, undifferentiated, and non-anthropomorphic Cartesian space, without any concrete emotional attachment to the particularities of a specific place. An old American Indian proverb says: "We have not inherited the earth from our parents, but borrowed it from our children."[7] It is therefore evident, even in our contemporary world, that such larger spatial concepts as nation or the planetary perspective of globality are still mediated by the local world, by the place.

It is certain that the gradual disappearance of the attachment to a place, to a sacred land, in monotheistically based civilizations was the result of the triumph of the universal religion in their core, which endeavored to eliminate all place-attachments because of their sacred significance of specific landscapes or earth-spots, in order to uproot the still attractive pagan creeds.

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and, in philosophical terms, an ontological issue about how things are in the world. Yet the way these are understood depends on our awareness or the perspectives we take." Sack 1997, 27-28.

[5] There is an interesting illustration by Kingdon Ward of what place means to a human being: " ... obviously a pass of 15000 feet is nothing to a Tibetan who habitually lives at 12000 feet altitude. The Tibetan is not stopped by physical but climate barriers, and no boundary pillars are needed to make him respect these. His frontier is the verge of the grass land, the fringe of the pine forests, the 50 inch rainfall contour beyond which no salt is (until indeed you come to the sea) or the 75 percent saturated atmosphere. The barrier may be invisible; but it is a more formidable one to a Tibetan than the Great Himalayan ranges. If he crosses it he must revolutionize his mode of life." Kingdon Ward 1932. "Explorations on the Burma-Tibet Frontier." *Geographical Journal*, 80: 465-483; quoted in Kratochwil, Rohrlich, and Mahajan 1985, 10.

[6] Deudney even writes about *earth nationalism* as the fruit of deep green identity, having six elements: (1) cosmology, (2) symbolism, (3) sacred places, (4) ceremony, (5) sacrifice, and (6) intergenerational community. Deudney 1996, 131.

[7] Ibid., 142.

The cosmology of cosmopolitanism links its adherents not to a specific place but to all possible places, to everything they have in common as places. It seems to be justified to regard, then, such cosmopolitanism as a rootless or displaced perspective of the cosmos, because the concreteness of place cannot be replaced by any belonging centered exclusively on human artifacts such as the global marketplace (shared experiences of consumption, leisure, and entertainment), or democratic regimes (reduced to a mere method of choosing leaders and living under the rule of unelected bureaucracies), or the fictive notion of humanity, man in the abstract (a *sine qua non* condition of the modern state's power). The planetary space, reduced through space and time distanciation, compressed, crowded, and threatened in its existence through ecological dangers, cannot create a late modern identity via the feeling to belong to such an anesthetized world.

The mutual interdependence of place and human selves is a quasi-biological phenomenon, which, however, does not mean that human beings are enslaved by place. *Place as a context is also the locus of human freedom, which can only flourish in communities tied to determined places*. In this respect, it is useful to refer to the studies of Asian frontiers by Owen Lattimore in which he refers to the property rights in the Mongol tribal world. He evidences that the Mongols driven by "the sovereign importance of movement" laid claim "to definite pastures and to the control of routes of migration between these pastures," and "the right to move prevailed over the right to camp."[8]

The compression of space and time, resulting from information and communication technologies, cannot erase the ontological importance, the existence even, of place, because these technologies are infused into place from the outside and become sort of domesticated into the spatial and temporal texture of the place. Place is one of the principal focuses of the territorial narrative in every civilization.

2. Space, Place, and Time

Before starting the exploration of various aspects of space and place as territoriality, we must inevitably deal briefly with the temporal dimension of spatial concepts. Time, together with planetary space (that is, excluding from our considerations all illusory, extra-planetary endeavors), is the ultimate scarce commodity. Though spatial arrangements can be modified and places can be redefined, the arrow of time is irrevocably one-directional for every human being. No political measures, not even scientific efforts, can change this or can change the allocation of time between existing organisms, between individuals or collectivities. The only possibility of managing time, tried through different historical schemes, is to coordinate private and public times, which have been eliminated by modernity through the definite separation of individual and collective time perspectives, and to unify modalities of temporality in the overwhelming present.

At the beginning of modernity, under the pressures of scientific and economic developments and the subsequent formation of a bourgeois social order, a new awareness of time took place, which manifested itself in undertaking a rationalization of time, simultaneously with the rationalization of space. Rationalization of the temporal meant not only a standardized measurement of time ensuring impartial social organization and discipline, but also, especially, the belief in the linear temporal evolution of the human world – the inexorably advancing progress of humanity toward everything better than before. This temporal rationalization also implied the decoupling of individual and collective time, which reached its full realization in late modernity. At the same time, the rationalization of space created many divisions between spatial spheres, not only through the creation of territorial boundaries delimiting sovereign states, but in every possible respect – public and private, state and society, workplace and home – thereby curiously reinforcing the role of place.

As economic activities assumed a dominant position in human existence, the market became the privileged feature of society, and time was construed as a marketable commodity. Activities linked to civil society, that is, belonging to the sphere not controlled by the state and not serving usefulness criteria of the market as well as the individual's leisure time, were excluded from the collective time perspective though

[8] Lattimore 1962, 535.

requiring sacrifices from individual persons and entities of civil society alike. One of the temporal techniques exacting individual or commonly shared sacrifices was the imposition of deferred gratification of material consumption, in order to finance the interests of market activities – public and private investment in infrastructure, industry, agricultural mechanization, etc. During the first one and a half centuries of modernization, efforts to rationalize temporal commitments led to the decollectivization of risks of the human life cycle and to the imposition of civic duties such as conscription, incumbent on all as a result of the doctrine of universal citizenship but clearly signifying an expropriation of individual time and labor by the state. Thus, in the interests of economic development and in view of the importance for these interests to maintain order and stability in social relations, the widespread adoption of collective measures (the welfare state) providing for the future of individuals against sickness, old age, accidents, took place since the 1950's.

The apparently scientific management of time in the public sphere became, on the one hand, more and more centralized in the hands of the state and corporate bureaucracies, such as huge companies and unions, eliminating, in the name of emancipation from particular interventions, the multiple jurisdictions which, in earlier ages, allocated and coordinated time between individuals and collectivities. On the other hand, the remaining time was customized for individual consumption to such an extent that it destroyed the existence of communities and entities of civil society, which could not participate in this allocation. The disequilibrated allocation pattern of time and a foreshortening of the future led, therefore, to an imbalance in intergenerational transmission of public goods and to a continuous depreciation of individual and collective assets expressed, in the economic field, by the ever-recurring menace of inflation. It is, therefore, evident today that the state can take valid measures concerning present time but cannot influence the future.

The trend is, however, to a return to the public allocation of space and time, especially from the point of view of the crucial problems of the environmental crisis, the solution of which can only be achieved by surpassing the market perspective and the role of the state in time allocation by recourse to collective choices and decisions.[9]

3. Territoriality: Land and Territory

Territoriality[10] is variously designated as part of man's environment and as part of the lifeworld charged with cultural and political significations. Jouni Häkli gave a synthetic account of how territories were born, emphasizing the role of recently invented writing, and the procedure of formalization:

> The formalisation of communication makes possible the emergence of new "horizontal vision" which originates from a co-synchronous representation of objects and persons as juxtaposed in a written document. Territories begin to exist independently of context, in a framework of integration with formal, "bounded" configuration. Writing also enhances processes of generalisation of norms, laws and rules which tend to "fill space horizontally" ... territoriality is integration of time, space and authority (Häkli 1994, 39).

And significantly he adds later: "Modern states have borders instead of frontiers" (ibid., 40).[11] Thus, territory and locality are not the same because relations between a group and its territory are cultural and ecological, whereas relations between members of a group with the territory on which they live – places –

[9] On problems of public and private time allocation see Maier 1987, 151-175.

[10] Territoriality is defined by behaviorists as "a behavioural phenomenon associated with the organization of space into spheres of influence or clearly demarcated territories which are made distinctive and considered at least partially exclusive by their occupants or definers." Malmberg 1980, 10.

[11] Häkli quotes Muir (Richard Muir, *Modern Political Geography*. London: Macmillan, 1975) to indicate the difference between boundaries and frontiers: "[Boundaries] occur where the vertical interfaces between state sovereignties intersect with the surface of earth. Frontiers, in contrast, are horizontal and therefore contain various geographical features and, frequently, populations. As vertical interfaces, boundaries have no horizontal extent." Häkli 1994, 44.

are part of their culturally normatively established social relations and legitimated by the social structures sustaining the authority of political institutions.

Human beings have identities of which the geographical space they inhabit is an essential component, and such a territorial identity is expressed and reinforced by symbols. Such symbols may also be used for territorial demarcation. In consequence, territoriality "can take different forms in different geographical and historical circumstances, and its specific manifestations must be *contextualized*" (Chisholm and Smith 1990: 3; italics added).

Tuomas Forsberg lists six forms of territoriality, explaining the latter in relation to the concept of place (except the sixth aspect), through which his conception is linked to that of Häkli:

> Firstly, man's existence in some place; secondly, man's boundedness with place; thirdly, man's dependence on space; fourthly man's natural behavioural predispositions with place; fifthly, man's attachment with place; and sixthly, territoriality as a means of organizing power among men (Forsberg 1996, 359).

With respect to the geopolitical character of territoriality, his sixth variant, Forsberg rightly points out a general error treats territoriality as if it meant the decreasing value of territory or, from the point of view of sovereign states, the decreasing value of territorial expansion. This is because even multinational firms and financial institutions are territorially attached, and environmentalism in its most radical forms is also linked to place. The fundamental transformation in late modernity is, in the perspective adopted here, the waning into the past of territorially based democracies and the de-territorialization of responsibilities. Not global but transboundary reality is determinant and, at the political level, "regions are territorial units par excellence, since their constitutive element is the idea of a particular area."[12]

In Forsberg's understanding, the concept of re-territorialization means not the reinforcement of the domination of the territorial state, but the perspective that the territorial identity of political units will become the defining framework of human existence (ibid., 366-37l). These new territorial identities do not presuppose exclusion, and may change in time in the process of reformulation of the lifeworld's framework, because territoriality is defined in cultural terms.[13] Thus, cultural territorial significations and metaphors represent a much more profoundly rooted reality than territoriality as a physical reality. One example is the effective realization of the territorial ideal by the Church in the Middle Ages, and history shows that Christianity is the only world religion, which attached a particular, perhaps identity-creating value to spatial extension.

Territories consequently engender identities. It is useful to think in terms of territorial identities according to geographical scale, that is, in terms of zones of identity arranged in accordance with increasing geographical extent. Thus, national identities, encompassing a territorial element, are situated on a continuum of geographically based identities:

> Classification according to scale is a critical aspect of human ordering and is particularly important in helping to organize human identities. We are all part of the "global community," and we are all unique individuals. Between

[12] "In the construction of regionality the crossing of borders and the transcending of hierarchies is encouraged rather than penalized. Thereby essential borderlines break down and what has previously been depicted as the outside and the sphere of danger becomes part of the inside. The tolerance for diversity, decentralization and fragmentation increases. – The process infringes the principle of operating with oppositions and unmasks the brittle artificiality of constructing political space by introducing rather strict divisions." Pertti Joenniemi, "Regionality and the Modernist Script: Tuning into the Unexpected in International Politics." *Tampere Peace Research Institute, Occasional Papers No. 44*, (1994) 2; quoted by Forsberg 1996, 374.

[13] Lloyd and Thomas define even the state in a cultural mode: "What we will argue is that the effectivity of developments and transformations gathered under the concept of an emergent governmentality requires not only disciplinary institutions themselves, but a certain *idea* of the state. That idea, reproduced in state institutions of all kinds, is a regulative one which determines, in Raymond William's sense, the forms and ends of those institutions and, therefore, the possibility for subjects formed within them to transfer continually among them." Lloyd and Thomas, 1998, 4; italics in original.

> these two extremes lie several intermediary scales of identity, and, in our modern world, national identity has emerged as the single most significant of these; it is an identity both global and pervasive (Kaplan 1999: 31).

Geographies of nations and geographies of states do not coincide because, on the one hand, the spatial identity of a state involves membership in a political entity, in a juridically, administratively, and economically circumscribed area, whereas, on the other hand, the spatial identity of a nation is first of all constituted by a primordial attachment to the land and to the cultural world defining the nation's heritage. In addition, the spatial identity of a state is linked to a contiguous territory, but national identities can possess varying intensities between the center and the margins, and can be interlaced within other national identities, or even overlap with such other identities.[14] The case is entirely different if one considers macro-identities, that is, those of people living in an empire or in the orbit of specific civilizations. These identities are not territorially bound. Those based on the idea of an empire expressed in loyalty to the ruler can be compared to civilizational or feudal identities; a civilizational identity, sometimes even stronger than national identity, may be, on the contrary, entirely free of territorial linkages.

A. THE LAND

Cultures are comprehensive wholes. Meanings are self-referential within a culture, just like symbols, which, in turn, refer to other symbols. For this reason one can say that our lifeworlds are founded on cultures, that meanings and symbols frame our perspectives, and that this cultural foundation enables our species (uniquely in the cosmos) to be reflexive about the world, about space and time, incorporating both perspectives into the notion of place.

Places are different according to the existential and cultural perspectives human beings give them – human beings as individuals, as communities, and as groups living in the orbits of incommensurable civilizational contexts. Being conditioned culturally, the significance of a place may change over time – like the holy places of the past, such as places where the oracles of ancient Greece made their prophetic pronouncements (though, it is true, these places conserved across centuries an unmistakable air of holiness).

The cultural importance of places, of the overall context of individual and communal existence, indicates that they are one of the essential ingredients in the formation of cultural identities – identity being understood not only as a certain continuity and unity of the self, a clear self-awareness, but also as an awareness of the world in which one lives.[15] In Hegel's words:

> Self-consciousness exists in itself and for itself, in that, and by the fact that it exists for another self-consciousness; that is to say, it *is* only by being acknowledged or "recognized."[16]

This, of course, means that individual identity is always rooted in a community, and communal identity is manifest in its individual bearers. The subject's and the community's identity is based on memories and

[14] Kaplan 1999, 34-35.

[15] Kosaku Yoshino offers an extremely interesting case study in his *Cultural Nationalism in Contemporary Japan*, especially concerning the role of the thinking elites – *nihonjinron* – in the elaboration of the culture of Japanese uniqueness. Yoshino 1992, 9-38.

[16] F. W. Hegel, F.W. *The Phenomenology of Mind*. (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1971), 229; *emphasis* in original.

shared historical experiences because only such memories can produce a continuity of consciousness reflected in stable identities.[17]

However, the globalizing trend enhanced the awareness of differences among peoples and spurred new group identities.[18] It appears, therefore, today that individual and communal identities are waning in our Western civilization, memories are fading, and identities become decentered and fragmented in a global world characterized by Giddens as the world of space/time distanciation. The territoriality of political power, expressed by the institution of the nation-state, became incongruent with the territoriality of group, especially national, identities. Fragmented identities exist in non-Western worlds only in cases when individuals have a sort of split personality as a result of the contradiction between their socialization in a traditional world and their everyday life in a totally different, globalized world. Identity fragmentation and universalistic tendencies lead, then, to reaffirmation of differences between ethnic and religious groups or other particular strata of society.

In this respect, our place is different from other places, and the existence of the Other implies a distinction of beliefs, values, morals, and other aspects of ways of life:

> Our concepts of space have always fundamentally rested on ... images of break, rupture, and disjunction. The recognition of cultures, societies, nations, all in the *plural*, is unproblematic exactly because there appears an unquestionable division, an intrinsic discontinuity, *between* cultures, *between* societies, etc.[19]

B. HOMELAND AND TERRITORIALITY

Home, in its customary sense of homecoming, as well as homelands usually designating one's place of origin, represent a well-equilibrated balance of various human existential elements such as the biological, the spatial, the temporal, the cultural, and the social. In this sense, in a politically defined territorial space like a nation's or a state's territory, natural elements as physical space, or cultural symbols, meanings and significations, as well as social, political, and economic institutions and processes are intermeshed and interacting:

> Perceptions of territorial limits and territorial constraints are part of social and political processes. A sense of territory is an element ... of what is to be human, writes Malcolm Anderson. [He continues:] Human consciousness and social organization are profoundly conditioned by territory and frontiers. Boundary making may be seen as part of the natural history of the human species ... Territorial ideologies have had widely varying bases ... These are part of the discourse of frontiers, and without them frontiers become unintelligible. Most have motivated people to fight and to die (Anderson 1996, 189).

[17] The most intriguing recent studies on identity formation are the ones on the formation of some specific Latin American identities by Pedro Morandé, "Latinoamericanos: Hijos de un Dialogo Ritual," *Creces*, (1990), Nos. 11-12; "La Sìntesis Cultural Hispànica Indigena," *Teologia y Vida*, 32: Nos.1-2, (1991), and his book, *Cultura y Modernizacion en América Latina*, /Cuadernos del Instituto de Sociologia/. (Santiago: Universidad Catòlica de Chile, 1984).

[18] See on the problems of identities Segesvary 1999b, 123-159. Hannah Arendt wrote "mankind, for so long a time considered under the image of a family of nations, had reached the stage where whoever was thrown out of one of these tightly organized closed communities found himself thrown out of the family of nations altogether ... the abstract nakedness of being nothing but human was their greatest danger." Hanna Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1973), 294 and 300.

[19] Akhil Gupta, Space and Time in the Politics of Culture. Paper presented at the 87th annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Phoenix, Arizona, 1-2; quoted in Malkki 1992, 439; *emphasis* in original.

This pervasive sense of territoriality, as against territory, is well illustrated by the cultural traditions of all human groups and, especially, by those in which national consciousness, or "the national order of things" (Malkki's expression, in Malkki 1992, 432) is anchored. The anchoring of national feelings in the soil of the homeland is manifest in such expressions as native, indigenous, or autochthonous; thus culture of a human group always reflects a "stable, territorialized existence" (Clifford 1988, 338). In this sense, territoriality expresses a political space defined "*as it appeared from a single fixed viewpoint*" (Ruggie 1993, 159; italics in original). Therefore, Everett Hagen is right in saying that the respect of traditions does not indicate the characteristic of a particular type of society, but rather distinguishes two states of a given society (Hagen 1962, 58).

Originally, the word *patria* – that can refer as much to the land as to the people who inhabit that land – did not designate the country of birth. It was, rather, a synonym to *regio*, which referred to the various local entities during the entire Middle Ages, – political or ecclesiastical districts, bailiwicks, or cities with their surrounding territories. One belonged to a region or a province because *patria evoked one's belonging to a cultural world, to a particular society, whereas nation meant to live under the authority of a political institution*. Therefore, patriotism, a territorial identity as a form of primordial quality of total identification with one's land, transcends other identities (religious, ethnic, or class), in focusing people's loyalties on their complex human world.

In the eighteenth century, patriotism designated those citizens who wanted to introduce political and social reforms within their states. Later, patriotism denoted the legitimate love for one's country, as against nationalism, which aimed at making congruent the nation and its territory in a nation-state. Some thinkers attribute today a completely different sense to patriotism,[20] namely, an identification of citizens with a particular form of political order – naturally, the liberal, parliamentary democracy.

Region, as an aspect of the notion of land, was defined, in addition to the above-indicated characteristics of land, by the exclusive use of a language; therefore, when the use of the language of the majority was made mandatory in the absolutist state, it signified erasing regional identities and cultures.

C. TERRITORY

During the first centuries of existence of the modern state, the territorial problem did not exist as the monarch owned the land of the whole country. The word "land" is linked to its traditional cultural and social meanings, and, in most European countries, *territorium* stood for the Latin expression *ager*, as measurement of a definite portion of the rural domain.

When territory first assumed its signification as we understand it today, it signified a spatial reorganization overthrowing traditional social relationships and cultural ties. Not only such relationships but even the connection between religion and territory as well: territorialization was, since the Westphalian arrangement, closely linked to secularization. Territory became the land of a specific ethnic community as pointed out by Anthony Smith:

> I define an ethnic community (or "ethnie") as a named human population of alleged common ancestry, shared memories and elements of common culture with a link to a specific territory and a measure of specific solidarity; a "nation" as a named human population sharing a historic territory, common myths and historical memories, a mass, public culture, a common economy and common legal rights and duties; and "nationalism" as an ideological movement for the attainment and maintenance of autonomy, unity and identity on behalf of a population some of whose members deem themselves to constitute an actual or potential "nation" (Smith 1996, 447).

[20] For instance, Wolfgang Mommsen 1993, 13.

The process of the formation of territorial ethnic communities originated, according to Smith, in a cultural purification in which the initially religious idea of chosenness was reflected, and which territorialized or attached to "specific places and definite territories" peoples' shared memories in order to fit them into the modern nationalistic mould (ibid., 448 and 451). This means that old meanings and symbols were simply taken out of their historical and intellectual context and used to create the sentiment of common existence, shared culture and solidarity[21] with a view to reaching a congruence between the territorially defined modern states, in the process of formation, and the dominant ethnic groups. State boundaries responded to political, economic, and military necessities, but its populations were kept together by emotional attachments to the land on which the state ruled.

[21] How true sound, then, the words of Smith, in view of the situation which exists between Serbia, Bosnia, and Kosovo, when he says: "At the same time, sacred mountains and rivers, shrines, tombs, monuments and fields of battle could not and did not demarcate the extent of the historic homeland. In fact, the boundaries of even the most sacred of ancestral homelands fluctuated considerably in premodern times." Smith 1996, 449.

CHAPTER TWO

THE NATION-STATE AND CITIZENSHIP

1. Land and Territory in Non-Modern Societies

In all societies before the advent of modernity, society was constituted by kinship-based communities, governed by a common law recognizing mutual rights for all inhabitants on a given territory. There was no duality between ethnic, or tribal, and territorial communities, especially not for nomadic populations for whom ownership meant in effect "the title to a cycle of migration."[1] The cycle was tribally owned and administered by the prince. In such societies in which territory was not part of group identities, the existence of a territorially based state was compatible with overlapping personal jurisdictions, as people owed loyalty, simultaneously, to different overlords because political power was predicated on the personal allegiance between subjects and rulers rather than the bounds of a specific territory.

This was possible because land did not belong to either the lords or the peasants but was the property of the community. The peasants had an inherited right to use part of the communal land, whereas the lord had a right to his dues in accordance with the prevailing custom.

The historical change from kinship-based communities to larger, hierarchically organized societies (from consanguinity to contiguity) implied a complete reversal in the meaning of territorial feature: the territorial aspect became fixed territory, though a legitimate dominion based on spatial extension (the expression is from John Ruggie 1993, 148) did not imply that a political territory has to assume the form of territorial states. Territory meant, in this case, an administrative concept delineating spheres of state authority, but when nation-states were created in early modernity, territory became not only the legitimation of the state but also part of a national community's identity. A similar development though rarely occurred in Africa or Asia because non-modern conceptions of personal rule and of land ownership are still dominant.

Therefore, systems of rule in the non-modern world (including the European Middle Ages) may be conceived in three ways:

(1) Non-territorial political organization, as in kinship-based societies, in which territory was not a determinant of such organization;

(2) Political organization not based on fixed territories, as in the case of nomadic societies discussed above; and,

[1] See Lattimore 1940, 66, and his *The Mongols of Manchuria* (New York: John Day, 1934). Lattimore's intriguing discovery was that the society of Central Asian nomads changed through the establishment of fixed private property at the moment of the introduction of monastic rule of Lamaism. The allocation of fixed property prevented the process of wealth accumulation but also led to the parceling and repartitioning of tribal territory. In addition, this fundamental change also implied a transfer of allegiance of the people: hitherto they owed it to the tribal lord, but henceforth they had to show it by not deserting the tribe's territory.

(3) Non-exclusive territorial rule in which the existence of a fixed territory did not entail mutual exclusion between territorially based units, public entities, or private estates. The medieval, territorially based feudal domains without firm boundary lines, and public territories best exemplify such a system:

> Briefly put, the spatial extension of the medieval system of rule was structured by a nonexclusive form of territorial, in which authority was both personalized and parcelized within and across territorial formations and for which inclusive bases of legitimation prevailed ... In addition, the medieval system of rule was legitimated by common bodies of law, religion, and customs, expressing inclusive natural rights. Nevertheless, these inclusive legitimations posed no threat to the integrity of the constituent political units because these units viewed themselves as municipal embodiments of a universal moral community (Ruggie 1993, 150).[2]

This does not mean that in non-modern contexts there did not exist some sort of frontiers. Frontiers and boundaries, in addition to separating territories, have social functions, too,[3] such as differentiation, connection, and regulation, as they did in Africa during millennia. In the same vein, one can see frontiers as barriers, passages, filters, or gateways between different human – cultural and political – worlds. For this reason, frontiers and boundaries were in history frequently the site of conflicts over territory, over political influence, or, simply, over ambitions of persons.

The shift accomplished in modern times was fundamental: it was a shift from a certain kind of cosmopolitanism to isolationism between the frontiers of the nation-state. Exclusive jurisdiction internally, and independence externally – they constitute the nation-state's sovereignty.

2. The Creation of Sovereign Nation-States

In modernity, the consolidation of personal and fragmented authority into one public realm led to the replacement of the bases of legitimation derived from the existence of a universal community, by the doctrine of sovereignty. The creation of nation-states consisted in making coextensive entities of the national community and the territorial state on which the community lived. This was the aim of every nationalist movement through the creation of nation-states,[4] despite the very fact that few nations lived in a pure and compact mass on a contiguous territory. Their character as a collectively self-defined entity with a shared destiny, language, and culture marks both a nation and an ethnic group,[5] but ethnic ties are transformed through a political commitment, promoted by nationalist movements, into a political nation requiring the establishment of its own state. The formation of nation-states possessing their bounded territory was, thus, considered inevitable to ensure the continued existence of nations.

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[2] On this point another work of Ruggie has to be referred to as well: John G. Ruggie, "Continuity and Transformation in the World Polity: Toward a Neorealist Synthesis," *World Politics* (1983), 35: 261-285.

[3] C. Raffestin, "Autour de la fonction sociale de la frontière." *Espaces et sociétés: Identités, espaces, frontières* (1993), 70-71: 157-164.

[4] In a recent formulation: "Nationalism is in essence a claim that political power should reflect *cultural* homogeneity, according to some common set of historically specific political understandings of the content of the nation." Hirst and Thompson 1996, 172; *emphasis* in original.

[5] Guéhenno gives a curiously reductive, though not untrue, definition of the nation: "What distinguishes a national community, as the Europeans have defined it, from all other communities lies in this: it brings people together not for what they are but for the memory of what they have been. A nation has no other definition but historical. It is the locus of a common history, of common misfortunes, and of common triumphs. It is the locus of shared destiny." Guéhenno 1995, 4.

The birth of nation-states in large part follows the establishment of the Westphalian system in 1648 because, as Giddens pointed out: "The development of the sovereignty of the modern state from its beginnings depends upon a reflexively monitored set of relations between states" (Giddens 1981/85, 2:263). Even the post-colonial states, justifiably called state-nations, were not exceptions to this rule, as, after independence, these newly independent states were based on the state apparatus created by the colonial power and anointed by the interstate system's current institution, the United Nations. In appearance a normatively universal order was created, though Badie is right in saying:

> The diffusion of the territorial principle did not achieve the triumph of the universal over the particular or of modernity over tradition, it simply gave the garb of a universal principle to a conquering particularity (Badie 1995, 53; my translation).

It is in this sense that identities of nation and state, tied to a territorial determination are called by some authors *spatial identities*. Shared space, as the people's homeland, contributes (1) to weld together fragmented individual and group experiences in a historical destiny, and (2) to create a collective consciousness and identity. In many cases, the nation is not defining the territory but practically the territory is defining the nation. However, the primordial cultural definition of the nation cannot be ignored, implying a collective memory and shared historical destiny (and, as such, tied to its territory, its homeland) as well as common social practices such as settlement structures and land use; therefore, the designation of nation and state as spatial identities are only true in a very limited sense.

This is all the more the case that the so-called institutionalization of territories was always, in all historical epochs, a contested and not a universal phenomenon, precisely because few nations occupied a contiguous territory. In consequence, the establishment of a centralized national power center involved the destruction of all local and regional communities and corporative organizations, whether their members belonged to the dominant nation, or to ethnic, religious, linguistic, or cultural minorities: "Modern state power meant disempowerment of communal self-management and local or corporative mechanisms of self-perpetuation; it meant, therefore, sapping the social foundations of communal and corporative traditions and forms of life" (Bauman 1990, 157). All differences, all heterogeneity of cultural forms and social practices, any manifestation of pluralism, were supposed to disappear in the name of the universality of the principles and values sustained by those who were at the helm of the new state.[6] The destruction by the nascent state of all mediating bodies of society, mediating, that is, between itself and the population, appears today particularly disingenuous because through the idea of self-determination nationalism and freedom are inextricably interwoven. Both are normative and not analytical principles.

In view of this, national territories should be rather envisaged as multidimensional spaces which possess (1) physical traits determining the framework of the lifeworld of all populations living on them; (2) a sense of place revealed in narratives, collective memories, and cultural expressions; as well as (3) a historic role in the formation of the nation's destiny.[7]

Such an enterprise required, from the beginning, the forced extraction from the population of those material means which were necessary to consolidate the central power. But, in an ulterior phase, the territorial state needed a legitimation by society and for this purpose put the emphasis of government on the provision of public order. Legitimation in the outside world in relations between territorial states was obtained through mutual recognition of the constitutive principle of sovereignty, and the interstate system has been

[6] "The effective disenfranchisement of alternative value-generating and value-legitimating authorities was represented as the universality of values supported by the extant hierarchy. In fact, however, the alleged universality of the authoritatively hailed and promoted values had no other material substratum but the expediently protected sovereignty of the value-adjudicating powers. The more effective was the suppression of possible sources of challenge, the less chance there was that the bluff universality would be called, and that the pretense of the absolute validity of value-claims would be unmasked as a function of power monopoly." Bauman 1990, 160.

[7] It is very true what Van Gennep noted, namely, that "at each moment of its duration, nationality is never in other than an unstable equilibrium. It is always becoming. This instability is the proof of its internal vitality." Quoted by Cobban 1969, 127.

built on this reciprocal attitude.[8] This development happened logically because sovereignty "begets equality where more than one actor is defined sovereign" (Miller 1994, 24).

Claims to universal power such as the universal (religious) authority of the pope, eroded the equilibrated, non-territorially determined power relations between political entities already in the medieval period. Without entering here into an analysis of the complex details concerning the birth of nation-states on the European continent – economic development and accumulation of wealth in mercantilism, improved weaponry and military capabilities, the emergence of a bureaucratic state apparatus – I wish only to call attention to the importance of the territorial definition of power in this process. Even overseas expansion and the beginning of colonization reflected this importance as spelled out in the Treaty of Tordesillas in 1494, dividing Spanish and Portuguese colonial spheres along a line of longitude. It became, thus, clear that, in the nascent world of modernity, territory defined the extent of sovereignty, of political power. Even the description of society has been cut to the measure of the nation-state with which it became intimately associated. People lost the feeling of ontological security when their age-old communities and local, traditional institutions were destroyed, though this was expected to be stimulated, in turn, by the nationalist symbols and ideology of the dominant nation (Giddens 1981/85, 2:218). This "étatization of the nation" (Bauman 1990, 161) explains the increasingly important discourse about civil society in our age, which designates society as a *sui generis* entity, not dependent on, or unduly controlled by, state power.

This evolution brought with itself a confusing phenomenon from the point of view of populations living on the territory of the new states. Some of the nation-states were born out of a long centralizing process which was initiated by autocratic power holders, and in certain cases, like France or Russia, populations were homogenized, to the extent possible, by administrative measures and pure physical constraint in the name of the principle of universal citizenship. In other states, a more or less homogeneous population lived under the rule of fragmented, sovereign entities, as in Germany, benefiting still from some privileges of the cosmopolitan atmosphere of the preceding age because identities were not imposed in the form of citizenship in the state. Finally, there were nation-states in which identities developed along ethnic lines, in Central and Eastern Europe, though not without reference to territorial attachments. Thus, in the course of the formation of nation-states two different types of identities were present from the beginning, – the civic or citizen identity, congruous with the territory of the state, and the national, ethnic, and cultural identity encompassing a contiguous territory.

3. Democracy and the Nation-State

Two important changes modified people's relationship to the state in the course of subsequent developments. First, the democratic principle put emphasis on popular sovereignty as opposed to territorial/dynastic sovereignty under the banner of democracy. People, however, could be either the citizens of a country, or members of the ethnically or culturally defined nation.[9] Second, these two types of identities

[8] "The United Nations, it can be said, canonized a paradoxical view of change in the contemporary world. On the one hand, it hallowed the *status quo* by making the large territorial state, a political form of a limited period of all human history, inviolable. States were to be building blocks of the UN, while the UN, in turn, would attempt to safeguard them from aggression. At the same time, the UN was elaborating comprehensive plans for undermining the *status quo* through economic and social programs promoted by states. Little concern was exhibited for the near impossibility of undermining the *status quo* in one realm without also disturbing it in the other and the very real possibility of social and economic change bringing domestic and international political instability. Broad acceptance of UN plans and goals by populations throughout the world was simply assumed." Migdal 1988, 13-14.

[9] Cobban relates democracy and nation-state in a historical perspective: "One of the major sources of democratic ideas was the eighteenth-century belief in the identity of human nature, or, to use the language of the century, in the natural equality of men. When the cosmopolitanism of the Enlightenment was replaced by the nationalism of the romantic movement, and the differences rather than the uniformities in human nature came to be stressed, it was gradually realized that the homogeneity assumed to be necessary for democracy did not exist in any state containing members of more than one nationality. Here we have an explanation in theoretical terms of the growth of the belief that democracy is only possible in a nationally united state." Cobban 1969, 130.

were conflated because the state, looking for a reinforced territorial and dynastic legitimation, appealed to ethnic and cultural principles in order to unify its citizenry behind the governing group.

The Hobbesian, Lockean, and Rousseauan theory of contract between members of a society to delegate their powers to the state is a pure intellectual construction. According to Rousseau, the myth of the *volonté générale*, is in no way a majority will in his view but a meta-physical, indivisible phenomenon "emanating from the people as one single unit, and which is always right."[10] The idea of the general will was, in truth, nothing but a means to transfer the transcendent power of the king, separate from the people, to the people themselves while, as a popularly legitimated power, it remained separate from the multitude of individuals which it transcended.[11] And Rousseau went as far as suggesting (what became the real situation in the modern age and what destroys democratic life) that "each citizen should be in perfect independence of the others, and *excessively dependent on the State* ... For it is only the power of the State which makes the freedom of its members."[12] As Reinhold Niebuhr correctly saw:

> The myth of the "social contract" was a symbol of modern man's protest against his subordination to historical and natural ties in a traditional society, and an assertion of man's role as creator and agent in history. The myth vividly but erroneously gathers, into one discreet act of reason and will, all the gradual accretions of human freedom in the historical process (Niebuhr 1965, 55-56).[13]

Kratochwil clearly explained (Kratochwil 1996, 183) that there can be no question of such a social contract because two of the main elements of contractual proceedings is missing from the theory: first, the fact that one cannot revoke it except by changing one's citizenship; and, second, that the consent of any individual cannot be considered to be implied by an act on his behalf as participation in voting cannot be deemed as an act of consent because it is itself based on a prior, presupposed consent in the form of contract. As the legitimation of a theoretical social contract, only the principle of the territorial jurisdiction of the state can be referred to.

In Rousseau's understanding today's representative democracy, a consequence of the large size of populations in most countries, is not a democracy because people cannot delegate their power based on the contract concluded between them and expressing their general will.[14] In this sense, Rousseau's foresight of what will be the fate of democracy is striking because it is precisely what he predicted that happens today – the growing phenomenon of abstentions in democracies reflects the feeling that periodic elections of representatives do not permit an effective participation in governmental affairs.

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[10] Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract*, trans. H.J. Tozer. (London: Allen & Unwin, 1920), book II, chapter 4, 123.

[11] "The social pact gives the body politic an absolute power over all its members; and it is the same power which, when directed by the general will, bears, as I said, the name of sovereignty." Ibid., 125.

[12] Ibid.; italics are mine.

[13] Niebuhr also pinpoints Locke's disregard of the difference between implicit and explicit consent for civil authority, due to his ideological blindness engendered by an excessive rationalism. He quotes Locke: "When any number of men have, by the consent of every individual, made a community, they have thereby made the community one body, with a power to act as one body, which is only by the will and determination of the majority." Locke 1946, chap. 8, par. 96. This imaginary contractual arrangement will, in the view of Locke, "provide for their own safety and security, which is the end for which they are in society." Ibid., chap. 19, par. 222.

[14] "Sovereignty cannot be represented for the same reason that it cannot be alienated ... The deputies of the people are not and cannot be its representatives; they are only its commissioners and can conclude nothing definitely. Every law which the people in person have not ratified is invalid; it is not a law. The English nation thinks that it is free, but is greatly mistaken, for it is only during the election of members of Parliament; as soon as they are elected, it is enslaved and counts for nothing. The use which it makes of the brief moment of freedom renders the loss of liberty well-deserved." ibid., book III, chapter 15, par. 187.

The failure of democratic processes is, therefore, the principal element in the crisis of the nation-state, the credibility of which is in question; it is a sign of the growing distance between the state and civil society that democracy does not represent more than the competitive access to power by a political elite. Jürgen Habermas dubbed, in one early but important work, the crisis of the nation-state as legitimation crisis, putting clearly the blame on the dysfunctioning of democracy:

> The arrangement of formal democratic institutions and procedures permits administrative decisions to be made largely independently of specific motives of the citizens. This takes place through a legitimation process that elicits general motives – that is, diffuse mass loyalty – but avoids participation. This structural alteration of the bourgeois public realm (*Öffentlichkeit*) provides for application of institutions and procedures that are democratic in form, while the citizenry, in the midst of an objectively (*an sich*) political society, enjoy the status of passive citizens with only the right to withhold acclamation (Habermas 1975, 36-37; italics in original).[15]

A reference must be made here to the prevailing situation in the European Union because it shows how supra-national political entities – regional states or a world state – simply reproduce the defaults of the nation-state. The enormous weakness of European integration is that European legal acts "derive their democratic legitimacy overwhelmingly from the democratic legitimation of the national governments.[16] No democratic legitimation is possible through multilevel transmission processes neither in a nation-state nor in larger, so-called metastatal political entities.

It is noteworthy that, when the democratic process was re-formulated in a universalistic language as the right to self-determination, it was only applied to the territorial states of Central and Eastern Europe, after World War I, and to the de-colonized territories of Asia, Africa, or Latin America, after World War II. In both cases, an external power and not a democratically elected majority dominated and oppressed minorities inside an existing state territory. This meant that the principle of self-determination did not apply to those European states where civic identity was enforced by state power through assimilation, whereas the situation was totally different in the so-called settler countries, like the United States of America, where the autochthonous population was nearly annihilated and immigrant populations willingly accepted civic identity.

It makes, therefore, sense to ask the question, as Katherine Fierlbeck does (Fierlbeck 1998, 87), whether there can be a non-liberal, that is, non-Western, type of democracy in view of the fact that for many people living in the orbit of non-Western civilizations, liberal ideals are foreign and served oppressive strategies? Her answer is that democracy as the principle of self-rule justifies the doctrine of collective self-determination considered as leading to individual autonomy. Thus the dilemma, from Fierlbeck's point of view, is reduced to whether democracy, whose main aim is the recognition and protection of individual rights, is compatible or can coexist with group rights? However, in this perspective the fact that national self-determination is a collective act makes such an exercise of self-rule non-liberally democratic because it does not reflect Western cultural values and recognizes common, public interests above the protection of the sacrosanct interests of individuals. Let's say it clearly; the doctrine of self-determination favors and promotes, in principle, any civilizational values, even those different from the ones propagated by contemporary Western ideologies.

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[15] Later in his study, Habermas expands his idea of a legitimation deficit: "A rationality deficit in public administration means that the state apparatus cannot, under given boundary conditions, adequately steer the economic system. A legitimation deficit means that it is not possible by administrative means to maintain or establish effective normative structures to the extent required. During the course of capitalist development, the political system shifts its boundaries not only into the economic system but also into the socio-cultural system. While organizational rationality spreads, cultural traditions are undermined and weakened. The residue of tradition must, however, escape the administrative grasp, for traditions important for legitimation cannot be regenerated administratively. Furthermore, administrative manipulation of cultural matters has the unintended side effect of causing meanings and norms previously fixed by tradition and belonging to the *boundary* conditions of the political system to be publicly thematized." Habermas 1975, 47-48. Habermas also explains why culture is particularly resistant to administrative control, because "*there is no administrative production of meaning*." Ibid., 70; in both cases *emphasis* in original.

[16] Dieter Grimm in Gowan and Anderson, 1997, 240.

4. The Modern State and Modern Citizenship

It is a most important fact that the concept of citizenship, inherited by the West as a juridical status from Rome, does not, against all contrary opinions, favor a universalistic outlook but can be easily accommodated to a fragmented world picture, too. In comparison the Greek concept of citizenship, the essential criterion to be a *civis romanus* was legal and not ascriptive, though it is evident that this Roman concept was formed only when the scale of territories and populations controlled by Rome increased enormously. Imperial Rome's definition of society was, therefore, in accordance with the rule of law: "It was no longer a matter of organizing the life and conflicts between groups of real individuals, but of regulating the relations between subjects of law" (Schnapper 1998, 69). Citizenship thus became, in theory, a universal category; – meaning certain openness to foreigners – but in reality the organization of Roman society remained oligarchic.

In medieval Europe, innumerable and intertwined vertical ties linked together members of the feudal society, whereas in the city-states and the nascent monarchies of the late Middle Ages and the Renaissance, the ties between members of society became horizontal. However, this unique evolution in Europe, unique in comparison to all other civilizations, did not mean, as some would like to suggest, that European society became less hierarchical, less unequal than societies in other cultural orbits. The territorial state, created by the monarchs, represented the body politic, which was entirely dependent on the absolutist power of rulers. Therefore, medieval communes, Renaissance city-states, and the feudal organization of society corresponded more to the Roman ideal than the modern state during the first centuries of its existence.

It was precisely this situation that made it necessary, after the age of Enlightenment, to find a clear popular legitimation for the territorial state. This led to the nationalistic fervor aiming at making to coincide the state with a particular, dominant nation; the doctrine of nationalism thus offered a legitimation for the territorial state. The advent of the nationalistic age meant, of course, another epochal shift in European life, that which represented the trend away from the non-modern communal conception toward a completely individualistic comprehension of society in general, and of political society in particular. The concept of citizenship was, thus, formulated in its modern form: against the republican or imperial image of the citizen the liberal-populist understanding of citizenship was born (Walzer 1989, 216).[17]

At this point it is necessary to introduce a caveat regarding the political evolution of modern Europe, because it may look to an inadvertent observer that nations and national feeling did not exist before the appearance of nationalism. This would be completely false because nations as naturally formed ethnic collectivities and communities of culture – with shared language, values, symbols, and in most cases, shared religious faith – existed since immemorial times. *Nations occupy a self-constituting public space characterized by specific identities and ways of life*. In this sense, national consciousness and national feeling were not born in the modern age but were transformed and exploited for the political legitimation of the territorial state and became the so-called civic nationalism.

In fact, the modern democratic political process changed the classic meaning of democracy. We have to remember that for Aristotle to delegate one's power is to renounce one's liberty. Classical republicanism in, for instance, Machiavelli's understanding is not possible in larger political units whose functioning, in this perspective, would require the existence of a community, bearer of a common culture and of common traditions. Thus, modern democracies in the emerging nation-states could not have functioned without popular acceptance of the principle of delegation or representation; representative democracy, therefore, necessitates the creation of political parties to represent the interests of citizen groups in a situation of institutionalized and regulated political and social conflicts. As Niklas Luhmann wrote,

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[17] Walzer explains his differentiation of the republican or imperial against the liberal citizenship concepts as follows: "We have, then, two different understandings of what it means to be a citizen. The first describes citizenship as an office, a responsibility, a burden proudly assumed; the second describes citizenship as a status, an entitlement, a right or set of rights passively enjoyed. The first makes citizenship the core of our life, the second makes it its outer frame. The first assumes a closely knit body of citizens, its members committed to one another; the second assumes a diverse and loosely connected body, its members (mostly) committed elsewhere. According to the first, the citizen is the primary political actor, law-making and administration his everyday business. According to the second, law-making and administration are someone else's business, the citizen's business is private." Walzer 1989, 216.

> The legitimacy of parliamentary representation must then be grounded in the fact that a representation of unity, a representation of the system in the system, is no longer possible. Since then, "representation" has been a hopeless, romantic category ... My argument is that the problems of the legitimacy of political power are linked with this impossibility of representation (Luhmann 1987, 103-104).[18]

Democracies are not based on communal values, but on universalistic principles, that is, on the citizen-individual who is supposed to possess the required competencies and capacities for exercising his rights in periodical elections. Modern citizenship, therefore, simply is a regulating idea. All the more that citizenship in the modern, democratic state, a deliberative democracy, was construed as implying a complete but abstract individual autonomy – individuals must be the best judges of their own interests – based on "anonymously interlinked discourses" and "the paradoxical sense of compliance with the procedural rationality of a political will-formation" (Habermas 1992, 11).[19] It is also implying that citizens possess such abilities and capabilities in all spheres of activity that enable them to realize the Rousseauan ideal of free and autonomous individual, responsibly sharing in the making of the laws he obeys. As a consequence, any shortcomings, any deficiencies of individual citizens are to be ascribed to social and political conditions that can, and must be, improved.

Beside periodic elections, and excluding the eventuality of revolution, the citizen-individuals have absolutely no means at their disposal to break the rule of those they voted into power. This is the sense of the expression of majority dictatorship in democracies, which already Tocqueville noticed in nineteenth century America. Civic nationalism in the territorial state is a principle of political regimentation, and citizenship in this sense is still focused on belonging (to a historical community, the nation) and status (ensuring economic entitlements and other privileges).[20] In consequence, *nation-states were born out of the integration of lonely individuals through citizenship* – a citizen's identity being constituted by loyalty to the state – that was achieved by the instrumental use of nationalistic ideology. No other identity-constituting loyalty or belonging is admitted than that of the loyalty of citizens to the state – the Habermasian constitutional patriotism[21] – based on an imaginary contract between the rulers and the people. Kratochwil defines citizenship status as, on the one hand, a "right to have rights," "a bundle of rights protected by law," and, on the other hand, "to be free from certain (arbitrary) interferences" in one's life (Kratochwil 186). It is in this sense that Michael Walzer declares that for citizens "the political community is only a necessary framework, a set of external arrangements not a common life" Walzer 1989, 215).[22]

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[18] As Habermas expressed it: "The classic republican idea of the self-conscious political integration of a community of free and equal persons is evidently too concrete and simple a notion to remain applicable to modern conditions, especially if one has in mind a nation, indeed an ethnically honogeneous community which is held together by common traditions and a shared history." Habermas 1992, 11.

[19] Habermas sought to eliminate this paradox with reference to the classical republican conception: "In this regard, the republican model of citizenship reminds one that the institutions of constitutional freedom are only worth as much as a population makes of them, and this would be a population *accustomed* to political freedom and well-versed in adopting the we-perspective of active self-determination. Therefore, the legally institutionalized role of a citizen had to be embedded in the context of a political culture imbued with the concept of freedom." Ibid., 7.

[20] "'Citizenship' might not even be a 'description' of a social fact such as the bundling of rights," Kratochwil wrote recently. He continued, "It is perhaps best to conceive of 'citizenship' as a *space* within a discourse on politics that institutionalizes identities and differences by drawing boundaries, in terms of both membership and the actual political practices associated with this membership." Kratochwil 1996, 182; *emphasis* in original.

[21] "The political culture must serve as the common denominator for a constitutional patriotism which simultaneously sharpens an awareness of the multiplicity and integrity of the different forms of life which coexist in a multicultural society." Ibid., 7.

[22] Referring to writers such as Rawls or Ackerman, Kratochwil points out that "the 'liberal' stratagem of eliminating all substantive content from the public sphere and situating it in 'civil society' has come to haunt this very construct, as the very identity of 'civil society' is not being subjected to a similar process of elimination." Kratochwil 1996, 187.

In the nation-state the citizen-individual, or at least it is pictured in this way by contemporary theorists, is able to break away from his traditional community, beliefs, and values, from prescribed roles and lifestyles, and to enjoy free communication with other citizen-individuals. For this reason, most communities, institutions, and organizations, which could have been considered as intermediaries between the atomistic individual and the state, had to be eliminated by force or by ideological persuasion. As Gellner made it evident:

> It is the establishment of an anonymous, impersonal society, with mutually substitutable atomized individuals, held together, above all, by a shared culture of this kind [the civic culture of the modern state] in place of a previously complex structure of local groups, sustained by folk-cultures, reproduced locally and idiosyncratically by the micro-groups themselves (Gellner 1983, 57).[23]

This evolution made almost impossible the survival of any kind of institutionalized pluralism of social groups on the territory of the state. Consequently, all citizen-individuals, framed by a set of institutionally embedded social practices,[24] were left at the mercy of the powerful state. One cannot avoid discovering here a fundamental paradox of the modern, territorial state whose populations, as citizens, are composed of equal, human individuals – representing the principle of universality – whereas the state's legitimation is derived from its constitutive body, the nation – representing the principle of particularity. This construction was accompanied by a logical and rational corollary completing this idea of citizenship, namely, the exclusion of others, or the non-granting of equal status for those belonging to the outside, that is, those belonging to another territorial unit.

Political legitimacy in the democratic nation-state is linked "to the state's capacity to deal relatively effectively with the demands and expectations of its citizens as much as with the citizens' right to exercise control over public affairs and the ruling elites" (Axtmann 1996, 133). Hence, the importance of the transformation of the modern state into welfare state. This is the other face of the democratic nation-state's essence, that the state has to take care of its citizens – atomistic individuals – because there are no more institutions of civil society, which could take care of them. The "social massification" (Rosanvallon 1988, 207) induced a widespread social fragmentation, and the social bond disappeared. The dysfunctions of the market necessitated more and more intervention by the state and, consequently, shifted more and more power into the hands of the bureaucracy, an anonymous, impersonal mechanism in charge of social assistance. This development introduced a growing inflexibility in the structures of the welfare state. The crisis of the latter is "in large measure an expression of the exponential costs of this inflexibility" (ibid.):

> The alternative to the welfare state is not primarily institutional, but societal. The task is to bring into being a civil society of greater density and to develop its scope for exchange and mutual support, instead of "externalizing" these needs and abandoning their satisfaction to the twin poles of market or state ... Such an immense revolution in our present forms of legal and political representation would mean moving beyond the welfare state as the sole expression and instrument of collective mutual support ... The only way to reduce the state intervention requirement in a non-regressive fashion is to encourage the multiplication of community self-help initiatives or locally organized, small-scale public services (ibid., 204-206).

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[23] Therefore, in Castells' words, "the (re)construction of political meaning on the basis of specific identities fundamentally challenges the very concept of citizenship. The state could only shift the source of its legitimacy from representing people's will and providing for their well-being, to asserting collective identity, by identifying itself with communalism to the exclusion of other values and of minorities' identities." Castells 1997, 2:343.

[24] Some authors, like Bryan Turner, define citizenship in terms of "that set of social practices (juridical, political, economic and cultural) which define a person as a competent member of society, and which as a consequence shape the flow of resources to persons and social groups ... [This conception of citizenship would eliminate the hiatus between civil society and citizenship because] ... citizenship is essentially about the nature of social membership within modern political collectivities." Turner 1993, 2-3. And Turner points out that citizenship is, in Durkheim's sense, a "secular *conscience collective.*" Ibid., 8; *emphasis* in original.

In the age of globalization, besides being overburdened as a result of the revolution of rising expectations, the power of the state to carry out all necessary actions in response to its welfare mandate are increasingly constrained. Many relevant policy issues require international cooperation and agreements, and who can thus be held accountable for the decisions taken? What is the sense of democratic accountability, especially in a world in which a hegemonic power imposes its interests and its ideology, through conviction and not through coercion, upon other members of the interstate system?

5. Globalization and the Nation-State

Globalization means diversification and, therefore, it creates a plural world. This plurality does not mean a simple coexistence of different human worlds, or a world in which plurality is only apparent because one particular worldview and way of life extends its hegemony on the whole planet, but

> The growing awareness of several interdependent but mutually irreducible components of modernity, and of the discrepancies and tension within them ... [globalization] should rather be understood as a new framework of differentiation (Arnason 1990, 220).

Pluralism means the plurality of complete ways of life, a pluralism of values – a civilizational pluralism. Therefore, in a pluralist state the existence of different religions and worldviews is accepted in an appropriate legal framework (this means that the state would take a positive and not a neutral stance toward these different ways of life), and in the pluralistic world system it is natural that various civilizations coexist. In a pluralist state, there cannot be dominant belief and value systems such as in totalitarian regimes. As against the liberal, at the surface pluralist, democracies, in truly pluralist states it is not individual persons who are the bearer of rights, but communities effectively representing cultural differences manifested in different ways of life (Gray 1995, 136-141). As against the present, hegemonic world system, in a world of civilizational pluralism neither democratic forms of political ordering nor market mechanisms as the framework for economic activities may be declared as the universally valid forms of structuring public life.

Interconnectedness is complementary to this pluralism; states and societies have to situate themselves in the context of a global order. It is, therefore, unrealistic that the nation-state formula, a particular form of institutionalization of the political sphere, was, without further ado, transplanted in non-European territories of the colonial world, belonging to other civilizational orbits: "The modern European state emerged within the confines of a single civilization united by the normative and religious power of Christendom."[25] To obtain the right to be different, non-Western countries and peoples had first to adopt the Western ways of political institutionalization. The imposition of the European model replaced the diversity of forms of political organization which prevailed in the past in Africa and Asia, and nationalist movements seized the reigns of power of the colonial (nation)-states as defined politically and geographically by the colonizers, believing that there was no alternative to the status quo.

Although the universalization of the nation-state norm contributed to the worldwide extension of the interstate system, cultural homogenization within the newly emerged nation-states reinforced cultural diversities and particularistic identities instead of leading to the appearance of a world culture. The timelessness and the context-specific character of Western civilization undermine its capacity to create a global identity.

Concerning Asia, a recent, detailed study (Tonnesson and Antlöv 1996a) demonstrates that Asian nationalism does not fit into the Western framework. Cultural diversity in Asia is much more complex than in Western civilization; it includes four major belief and morality systems (Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism,

[25] Andrew Linkblater, "The Problem of Community in International Relations." *Alternatives*, (1990), 15:135-153; quotation is on 136.

Islam) and an incredibly rich range of traditions, popular beliefs, and ways of life. There are no signs at all that the globalization of the form of political organization we call the nation-state, already imposed by the colonial powers, "will give way to a cultural diversification also of national forms. A growing self-confidence in many parts of Asia is likely to reduce the attraction of Western models" (ibid., 23). The idea of a nation, and of a nation-state in particular, is vehemently opposed by religious groups and in many cases it is rejected because it is linked to egalitarianism, though a large part of society is respectful of historically embedded hierarchical principles.

It is a fundamental insight with respect to nationalism in Asia that there exists a *civilizational nationalism*, comparable to a nationalist movement in favor not of building a nation but of safeguarding the beliefs, values, and practices of a great civilization. Such civilizational nationalism coexists with more or less Western-type nationalist movements, like Hindu nationalist parties[26] or ethnically based Han nationalism and the so-called Chinese high-culturalism.

Heesterman sees in a similar way the confrontation of tradition and modernization in India. He explains the inner conflict in Indian civilization between the "turbulent order of conflict" and "the static order of transcendence" (as he calls them), which can only be mediated by man's conscious intervention. Secular modernity, on the contrary, pretended to eliminate this gap, and proceeded with a

> Total identification of the mundane with the transcendent order. As the sovereignty ascribed to it makes it clear, the modern state cannot be transcended. It is itself transcendent and so is its universalist order. Hence the similarity of the brahmanical and the modern tradition. However, the difference is equally obvious. There is no room for a countervailing order. Modernity, then, means the integration of the mundane and the transcendent orders into one explosive reality (Heesterman 1985, 9).

In Indian civilization, traditional political organization always oscillated between a complete dispersion of power, which became merged in the social order, and a political order in which power was separated from society, which it administered according to unchangeable, transcendental rules legitimated by the universal ideal.[27]

In imperial China, two conceptualizations of the political community were coexisted for a long time: the so-called culturalism reflecting the view that in imperial times China was defined in terms of the traditional, universalistic, predominantly Confucian high culture ("the enduring sense of Chinese essence, (*guocui*) as a singularly important 'we' [the Chinese world] against 'them' [the barbarian world]" (Kim and Dittmer 1993, 246), and ethnic Han nationalism intertwined with a focus on lineage and family relations.[28] Both, of course, defined distinguishing marks and boundaries of the Chinese people, and in this they were similar. Both were committed as well to a transnational ideal, but the Chinese transnational ideal had solid foundations in the Confucian civilizational context and the acceptance of the state "as an embodiment of the combination of many common elements of the population that constitutes the Chinese identity" (ibid., 247). Legitimate

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[26] "It is important not to forget that Gandhi's nationalism was not so much aimed at the creation of a nation-state, he rarely talked about an Indian nation. Nationalism was patriotism, in defense not of a nation, but of a moral order derived from ancestral loyalty and communal integrity. His mission was to recreate the sense of an Indian civilization, regenerating its people and creating the conditions for an autonomous moral growth." Parekh Bikhu, "Ethnocentricity of the Nationalist Discourse." *Nations and Nationalism*, (1995), 1, No. 1: 39. Concerning Indian nationalism see also Dipankar Gupta, "Ethnicity, Religions, and National Politics in India," in Berberoglu 1995, 77-94.

[27] "The latter pole [the transcendental, universal ideal] is in the literal sense transcendent in that it is beyond the limitations of actual society and can therefore possess ultimate legitimating force. It can only be imagined in an extrasocietal, never-never world such as Ashoka's *dharma* empire, the '*umma*, the universal brotherhood of all believers, as the Islamic polity, or the *universitas Christiana*." Heesterman 1985, 20.

[28] Kim and Dittmer point out that Han nationalism cannot be considered as based on race because the fifty-six component ethnic groups of the Chinese populations are all Mongoloid by race. More than 8 million people (around 8 per cent of the total population) reside in the autonomous regions covering roughly 64 per cent of the country's territory. Kim and Dittmer 1993, 247 and 279.

sovereignty resided with the imperial center and, as a consequence, (1) no regional states could long time claim any durable sovereignty within the empire, and (2) the emperor, under the Mandate of Heaven, was in principle the ruler over the whole earth.

Transcendentalism therefore was rooted in the Confucian worldview, and no ethnic diversity could justify political division. In the same vein, the Chinese image of world order, reflecting the assumptions, beliefs, and symbols of Confucian teachings, was nothing but the planetary projection of Chinese civilizational identity, which constituted, in expanding concentric circles, the cosmic order. The important difference between civilizational and Han nationalism was evidenced by the fact that though Chinese culturalism contended that the Chinese worldview was superior to that of non-Chinese barbarians, it was not exclusive but admitted, without objection, foreigners who submitted themselves to the acculturation process.[29] This was made possible by the importance attributed to proper ritual forms (*li*) against the substantive content of beliefs in maintaining social order:

> One is and becomes Chinese and achieves Chinese cultural identity (*wen*) by understanding and performing key rituals associated with the life cycle – the rites of birth, marriage, death, and ancestor – in the proper and accepted manner. In essence, one becomes Chinese by *acting* Chinese. Rites rather than beliefs – participatory practice rather than adherence to values – is really what make one Chinese (ibid., 256; italics in original).[30]

As a consequence, Chinese civilizational ties were so flexible that those considered being Chinese and participating in the rituals preordained by the founders and organized by the imperial center could, however, celebrate simultaneously their local and regional distinctiveness.[31]

The nation-builders in republican China, when the process of modernization made obsolete the universalistic pretensions of the empire, had a very similar objective to the one of their imperial predecessors: the establishment and maintenance of unity under a centralized state. Western-type nationalism was part of the new state's formation (state-nationalism). This was an overwhelming task because the concepts of China and Chinese identity had to be clarified in opposition and, simultaneously, with reference to the traditional civilizational context. The onslaught of Western modernity thus created the never resolved *tiyong* dilemma, which meant to safeguard the traditional civilizational background as Chinese identity and to appropriate Western learning for its practical utility.

No expression existed to designate China as a country, and traditional notions related to the state and political institutions underwent considerable changes as a result of historical evolution. As an example, the modification of the meaning of the term *fengjian* (feudalism) can be mentioned. *Fengjian* signified in the past a check upon absolutist power; in modern times *fengjian* and related notions received a negative connotation meaning the outsider against whom Chinese civilization should be defended.[32] Up to now, Chinese identity is considered as culturally based and, even according to Communist ideology, the Han people and ethnic minorities partake together in this Chinese identity.

In the Islamic world, especially in Arab countries, the conflict between civilizational context and the various nationalisms in individual states was always extremely sharp. Islam, as all monotheistic religions, is universalistic and, in addition, it does not differentiate between this worldly and the otherworldly life; human

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[29] This inclusiveness was also evidenced in ancient China by the fact that the principle of succession based on ethnic affiliation gradually gave place to the principle of succession according to competence. Lodén 1996, 272-273.

[30] It is significant that in imperial China the Board of Rites "was in charge of handling external affairs by enforcing the proper performance of rites and rituals in the acceptable Chinese way (such as the performance of the kowtow: three kneelings and nine prostration)." Dittmer and Kim 1993, 257.

[31] "In the traditional Chinese normative order, the determination of right and wrong stressed the derelictions of obligations as required by *li* (proper form) above the actual nature of transgression, wrongdoing was determined not by the commission of certain acts but by the violation of the obligations associated with filial piety." ibid., 260.

[32] Prasenjit Duara, "De-Constructing the Chinese Nation," in Unger 1996, 31-55; quotation is on 48.

existence represents a continuum. The concept of Islamic universalism is based on the *'ummah* which, in accordance with the Qur'an's teachings, is not a supra-national entity but the only entity encompassing the human lifeworld. The only nation which, for Muslims, can exist on earth is precisely the '*ummah*. The latter has some territorial connotations as the *dâr-al-islâm*, the abode of Islam, can be understood as a source of spatial identification. However, the only particular localities, which were really considered sacred, were the holy cities because of their primordial role in the early history of Islam. In fact, the whole history of Islamic civilization, as evidenced by the conquests, represented a definite openness instead of a trend toward isolation.

The Islamic space can, thus, be envisaged as constituted of numerous transethnic or transnational networks of different religious inspirations, which always remain in the Islamic fold that integrates populations in different areas. Practical realities of life were recognized in Ibn Khaldun's famous concept of *asabiyya* – group feeling founded on blood ties – but such a relationship could only exist as part of the Islamic community. In consequence, nationalism was always considered alien to Islam, all the more that the democratic character of nation-states (1) reflects the ideal of popular sovereignty incompatible with divine sovereignty as taught by the Prophet, and (2) commits nationalists to the secular worldview through the separation of religion and state (Segesvary 1998/2000, 227-228). For this reason, "neither internal sovereignty, with its conception of citizenship and national identity and loyalty, nor external sovereignty, with its idea of mutual recognition of boundaries and authority over that territory, has a real counterpart in Arab-Islamic history."[33]

However, and this is a most astonishing development in the contemporary Muslim world, Islamic resurgence and processes of democratization became, to a certain extent, complementary.[34] The reason is that popular empowerment requires the affirmation of communal identity, of shared beliefs, values, and symbols, as happened in Europe when the modern nation-state was born through the adoption by the state of people's nationalistic fervor. Such a change in the Islamic formation of Western-type political institutions does not mean the abandonment of traditional concepts but the definition of their content. Can one find better examples of democratic ideals than some of the basic concepts in the Qur'an, such as the duty of consultation (*shurah*) and the consensus of the believers (*'ijma*), of which the Prophet Muhammad said, "My Community will not agree upon an error?" Or, the concept of independent, interpretive judgement (*'ijtihad*), which played such an important role in Islamic intellectual development that the closing of the gates of *'ijtihad* is considered as the beginning of the decline of Muslim spirituality and power? Are these age-old concepts not legitimating procedures of a republican democracy? As Muhammad Iqbal, the great Pakistani poet, summed it up:

> The republican form of government is not only thoroughly consistent with the spirit of Islam, but has also become a necessity in view of the new forces that are set free in the world of Islam.[35]

If Iqbal rejected democracy as practiced in the West, it was because of its secular and materialistic basis neglecting ethical and spiritual concerns.

In Africa, pre-colonial political organization was not territorially based either; the new political order represented an essential and abrupt discontinuity in comparison to the past. Similarly, as in medieval, feudal Europe, control was exercised over people rather than land, and sovereignty tended to be shared:

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[33] Quoted from Bassam Tibi by Michel N. Barnett, Sovereignty, Nationalism, and Regional Order in the Arab States System, *International Organization*, (1995), 49, No. 3: 479-510; quotation is on 481.

[34] This aspect of the relations between Islamic thinking and modern democracy is analyzed in detail in Esposito and Voll 1996, 16-32.

[35] Ibid., 27.

> It was not unusual for a community to have nominal obligations and allegiances to more then one political center. As power was not strictly defined spatially, there was much greater confusion over what is meant to control a particular community at any one time ... [According to Ivor Wilks][36] "rights of sovereignty were regarded as distinguishable from the exercise of authority." Thus it was not uncommon practice in Ashanti law for the land to belong to one authority (e.g., the southern provinces to the Asantehene) but for the people to owe allegiance to another (in the case of the south, to the Fante or the British Governor). Indeed, such were the limits of territorial authority that the central government was often not concerned about what outlying areas did as long as tribute was paid (Herbst 1997, 128).

In the European-style African state, authority was not dependent on popular legitimation; hence, the effort of African leaders to create mass movements and follow the lines of populist politics in order to ensure some sort of legitimacy. However, the interstate system hypocritically maintains the fiction of statehood even in the case of those states that do not possess the characteristics of sovereign entities – because nobody knows a better solution.[37]

The nation-state is also the victim of another evolution in the modern world: the rapid technological change. A huge discrepancy developed between the pace of technological change and the capacity of social organization, in general, and the nation-state, in particular, to adapt to or control that change.

Finally, the globalizing process carries with it important modifications of economic relationships, too. This is based on the creed that with the economy seemingly going global, an increasingly global identity will be created, a kind of Western consumerism writ large. However, the evolution of the world economy is not a gradual and uniform process, but a disruptive one, bringing all kinds of dislocations and disparities with it. It, therefore, naturally reinforces regional economic disparities – within and between countries – paving the way to a re-emergence of a new form of nationalism within the borders of certain states, and of intensifying conflicts between states differentiated by geographical locations and by belonging to different civilizational orbits.

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[36] Ivor Wilks, *Asante in the Nineteenth Century: The Structure and Evolution of a Political Order*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 191-192.

[37] "The current static state system in Africa has institutionalized weakness and decline, irrespective of the sources of failure. The current complete disassociation between a country's economic and political performance and its sovereign status means that, no matter how poorly a country performs, the international community continues to give it legitimacy, pretends that it is a functioning state, and supports effort to preserve its integrity." Herbst 1997, 131.

CHAPTER THREE

LEGAL ASPECTS OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TERRITORY AND THE STATE

The problem of territory, as against land or country, is inevitably linked to the problem of the state and became, in consequence, an abstract entity instead of being something real. Territory represents the tangible basis of a state's existence, the geophysical description of the locus of political power, and appears to make the state an indispensable institution in human life.[1] The two appear to be linked for eternity because the spatial grounding was expected to secure for the state its atemporal character. "The principle of territoriality presupposes that territory be *constitutive* of order, as a principle which structures political communities, without being derived from whatever sort of social solidarity prior and distinct to it, and transcending it" (Badie 1995, 47; my translation, italics in original). This conception was, of course, facilitated by the fact that the state was considered as surpassing individual interests and, therefore, the highest level of social organization, an institution of objective utility.

In legal terms, there were three ways to look at the relationship between territory and state.[2] First, territory was considered to be an object of the juridical personality of the state and, thus, reified. Built upon the distinction of *imperium* and *dominium* in Roman law, sovereignty was, since the creation of the first feudal monarchies in Europe, conceived as territorial sovereignty centered upon the rights and powers the applicability of which was determined in a geographical sense. This sovereignty did not signify a proprietary right of the supreme feudal lord over the territory on which he exercised his domination, it simply expressed the fact of his *imperium* over the populations inhabiting the lands under his authority. Territory, in this case, was seen as a limiting factor regarding the exercise of the power of the state and represented the framework of the ruler's and his administration's competencies, a spatially circumscribed functional unity; consequently, frontiers took on a vital importance as they indicated the limits of the exercise of sovereign rights.

Second, in an ulterior phase of the evolution of the relationship between territory and state, the former became a constitutive element of the latter, *an expression of the spatial existence of the state*. It was a constituent element, among others, of the juridical personality of the state, such as population, judicial organization, and administrative structuring. Nevertheless, the constituent elements were not expected to be confused with the state itself.

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[1] Article 1 of the 1933 Montevideo Convention on Rights and Duties of States stipulated that "the State as a person of international law should possess the following qualifications: (a) a permanent population, (b) a defined territory, (c) government, and (d) capacity to enter into relations with the other States." Shaw 1986, 146. It is interesting that Vattel, in the eighteenth century, missed the territorial element in his definition of the state. States, for him, were "political bodies, societies of men who have united together and combined their forces in order to procure their mutual welfare and security." ibid., 1.

[2] In the so-called pure theory of law, elaborated by Kelsen, the definition of a state's territory was produced in a completely different, exclusively theoretical, manner. The state's territory was constituted by the domain in which its constitutional and legal order was applicable; that is, the unity of the territory was solely the result of the validity of a unique legal order.

Finally, the ultimate development of the territory's relationship to the state was the nationalistic one. Territory henceforth represented the space vital for the nation's existence, expressing the nation's unity and power through positing the state's sovereignty. Sovereignty, thus, belongs to the people, the collectivity of individuals inhabiting the territory, and the state is only vested, in one way or another, with the attributes of sovereignty by the population.

Whichever aspect of the relationship between state and territory we consider in analyzing territory's role in the construction of the state, the role of the state's administration[3] is overwhelmingly important as the latter evidently was the real creator of the territorial state through suppressing the multidimensional public space of society. Here is the crucial point, many times ignored, in the evolution of the state as a spatial phenomenon: *it was through the workings of the administration that the state became definitely separated from what we call today civil society*.

1. The Role of Territory in Western Civilization

A. THE CONSTITUTION OF LIMITS AND FRONTIERS

Territorial administration in political entities – empires, kingdoms, city-states – were born in non-modern times, that is, before the political sphere was differentiated from society, and revolved around individual and group allegiance to a sovereign, a feudal lord, or the Church. Nevertheless, an administration of any scale reified and centralized social relationships through its activities and defined them in its own way appropriate for its purposes. This process was facilitated by the fact that *whereas non-modern political institutions were structured by social relationships, the state was structured by a more and more elaborated legal pattern*, always responding, of course, to the requirements of the powers-that-be. The constitution and the law are viewed as sacred and are mediated by the administration in the (sort of mystical) relationship entertained with the masses of the population. It is from this perspective that the statal administration, as distinguished from local or municipal administrations, created the myth of an eternal territorial unit constituting the state that not only surpassed the microcosm of feudal lands, communal tenures, and city territories existing before, but created something new above them – the sovereign, dynastic and, later, nation-state.

The modern state introduced a completely new public order through eliminating all territorial limits in the geographical area it controlled (using measurement devices developed by new technologies), and it radically redefined the notion of frontiers. This radical change meant that geographical space was artificially delimited corresponding to the inside/outside perspectives of the state's jurisdictional powers. Particularistic political and social entities were reordered around designated centers, the king's court or the capital city. They were later merged into the unitary state, especially through control and domination of the channels of communication – cultural, like the imposition of the usage of national languages, or infrastructural, like the unification of the system of roads, waterways, and toll stations. Specialized administrations, whose representatives gradually took over the management of educational systems or infrastructures from feudal landlords and the entities of civil society like churches or municipalities, were, therefore, the true instruments of the occupation by the central power of not only public spaces but increasingly of private spaces in individual lives, too.

Land statutes were variable in different regions of the ancient world and around the various city-states of Greece. Greek citizens were not tied to the land, their citizenship did not depend on where they lived or where they were born; citizenship was the mark of an individual as it reflected his or her belonging to a human group and to a given culture. Frontiers in Greece had nothing to do with the internal organization of

[3] I am using here the expression *administration* to define the structuring, organizing, and controlling element of a state's build up, and not the expression *bureaucracy*, because not all administrations have obligatorily to evolve in a bureaucratic way. It is unfortunate that in today's world no state administration can escape the bureaucratic character and the concomitant abuses.

political entities; they were in perpetual movement following the territorial expansion of one or the other of city-states. However, in comparison to the practice prevailing before, Greece accomplished an important modification in separating the religious significance of territorial limits from their economic role – a change that made possible the colonial expansion of some cities.

For Rome, a twofold distinction in the significance of territorial limits was adopted. The *limes* meant the military demarcation of the empire from the area dominated by the barbarians, whereas the *finis*, in the usage of legal theory, stood for the demarcation of the jurisdiction of a magistrate (regarding the public realm) but was also used in the sense of the boundary governing property rights (in private legal relations). This designation was not always identical with the *limes*, which symbolized and formalized territorial conquests. It is important to note that for the Romans the territorial limits of their empire represented always a unilateral act of spatial organization, an aggregation of territories obtained through military successes. They did not represent an extension of what was called *ager romanus* or *ager antiquus*.

In Europe there were multi-purpose limits separating socio-political entities within greater political units, which had for the populations of these areas great importance as they were linked to political and religious demarcations. As a result of the conclusion of the Treaty of Verdun in 843, it became necessary to proceed with the demarcation of territorial limits because of the partition of the empire of Charlemagne; these demarcations reflected, however, a political necessity based on fictitious rights but not on effective administrative or juridical competencies. The territorial settlements at the time of the Verdun Treaty and after, were, therefore, quasi-private arrangements, related to problems of succession and inheritance, one feoffee was added to the other. Consequently, this course of development, creating considerable confusion, resulted in a situation in which suzerainty meant sovereignty, and the homogeneity of frontiers, based on natural givens or common history, disappeared.

In a subsequent phase of the political evolution of Europe, new territorial delimitations were mainly destined to separate these multiple and, in many cases, overlapping jurisdictions that existed until the end of the Middle Ages.[4] The monarchs and sometimes even the city-states endeavored in this process to widen the area under their exclusive jurisdiction and power, absorbing more and more of the typical medieval administrative divisions that existed before the creation of unified state territories – such as communal or manorial circumscriptions, seneschalies and bailiwicks. The inclusion of these typical, medieval communal entities into larger territorial units, however, not without difficulties, because these centuries-old units were stable and disposed of an undisputed land, whereas the new jurisdictions were, for an initial period at least, quite uncertain and could be easily disputed by other pretenders to the supreme power. At the beginning, internal demarcations were thus discontinuous, and in the economic vacuum between village-level activities, on the one hand, and commerce with the East or maritime or fluvial trade, on the other, the city centers were flourishing due to the increasing industrial production of their craftsmen.

Thus, the frontiers of future states took shape in a piecemeal way with a unifying force at the summit and heterogeneous entities in the provinces, reflecting the underlying cultural diversity. The stability of these frontiers was guaranteed by the territorial entities inherited from feudalism and the medieval world, which also greatly contributed to the production of wealth and the continuous performance of administrative tasks. These entities were the building blocks of the creation of the absolutist states born from the sixteenth century on. It was the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648 that proceeded with the legal ordering of territorial stability and change and gave final consecration to the concept of the territorial sovereign state, though the concept of sovereignty remained still alive in the form of personal allegiance to the ruler and his dynasty. In the Westphalian order the territory determined the physical basis of the existence of a state and its identity within the community of states, whereas frontiers marked the extent of a state's physical expression. Thus, territorial integrity and political independence were closely linked or, rather, represented overlapping realities.

[4] Many studies, in particular concerning frontier formation in the French Kingdom, prove how long frontiers traced during the feudal age survived during the waning of medieval political institutions. In Normandy, for example, the limits established during the Carolingian period remained untouched during the eleventh through thirteenth centuries, when in other parts of Europe the old territorial limits marking administrative divisions – called *pagus* in Latin – already disappeared. P. Feuchère, "Essai sur l'évolution territoriale des principautés françaises, Xe-XIII siècles. *Le Moyen Age*, 1952, 86.

At the beginning of the age when nation-states were created, the concept of a nation covered physical as well as juridical identities, correctly reflected in the division of the representative assembly of the French feudal society (les États Généraux) into six groups, called nations in the fifteenth century, or the student body at Paris university into four nations (further divided into provinces) until the end of the seventeenth century. Following the formation of the unitary, territorially defined, modern state, the designation *nation* did not mean anything else but an organizational principle, completely dissociating the nation from the designation of any territorial belonging. In the absolutist nation-state the nation became an extension of the physical body of the monarch. Society as such disappeared from the conceptualization of public space, people lost the relative freedom, which they enjoyed, in various forms, in the Middle Ages. The monarch represented the only sovereignty projected on a closed territory.

State frontiers were gradually set up at the dawn of the modern age, reflecting deep political and economic changes (strategic importance of the new urban centers; dynamism of the ruling family; cleaning of forests; conquests of the sea, marshes, and meadows; or increasing importance of commercial waterways crossing the region) in the lives of the entities formed during feudalism. There was a twofold reason for the establishment of permanent frontiers: first, they were an indispensable complement of sovereignty, in a symbolic way,[5] and, second, they delimited the institutional jurisdictions – justice, defense, customs – of the sovereign state, a practical aspect. Territories – representing a superior organization imposed on individuals, communities, and the whole society by royal dynasties instead of being the propriety of feudal lords as during the half a millennium of the Middle Ages – became the instrument of state authority, which was expected to serve the common good and the common interest.

The monarchs, in order to secure their absolute power over the territories obtained, destroyed all intermediate organizational or social structures, proceeding with a sort of spatial rationalization; introduced new institutional rules in public life; and created the necessary instruments for the direct transmission of orders and for carrying out the indispensable and exclusive controls – the statal bureaucracies. Such a rationalizing of the immediate spaces surrounding their new realms, through streamlining all territorial statutes on its borders or, in other words, through regulating all zones located at the territory's limits, will remain a permanent feature of the policies of dynastic states for centuries. This evolution, if it put an end to a situation many times confused and without clear titles to jurisdiction, also rang the death knell for many and diverse freedoms of smaller and larger medieval communes and institutions, which were made possible precisely by the unregulated situation of territorial supremacy.[6] Frontiers were naturalized, that is, declared to follow natural lines of demarcation, and historicized, justified by the dominant ethnic group's history whose language also became a powerful factor of integration. The notion of the container denoted the content, or territory was bound to be limited from the outside world by frontiers. But if territory became defined by the natural and historic frontiers of the state, was it not necessary to conceptualize the state in advance as located in its frontiers, was it not necessary to intentionally create what was to be considered the territory of the state?[7]

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[5] In Judge Huber's words, who wrote in the *Island of Palmas* case: "Territorial sovereignty is, in general, a situation recognized and delimited in space, either by so-called natural frontiers as recognized by international law or by outward signs of delimitation that are undisputed or else by legal engagements entered into between interested neighbours, such as frontier conventions, or by acts of recognition of States within fixed boundaries." Quoted by Shaw 1986, 221.

[6] In some non-Western regions the same evolution took place, though much later. For example, the Treaty of Nerchinsk in 1689 inaugurated the demarcation of frontiers between Russia and China. In Asia, the best example is China, where the evolution of society and political institutions was similar to that in Europe; "The elimination of feudalism abolished the 'cellular' structure of Chinese society, a pattern in which walled cities had dominated the surrounding countryside for long periods of time without giving rise to central institutions. The destruction of feudalism proceeded through the Ch'in's deliberate policy of exterminating the nobility and of converting the feudal serfs into peasants who owed rent to their overlord and taxes to the state ... The defense of the boundaries became, in contrast to the situation prevailing under feudalism, a task of the *central authorities* and the boundaries served not to demarcate areas of competing jurisdiction on the basis of shared practices and mutual recognition of rights but to keep the 'environment' safe through the establishment of clients and the control of trade." Kratochwil, Rohrlich, and Mahajan 1985, 12; *emphasis* in original.

[7] Language contributed, first of all, to spatial delimitation within the borders of the state, corresponding to territorially defined social cleavages between populations speaking the language of those in power (the majority), and those speaking vernacular dialects in the new state's different regions. The Italian language, for example, was created by an intellectual elite without taking into account the various provincial dialects spoken in medieval communal centers, and

Natural and historic frontiers meant, in accordance with the requirements of the rationalist age, objective frontiers in the sense that they delimited a space in which laws and other legal regulations were validly applied, or in which a specific legal discipline prevailed. It is thus evident that frontiers not only meant a justifiable continuity, but also served the forced enclosure of multidimensional – cultural, social, or ethnic – spaces. In opposition to frontiers, which really covered not only a line established by geographers and political scientists[8] but zones of encounter of empirically different realities, the ancient *limes* stood only for demarcation, for the determination of lines of separation. The *limes*, therefore, was fluctuating and did not denote fixed and closed borderlines.

The establishment of a state's frontiers represented an act of sovereignty, and the boundaries delimited the domain in which the state could exercise its sovereignty:

> Frontiers between states are institutions and processes. As institutions they are established by political decisions and regulated by legal texts. The frontier is the basic political institution: no rule-bound economic, social and political life in complex societies could be organized without them" (Anderson 1996, 1).

Frontiers, as processes, reveal four dimensions: (1) As markers of political identity; (2) As instruments of state policies; (3) As constraints of governmental policies and practices which are conditioned by the de facto control of frontiers; (4) As elements of discourse of which the meaning changes over time (ibid., 1-2).

After Westphalia, protection of the inviolability of boundaries was always considered a crucial function of the interstate system, though it was recognized that they were, in most cases, artificially created, that is, brought into existence by political events or decisions. Thus, legal ordering of the interstate community, founded upon the supremacy and cooperation of sovereign states, had to be based on the legal ordering of territorial stability and on the legal ordering of territorial change. The principle of stability even played a role in the adjudication of which competing norms were applicable in any given situation. It played a particularly important role in case of conflict between the norms of self-determination and those regulating territorial integrity, in the sense of the rule *uti possidetis juris*. However, stability did not mean an ignorance of change necessitated by constant modifications in contemporary conditions, especially in view of the fact that interstate stability was superseded, during the last two hundred years, by the requirement to preserve or restore peace and security through international cooperation, crystallized today in the framework of the United Nations system.

During the last two decades, we entered, however, on a new path of evolution of the nation-state system, what John Ruggie calls the unbundling of territory, meaning that "an institutional *negation* of exclusive territoriality serves as the means of situating and dealing with those dimensions of collective existence that territorial rulers recognize to be irreducibly transterritorial in character." Accordingly, it is considered that "nonterritorial functional space is the place wherein international society is anchored" (Ruggie 1993, 165; italics in original).

B. THE ROLE OF BUREAUCRACIES AND THE REIFICATION OF SPACE

One considers in general the build up of state bureaucracies as a reflection of the centralized, absolutist power in the newly formed nation-states. However, it must also be clear, retrospectively, that these bureaucracies played an important role in the establishment of top-down links between the central power and the population, not only as an expression of the centrality of power. As they became the only intermediaries between the two poles of society, all other intermediaries having been eliminated, they succeeded in

this is, perhaps, the reason why no absolute monarchy was born in Italy in Machiavelli's time. A. Gramsci, *Notes rapides sur la politique de Machiavel*. (Paris, 1959), 189.

[8] The legal technique of political determination of frontiers is the *plebiscite*, in accordance with which the people decide where, to which state, they want to belong.

influencing social development even outside the circles of their competence and attributions through establishing horizontal links with various local entities active in society. For this purpose, it was evidently necessary, first, to secularize the legal and procedural context of administrative work through codifying laws and developing rules deduced from the doctrine of sovereignty and, second, to endow the administration with a hierarchical structure coupled with a protection from outside interventions and with a completely impersonal execution of the work. Hierarchy linked various administrations at all levels in order (1) to avoid discrepancies in the actions of different departments and services through uniform norms and principles; (2) to introduce a quasi-military discipline; and (3) to stimulate its members by a profound belief in the utility of what they do, even at the expense of making them blind to social realities and to local consequences of their activities.

Bureaucracies of the nascent state were, thus, instruments in the reification of space in the sense that they inserted, if needed by coercion, many parts of civil society into the circuits of state administration. In the course of the passage, from policing the roads to the service of public works, there were only a few steps. Through high technical competence and an intentional selection of convergent and homogeneous segments of territories and populations, in accordance with dynastic interests, *bureaucratic administrations produced the state's territorial unity out of a multidimensional space*. As a good example, one can refer to statal institutions that were in charge of creating a country's infrastructure – roads, bridges, canalization, water supply – and which monopolized relations between the state and organisms of civil society. Later, these institutions even anticipated the evolution of representative mechanisms and thus became agents of pre-democratic mobilization through endeavoring to reach a collective consensus.

This example shows that the duality of administrative systems and political regimes did not mean that the former only channeled the latter's orders and directives toward society but that bureaucracy gained a certain autonomy, made decisions, and arbitrated conflicts at local level. It thus became a quasi-independent actor in the rationalization of space, in the transformation of territory into an important constitutive element of the state. Dynasties and regimes could change, but bureaucracies remained and continued their perennial work in administering territories and populations. Through this role it assumed an essential task in the gradual establishment of the nation-state. And assuming this role, bureaucracy itself went through a metamorphosis, becoming an indispensable part of the centralized, modern state.

It is evident today that the centralized, dynastic nation-states, despite the efforts of their bureaucracies, never did succeed in creating a homogeneous territory, a homogeneous society, because, even if weakened, the resistance of particularistic groups and institutions that expected to be merged in the unitary territory of the state was never entirely broken.

2. The Role of Territory in the non-Western World

In the course of the decolonization movement, the principle of self-determination was coupled with the principle of territorial integrity by the interstate system that recognized the sovereignty of the new states. As the territorial definition of states determined the application of a state's jurisdiction in spatial context, particular problems emerged in regard to the transmission of state sovereignty from one entity to the other as well as the creation of new states. The interstate system was, therefore, called upon to establish the rules for changes of territorial limits and for the transmission of sovereignty. This meant that self-determination was expected to be exercised by people within the territorial framework of the former colonial entity, that is, as it existed before independence. Thus, territory served as the identification pattern for the exercise of the right of self-determination as boundaries fixed the extent of state sovereignty and of the operations of the domestic legal system. Under the banner of the overarching concept of stability, the fact that state boundaries were established and confirmed by an international agreement created an objective reality which survived the demise of the treaty or convention itself.

The important function of the interstate system to protect the inviolability of boundaries was performed through the application of the principle of *uti possidetis juris*, which assured territorial legitimation to the new state, thus reducing the importance of other legitimizing principles, like belonging to ethnic, religious, or historic communities. Malcolm Shaw summarized the role of this principle in the decolonization process as follows:

> The principle of *uti possidetis juris* developed as an attempt to obviate territorial disputes by fixing the territorial heritage of the new states at the moment of independence and can thus be seen as a specific legal package, anchored in space and time, with crucial legitimating functions (Shaw 1996, 75).[9]

This principle was put into practice, first of all, in Africa. Limits and boundary lines did not exist there before colonization, while the use of frontiers consisting of fluid and fluctuating demarcations – frontiers of contact – was widespread. They were really frontier areas of separation constituting geographical buffer zones between communities; they were not claimed by any authority. Of course, such a practice implied the existence of enclaves as well as frequent and considerable overlapping of different ethnic populations.

As a result of this pre-colonial situation, very few of the colonial borders coincided with ethnic lines. Territories of colonial possessions contained a multitude of different ethnic groups, and the borders usually split such groups amongst different administrative authorities. The frontiers of Ghana, the former Gold Coast, cut through the areas of seventeen tribes; the Kingdom of Bakongo was partitioned between the Belgian Congo, the French Congo, and Portuguese Angola. This evidence, then, clearly indicates that, with a few exceptions, no newly independent states emerged with frontiers corresponding to territories occupied by the same ethnic populations.

The United Nations was, of course, the main promoter of de-colonization, though the decisions were taken by the metropolitan powers. In the various United Nations documents, the term *people* implied a social entity possessing a clear identity and denoting a relationship with a territory as well. However, the designation *people* did not stand for ethnic, religious, or linguistic minorities. The legal instrument that made the decolonization process possible was the concept of self-determination, first declared by President Wilson in his famous fourteen points in 1918. As a consequence of the exclusion of minorities from the designation *people*, their problems, though recognized in Article 27 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, were clearly differentiated from the drive to self-determination. The reason for this was that permitting minority groups to secede from an independent state, recognized by the interstate system, is not acceptable under international law.

This was not the only situation that testified to the fact that self-determination does not apply to all groups, which, under the definition cited above, would qualify as people. That is, exercising the right to self-determination, when leading to modifications in the recognized territorial status of states, was only acceptable legally in case of non-self-governing territories. Entitlement to self-determination really signified for minorities that they should be able to fully participate in the internal constitutional structure and political institutions of the state on the territory of which they lived.

The logic of this legal principle leads to a particularly important problem regarding state territories. The determination of a given people's self in terms of a defined territorial setting raises the question of whether or not a state's territory, determined by the colonial powers prior to independence, is to be considered inviolable? If yes, as was the position of the United Nations and of specialists of international law, then self-determination was to be understood as dependent on the territorial integrity of the colonial state, that is, on a pre-independence situation. This situation, of course, reflects the principle that international law only recognizes the factual existence of states through giving legal effect to this existence. Though the creation of states is a political matter, the recognition of new states to be integrated in the interstate system requires the acquisition by them of a title to their territory.

The Pan-African Congress held in Manchester in 1945, dealing with problems concerning West Africa, recognized that the situation created on the continent by colonial frontiers "are deliberate steps to obstruct the political unity of the West African peoples" (quoted in Shaw 1986, 182-183). However, the Congress did

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[9] "In essence," writes Shaw following Oppenheim, "the doctrine [of *uti possidetis juris*] provides that new States will come to independence with the same borders that they had when they were administrative units within the territory or territories of one colonial power and the fundamental aim of the doctrine is to underline the principle of the stability of State boundaries. More than that, however, *uti possidetis juris* provides the new State with a territorial legitimation. It enables the State to proclaim the juridically acceptable nature of its territorial definition, both internally and externally ... It focuses questions of legitimacy and recognition primarily (and perhaps it may be said, traditionally, exclusively) upon territorial factors and thus acts as a counter-weight to other legitimizing principles, such as ethnic, religious or historic affinities." Shaw 1996, 97-98.

not demand the revision of those frontiers established by the metropolitan powers. In the same vein, the All-Africa People's Conference in Accra in 1958 also denounced the artificiality of frontiers, especially those that cut across ethnic lines, and called for a modification or even abolition of these frontiers in accordance with "the true wishes of the people" (ibid., 183). Finally, the 1964 border resolution of the Organization of African Unity definitely laid down the principle that colonial boundaries will be binding upon the independent African successor states (ibid., 259), ignoring ethnic, cultural, and social realities in the borderlands between states.

However, despite all these condemnations, resolutions, and announcements nothing happened when the time of independence came. The territories inherited from the colonial era and the unjustly drawn frontiers demarcating the territories of the emergent new states appeared to be accepted, thus the colonial territorial unit was transfigured into an independent political entity. This fundamental change in the attitude of African states and of the great majority of members of the United Nations became evident in Resolution 1514 (XV) regarding the territorial dispute between Mauritania and Morocco. This resolution clearly expressed the concern of members of the interstate system, including the African states, that the national unity and territorial integrity, both inherited from the past, of the newly independent states should be preserved. Finally, the Lagos Conference of the Monrovia bloc proclaimed in 1962, for the first time, the principle of maintaining and safeguarding existing borders, and the Charter of the Inter-African and Malagasy Organization, adopted by the same Conference, emphasized (Articles 3 and 5 of the Charter) "the respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of each State" (ibid., 183-184).

It is understandable that the African states feared the anarchy and chaos that would follow initiatives to redraw the frontiers of the colonial territorial legacy, but it is also evident that the new states needed a source of legitimation in the sense discussed above, as their populations were ethnically and culturally so diverse. The notion of the nation-state, dominant in the Western world, was replaced by the notion of the territorial state.[10] As a consequence, the principle of *uti possidetis juris* became, on the one hand, legitimately applicable on the African continent; the principle of self-determination, on the other hand, does not refer anymore to the will of the people but applies to the population on a given territory.

[10] "If ethnic unity does not exist in any given country, the question of self-determination of peoples in its sociological meaning of identifiable cultural groups becomes highly controversial. This is especially so since the end result could well be the creation of large numbers of competing and often hostile States each based upon a different ethnic or cultural unit. Accordingly, the legal and political emphasis has been not upon the charateristics of the population of the State but upon the territorial definition of that State, and not unnaturally the doctrine of territorial integrity has been elevated to a principle of prime importance for the African continent." Shaw 1996, 186.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE MULTINATIONAL STATE AND HUMAN RIGHTS

1. Minorities, Autonomy, Exclusion, and Segregation

A fundamental paradox of the institution we call the nation-state is that, on the one hand, it promises to ensure the equal treatment[1] of all its citizens in the name of the principle of universal citizenship and to create through ethnic cohesion a bond of solidarity among people living on the state's territory, but, on the other hand, it contains in its proper definition the legitimation of ethnic, national, and social exclusion. The gap between uniformity inherent in the idea of the nation and the practical heterogeneity of cultural forms within territorial limits was expected to be bridged by the ideology of universal citizenship. It did not, however, succeed. A democratic political order does not entail equal access to power, privileges, or property for all citizens of the state, and the market mechanism only aggravates this situation by increasing existing exclusions and inequalities and creating new ones. This evidently is the result of the democratic system of government as John Adams rightly saw it almost two centuries ago:

> The fundamental principle of my political creed is, that despotism, or unlimited sovereignty, or absolute power, is the same in a majority of popular assembly, an aristocratic council, an oligarchical junta, and a single emperor.[2]

The territorially based state claims the right to establish rules of unequal access to citizenship for minorities living on its territory – thus, geographical space is an instrument of all types of exclusion, thereby eliminating any pluralism. One of the major values of modernity, equality, also suffered a re-definition, from equality of opportunity – meaning mobility based upon talent – to equality of result by state intervention, if necessary. Redistributive policies, fully developed in the welfare state, led not only to a zero-sum game but to an overburdening of the state's budget as well. With Daniel Bell's expression, this, then, created the "revolution of rising expectation,"[3] which contributed to an aggravation of social conflicts, particularly ethnic hostilities, in many countries. Finally, in Rosenau's words, "citizens have become important variables rather than remaining constants in global politics" (Rosenau 1992, 274).

Under the designation minorities *I mean groups of the population living on a state's territory, which are ethnically or culturally different from the dominant nationality*. Their discriminatory treatment is absolutely

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[1] Even the concept of equality as such is problematic, not only its realization in the framework of the territorial state. I think that the best summary of what equality should be was given by the nineteenth century French socialist, Louis Blanc, who wrote: "What is Equality? It is, for all men, the *equal* development of their *unequal* faculties, and the *equal* satisfaction of their *unequal* needs." Louis Blanc, *Catéchisme des Socialistes*. Quoted by Randall 1976, 454; *emphasis* in original.

[2] John Adams, *Works*. 10: 174; quoted by Randall 1976, 349.

[3] Daniel Bell, "Ethnicity and Social Change," in Glazer and Moynihan 1975, 141-174.

unjustifiable, especially in the case of historic minorities who have lived for centuries together with the dominant ethnic or cultural group, because there is no reason to suppose that "members of a dozen different nationalities [could not] live in a single state."[4]

It is possible to conceptualize identity problems of populations as a disjuncture or dislocation of spatial identities, or as discordance between national identities affirmed at different spatial scales. Such distinctions are useful when considering aspects of people's existence in borderlands involving overlapping identities in the same geographical frame. There is the identity based on citizenship in the state controlling the area; there is the identity that inhabitants share with the national community; and, finally, there is what one could call borderland identity derived from the spatial location and the symbolism of the borderland itself. The most obvious example of such combination of identities is Alsace. It is well known from European history that borderlands can effectively spur state efforts to secure its borders by obtaining the firm adhesion of the populations concerned.

A particular case of minorities is *diaspora* nations – like Jews, Chinese, or Indians. Diaspora represents separated parts of a national community, which left, either voluntarily or forcibly, their homeland. Despite their dispersion in lands controlled by other nationalities, diaspora preserves a strong identification as a distinct ethnic and cultural group maintaining, nevertheless, transnational contacts with the other diaspora groups of the same origin. For diaspora, identification and contacts with the homeland are vital, whereas for the nation as a community, diaspora may contribute to the maintenance of nationhood in an essential way. As in the case of other minorities, diaspora communities are bound to have a divided loyalty: to their homeland and to the state of which they are citizens.

Many studies have already pointed out that it would be very difficult to find today a country with a nationally homogeneous population. Even in the homeland of the nation-state, the European continent, this is the case. Good examples are minorities established in France or Spain centuries if not millennia ago, which survived despite all possible efforts of assimilation undertaken by the strong, centralized state;[5] or Hungarian minorities in four successor states of the Habsburg monarchy, the largest national minority in today's Europe, which before the Wilsonian peace-making after World War I belonged to the dominant nation of the Hungarian state. Even in the so-called settler countries, such as the United States of America, a differentiation has to be made between minorities who immigrated into the United States of America since World War II, and the African-American minority, which must be considered historic as it had lived, against its own will, on the North American continent for more than two hundred years. Autochthonous Indian tribes, representing about one per cent of the total population, were granted an unusual domestic dependent nation status, in fact equivalent to a protectorate within national territory.

By *segregation* such state policies are meant which permanently separate minority groups or social categories which are discriminated against from the rest of the population, such as the Nazis did by concentrating Jews in ghettos, or Stalin, when he ordered the forcible transfer of all people of an ethnic group (like the Tartars) into sparsely populated areas of the Soviet Union.

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[4] Referring to the principle of universal citizenship, Macartney wrote that "it is this sense of common interest in and devotion to the state, which constitutes the sense of political nationality ... As men of the same nationality can live in a dozen different states without losing their sense of personal nationality, so can members of a dozen different nationalities live within a single state, and each of them regard it with equal and unalloyed devotion. The two feelings are not mutually antagonistic; they are different. In practice, however, they easily tend to be confounded ... A minority becomes a national minority, properly speaking, only when its national aspirations conflict with those of the state ... Most frequently of all, under present circumstances, both the minority and the majority possess active national consciousness." Macartney 1968, 13 and 16.

[5] The famous Abbé Sièyes, one of the great promoters of the French Revolution, said: "What is a nation? A body of associates living under one common law and represented by the same legislature." Quoted by Macartney 1968, 46. This legalistic conception of nationality made possible the repression of minority languages in revolutionary France where the rejection of the Other is still dominant today. Until recently French republican centralism refuses to accept even the existence of minority languages. The Charter of Regional or Minority Languages adopted by the Council of Europe was never approved by France because it is contrary to the constitution of the French Republic. *Le Monde* (édition électronique), 24 June 1999.

The term *exclusion* designates discriminatory measures not only against minorities, as defined above, but also against social categories or members of civil society's specific institutions. This happened in the former Communist states with certain classes, like the rich peasants (kulaks), or the adherents of Christian churches, which were excluded by the state power from the benefits, and entitlements of full citizenship. As far as the term *exclusion* is concerned it has to be added that today, especially in Europe, it is used in regard to immigrants coming mostly from other continents and belonging to other civilizations; I shall deal with this category of exclusion at the end of this chapter.

Dealing with ethnic and cultural, that is, national, minorities, it is useful to go back to one of the great, and most quoted, fathers of twentieth-century liberal concepts of state and citizenship, John Stuart Mill. He described, one hundred and fifty years ago, the situation in a nation-state as it really is. Mill's critique of the territorially based, democratic nation-state has to be divided into two equally important parts: first, the impossibility of establishing true political freedom in a multinational state, and, second, his condemnation without appeal of the quasi-dictatorship of non-democratic majorities in representative democracies of his time. In Chapter 16 of his *Considerations on Representative Government* ("Of Nationality, as Connected with Representative Government"), he estimated that national identity[6] is the strongest of all identities in the political sphere, and summarily stated: "Free institutions are next to impossible in a country made up of different nationalities." Therefore, he admits that there is no other solution to the problem of nationalities, if one wants to have free institutions, than "that the boundaries of governments should coincide in the main with those of nationalities" (Mill 1993, 392 and 394).[7] He has no remedy to propose, in the prevailing circumstances of his age, for this fundamental problem undermining political life in all modern states.

In respect of his second critique of representative government, in Chapter 7 ("Of True and False Democracy; Representation of All, and Representation of the Majority Only") of the same book, he developed his arguments with the usual clarity of his thinking:

> Democracy as commonly conceived and hitherto practiced is the government of the whole people by a mere majority of the people, exclusively represented. The former is synonymous with the equality of all citizens; the latter, strangely confounded with it, is a government of privilege, in favour of the numerical majority, who alone possesses practically any voice in the State ... [This type of democracy] is diametrically opposed to the first principle of democracy, representation in proportion to numbers. It is an essential part of democracy that minorities should be adequately represented. No real democracy, nothing but a false show of democracy, is possible without it (ibid., 277, 281).[8]

The historical process that led to the formation of the nation-state engendered these two paradoxes of our modern political institutions. The state, in order to acquire absolute control over its territory and the life of the populations living there, eliminated all intermediary social entities constituting civil society, to make sure that its subjects have only one allegiance, an allegiance to the state itself. It was in the course of the destruction of the innumerable social and cultural forms of conviviality, communities of belief, moral principles as well as

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[6] Mill's definition of nationality can be found in Mill 1993, 391.

[7] Jacob Burckhardt, the famous Swiss historian of culture, already advanced the insight at the end of the nineteenth century that "the popular enthusiasm for the nation respectively for national self-determination was not so much concerned with the desire to create the essential political conditions for a free and unhindered enfolding of one's own national culture, but rather with the desire to be part of a strong national state capable of imposing the national will, if need be, upon other peoples." Mommsen 1993, 3.

[8] To quote just one modern writer on the same subject, Béla Faragò, a French judge of Hungarian extraction, wrote not so long ago: "Le pluralisme propre à la démocratie politique est seulement celui qui postule la pluralité des *opinions* ... Un régime politique ne peut pas être considéré comme démocratique s'il n'est pas en mesure d'admettre l'existence ou de reconnaître les droits des minorités ... Il est donc nécessaire d'affirmer de façon très explicite qu'à notre époque la démocratie n'est réellement légitime si, d'une conception 'absolutiste' de la volonté populaire, elle est capable de parvenir enfin à une démocratie 'limitée', limitée non seulement par les règles formelles des institutions permettant la dévolution du pouvoir, mais aussi par les droits de l'homme qui font aujourd'hui pleinement partie de la constitution de l'Etat de droit." Béla Faragò, "La démocratie et le problème des minorités nationales." *Le Débat*, No. 76 (September/October 1993), 6 and 23.

playful practices, that the state achieved, at an enormous price, to have opposite to it only atomistic individuals, sort of monadic subjects, equal before the law and interchangeable. This was the principal reason why in modernity the individual gained such preeminence, and why one calls our age the age of individualism. Problems of minorities, national and social exclusion and segregation, as well as the indispensable introduction of the human rights regime are the consequences of this terrifying interface between the all-powerful state and the lonely, atomlike, defenseless individuals at the mercy of the state as its subjects. As a consequence, the state was forced to undertake all sorts of interventions in society, in a manner of social engineering, which, in most cases, led to disastrous results.

> Modern state power meant disempowerment of communal self-management and local corporative mechanisms of self-perpetuation; it meant, therefore, sapping the social foundations of communal and corporate traditions and forms of life. This, in turn, broke the unthinking automaticism and the "matter-of-factness" with which the patterns of human behavior used to be reproduced and maintained ... With the backbone of communal self-reproduction disintegrating or crushed, the modern state power was bound to engage in deliberate management of social processes on an unheard of scale. Indeed, it needed to generate by design what in the past could be relied upon to appear on its own (Bauman 1990, 157).

Minorities have two possibilities to avoid exclusion, segregation, or forcible assimilation: to obtain autonomy, or, if politically feasible, secession. From this point of view it is important in what type of category the minority in question falls. Minorities can be, in general, categorized as follows:

(1) Territorial minorities, associated for many generations with a particular area (what I called historic minorities);

(2) Minorities without any specific geographical location but strong cultural ties and communication networks;

(3) Minorities of these two types who live in a state the territory of which is contiguous with their homeland; and,

(4) Minorities who live within enclaves or ghettos, in general segregated by the majority population.

According to the principle of national self-determination, all categories of minorities should benefit from special arrangements that at least guarantee them a certain degree of autonomy – even against the die-hard resistance of the dominant majority population. *Autonomy* may operate at three levels – personal, cultural, and territorial. All forms of autonomy have political, cultural, legal, administrative, and, above all, emotional implications, and in many countries minority autonomy is automatically interpreted as a covert demand for secession because autonomy is understood as a claim to territory.

The three categories of autonomy which establish, in fact, non-territorially determined rights for part of the population of a state,[9] are:

First, *personal autonomy*, is the least efficient for any minority, which means that the individual should be free to define his ethnic identity and cultural orientation, following the example of most Western countries. No particular privileges or special provisions are attached to personal autonomy, but the state bureaucratic machinery is expected to avoid any and all discrimination against minority individuals.

Second, *cultural autonomy*, is much more complex. It is important for minorities who do not live on a contiguous territory but are dispersed on the territory of the state, either in enclaves or mingled with the majority population. The establishment of cultural autonomy involves an explicit recognition by the majority

[9] Two Austrian Social Democrats, Otto Bauer and Karl Renner, were the first to propose, at the beginning of the twentieth century, considerations concerning the protection of non-territorially based minority rights to guarantee personal and functional autonomy in such areas as language, religion, and culture. Otto Bauer's major work is *Die Nationalitätenfrage und die Sozialdemokratie* (Vienna, 1907). Karl Renner published two works on the subject: 1/ *Was ist die nationale Autonomie? Was ist die soziale Verwaltung? Einführung in die nationale Frage und Erläuterung der Grundsätze des nationalem Programms der Sozialdemokratie* (Vienna, 1913); 2/ *Staat und Nation: Zur österreichischen Nationalitätenfrage. Staatsrechtliche Untersuchung über die möglichen Prinzipien einer Lösung und die juristischen Voraussetzungen eines Nationalitätengesetzes* (Vienna, 1899).

that the minority has a collective identity culturally defined and, as a consequence, a separate legal and political persona. In practice, this means that members of the minority are recognized as having a double allegiance: loyalty as citizens to the state, sharing in the benefits granted by the state to any other citizen, and allegiance to their ethnic community. Cultural autonomy, encompassing the whole national territory, also consists in state provision for schooling in minority language, bilingual administration in localities and regions where the minority represents a percentage defined by law.

Third, *territorial autonomy*, is applicable where a minority, concentrated in a contiguous territory, lives as a compact entity and represents the majority of the population. The state therefore designates such particular areas as autonomous provinces, departments, or whatever, that are free to manage their own affairs through local assemblies and administration, eventually in their own language. All necessary expenditures are covered by the state's budget on the same terms as are budgetary provisions for the areas populated by the majority population. Such territorial autonomies exist, as in Catalonia (Spain), in the Aaland Islands (Sweden), in Alto-Adige (Italy). Multinational Switzerland represents a very special case. The three-tiered government – municipal, cantonal, and federal – ensures, legally and administratively, territorial and cultural autonomy for all nation-constituting nationalities, and all three languages (German, French, Italian) are official languages. One minority language, the Romansch, benefits from special privileges, and a recent popular referendum approved that was strengthened measures for sustaining Romansch linguistic autonomy and cultural life.

These forms of autonomy – granting certain rights to a specific part of a state's population based on its distinctive characteristics – thus represent either a generous or a limiting interpretation of the concept. Generous interpretation relates to the autonomous self-determination of an individual or a group, transferring to the latter power over its own affairs without outside interference. A narrower interpretation of autonomy is apparent in modern international law aiming at the protection and limited self-determination of minorities. Even this narrower interpretation of minority autonomy means, however, the legal recognition of minority rights, or, if we reverse our perspective, it excludes absolute majority rule detrimental to any ethnic or cultural minority.

To these categories one can add an institutional innovation, born out of the debates in the United Nations on non-self-governing territories, called the associated state, which recognizes the international status of a newly created state, although certain competences – such as foreign affairs and defense – remain with the principal state, that is, the formerly dominant statal entity.[10]

International organizations like the League of Nations or the United Nations endeavored to improve the situation of minorities – without much success. The same can be said of the European Union. The only organization, in the present, which tries seriously not only to monitor minorities' situation but even to prevent the outbreak of conflicts, is the Organization on Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), which has made conflict prevention and crisis management an integral part of the process of its functional redefinition and institutional development. The High Commissioner on National Minorities, established in 1992, has an explicit early warning function.

Partition of a territory seems to be impossible because of humanistic considerations as it requires, in almost all cases, transfers of some people from one territory to another, involving dispossession, displacement, impoverishment, destruction, injuries, atrocities, and deaths. Ethnic cleansing, as we have seen in the former Yugoslavia, is a crime against humanity, and has to be stopped by all means at the disposal of the concerned peoples.

Secession designates some form of territorial separatism of a minority residing in a contiguous territory, on a continuum from regional assertiveness through autonomy to secession or complete independence. Three arguments are generally put forward to justify a secessionist movement. The first is based on ethical, the second on cultural considerations, and the third on an actual or perceived inequality or disadvantage of the group concerned in an existing, unified state. The first, referring to requirements of justice, states that the right to secede (a remedial right) is only justifiable when the secessionist group is the victim of injustice. The second grounds the right to secede (a primordial right) on collective identity and individual self-respect, both necessitating the possibility of exercising autonomy. The third evokes an absolute, marginal or relative

[10] Hurst Hannum, and Richard B. Lillich, "The Concept of Autonomy in International Law," in Dinstein 1981, 215-254; quotation is from note 13 on page 215.

economic and/or political inequality, disadvantage or deprivation, inflicted on the separatist minority by the dominant majority of the state.

The validity of these arguments depends on whether the right to self-determination, the principle of self-rule, relates to a territory or to people. Margaret Moore defends the idea that self-rule applies to certain areas of the globe, "the rules thus made govern all those people who reside within the *territory* of the state" (Moore 1998b, 135; italics in original), based on the territorial conception of citizenship. In this perspective, secession cannot be justified because it removes part of the territory from under the state's jurisdiction. However, Moore's position is not acceptable as it moves around in a vicious circle because it tacitly admits the presupposition that the state *has* the right to rule on its territory even over the heads of people who are not willing to accept its rule.[11] Such a conception cannot be legitimated by the difficulties of adjudicating rival, historic claims to a territory, or the legally subtle but in reality inapplicable distinction between access and control over a territory. Self-rule can apply, in my understanding, either to the territory of a state or to people who live in a specific part of that territory.

In the historic movement of de-colonization, after World War II, the principle of self-determination simply meant that it should take place within the boundaries of previously established administrative units, that is, colonial territories, without regard for the ethnic or cultural identities of the people concerned. The conflicts in the former Yugoslavia during the last decade of the twentieth century saw a mixture of ethnic convulsions and uprising which showed that, at present, only two solutions are possible to resolve such conflicts: either maintaining the reference to the administrative frontiers as they existed before the conflict broke out, – in Yugoslavia's case in Tito's time – or ignoring them in order to respect ethnic cultural identities of the people – of the populations dispersed on the various territories of the Yugoslav Federation. European powers and the United States preferred the first option, maintaining the stability of frontiers as established before (no secession from secessions), and the former Yugoslavia's constituent units' territorial integrity in order to safeguard international stability, that is, the stability of the Westphalian interstate system.

The development of information and communication technologies made it possible for ethnic groups to gain visibility at the worldwide level, to interact across national boundaries, and, as a consequence, the globalizing process aggravated the exclusionary and segregational tendencies within nation-states.

> Global social mobilization has enhanced the awareness of differences among groups of peoples and spurred new national identities. So, although the forces of globalization have reduced some of the divisive effects of boundaries between states, they have also encouraged new divisions among national groups within states. As a result, the territoriality of political power as expressed in the patchwork of colors on the world political map, is discordant with the territoriality of national identity (Herb 1999, 9).

The constitutionally and politically motivated exclusion and segregation make social integration in nation-states, that is, the reduction of exclusion and segregation, all the more difficult when eventual candidates for citizenship belong to an entirely different cultural orbit. This is so because cultural differences – religion, customs, traditions, way of life – are the real sources of hostility between ordinary people who are defending their own world against any intruders. It is in this sense that Kratochwil refers to citizenship "as a gatekeeper between 'humanity' in general, and what Walzer called the 'communities of character'" (Kratochwil 1996, 182). For this reason, the statement by Anthony Smith that "the sources of the endemic instability of ethnic and national politics can be found in the ambivalence over alien cultures" (Smith 1996, 458) is absolutely correct. I am also convinced that we all are *culturally conditioned* and that our differences are due to such conditioning and not to racial, ethnic or other discrimination. It can be added that this paradox linked to the existence of the nation-state – exclusion and segregation – created one of the most harrowing problems of statal institutions in modern times: the constant and persistent persecution or oppression of ethnic/national, religious, or cultural minorities.

[11] Rogers Brubaker wrote with reason, in the volume of which Moore is the editor, that "the principle of national self-determination assigns moral agency and political authority to nations; it holds that nations are entitled to govern their own affairs and, in particular, to form their own states." Brubaker 1998, 235.

In this respect, it is important to differentiate between minorities, especially historic minorities who have resided in the territory of a state for a long period, and present-day immigrants who come to rich countries looking for work, for an easier life, and, frequently, for survival. These transnational movements that characterize our age are exploited by criminal organizations that impose their will and thirst for profit on entire regions and their populations. One cannot speak, in the case of such immigrants, of exclusion and segregation because they are so much different from local populations in their culture, habits, and way of life that a peaceful coexistence between these populations and the newcomers is not possible. For those who champion, in the name of humanitarianism, the inclusion of these immigrants in the population of the countries where they decide to stay, and to grant them citizenship rights and entitlements, this policy seems feasible because they believe that the atomistic nature of our societies is an irreversible fact. They pretend that one atom or one person can be replaced by another atom or another person without further ado (especially when the receiving country's population is aging), and all characteristics such as culture, religion, and forms of conviviality are unimportant beside the overwhelming nature of being a citizen. The protagonists of the unrestrained modification of European countries' demography are, simultaneously, the champions of territorial citizenship, of condemning the outmoded character of such notions as homeland, nation and ethnic solidarity. For precisely this reason, these promoters of more and more immigration (beside entrepreneurs who look only at their own profit without considering public interest) try to replace collective identity as well as shared history and destiny, with concepts like constitutionalism and constitutional patriotism – in which anybody can partake, even the traveler who comes today and goes away, always in search of better living, tomorrow.

Such attitudes are very harmful for countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America and ethically unjust in regard to their populations. They are harmful because they are focusing interest on immigrants instead of promoting better aid and cooperation policies which may be instrumental in creating the necessary conditions in the home countries of the immigrants having there, where they belong, a better and supportable life.[12] These attitudes are ethically unjust because they privilege certain individuals at the expense of people who stay at home and try to contribute to the economic and social development of their country. And these attitudes are also harmful for populations in the countries of immigration. Not only from the economic point of view as unemployment and the modification of the whole landscape of economic activities by fundamental structural changes, but especially from the point of view of culture because immigrants who have no attachment whatsoever to European culture will never vote, as citizens, for safeguarding the cultural and artistic heritage of the Old Continent.

2. The Human Rights Regime: Its Necessity and Its Limits

The 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights of the United Nations General Assembly was a direct consequence of the horrors of World War II, of the persecution, the unspeakable suffering and the extermination of Jews by the Nazi terror. It has to be recognized, however, that the gradually increasing importance of human rights during the last half of a century happened not because of the terrible memories of the past, but first and foremost because of the evolution of modern society, deeply rooted in what I call the interface of the lonely, atomlike individual and the omnipotent and dominant state power. As Jeremy Waldron wrote in his volume about human rights: "The term refers to universality and a commitment to equality and non-discrimination, particularly across races and peoples" (Waldron 1987, 163). The disequilibrium, created by the destruction of all intermediate bodies between individuals and the state, necessitated the establishment and development of a worldwide human rights regime. How otherwise could the lonely individual be protected against the domineering attitude and exploitative manipulations of the political class (though regularly elected and re-elected by the mass of individuals)? And how could he be shielded against the arrogance of ever-the-same bureaucrats whose power and importance grows with every passing year?

[12] I am convinced that Western aid and cooperation policies are on the wrong track and therefore unsuccessful. They endeavor to transplant economic principles, methods, and policies formulated in the West into contexts which are totally different. These principles, methods and policies are not at all adapted to the ways of life of populations in non-Western civilizational orbits, and fail for this reason. On these problems see Segesvary 1998/2000 and 1999a/2001.

The necessity to defend members of society against state power and its representatives also means that democratic regimes, democracy *tout court*, do not protect individuals against abuse and domination of those in power. Periodical elections in a representative democracy are not sufficient to give voters, the common man, enough protection because, first, the party system is more important than democratically elected office holders, and political parties, in the possession of all possibilities offered by the multimedia world, do practically whatever they want. Second, in modern societies problems have become so complex and overwhelming that most voters do not even grasp the importance of what a party or a politician proposes to do, and vote simply for candidates as persons or for a party because of family tradition, ethnic or religious affiliation. This is as true in the United States as in any country of the non-Western world.

One of the most ardent defenders of a universal human rights regime is Professor Jack Donnelly, and my account of the standard view of human rights is based on his writings. It is important to point out in the beginning that the contemporary human rights regime is determined as part of universal human morality, and in this sense it represents an *international normative universality*. Human rights are universal because they are derived from being human, – one is unequivocally entitled to these rights simply because one is a human being. In fact, human rights are considered the highest level of morality and, as such, they are expected to regulate the fundamental structures of society, political practices, and institutions, and therefore they supersede all other claims, moral, legal, or political. As the International Human Rights Covenant formulates it, human rights arise from "the inherent dignity of the human person" (Donnelly 1989, 15). Human rights violations deny the humanity of the person concerned.

Human rights regulate all relationships between the right-holder and the duty-bearer. From such a conceptualization one can conclude, then, that each human person is, simultaneously, a right-holder and a duty-bearer vis-à-vis another human person; it is most important to point this out because in general practice it is mainly institutions, organizational entities, or society in general that are designated as duty-bearers. Of course, such entities and, above all, the state, are the first to be held responsible for the respect of the rights of human beings, but the fundamental moral claim of respecting rights aims directly at other individuals – the Other as against oneself.[13] The necessity to attach any rights, including human rights, to corresponding duties is, however, recognized in all civilizational worlds different from our Western world.[14] In these worlds, human rights claims are extra-legal and derived from universal morality, that is, they are not claims based on any legal instruments for enforcement, but respect for them is a natural product of a basic feeling of human solidarity in individuals and social groups.

Despite the universal nature of human rights, even Donnelly acknowledges that "any list or conception of human rights – and the idea of human rights itself – is historically specific and contingent" (ibid., 1). Although he thus admitted the time-bounded nature of human rights, Donnelly definitely considers that the human rights regime, as it was established within the orbit of Western civilization during the last fifty years, has a planetary validity over and above other civilizational orbits. This is a first paradox in the standard human rights conception prevalent today.

In contrast to the affirmation that human rights are part of the inherent dignity of the human person, they are also considered as a social construct in Western modernity:

> Human rights represent a social choice of a particular moral vision of human potentiality, which rests on a particular substantive account of the minimum requirements of a life of dignity. Human potential is widely variable

[13] Here there is a fundamental failure in the standard view of human rights, because this view never recognizes that to each right in our world there *must* correspond a duty, in this case the duty of each human to respect the right of the other. Donnelly's ideas clearly indicate this failure, transposed to the level of society: "One *has* the same human rights whether or not one discharges one's duties to society, because one is a human being regardless of whether or not one is a good member of society." Donnelly 1989, note 9 on page 21; *emphasis* in original.

[14] "Rights and duties are two facets of the same picture. Whoever demands a right to liberty has to respect a similar right in others which circumscribes his right to personal liberty very considerably. If an individual thinks it is his right to be fed and clothed and maintained in proper health and if he has a right to work, it is also his duty to work according to his energies and skill and accept the work which the welfare of the community demands from him." Khalifa Abdul Hakim, 1955. *Fundamental Human Rights*. (Lahore: Institute of Islamic Culture, 1955), 3; quoted by Donnelly 1989, 56.

> and it includes both good and evil ... Society plays a crucial role in determining which potentials will be realized and how (ibid., 17).

The second paradox of the standard view of universal human rights consists, in consequence, in the affirmation that human nature itself is a social project (which in my opinion it is not, and the acceptance of such a view would mean to ignore the extremely important biological foundations of human existence), because as a social construct it cannot be inherent in the dignity of the human person. If human dignity would be a social construct, then the gates would be open to a total relativism depriving a human person of the inherent moral value of being human.

One of the most controversial aspects of the human rights regime is whether its bearers are only individuals or groups of individuals as well? The standard view unequivocally affirms that only individuals are beneficiaries of human rights provisions, whether in their individual capacity or as members of their community or of a particular cultural group. Thus, the standard view does not recognize group rights in the human rights regime, but still affirms, and this is the third paradox, that "human rights are embedded in a social context and have important social dimensions" (ibid., 20). The absolute privilege granted to individuals in the human rights regime represents the great divide between the Western and non-Western civilization. Nevertheless, the standard view refuses to admit the justified claim to incorporate group rights into the human rights regime (ibid., 145), especially because society is being conceived as a collectivity of atomlike individuals only.

To avoid certain difficulties engendered by his opposition to group rights (what he calls collective rights), Professor Donnelly sometimes has recourse to arguments that may be characterized unintelligible. Thus, when he writes that "the right to self-determination, even in its collective dimensions, is essentially a right of individuals acting collectively" (ibid., 149),[15] the nonsensical position toward which such an extreme individualism is pushing its protagonists becomes evident. Even the argumentation of such reputed jurists as George Abi-Saab does not convince him, though the latter clearly explains that "the satisfaction of a collective right is a necessary condition, a condition-precedent for the materialization of individual rights."[16]

If people are not only considered as a body of citizens but also as an ethnoculturally defined collectivity, then the sense of attributing human rights to such collectivities makes sense because individuals, members of such collectivities, cannot alone benefit from a basic right such as free participation in their religious practices. "There are some rights ascribed to collectivities," pointed out Graff, "that are not equivalent to the rights of the individuals who comprise them."[17] The justification of group rights is simply that individuals constituting a group have not only their own, personal identity but a collective identity as well. The existence and destiny of individuals and of their communities are inseparably interwoven. As I wrote a couple of years ago: "*The split between group rights and individual human rights is a derivative of the modern development ... Under the 'reign of the individual' human rights cannot but be applicable to individuals, or, rather, to the universal because abstractly defined individual* ... [Group identity] *is culturally and historically based and is characterized by shared symbolisms, shared belief- and value-systems and common historical consciousness*" (Segesvary 1995, 96 and 98; italics in original). From a human rights perspective, self-determination of a community reflecting, whatever the basis of the community's constitution, the principle of popular sovereignty is one of the best examples of group or collective rights.

This is the point of view adopted in all non-Western civilizations, and it is undergoing a change only under the pressure of the so-called international community. In China the Confucian heritage regarded human

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[15] In fact, Donnelly echoes the wording of most international documents such as the 1966 *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*, which in its Article 27 says: "In those States, in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities will not be denied the right, in community with the other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practice their own religion, or to use their own language." Quoted by Dinstein 1981, 293.

[16] George Abi-Saab, The Legal Formulation of a Right to Development, in René-Jean Dupuy, ed. *Colloque 1979: Le Droit au développement au plan international*. (La Haye: Académie de droit international, 1980), 171.

[17] James A. Graff, "Human Rights, Peoples, and the Right to Self-Determination," in Baker 1994, 186-214; quotation is on page 188.

rights more collective than individual, and in Mao's time human rights were defined and regulated by the state as they were when the emperor ruled in accordance with the Mandate of Heaven. Under the influence of external powers, then, a normative transformation in the direction of the protection of individual rights took place, signaled in 1986 by signing (and ratification in 1988) of the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment and Punishment. This breakthrough also meant that the Chinese Communist regime slowly gave up its rigid stand regarding the inviolability of domestic jurisdiction of the state.

Although public opinion embraced the human rights issue in such a way that one can speak nowadays of a human rights ideology, it is better in legal terms to describe it as a human rights regime. The good functioning of a regime necessitates a hegemon,[18] which promotes the regime worldwide:

> The presence of a hegemon in regime formation is of central importance to regime theory. The successful creation of a regime depends upon three factors. First, the hegemon must possess the capabilities to perform the necessary tasks associated with ordering international interactions ... . Second, even if these resources are available, the hegemon must be willing to commit them to building a regime ... Third, although in some issue-areas the hegemon may possess sufficient power to exact obedience, capability and willingness alone may prove insufficient in the absence of deference from lesser states (Evans 1996, 101).

We live at the beginning of the third millennium in the age of the hegemony of the United States. It is evident that general, if not universal, acceptance of the human rights doctrine is a result of the pressure exercised by the United States, through channels of bilateral as well as multilateral diplomacy, on members of the so-called international community. The role of a hegemon in imposing the human rights regime also signifies that the rules of behavior legitimized by the doctrine limit the freedom of action of the hegemon as well. The latter may give a particular interpretation of some of its actions, illegal in terms of the regime, in order to cover them up before domestic and international public opinion. Filtering its own interests through a series of institutions and organizations produces the end result that they appear as being in conformity with the norms and rules of the human rights regime.

It is, then, evident that the only viable solution aiming to extend the rule of the human rights regime worldwide would be to find an intercivilizational approach through a dialogue of civilizations. This would be certainly possible as there are ideas and practices in most religions and traditional cultures that are similar to those of the human rights regime, as we know it in the present.[19]

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[18] Hegemony, accoding to Robet Keohane, is defined "as a situation in which one state is powerful enough to maintain the essential rules governing interstate relations, and willing to do so. This interpretative framework retains an emphasis on power ... [but it] does not assume that the strong state automatically creates incentives to project one's power abroad. Domestic attitudes, political structures, and decision-making processes are also important." Robert O. Keohane, *After Hegemony: Co-operation and Discord in the World Political Economy*. (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1984), 34-35.

[19] Onuma Yasuaki, "Toward an Intercivilizational Approach to Human Rights," in Bauer and Bell 1999, 103-123.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE STATE AND CIVIL SOCIETY

It would be impossible to envisage future options for re-ordering the political sphere without determining the role of civil society in this process. *States cannot exist without societies, but the latter can have different ways of organizing their political activities in the public sphere*.

Societies represent the greatest ensembles embracing all human communities belonging to the same civilizational orbit. That is, societies correspond to civilizational worlds and encompass all spheres of human activity in these worlds. A political structure and institution – just like the spheres of law, the economy, or the arts – always depend on the society that is its bearer. The creation of a world state in the future would therefore suppose the existence of a worldwide society. However, the existence of such a society, or its birth in the near future, is a utopia, a tenet of the universalistic creed.

1. The Concept of Civil Society

What is civil society?[1] Its configuration varies with historical situations, but *its basic definition refers to society as the totality of autonomous communities and all activities carried out by those human groups constituting this social whole – independently of any power relations, that is, in a framework of non-institutionalized power, meaning multiple power centers*. Civil society, thus, represents the public and private spaces in which human beings live; the political sphere, its structures and institutions, is among the most important components of the public space together with the media and various forms of intersubjective communication (for Aristotle it was clear that not any collectivity – *koinonia* – equals the politically structured public space, the *polis*). In our days, it is usually considered that civil society is a society distinguished from the centralized state power – from its institutional structure, its impersonal and bureaucratic procedures and administrative solutions of all human problems, as well as its democratic processes.

Every human society always had, in the course of history, its *institutions*, – religious bodies, associations, organizations to promote myriad interests (like unions, educational or industrial associations, or neighborhood committees, sports clubs, etc.); its *activities* in the public and private spheres such as those in the economic field (producing and consuming, in whatever form, the material necessities to maintain life) or in the domain of leisure (nature, entertainment, and opportunities of conviviality, among others); its *creative developments* (philosophy, arts, sciences, and technology); and, above all, its own *way of life*. For this reason, such a society is simultaneously constituted by horizontal and vertical linkages, the latter

[1] In the eighteenth century, the concept of civil society was elaborated on the basis of a utopian conviction consisting in the belief that there is an innate and universal benevolence and solidarity in mankind, independent of reason but embedded in individual psychology. The main works in this respect are: Shaftesbury's *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times* (1711), Francis Hutcheson's *Inquiry into the Origins of Beauty and Virtue* (1725), Adam Ferguson's *An Essay on the History of Civil Society* (1767), and even Adam Smith's *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* until its 1790 edition. These authors simply took private morality, derived from predispositions in individual consciences, as a guarantee of public good, replacing the classical notion of civic virtue with the chimera of universal human empathy, a sort of sociability based on shared norms of humanity.

representing mediation through hierarchical ordering. In this perspective, civil society represents, *first*, a spatio-social contiguity because it congregates all private and public spaces into a shared, common realm; *second*, because of the congregation of all other spaces, it usually, but not always, stands for socio-spatial density (therefore, it is collapsed with the modern trend of urbanization) which may lead to the elaboration of new rules of shared existence and conviviality; and, *third*, it offers a framework for non-mediated communication and exchange of information.

Joseph Camillieri gives a quite accurate description of civil society as understood in the present essay:

> The notion of civil society has a long history, dating back at least to the ancient Roman notion of jus civile. In the more recent Western tradition, the tendency has been, despite considerable variations, to define civil society as the realm of autonomous activity; that is, as public activity separate, or at least distinct, from that of the state. The diverse associations that fall under this category include extended families, clans, villages, local communities, unions, craft guilds or firms, groups for leisure or charity, and religious organizations; indeed, the whole gamut of voluntary associations formed to advance particular interests or objectives. The experience of community afforded by these associations lies at the heart of the concept of civil society, since it is that experience and the accompanying sense of identity and belonging that point to and animate a public sphere functioning side by side with, yet independently of, the state. These communities, insofar as they express the fundamental sociality of the human person, often call into question the atomistic individualism favored by many social contract theories.[2]

Civil society is situated in the space of our lifeworld because it is based on shared normative understandings.[3] Therefore, the differentiation of multiple spheres of human activity – political, economic and scientific – that occurred since the advent of modernity in the West is destructive from the point of view of civil society because these differentiated spheres are independent from each other as well as from the whole. The effects of differentiation were particularly devastating as they were followed by a selective pattern of appreciation and institutionalization of differentiated spheres, which resulted in the elimination of the holistic character of society. In this way the normative consensus, based on shared civilizational givens, was replaced by a supposedly reflexive, post-conventional and post-traditional discourse expected to lead to a communicative deliberation and agreement. The loss of shared norms which mediated between the community's ethical values and individual or group interests, the gradual disappearance of a pattern of harmonious societal interaction led, according to Habermas, to the colonization of the lifeworld and to a selective empowerment of the differentiated spheres of civil society, that is, to a "loss of freedom" and a "loss of meaning" (Habermas 1981/1989, 1: 244, and 2: 323). Thus, the all-encompassing ethos of society hitherto based on a collective definition of the good, was dissolved for the benefit of the individual and his multiple identities and associations.

Thus, civil society consists of various communities within which flourish various forms of association and conviviality.[4] The concept of community is derived from the Latin word *communicare*, meaning to live in one place in which one shares belief and purpose and putting emphasis on proximity and voluntary adhesion instead of compulsion and obedience to standardized rules.[5] In turn, these communities are composed of

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[2] Joseph A. Camillieri, "State, Civil Society, and Economy," in Camillieri, Jarvis, and Paolini, 1995, 216.

[3] Cicero defines the *res publica* as "not any collection of human beings brought together in any sort of way, but an assemblage of people in large numbers associated in an agreement with respect to justice and a partnership for the common good." Marcus Tullius Cicero, *De re publica [On the Commonwealth]*. Transl. by C. W. Keyes. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1965). 39, 65.

[4] In Mulgan's words the notion of community "may refer to neighbourhoods or workplaces, but to be meaningful it must imply membership in a human-scale collective: a scale at which it is possible to encounter people face to face. Confucius believed there to be a series of concentric circles of compassion around each person, with love devoted first to father, then family, then others, a very different goal from the Judeo-Christian one of loving everyone as oneself." Mulgan 1997, 230.

[5] "The dependence of the individual on the social consensus which surrounds him, the ambiguity of facts and the circularity of interpretation are all enlisted in support of the fusion of faith and society. This is the normal social condition of mankind." Gellner 1994, 140. In Gellner's view, the modern notion of civil society was a rejection of the classical concept of society, "there had to be faith, before there could be doubt," and the social had to become "both instrumental and optional." Ibid., 142.

individuals – persons, as I designated above, who are members of such communities.[6] It is most important to realize that there is a constant interaction between individual members of a community and the community itself, and that the community simultaneously integrates and differentiates its members. The community cannot exist without its members and the latter, by definition, cannot exist outside a community because we are, all of us, born into a community. As the late Ernest Gellner expressed it:

> Culture and community are defined in terms of each other: culture is what a population shares and what it turns into a community. A community is a sub-population of a species, which shares its genetically transmitted traits with the species, but which is distinguished from that wider population by some additional characteristics: this in some way or other depends on what the members of that community or sub-population *do*, rather than on their genetic equipment ... Such non-genetic delimitation of boundaries of conduct or of perception, in the keeping of a community, is about as good a definition of *meaning* as we possess. Meaning, culture, community – these notions interlock with each other. The circularity of their definitions, their interdependence, does not matter (Gellner 1995, 45-46).[7]

Consequently, the interaction between a community and its members means that they influence each other's existence mutually: the community determines an individual's life chances and biography, whereas each individual contributes to the community's cultural heritage by adding to it, or modifying it, or even introducing in it new elements. Therefore, any juxtaposition of a community and of its members who supposedly endeavor to liberate themselves from the community's traditions, values, beliefs, or way of life, is false and serves only to make individuals lonely entities facing, without any mediation, the powerful state. Adam Seligman summed up the situation in modernity with exceptional clarity:

> What becomes a universal in the individualist ethic of modern societies is the individual him-herself. Society itself is no longer universal but exists only as a derivative of the individual, that is, of the growing recognition of the individual as subject and society as the amalgamation of these "universally" constituted subjects (Seligman 1992, 95).

The most important feature of civil society, then, is not equality but the fact that its members are bonded together by a strong feeling of solidarity.[8] Solidarity means that members identify with one another, mutually and reciprocally, and are ready to help each other without compulsion, without expecting anything in return, without hoping for individual advantages that their actions could bring them.[9]

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[6] Ferguson wrote: "Man is, by nature, the member of a community; and when considered in this capacity, the individual appears to be no longer made for himself ... The interests of society, however, and of its members, are easily reconciled. If the individual owe every degree of consideration to the public, he receives, in paying that very consideration, the greatest happiness of which his nature is capable; and the greatest blessing that the public can bestow on its members, is to keep them attached to itself." Ferguson 1767, Part 1, Sec. IX, 33.

[7] The definition of culture by Castoriadis emphasizes the non-instrumental character of culture: "Culture is whatever goes beyond the strictly instrumental or functional in a given institution of a society and in the works of this society, and that which presents an invisible dimension cathected or invested positively as such by the individuals in the given society. For example, a Gothic cathedral is certainly much more than the stones which compose it; apart from its sacred character, people continue to invest it with something which is more than the stones, more then shelter, more than a place where priests can perform their function. They invest it, they cathect it because they positively value it in some invisible and noninstrumental, nonfunctional dimension." Castoriadis 1991, 220.

[8] "The good life can only be lived in civil society, the realm of fragmentation and struggle but also of concrete and authentic solidarities." Walzer 1991, 298.

[9] In the framework of discourse ethic, Cohen and Aratò define modern solidarity as involving "the acceptance of the other as an other, as one who must be accorded the same chance to articulate identity needs and arguments as one would like oneself." Cohen and Aratò 1992, 383. In their view, "Solidarity involves the willingness to share the fate of the other, not as the exemplar of a category to which the self belongs but as a unique or different person ... Solidary individuals are

The particular solidarity belonging to a determined public space occupied by a community was, however, transformed into a universalistic conception of citizenship which voids this public space "of any value attributes independent of the individuals inhabiting that space ... [Thus] rights are no longer framed in terms of citizen or civil rights, but of human rights" (Seligman 1992, 132-133).[10] Or, as Gellner put it, "Civil Society is an a-moral order" (Gellner 1994, 137). The main instrument to achieve this elimination of social bonds, preeminent in public space, is the modern state's welfare policy that deeply penetrates the tissue of civil society with its administrative organization under the guise of ignoring particular interests in favor of the majority. Such policies virtually replace, through impersonal legal and administrative measures directed to functions and categories and not to real persons, the ethic of commitment of communal and social solidarity structures and networks. In consequence, administrative relations with organs of the state replace solidarity, though "where responsibility is involved, the specifics matter" (Mulgan 1997, 227). Thus, justice and solidarity are united in appearance, but in reality administrative justice takes the place of solidarity.

Social life, life in civil society, is the framework without which there is no human existence.[11] The advantage of all past forms of political ordering in comparison to the modern nation-state – empires, kingdoms, loose confederations, without including, of course, tyrannic and despotic regimes – was that they required certain forms of cooperation from the institutions of society and the inhabitants in their lands, but did not destroy their way of life and their existential bases except during devastating wars. Payment of taxes in produce, services, or money, or contribution to military service represented already a heavy burden for those societies, but populations were not obliged, in most cases, to prove their dynastic loyalty, and were able to continue to live as they did during past centuries. In conclusion, it was only in the modern era that it was unavoidable to peg the qualifier *civil* to the designation of society when speaking of social activities that were not under the umbrella of the all-powerful state.

2. Power and Society

Thus, civil society is antithetic to any domination, to the reign of any powerful ruler or social strata, in short, to any submission to any power in whatever forms because the sovereign authority belongs to the people whose communities constitute civil society.[12] All those who equate civil society with democracy forget the admonition of Ferguson who declared two and a half centuries ago that

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consciously rooted in the same or significantly overlapping lifeworlds, and this guarantees consensus about important matters, even in a modern lifeworld where their content can be discussed and challenged." ibid., 472.

[10] This can be illustrated by the fact, indicated by Anthony Giddens as well as Seligman, that parallel to the universalization of solidarity through universal citizenship, the universalization of trust through democratic legitimation in the political field and through monetary mediation in economic activities, thoroughly vitiated the communality and mutuality on which trust was based in civil societies. Seligman 1992, 185.

[11] According to Ferguson: "The multiplicity of forms, in the mean time, which different societies offer to our view, is almost infinite. The classes into which they distribute their members, the manner in which they establish the legislative and executive powers, the imperceptible circumstances by which they are led to have different customs, and to confer on their governors unequal measures of power and authority, gives rise to perpetual distinctions between constitutions the most nearly resembling one another, and give to human affairs a variety in detail, which, in its full extent, no understanding can comprehend, and no memory retain." Ferguson 1767, 37.

[12] The concept of the associational democracy of Paul Hirst, though somewhat similar to the concept of civil society advocated here, is different from it in two important aspects, namely, concerning the status of the individual and the public financing of most associational activities. Hirst considers that "the main political objective of modern associationalism is to decentralize and devolve as much of the affairs of society as possible to publicly funded but voluntary and self-governing associations ... a self-governing civil society becomes primary, and the state becomes a secondary (if vitally necessary) public power that ensures peace between associations, protects the rights of individuals and provides the mechanisms of public finance whereby a substantial part of the activities of associations are funded." Hirst 1997, 38-59; quotation is on page 42.

> The pretensions of any particular order, if not checked by some collateral power, would terminate in tyranny; those of a prince, in despotism; those of a nobility or priesthood, in the abuses of aristocracy; of a populace, in the confusions of anarchy.[13]

Power in its classical, fourfold category appears as (1) one-man rule – *monarchy*; (2) the rule of a small number – *oligarchy*; (3) the rule of the best – *aristocracy*; and (4) the rule of the majority – *democracy*. Hannah Arendt completed this tetralogy with (5) the rule of the anonymous – *bureaucracy*.

In democracies as well as republics, power can be derived exclusively from the will of the people. This is all the more so that "in a world in which the faith in the transcendent foundation of values is absent, human will seems a natural, plausible, perhaps indeed the only eligible heir ... Democracy appears as the only possible source of legitimacy in a secularized, naturalized world" (Gellner 1994, 184). Thus, power means that the *being-together* of the people – civil society – is translated into their *acting-together* – political action through appropriate procedures agreed upon in advance. Power in its immediacy as an ideal-type, of which rare examples are the Hungarian Revolution of 1956 and the Prague Spring of 1968 does not need legitimation, but as soon as it is institutionalized as in representative democracies, it needs such a legitimation to make evident its foundation in the people's will. Popular legitimation, as Gellner saw it clearly, involves circularity and pre-judgement, because it is not only self-reflexivity but self-authentication as well. Whenever the being-together disappears, that is, the unity of the people making up the civil society is broken, no more acting-together is possible, and the political-institutional system crumbles. Did not Montesquieu write a quarter of a millennium ago "republics are based on the virtues of man, and tyrannies on their vices" (quoted in Gellner 1994, 71)? In contrast to power, authority characterizes relations between individuals as well as institutions. While power is based on force and constraint, authority cannot be forced upon others; it exists only if based on respect and unconditional obedience freely consented.

Power can be generated either through debate, through people's interaction, e.g., their acting-together, or through despotic or administrative fiat according to the character of the political-institutional structure. The first form of power requires, and here we return to the definition of civil society given above, an autonomous public space in which different groups of a pluralistic civil society are able to communicate and to debate problems of their common life. Communicative process and debate are made possible by "the fact that institutions and cultures *precede* decisions rather than *follow* them,"[14] though the democratic creed ignores this fact (Gellner 1994, 185; italics in original).[15] Dialogue and coordination take place before the creation of institutionalized procedures, in the non-programmed and non-organized flux of interaction and communication within public space, which is the true birthplace of civil society. The second form of power exploits the public space by transforming it into a vacuum without significance. Both forms of power are self-reflexive; the locus of self-reflexivity of people's deliberative action is the public space, whereas in the case of despotic or administrative powers self-reflexivity is restricted to the inner circle of the powerholders.

Civil society, therefore, requires

(1) The diffusion or dispersal of power throughout the social collectivity composed of autonomous communities; it cannot exist without a network of mutual dependencies not implying any kind of power relations;

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[13] Ferguson 1767, Part 3, Sec. II, 12.

[14] "Our culture gives us our identity: so *who exactly* is to choose a culture, when there is as yet no self, no identity, no vision, or set of values, which would carry out the choice?" Gellner 1994, 186; italics in original.

[15] "Before being the orgnization proper for the political system, power is first created by free associations of citizens. As such, its specific objective is the mutual comprehension of all participants in interaction through the medium of deliberative communication. Its rationality is the rationality of practical wisdom aiming at the action concerned. Communicative power presupposes and requires for its existence a public space in which the future political force manifests itself, before any move of institutionalization, what it is and what is most important in its deliberations. In this perspective, public space constitutes the locus of political function." Paul Ladrière, "Espace public et démocratie: Weber, Arendt, Habermas," in Cottereau, and Ladrière 1992, 19-44; quotation is on page 35; translated into English by the author.

(2) The acceptance of a wide range of beliefs, conceptions and attitudes, autonomously held and freely fostered by individuals and their communities in the limits of a particular civilizational world; it cannot exist without broadly understood, shared cultural foundations; and,

(3) The existence of real freedom of individuals and communities, guaranteed by shared values and traditions of the specific cultural world concerned and by the bonds of solidarity this being-together creates. Freedom in civil society is not a negative freedom – the individual's limitation of his actions in order to ensure that others, through their similar limitation of their actions, will not infringe on his own absolute sovereignty – but a freedom with common, positive content, constituting the moral order of the civil society concerned.

The qualifier *civil* means just that. This formulation corresponds to the classical concept of republicanism. Therefore, in a civil society power has to be vested in separate bodies, not solely in the sense of the present Western political institutionalization – the separation of legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government dating back to Montesquieu – but in entities representing other fundamental spheres of society as well, like the spiritual, the cultural, or the economic.

This conception of civil society – a contingent and indeterminate historical formation responding to the requirements of a particular context – requires a dialectical vision as it does not admit, on the one hand, the much praised differentiation of various societal spheres – political, economic, juridical – but it does neither admit, on the other hand, the domination of one or the other forces that make up society. This means that the existence of a civil society excludes a theocratic form of government, though it requires the maintenance of particular moral traditions because morality is not only a trait of individuals but it is also a fundamental component of the public sphere.[16] The existence of a civil society does not necessitate secularization of social life under the guise of a neutral stance in the public space, though it excludes that communities which compose such a society should be subject to the rule of anyone of the spiritual movements or political ideologies – not even to the power represented by a democratic majority. To the above characterization of civil society as conceived by classical republicanism, and to its eighteenth-century liberal-individualist opposite correspond two different conceptualizations of citizenship as well.

The fundamental change in the organization of society in the modern age meant that the autonomous individual won against the individual embedded in his community's traditions and way of life and, therefore, mutuality, solidarity, and even the principle of equality, had to be incorporated in formal, legal, and sometimes economic guarantees. Abstract, formal, legalistic criteria and instrumental rationality dominate over shared solidarities based on concrete ties rooted in common existence and history.

As any other social relation, or any interdependence in the framework of one overarching whole, all interaction in the public space has to be rule-bound. However, this does not mean that the power of legality should be as overwhelming as it is in present Western societies; this is not at all justified from the civil society's point of view. Its justification simply lies, first, in the secularization of public life, corresponding to the differentiation of social spheres, which led to the elimination of any transcendent foundation of morals and, therefore, necessitate some sort of social regulation of all human activities. The second source of the domination of legal power in modern societies is – whatever is pretended by the protagonists of excessive individualism – that only certain individuals are capable of obeying moral rules imposed on them by their conscience. This situation is, however, absolutely abnormal because it is incomprehensible why a judge (in most cases not even having a democratic legitimation) should pronounce ethical precepts and moral rules for an entire group of men.

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[16] Durkheim also considers society as a teleological entity: "The general will must be respected, not because it is stronger but because it is general. If there is to be justice among individuals, there must be something outside them, a being sui generis, which acts as arbiter and determines the law. This something is society, which owes its moral supremacy, not to its physical supremacy, but to its nature, which is superior to that of individuals." Emile Durkheim, *Montesquieu and Rousseau*. (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1965), 103. – Explaining the essence of morality according to the classical conception of civic virtue, Adam Seligman wrote that it is "a moral community where what is moral is precisely the community." He is convinced that the civic virtue tradition can only be maintained with reference to primordial givens and a transcendental authority, and explains the change in the thinking of eighteenth-century Scottish writers by pointing out that "the absence of ascriptive or primordial ties within that ideological community owed much to pre-existing Puritan traditions of the community of believers, that is, to some secularized idea of a community of grace ... when virtue is effected solely by the participation in shared political institutions." Adam B. Seligman, "Animadversions upon Civil Society and Civic Virtue in the Last Decade of the Twentieth Century," in Hall 1995, 204 and 214.

3. Deformations of the Concept of Civil Society

The idea of civil society has many times collapsed with ideological concepts completely foreign to it. Thus, *civil* in "civil society" does not stand for *civilized* or *polished nations*, for a certain *civility* declared by political thinkers and ideologues since the eighteenth century.[17] All explanation trying to prove that this kind of "civility" stands for respect of the law, the rules of reciprocity and the toleration of diversity (or, for the Scottish philosophers, "altruism") is entirely mistaken. *Civility* means, since the eighteenth century, social conventions and civilizationally conditioned customs elaborated in the West, considered to be perennial, and *incivility* consists in rejecting these contingent norms with reference to other conventions or customs.

Another case of such unjustified intrusions of foreign elements into the notion of civil society is the claim that civil society cannot be civil if it is not egalitarian. Adam Ferguson's argument is still valid in this respect when he wrote that

> It is a common observation, that mankind were originally equal. They have indeed by nature equal rights to their preservation, and to the use of their talents; but they are fitted for different stations; and when they are classed by a rule taken from this circumstance, they suffer no injustice on the side of their natural rights. It is obvious, that some mode of subordination is as necessary to men as society itself; and this, not only to attain the ends of government, but to comply with an order established by nature.[18]

It is also unfortunate that the trend in our time is to equate the concept of civil society with that of democracy and its institutions in line with the liberal worldview.[19] A society represented in all ages a non-centralized sphere, if not it was not a civil society but a statelike entity. And as a non-centralized ordering of human relations, it represented a truly democratic public sphere as against the political democracies dominating our age. This was made possible by normative consensus, a shared conception of the common good that legitimated people's choices. As non-centralization and democracy are inextricably linked to each other by definition, civil society is the real home of democracy – if the latter is not conceived of (as it is today) simply in the manner of an electoral mechanism by which people select their rulers for a certain period of time.

Finally, it is undeniable that civil society was considered, from the eighteenth century on, as part of the equation between the state and the society, precisely because civil society stood for civility. For this reason,

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[17] Concerning the role of civility transformed into a rule of Western civilisational customs imposed on international society, see: Gerrit W. Gong, *The Standard of 'Civilization' in International Society*. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984).

[18] Ferguson 1767, Part 1, Sec. X, 36 and 37.

[19] How biased and misinterpreted the concept of civil society is in some contemporary writings can be shown by a text from Víctor Pérez-Díaz: " 'Civil society' refers to an attempt to theorize about a specific historical experience: an ongoing, uninterrupted tradition of a core of socioeconomic and political institutions (interconnected with some key cultural dispositions) in some North Atlantic nations dating back at least two to three centuries ... The institutional core consists of the following combination of political and socioeconomic arrangements: a government which is limited and accountable and operates under the rule of law; a market economy (implying a regime of private property); an array of free, voluntary associations (political, economic, social and cultural); and a sphere of free public debate." Victor Pérez-Díaz, "The Possibility of Civil Society: Traditions, Character and Challenges'," in Hall 1995, 81. – Another example of this view is William Sullivan's: "While the concept of civil society describes the dimension of free communication and activity that modern civic solidarity makes possible, civil society is not a freestanding dimension of democratic life, nor is it a self-sufficient idea or form of life. In its fully developed forms, it rests on the effective institutionalization of collective responsibility in democratic government." William M. Sullivan, "Making Civil Society Work: Democracy as a Problem of Civic Cooperation," in Fullinwider 1999, 33.

the role of civil society is envisaged, even today, as a counterweight to the all-powerful state.[20] A useful insight of Hirst has to be remembered here:

> This classical liberal legacy of conceiving civil society as a spontaneous order separate from government actually undermines the devising of effective remedies to the growth of unaccountable hierarchical power in both the public and the private spheres. The issue is no longer usefully posed in terms of either the autonomy of civil society from government or the restriction of the scope of public governance ... The issue is better conceived as the freedom of individuals within institutions and the autonomy of institutions within their legitimate sphere (Hirst 1997, 117).[21]

The collapsing of various ideological concepts with the notion of civil society can be summed up in one major conclusion: all these views deny the plural character of civil societies responding to the requirements of their particular contexts and environment; they negate the respect of difference – what, in other situations, they evoke as the hallmark of Western modernity. Difference is acknowledged only if it concerns individuals but not groups; therefore, it is a constant claim to recognize "individualism [as] a core component of civil society ... Diversity is attractive only within a shared framework which values the worth of the individual" (Hall 1995, 15).[22] It is logical, then, that for the protagonists of such a conception of civil society the state is indispensable because it ensures the basic conditions for the individuals' security, equality, and welfare. The state's existence, as we know it today, is the sole guarantor of individuals' preeminence, precisely because the classical republican, civic mores, based on the communities' coherence and solidarity, are rejected.

4. Civil Society in Other Civilizations

It is also necessary to clarify why I write in the plural about civil societies and not about a planetary civil society. *The reason is that there is no planetary civil society that would encompass the whole of humanity*. There are civil societies in different parts of the world, which are formed by populations, living within specific civilizational ensembles, in accordance with cultural and sub-cultural divisions, and in harmony with environmental realities. Civil societies are, consequently, creations of people belonging to particular cultural orbits – constituted by beliefs, values, traditions, symbols, institutional structure as well as shared destinies; therefore, civil societies strongly resemble each other within a specific civilization because civilizational fundamentals penetrate and condition all cultural phenomena within their orbit.[23]

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[20] George Schöpflin considering civil society as a feature of the democratic state adds a component, ethnicity, which from the standpoint represented here is already included in the concept of civil society. Schöpflin 1997, 1-2.

[21] Hirst refers to Montesquieu, who asserted "that liberty depended on the autonomy of social institutions from the central state. But he argued that such autonomy must be based on specific institutions enjoying constitutionally protected privileges and not just on individual rights or freedom from state interference." Hirst 1997, 123.

[22] Kant already established the basic principle of the individualist approach to the problems of society and political institutions when he wrote that the state's duty is to ensure "the greatest possible freedom of human individuals by framing the laws in such a way that the freedom of each can coexist with that of all others." Quoted from *The Critique of Pure Reason* by Karl Popper in *The Open Society and Its Enemies*. (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1971), 1: 247.

[23] Anthony Smith introduced recently a useful concept, "the family of cultures," when discussing what unites all Europeans. According to Smith, "a 'family of cultures' [is] made up of a syndrome of partially shared historical traditions and cultural heritages." These families of cultures are the result of a cultural cross-fertilization in the course of history and, thus, "the product of particular historical circumstances, often unanticipated and unintentional. Such cultural realities are no less potent for being so often inchoate and uninstitutionalized." Such families of cultures are completely different from political institutions, regional unions, or international organizations. "Thus the sentiments and identities that underpin the Islamic *umma* or community of Muslims are no less significant than any official Islamic social and political institutions." Smith 1997, 334-335.

To quote again Gellner, whose extremely perceptive study concerning civil society is little known and referred to:

> The naive formulations of the democratic ideal detach it from its institutional and cultural conditions, and tend implicitly to suggest that it is something valid for humanity as such. It is, in fact, eminently doubtful whether democracy is in some way rooted in human nature ... Societies and communities are endowed with a role structure, and in most circumstances this is, for better or worse, not democratic. We may deplore this, but it is a fact. Society maketh men, but men do not generally choose their society. Neither the *choice* nor the *equality* implied by the notion of "democracy" is inherent in the human soul or social condition (Gellner 1994, 186-187; italics in original).[24]

Civil societies always existed in civilizational frameworks different from the Western one. In the inter-civilizational context it is regularly argued against other cultures that their societies do not obey the law of equality. The examples always cited are, first, the Indian caste system, in which civilizational givens impose a hierarchical ordering of society, and, second, the vision of society in Islam not recognizing liberties in our sense.[25]

In Islamic teaching the only political system recognized is the caliphate, in which the ruler is at the same time the representative of God and the head of the earthly commonwealth. This perspective would make it impossible, if ever realized, to speak of a civil society in a Muslim country. However, the Qur'an foresaw a legitimation mechanism in the form of the consensus of the believers' assembled, the *'ijma* – that is, consultation in a religiously and not legally constituted communal collectivity. Although Islamic law recognizes only physical persons, and not corporations, being endowed with legal personality and rights, in towns of the Muslim world where beside religious communities there were guilds, fraternities, lineage, and ethnic groups, collective consensus was the basis of communal life, obtained through the submission to God and His law and not in a non-secular way as in the Western parliamentary system.[26]

Chinese intellectuals as well as Western specialists of China claim that the idea of civil society was, from the early beginnings, embedded in the relationship between Chinese state and society. This was a relationship in which, according to the Chinese tradition, the state as central authority played a dominant role as the bulwark of civilization against barbarism and, therefore, protected Chinese culture and society.

Following Wang Shaoguang,[27] the best translation of the Western concept of civil society into Chinese is *wenming shehui*, or civilized/enlightened society, but it also meant, during certain epochs, *shimin shehui*, or city people's society (the legitimacy of commercial activities, of private property,[28] and of individual pursuit of

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[24] "The abstract model incidentally assumes one kind of man (the modern individualist, secular in outlook) and mistakenly treats him as man-in-general. An abstract vindication is offered first, and treated as universally valid; then it is regretfully conceded that the universal ideal, alas, cannot be implemented in most of the circumstances which have fallen to the lot of mankind." Gellner 1994, 189.

[25] "Current history makes it absolutely apparent that islam possesses a civilizational vision of its own, radically opposed to that of the West. The logical clarity enshrined in Islam – the monistic and puritanical scriptualism of its monotheism – obviated any equivalent to occidental 'liberties'." Hall 1995, 14.

[26] Lapidus clearly explains the difference separating the evolution of Islamic and European societies: "Whereas in the Middle East individual obligations were defined in terms of religiously commanded participation in a religiously defined community, in Europe the individual was perceived at two levels. One was in terms of the specialised roles which individuals played in occupational, corporate and office holding situations; the other was in terms of an inherent spiritual identity. Society itself came to be conceived in terms of individuals fulfilling a function, a calling, a role in a corporate, pluralistic and secular world." Lapidus 1988, 270.

[27] Roger V. Des Forges, "States, Societies, and Civil Societies in Chinese History," in Brook, and Frolic 1997, 68-95; Wang Shaoguang's categorization of the Chinese concepts corresponding to our notion of civil society is summarized on pages 70-74.

[28] This is the only case in which the characterization of civil society in a non-Western civilization includes reference to urban centers. It may, therefore, be suspected of a certain, perhaps unconscious, adaptation of Chinese realities of the past to today's dominant views. However, though the political evolution in the West was strongly influenced by the

profit), as well as *gongmin shehui*, or public people's society (corresponding to the Confucian conception that "all under heaven is public – *tianxia weigong* – or to the Buddhist notion of "pure land" – *jingtu*). These notions are, of course, nothing else than Weberian ideal-types and, for Thomas Metzger, utopian (Metzger 1998, 2:6).[29] It is most interesting, however, that such troublesome ages of Chinese history as the Spring and Autumn and the Warring States periods (722-221 BC), represent, at the same time, an era of decentralization and of disorganization and devastating wars; and that later ages like the southern Sung (the age of the birth of Neo-Confucianism), or the Qing period, are qualified by Wang as *par excellence* cases of the *shimin shehui* form of society characterized by "cultural creativity, intellectual debate, social mobility, economic growth, and technological innovation."[30]

Nevertheless, if Metzger is right (ibid., 3:4), Confucian scholars considered as a moral decline all relaxation of central controls, as during the Ming and Qing periods, when political communication frequently was horizontal and not vertical (top-down) – because of their traditionally motivated respect for the state's authority. Thus, conceptions of political power and convictions of moral consciousness were in great tension in Confucian culture – as in all other cultural worlds, too – because Confucius declared in his *Analects* that political morality must be in harmony with "what people regard as beneficial to them" (*Analects*, Book 20).

5. Civilizational Pluralism and Civil Society

Civilizational pluralism determines the plural nature of societies in different regions of the world because the world really is not a homogeneous but a discontinuous space, in which a multiplicity of places are found. This indicates a sort of relativization of societies, "the situating of concrete societies in the context of a world complex of societies;" all matters related to societal evolution will inevitably become "matters of inter-societal, inter-continental, inter-civilizational, and inter-doctrinal interpretation and debate" (Robertson and Chirico 1985, 237).

Pluralism characterized the Chinese, Hindu and Islamic civilizations, medieval Europe, and even Western modernity until the corrosive effects of late modern developments did not reduce the role of civil societies in the West. A similar evolution also started in non-Western civilizational areas through the influence of the late modern way of life, but it is far from being overwhelming because those civil societies vigorously defend themselves. In the West as well the state only partially succeeded in destroying the autonomous existence of civil society precisely because individual persons fought to maintain their institutions independent of the

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expanding role of the medieval city in Europe, the kernel of an autonomous sphere of activity, it would be incongruous to hold it against any non-Western society not to have evolved the same type of autonomy in their cities leading, eventually, to Western-type practices of civility and democracy.

[29] Metzger deals only with the Chinese concept identified by des Forges as *gongmin shehui*, an idealistic image of public space in society: "In modern Chinese thought, however, 'civil society' has been typically seen as a saintly, utopian gemeinschaft free of 'selfishness,' pervaded by 'sincerety,' lacking 'all constraints limiting properly free individual desires' (*shu-fu*), free of 'exploitation,' without any 'conflicts or feelings of alienation coming between people' (*ko-ho*), and also free of all 'ideological confusion' (*fen-yun*) – a 'great oneness' (*ta-t'ung*). This tradition-rooted *ta-t'ung* ideal, very important in modern Chinese thought, not only Chinese Marxism, connoted what has been called a state of perfect 'linkage': the resolution of all doctrinal differences (*hui-t'ung*); the oneness of self and cosmos (*t'ien-jen ho-i*); the oneness of the self with the other, whether with all good people throughout history or with all other people in a contemporary world where all bad behavior and alienation have come to an end, internationally as well as domestically ... and the oneness of ideals with the actual world ... Given this utopian outlook Chinese have found it difficult even to find a word with which to translate 'civility.' The main word they have used to described how people should interact outside their families is *kung-te* (the virtue of someone dedicated to the public good), an idea connoting the absolute morality just discussed. The term for 'civil society,' *kung-min shehui*, has a similar connotation." Metzger 2000, 2:7. I quoted at length from Metzger's study to show not only the differences between the views of China scholars, but mainly to indicate how limited this type of scholarly work is because of its Western-centered view.

[30] Ibid., 72.

state, and non-state entities adapted themselves to the harshest of life circumstances in order to survive despite official policies, even persecutions, ready to eliminate them.

The best example of the survival of an institution of civil society is the survival and growing influence in our age, of churches and religious organizations. The so-called Western policy of neutrality between religious denominations, although it only enhanced the positions of secular materialism, never achieved the elimination of religious faith and its manifestations. The important erosion of religiosity in the past was not the result of such policies but of material abundance and faith in science and technology. Christian churches resisted even the atheistic terror of Communist regimes and went, if needed, underground; the role of the Orthodox Church in born-again Russia testifies to such a tremendous force of resistance against outside oppression.

Thus, the most striking recent development in the life of Western peoples is that latent forces of a true civil society are going through a resurrection at the beginning of the twenty-first century, due to the fact that they could not be destroyed by the modern state and excessive late modern individualism, but surprisingly survived in such a hostile environment. Cultural features and civilizational buildups are the most difficult to selectively eliminate. History shows that they disappear only when the entire civilization disappears from the world scene. And the reasons for such disappearance of entire civilizations is the most difficult to find out – a case in point is the disappearance of the Khmer civilization after more than five hundred years of existence, hallmarked by exceptional cultural creations.

A worldwide relationship between different civil societies is only possible if a dialogue will take place among coexistent but different civilizations in order to reach an understanding between them, not with the aim of creating a kind of syncretic world civilization, but to establish mutually acceptable and beneficial relationships bridging their differences and linking them in innumerable ways. This does not mean to achieve some sort of *trans*-civilizational compact. Such a universal formulation of all aspects of the lifeworld, through trans-civilizational understanding, would be impossible because nobody, no human being and no human society, can change the determination of its fate by the inherited civilizational and historic background.

Societies as bearers of civilizational legacy show why states cannot fill in this role. *Civilizations are not territorially but existentially and culturally defined entities*, characterized by particular spiritual, intellectual, artistic, or scientific achievements as well as by social practices related to the creation and maintenance of material conditions of life. States, as we have seen it, are territorially defined and, therefore, cannot by definition be representative of civilizational wholes. Civilizational dialogue regarding the political-institutional sphere will not aim at reaching a universally applicable formula of political organization, but will enrich all participants in the dialogue through the experience of others, and enable them to search for the best solution, in this respect, for themselves.

As Camillieri and Falk pointed out, civil societies of the future will be characterized, simultaneously, by "two at least potentially conflicting tendencies: the reassertion of cultural identity and acceptance of cultural pluralism" (Camillieri, and Falk 1992, 255).[31]

[31] As Seligman prophesized in one of his most recent writings: "What must be sought is a different model of community, one rooted in neither primordial/ascriptive criteria nor in the presumptions of 'methodological individualism.' Such a model would, presumably, both recognize the saliency of ascriptively defined collective traditions but also seek some sort of consociational framework for their respective programmes and social desiderata. Such a framework would of course have to be based on a shared recognition of human integrity and the profitability of civil or civic interaction and exchange," in Hall 1995, 218.

PART TWO

OPTIONS FOR THE INSTITUTIONAL RE-ORDERING OF THE POLITICAL SPHERE

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

Basically, there are only two options regarding the institutional re-ordering of the political sphere in the future. The first of these options consists in maintaining the principles of the present political institution, the nation-state, but extending its territorial grasp either by creating a world state or by creating regional political entities which could be built up, as in a puzzle, into a world state.

The main element in this first conception is, whatever the form of the path chosen, to replicate the nation-state formula at ever larger territorial levels, thereby further eliminating any intermediary stages between the individual and the political institution, that is, totally disregarding the principle of subsidiarity and extending the bureaucratic domination of non-elected officials. Consequently, the democratic order loses its sense because one cannot speak of democracy when the system of national representation is replicated through representatives electing, in turn, less numerous and even less representative delegates at each institutional level, in a similar way as it is today in the United Nations. All cultural aspects of institution-founding communities will be lost; identity will simply mean to be a human being, traditions will be merged in an all-embracing world culture, and the human person will be nothing but one among billions, undistinguishable and without character. This multitude will constitute the three necessary elements of late modern society – as producers, as consumers, as a voting machine.

The second option before humankind is something that many of our contemporaries will find so horrendous that they will close the book when they get to this page and throw it away. This option consists in the *elimination of the nation-state and its replacement not by greater but by smaller units of political-institutional ordering*. This solution would give priority to regional integration at a much more limited territorial basis than continents or sub-continents – such as nowadays the European Union or the Indian Union. Such an alternative world order of non-state political units would not be based on any pre-existing principle, but follow people's natural inclination to stay together in institutional frameworks of the public sphere which suit their cultural, economic, traditional, and way-of-life contexts. Not the territorial grasp, not the possibilities of control, not the unifying wills of certain individuals or groups would determine the size of these new communities but solely the affinities among populations living together in certain areas. In fact, such communities would not be regarded as constituted for eternity, but as living organisms which may change with time, with the modification of relevant contexts in the never-ending succession of generations, and with the fluctuating reality of life chances and opportunities of survival which are conditioned by the unfolding ecological drama from which we cannot escape, and which may inexorably transform the environment in some areas of the earth's surface.

This option represents an entirely new possibility for humanity, a possibility created by the hitherto unknown advances in technologies of communication and information. The idea is that these technologies could be much better used than their present applications such as e-commerce, e-public relations, e-publicity, whatever money-making e-niche, in order to organize coordination of policies and activities as well as to ensure information flows between all areas, great and small; to create possibilities for decision-making as close as feasible to those who are concerned. In sum, today's technologies are enabling humankind to replace all bureaucratic structures with an elaborate network society in which resentments, hostilities, or exclusions will certainly not disappear but which will, however, be reduced in intensity, in frequency, and in ferocity.

These smaller political units will be shaped in accordance with people's shared culture, identities, and lifestyles instead of their becoming ignored quantities in the infinite flux of human history.

CHAPTER SIX

THE ILLUSION OF THE NATION-STATE: AN UNREALIZABLE OPTION

The grand majority of our contemporaries do not even think that the political order that for centuries framed the life of our ancestors could disappear or that it even would have to be changed. Despite the endless talk and the voluminous literature about the crisis of the nation-state,[1] nobody really dares to reflect about possible future options once the presently dominating institutional form will make impossible the smooth functioning of our societies. Some even consider that non-functioning of statal institutions based on the nation-state model may signify that some societies prefer anarchy to an organized form of political life, because institutional organization cannot but mean the nation-state as invented in our Western civilization.

Behind the idea of the decline of the nation-state is, of course, the reality of worldwide interdependence[2] mutual but unequal in accordance with Keohane's and Nye's insight.[3] The only and harmless idea that is sometimes discussed, though not among ordinary people but in intellectual and scholarly circles, is the illusionary proposition of having a world state encompassing the earth and the whole of humanity.

Among the reasons put forward to justify expectations that the evolution of the world is toward a unified, planetary political system, a particular emphasis has to be put on two perspectives:

(1) The growing feeling that the nation-state became dysfunctional in the present context of globalization; and

(2) The eternal dream of a universal human world that became one of the main themes of the media and other agents of the globalizing trend – for their own purposes, of course.

That the nation-state – with its claim of sovereignty, with its territorial control, with its apparently democratic processes, and with its completely bureaucratic buildup – became gradually dysfunctional in the course of the last three decades is evident for anyone who observes the evolution of contemporary life.

[1] Thus, in Luard's words: "More than in any earlier time the state, within which political activity has traditionally been concentrated, is not a self-sufficient political or economic unit, but only a fragment of a much wider entity: the world-wide political system, the international economy, world society." Luard 1990, 3.

[2] Young gives the following definition of *interdependence* in a world system of states: "The concept of 'interdependence' will be defined in this essay in terms of the extent to which events occurring in any given part or within any given component units of a world system affect (either physically or perceptually) events taking place in each of the other parts or component unit of the system. By definition, therefore, the greater the extensiveness and the weight of the impact of events occurring in any given part of a system for each of the other parts, the higher the level of interdependence in the system ... The level of interdependence has risen in the contemporary world as a result of the expanding role of various nonstate actors and the development of those patterns of interpretations among actors which are characteristics of systems which are heterogeneous with respect of basic types of actor. In general, interdependencies tend to rise when the actors in a system interpenetrate each other since such conditions make it virtually impossible to isolate the effects of the actions of any given actor from the concerns and interests of other actors." Oran R. Young, "Interdependencies in World Politics," in Maghoori, and Ramberg 1982, 57-79; quotation is on pages 57 and 67.

[3] Robert O. Keohane, and Joseph S. Nye, *Power and Interdependence: World Politics in Transition*. (Boston: Little, Brown, 1977), 8-11.

There are innumerable factors which may explain the decline of our fundamental political institution – among them, demographic, organizational, societal, economic, and, the most important because underlying all other symptoms, the undeniable globalizing trend created by technological advances in all fields of activity.

The best way to see what is meant by this chimera of the intellect – the world state – is to examine, in various domains of life, one after the other in a logical progression, what the motives are for inducing people to believe that the creation of such a worldwide institution is possible; why such an option is not feasible; and, if it ever did become a reality, what would be its disadvantages.

1. Demographic Evolution

The development of communication and information technologies gave birth to transnational tendencies in all spheres of life, and it is this transnational character, which constitutes the essential element of the global era. If we look at the demographic aspect, the following appears undeniable: whether the hitherto unknown population pressure in most non-Western areas of the world or the effective de-population of Western countries is concerned, they are either the result of advances in medical technology (in the first case), or a product of the material and spiritual evolution induced by scientific and technical progress (in the second case). These phenomena, together with other technical and ideological factors such as intercontinental transportation facilities or the bad conscience of Western people stirred up by their higher standard of living in comparison with other regions of the world, explain the transnational movements of ideas, migrants, goods and services, etc. These worldwide movements of ideas and people are linked to the spread of democratic ideals and the demonstration effect of economic well-being, i.e., the hope of a better life not only for a fraction of humanity. They reflect the inevitability of civilizational dialogues – the other face of the globalizing process.

The population explosion in certain parts of the world, and the demographic exhaustion in the old countries of the European continent, are thought to favor a worldwide arrangement – first, through relaxing immigration controls and legislation in the nation-states and, second, through a planetary institution which ensures free movement of peoples across the oceans and continents. The large, transnational population movements would permit, in the eyes of the advocates of such not-so-natural population transfers, a worldwide demographic equilibration of differential fertility rates. This would lead to a reduction of the pressures of young generations on the societies and economies of non-Western countries, on the one hand, and to filling the demographic gap in the highly developed countries of Europe (without mentioning the continued immigration in settler countries of the Western civilizational orbit like Canada and Australia), on the other hand. This is the demographic argument in favor of the creation of a world state.

However, these planetary population policies, managed by a worldwide institution, cannot be accepted as the right solution for demographic problems either in non-Western or in European countries. Briefly, two considerations can be put forward to show that such a solution will not only not achieve its objective, but would positively do harm. First, the siphoning off of part of the population from economically developing countries, especially of the very young, would deprive these countries of those who may contribute to the economic advancement of their peoples and, therefore, are valuable resources from their point of view. The only fair and humane solution for these emigrants, including those who escape persecution (like the Kurds), can only be to create conditions in which they can remain at home, be educated, find work, and live in their customary cultural context. Second, the co-existence of populations of totally different civilizational backgrounds would make, in the countries of immigration, their living together very difficult, if not impossible, because the citizenship formula would only be successful if the mentalities and ways of life of the autochthonous populations could be completely modified. In addition, in most cases these so-called economic migrants, as opposed to political refugees, do not want to cut their ties with their home country. They materially support their families who remain there, and hope to return once the situation improves in order to live and die in their own world. For protagonists of the world state, civilizational or cultural differences are not really important because they ignore them. But if the role of communities in human existence is taken seriously, then the view of individuals as sort of empty shells which can be filled with new identities, even multiple identities, either by themselves, or by the changed circumstances in the world in which they live, is not tenable.

2. The Evolution of Society

At the societal level, two main characteristics stand out, as indicated in preceding chapters, which were partly responsible for the demise of the nation-state: first, the uncontested reign of the individual and, second, the destruction of all intermediary social formation between the state and the individual. These two phenomena are entirely intertwined because the first would not be possible without the second.

It was a deliberate intention of the state since its dynastic beginnings to achieve an exclusive confrontation between itself and the individual. For this purpose, the individual had to be transformed from a human person into an atomlike, empty-shell individual, who is nothing else but a citizen, a bundle of consumer preferences, and a constituent of the labor force producing wealth which, via fiscal policy and other means, ensures the budgetary sources the state needs. The degree reached in the exclusive consideration of individuals' rights and interests makes it extremely difficult to ensure the respect of the rights of groups and to satisfy the interests of collectivities. Proof of such a state of affairs is offered by a quick look at the miserable state of the public infrastructure in American cities, especially in the so-called capital of the world, New York; or the incredible neglect of all aspects of collective life in the great capitals of the non-Western world where only those who win in the competition for survival, obtain the satisfaction of their needs for the betterment of their life.

It thus became crystal clear, in late modernity, that excessive individualism destroys the foundations of society, and its effects contribute to the crisis of the nation-state. The reason for this is that individuals as citizens only function, in their great majority, as producers, consumers, and voters, legitimating, through democratic procedures, the rule of those in power.

Therefore, it is important to distinguish today between an individual and a human person. The first is the empty-shell phenomenon of modernity on which, in the interest of the state and of those in power, the entire modern ideology of individualism is founded. In contrast, a human person is an individual whose existence is completely embedded in his community through shared beliefs, values, traditions, and destiny. Aiming to create atomlike individuals, genuine communities had to be destroyed or, at least, their role had to be reduced and circumscribed. The sovereign state could not be sovereign if any other societal entity could claim the allegiance of people. Thus, the modern state represents an instrument of straightforward domination in contrast to other types of social systems such as medieval feudalism, the Indian caste system, or the Confucian buildup of Chinese society based on family cohesion and filial piety.

The individual's identity cannot be but the identity of the state's citizen or, within this overall framework, individual identity may consist of multiple identities precisely because this multiplicity makes an exclusive allegiance to a community impossible. These multiple identities presumably signify to have an identity as member of a cult, as fan of a football club, or as adherent of a literary circle. These identities are, of course, compatible because they represent only roles in which the individual is placed in accordance with circumstances; such identities or roles are interchangeable, like an overcoat. An irresolvable problem comes only to the fore when one of the identities is a fundamental one, linked to an ethnic group or nation, to a religion, in sum, to a cultural community. In this case, there must be a clash between various identities, as the affiliation to the latter is of a higher order than, let's say, being a fan of a football team. There can, however, be a multiplicity of adhesion within these basic identities (which are competitors of citizenship), or such identities can occupy the same rank in a personality, being, for instance, simultaneously French and Catholic.

The concept of the world state is, even from the point of view of society, a simple copying of the situation prevailing in the nation-state. In the world society, because the state is only the political-institutional expression of an underlying social reality, the individual is the world's citizen; being human practically means being a citizen of the world state. The characteristics of the individual standing alone opposite the all-powerful state do not change in this new situation, but are even more important than in the nation-state. The transnational movement of people requires that people should be interchangeable empty shells that can migrate or be transferred because their qualities of citizen, consumer, and laborer are exactly the same everywhere. International civil society, in this perspective, does not exist, if we understand under the designation of civil society all social institutions and entities which are not statal, that is, they are not under the state's umbrella.

As a consequence, the same criticism as the one concerning the societal buildup in the nation-state is applicable to the world state, too. What are the integrative forces in such a society and what are the impulses, which create between people a genuine and sincere solidarity? The state cannot integrate people by force with reference either (1) to their obligations as citizens appealing to them, through unrealistic slogans; (2) to adherence to the constitution (any constitution is nothing but a piece of paper which can be made and remade); (3) to attachment to the democratic regime of participatory politics (we saw with our own eyes how democratic freedoms, obtained in the former Communist states after the disappearance of the Soviet Union, did not create any sincere loyalty to the democratic system, and we also experience a growing number of abstentions in Western democracies); or (4) to the ideal of the free market which pretends to serve people's interests but, in practice, leads only to an even more excessive individualism.

The same is true regarding solidarity. Solidarity cannot be awakened and made active by resounding appeals made by politicians, celebrities, or some representatives of societal institutions, or by routine reminders diffused through the media, or by reference to some universal human morality, which does not exist.

The only way to restore the integrative forces of society and genuine solidarity between persons and peoples is to restore the socially mediating role of institutions and entities of civil society, to restore basic democratic processes through infusing again into people's minds that they are truly participating in decisions concerning their own affairs, and to reduce the inhumanly vast domain of public life to human proportions.

3. The Organization of the Public Sphere

From the organizational point of view, the crisis of the nation-state is symptomatic of all bureaucratic organizations and all bureaucratically organized societies. Thus, the crisis of the state as institution is the crisis of national bureaucracies and of the society of which the state is an expression; it is projected at the interstate level either in regional entities – the European Union – or in international organizations – the United Nations and its agencies. What does bureaucracy mean? It means the totally impersonal handling and managing of human affairs (a characteristic Max Weber praised above all in the modern age). It is in this sense that bureaucracy pervades not only the activities of the state but those of society as well.

The impersonal, bureaucratic bent in handling and managing people's affairs got an unforeseen boost from technological advances in late modernity. Everything which is done in an electronic way – e-commerce, Internet chat-rooms, or whatever – entirely de-personalizes human relationships. If there is no need to go to a bar to meet friends, if there is no need to shop around in grocery stores, bookshops, or other retail outlets where there is always contact involved with other human beings, what will become of conviviality and of being close to others as happened in times not so long ago?

This impersonal character of life will become insupportable in a world state and in the concomitantly appearing world society. Already now, in nation-states with governance based on democratic procedures people vote and, then, even forget whom they elected and who decides in their stead. In a world state this will become much worse because in it some authorities, locally elected will send (perhaps elect) their envoys to represent their population in the organs of the world state. These envoys, in turn, will elect members of the governing bodies as spelled out in the world constitution, who will elect the world government, and so on. Almost in an endless series, representatives will elect other representatives who will elect further representatives, and finally, the poor farmer in India, or the workers in the oilfields of Russia, or American employees and workers in the Middle West or California will never know who is who, who is deciding what, and who is in charge of their destiny and their future. Thus, the birth of a world society and the creation of a world state will infinitely aggravate the incomprehension between governors and governed and infinitely increase the distance separating decision-makers from those who must support the consequences of their decisions.

National bureaucracies are overburdened by the tasks due to (1) population problems, (2) the exigencies of the welfare state and of the unavoidable, if very limited, task of managing the economy, (3) the ever-growing complexities of economic and social life which they do not master anymore, (4) the impossible task of developing, in the present context, underdeveloped areas, and finally, (5) the lack of competent personnel

in every field. Their dysfunction signifies the dysfunction of the state apparatus, and this is also an important element in the demise of the nation-state.

In the case of a world state, the overburdened nature and inefficiency of national bureaucracies will be multiplied by a factor of nobody knows how great, and even to imagine a bureaucratic management of public affairs at the planetary level is, at present, impossible. It goes without saying that impersonality will be dominating to the same extent, and so-called administrative solutions will be the only way to settle every problem and to guide every activity. It is scary to think of the tragedies created by worldwide bureaucratic measures and, if not for anything else, for this reason the dream of a world state should be abandoned.

4. The Globalization of Economic Activities

It is in the economic field that the effects of globalization are the most visible. The presumed worldwide integration of financial markets, the explosion (between developed countries, of course) of world trade in goods and services, the presupposition of a market mechanism capable of harmonizing all conflicting interests[4] and serving simultaneously, the public at large and individuals, are some of the successes attributed to economic globalization. It is, however, not clear at all for most people that it is only the speed of financial transactions, or of the volume of goods and services exchanged, which is now different in comparison to the past. The essential features of all such operations remain the same, and many observers doubt that the global character of planetary economic relationships is more intense now than it was, for example, during the years before World War I. The nature of these operations did, thus, not change at all, but is vested with an ideological garb because economic globalization *must* lead to worldwide integration.

Nobody is better off (except, of course, the speculators) because of the increased speed of transactions of all kinds due to technological developments; nevertheless, because of the great visibility of instantaneous communications, economic globalization became the standard-bearer of a new age. Experts, businessmen, and government officials, whose interest is to make believe everybody in the fundamental nature of these changes represented by globalization, coined the necessary terms in which the ideological credo is expressed. *The only difference between classical economic theory and the credo about the globalization of markets is that the latter takes into consideration solely one aspect of the economic activities, the pattern of comparative advantage among markets, products, and prices*. This reduction of the economic perspective automatically involves an overemphasized accent put on competition and competitiveness. Thus, even the leaders of the so-called competition state are transformed from statesmen into traveling salesmen or commercial representatives of their countries' enterprises, promoting the latter's competitive stance – therefore contributing to the well-being of their peoples.

An important element of economic globalization is that

> There is a transnational process of consensus formation among the official caretakers of the global economy. This process generates consensual guidelines, underpinned by an ideology of globalization, that are transmitted into

[4] A good example of the breakdown of efficiency of the market mechanism in the United States, after the (partly justifiable) drive of deregulation, is the situation created in New York during the summer of 2000 (and in California in the winter of the same year). Economic deregulation led to a multiplication of electric current producers. This evolution is expected, according to free market doctrine, to intensify competition and, consequently, reduce prices in favor of consumers. However, this did not happen. Prices are higher than ever before (The *New York Times* reported that consumer prices of electric current were 43 percent higher in June 2000 than a year before). The Consolidated Edison Company, which, as a result of deregulation, is at present mainly a distributor buying electric current from producers located in or out of the state, appears to be unable to change the producers' attitude that prices should be raised because of an ever-increasing demand. What is, perhaps, the most dramatic aspect of this situation is that authorities of the state were not even cognizant of the nature of the problem, and the said producers were only invited to the hearing in Albany in the last minute and, therefore, were not present. This case shows that officials do not grasp the nature of the changes they put into motion.

> the policy-making channels of national governments and big corporations ... [The common feature of such guidelines is] to convert the state into an agency for adjusting national economic practices and policies to the perceived exigencies of the global economy. The state becomes a transmission belt from the global to the national economy, where heretofore it had acted as the bulwark defending domestic welfare from external disturbances."[5]

Nobody could deny the truth of Cox's presentation when thinking of all meetings, summits, G-7 or G-8 gatherings. What is the most disturbing in such a spectacle is the immorality of those statesmen who participate in these games about the promotion of economic globalization, and present their decisions as unavoidable consequences of an economically overdetermined process, although they simply behave as unscrupulous promoters of, and irrational believers in, the ideology of globalization.[6]

However, the effects of economic globalization are felt in many fields such as the growing instability of labor markets around the world because multinational enterprises (which represent a truly global element in economic activities) shift production sites in reaction to the slightest change in the availability and cost of manpower in order to increase the market value of their shares. Instability is also reigning in trade relations as prices and requirements are responding to the unforeseeable fiscal policies and changing customer habits in dominating economies. But the most important effect of economic globalization is that it worsens inequality between, on the one hand, social strata in a given state, and, on the other hand, rich and poor states.

Inequality in the domestic sphere will be growing because technological developments require a qualified workforce, and social divisions will be based principally on knowledge differences (besides, of course, the classic division according to wealth, especially in this age of speculation in technological stocks). Such a renowned economist as Lester Thurow, foresees that American society will be divided, in the near future, between people living in relative abundance – 20 or 30 percent of the population – and the rest – 70 to 80 percent – will find themselves living in relative deprivation, frequently at the subsistence level (Thurow 1996, 166-167). And, compared with the abundance in industrialized states, the increase in relative deprivation induced by economic globalization is already obvious in most countries of the non-Western world.

Economic globalization also means the quasi-impossibility of forecasting or, at governmental level, rational policy-making whether supply-sider, Keynesian, or centrally planned. This is just one aspect of the separation of markets from the political and institutional framework, or, in general terms, the Luhmannian differentiation of the economic, social, and political spheres. Therefore, the limitation of the sovereignty of the nation-state in the field of economic policy is always mentioned as one of the principal aspects of its decline. However, if the markets are expected to function only in a convenient political-institutional context, the assumption about their self-regulative nature is not credible because the institutionalization of their self-regulation is dysfunctional. It also becomes clear that the markets are open to manipulation by rich investors and speculators as well as by those holding the reins of power. This state of affairs gives a good argument to protagonists of a world state that is expected to regulate all activities globally. In this sense, the theme of global governance is a major preoccupation in the economic sphere, too.

Finally, economic globalization has another detrimental aspect as well. It forces on all other peoples and civilizations of the world the application of Western economic principles, methods of production, management, and economic policies. The whole world has to become a consumer society. For this reason, even in a world state there could be no other economic policy than that modeled on the Western approach. How could it be otherwise? Everybody should adopt the predomination of materialistic values, the secularized perspective on life, and adjust accordingly all civilizational orientations guiding people's

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[5] Cox, Robert W. "Global Restructuring: Making Sense of the Changing International Political Economy," in Stubbs, and Underhill 1994, 45-49; the quotation is on page 49.

[6] In this perspective Ernst Hillebrand and Günther Maihold write that "es entsteht ein Demokratie-Dilemma: Während im Rahmen der demokratisch legitimierten, nationalstaatlichen Politik zunehmend *Nicht*-Entscheidungen politisch legitimiert werden, werden im transnationalen Rahmen der '*Nicht*-Politik' *nicht* demokratisch legitimierte Entscheidungen von *trans*nationaler Reichweite und Durchschlagskraft getroffen." Hillebrand, Ernst and Maihold, Günther. 1999. Von der Entwicklungspolitik zur globalen Strukturpolitik: Zur Notwendigkeit der Reform eines Politikfeldes. *Politik und Gesellschaft Online* /International Politics and Society/, 4/1999; *emphasis* in original; http://www.fes.de/ipg/ipg.4/99/arthille.htm.

economic activities. There is not one hint in the discourse about the world state that would question what economic policy should be followed in case this world entity became a reality? Nobody even presupposes among its protagonists that there are other civilizations, which may have social structures, or cultural foundations with which Western methods of economic management and organization are not congruent. It is therefore clear from the experience of economic globalization how fearfully limited all speculations about the world state are, how much they follow ideological persuasions instead of reasoning empirically and taking into account the diversity of the human world.

5. International Security

It is taken as evident that national security became an empty concept, and the only way to ensure a world without conflicts is to install collective security encompassing the whole planet. The psychological and institutional roots of this view and of the collective security concept can, of course, be found in the bitter and devastating experience of the two world wars. After World War I, the intention was to achieve, through alliances (the Entente, the Little Entente, etc.) and through an international body, the League of Nations, the collective defense of participating states.[7] The experience of World War II led the victorious powers to re-create an international organization, the United Nations, in a soon bipolarized world of alliances. The main task of the United Nations was the same as that of the League, that is, the elaboration of a collective security system to make sure that the United Nations Charter and other international treaties were not violated. In addition, this system was based on the assumption that states behave prudently and rationally – a totally irrational assumption.

The expectations regarding the collective security system embodied in the United Nations were, however, never fulfilled. Collective security was never assured by international consensus but, first, by the mutual deterrence between the two superpowers and the division of the world into two camps, and second, since the disappearance of the Soviet Union and of the Warsaw Pact by the only existing superpower or hegemon,[8] the United States of America, who acts with its allies, through political and military pressure and, if necessary, NATO intervention. Collective security, thus, instead of being the result of a consensus between states of different persuasion, is achieved through a decision of a sort of consortium of some powers, dubbed the international community, though, in truth, decisions are made by the hegemon.

If ethnic, religious, cultural, or linguistic belonging represents a transnational idea (which means that most people hold similar but not identical views in different parts of the world), then conflicts in the present hegemonic system and the future world society will be conflicts between groups of people confessing such ideas, because "civilizational and cultural differences are fundamental and immutable."[9] As Bereciartu clearly summarizes this ambiguous state of affairs in the present:

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[7] Luard is, of course, right that "the attempt to obtain security by unilateral means – whether by states or alliances – is based on a logical fallacy. It is based on the belief that each party can maximize its own security by maximizing the *insecurity* of its opponents ... But that threat compels the opponent, if only in self-defence, to maintain a similar threat in reverse, and so to develop an equivalent destructive capacity. Each, therefore, imposes insecurity not only on the other but on itself." Luard 1990, 33; *emphasis* in original.

[8] On hegemony see T.K. Hopkins, "A Note on the Concept of Hegemony." *Review of International Studies*, 13 (1990), 409-412, where Hopkins designates hegemonic cycles (Dutch, British, and American) as state-subversive and characterized by transstatal institutions. In this sense, any hegemony proceeds with a fundamental alteration in planetary politics, passing from inter-stateness to trans-stateness. That a hegemonic power is necessary to provide some of the political preconditions regarding the smooth functioning of the international monetary system was originally suggested by Charles Kindelberger in *The World in Depression 1929-1939*. (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1973).

[9] Scott Thomas, "Religion and International Society," in Haynes 1999, 28-44; quotation is on page 32.

> [Ethnic self-determination] is configured as a certain form of disintegration that simultaneously facilitates a more encompassing form of integration along the way toward a new world order. This results from a dual process, centrifugal and centripetal, simultaneous and complementary, which lends itself to a compatible structuring of centripetal sociopolitical entities with centrifugal economic-normative ones (Bereciartu 1994, 161).

6. The Nascent Global Culture

Because civilizational variety is ignored, talk about global or world culture in the framework of a world state sounds entirely logical. This world culture would, of course, resemble in all respects Western culture. However, if we take into account the technological requirement of the so-called knowledge society of the future, then it is inevitable to give, first of all, a closer look to problems of culture and education in the contemporary West.

In fact, a cultural paradox is developing in Western societies. The paradox consists in the contrast of an apparent and superficial progress in the access to information among the masses versus a general educational backwardness. Such a paradox is only possible because (1) instruction, at elementary, middle- and higher levels as well as in vocational training, and (2) education, in the cultural and moral sense are not up to the old, classical standards. Most individuals in late modernity are probably less knowledgeable than their predecessors were (in accordance with the standards of the time) fifty years ago. This goes even for those who are considered as experts, specialists in their respective fields, or intellectuals, professors, or staff of the media, who know about their specialty but cannot be, in general, qualified as cultivated people (as the French designation goes, *hommes de culture*) with an encompassing view of the world. As against this quasi-universal decline in instructional and educational standards, an enormous volume of information is put at the disposal of everybody through communication channels produced by new technologies. As a consequence, Internet fans, television viewers, and users of the ever-renewed possibilities of dissemination of piecemeal novelties are mentally overburdened by the quantity of information they are inundated with.

The tragedy is that people whose instructional and educational background is not solid enough cannot

– *First*, make a selection of what is worthwhile and useful in the information flow; and,

– *Second*, are led to believe – a most dangerous illusion – that what they have access to is knowledge.

The result is that, in Castells' words, the world culture of the global, information age is

> Culture, indeed, but a culture of the ephemeral, a culture of each strategic decision, a patchwork of experiences and interests, rather than a charter of rights and obligations. It is a *multifaceted, virtual culture*, as in the visual experiences created by computers in cyberspace by rearranging reality (Castells 1997, 1: 197; italics in original).

It is also evident that the piecemeal information available through the Internet and other media of the modern age does not represent real knowledge, but only elements of what can become knowledge after a person mentally processes them in order to produce a coherent whole. As a result, less-educated citizens are an important factor in the decline of the nation-state, based on democratic processes, because they are unable to grasp the complex issues of our society and, consequently, to have a well-founded judgement about these issues and to evaluate, accordingly, electoral programs put forward by political parties. The dictatorship of electoral majorities is thus transformed into a dictatorship of majorities who are not cognizant of what they decide about.

In consequence, world culture would be constituted by the piecemeal information to which everybody can have access thanks to modern technology, elements of Western culture that are picked up in the globalization process and transnational connections. It is, however, questionable whether the Internet, Coca-Cola, McDonald's, and Hollywood movies, superficial ideas about science and economic activities, would make up something one could call world culture. Even if we add ideological tenets about humanitarianism and human rights, democracy and the workings of a free market, which are the main slogans of a would-be world culture, our skepticism can only deepen. In fact, such a world culture would not have an integrative

force because it would lack any shared beliefs, values, symbols, language, historical memories, and customary ways of living in a common lifeworld. Could world culture be a form of transculturality or interculturality, a hybrid form of elements taken from various cultures? Is this possible, is this desirable? In short, mankind as a community is too big an entity to be the bearer of a shared culture, and every culture, since time immemorial, has had to have a community as its bearer. In this respect, our world is not different from the ancient worlds, although we took the bad habit of believing that modernity is different from everything, which preceded it, that modern man is an exceptional gift of biological evolution to the universe.

Thus, we meet again, when analyzing themes related to the world state and to a world culture, this terrible ignorance, already referred to above, of the overwhelming and inescapable human diversity that makes it legitimate to speak about different human worlds. Promoting world culture is to promote an empty ideal because the reality of civilizations, co-existing in space and time, does not admit any adaptation to vacuous mental constructs. What should be looked for instead of an impossible world culture, is an understanding of others, their civilizations and ways of life, through a dialogue without preconceived ideas and, above all, without a feeling of an uncalled-for superiority of our culture and civilization.

7. Normative Universalism and Cosmopolitan Citizenship

The world state and world culture ideology is based on a normative concept of universalism. Universalism is a millennia-old dream of humanity from the Stoics through the medieval Church down to modern ideologies like Marxism and liberalism. It is a natural inclination of human beings to look for, and believe in, what unites all members of our species living on the Earth; in the first place, our common biological origin. Normative universalism,[10] in contrast, is an ideology which pretends to declare moral principles of one part of the people belonging to a specific civilization, to be a universal ethics applicable to all peoples and in all times. As a matter of course, this universal, normative ethics requires the creation of a planetary political unit with global – legislative, executive, and judicial – authority, in the sense explained by Habermas, who wrote a quarter of a century ago:

> Since *morality based on principles* (*prinzipielle Moral*) is sanctioned only through the inner authority of conscience, its conflict with the public morality, still tied to the concrete citizen, is embedded in its claim to universality; the conflict is between the cosmopolitanism of the "human being" and the loyalties of the citizen (Habermas 1975, 87; italics in original).

Such a normative universalism represents, therefore, the moral code of a transnational state, the universal morality of a world society. The ideology, corresponding in the political field to normative universalism, is cosmopolitanism (advocated by Held or Falk or Giddens) conceived of as an antithesis of belonging to a nation and sharing its traditions and culture.

Cosmopolitan citizenship is closely linked to normative or moral universalism, the belief about the moral irrelevance of differences among people, as Andrew Linkblater's definition evidences it:

> The cosmopolitan argument is that world citizenship can be a powerful means of coaxing citizens away from the false supposition that the interests of fellow citizens necessarily take priority over duties to the rest of the human race; it is a unique device for eliciting their support for global political institutions and sentiments which weaken the grip of exclusionary separate states (Linkblater 1999, 36).

[10] The qualifier *normative* is a very charitable identification because it would not be mistaken to designate this kind of universalism as a particular version of the old colonialism of European powers.

One of the fundamental mistakes of normative universalism is that it considers the state as a moral institution, as a moral community. Universalists do not make the distinction between the state, which is not a moral entity, and its constitutive community (or communities), as the latter's morality determines the state's own morality. The universalistic point of view appears for those who are not promoters of such an ideal as an illogical and irrational proposition because no political institution can be considered as an object of moral reflection. There is public morality in the public space; nevertheless, this morality is not a feature of the state but a characteristic of civil society. Therefore, decoupling morality from any political institution is unavoidable. It is unbelievable how scholars like Linkblater can make such a *category mistake*, similar to the mistake of those who believe that the mechanism of the market obeys ethical principles, though entrepreneurs are expected to serve exclusively their own interests through profit maximization.

The moral basis of the concept of a world state is, thus, normative universalism because one has to transform the present nation-state citizens into citizens of the world state[11] in order to make sure that they will not be attached to their own community's ethical principles and moral traditions, but will internalize and put into practice the tenets of the universalistic ideal. It would seem all the more normal that, in this universalistic perspective, sovereignty belongs not to individual peoples but to the whole human race. (It must be noted how undemocratic the stance of normative universalists reveals itself, as in Linkblater's quoted text, when a minority of intellectuals and idealists want to oblige sovereign peoples to adopt their moral position.)

Biological universalism is the only acceptable form of universalism; cultural universalism is *not* simply because we live in the global age and not in classical antiquity, in the Middle Ages, or the nineteenth century. Universalism and globalization are not complementary concepts, but opposites that exclude each other. As the introduction to this book made clear, globalization is the interpenetration of the universal and the local; one cannot eliminate the local in the name of the universal. These bipolar concepts – globalism and localism – belong together, complete each other, and thus reflect reality.

It is all the more astounding, in the age of globalization, that the protagonists of the world state and world culture use arguments that are from another age. An age when the pluralism of world civilizations was not known or, what is worse, non-Western civilizations were treated as inferior to the Western culture and way of life – a view obviously reflecting the civilizational imperialism of the bygone age of colonialism as Ernesto Laclau summed it up:

> Social reality refused to abandon its resistance to universalistic rationalism. For an unsolved problem still remained. The universal had found its own body, but this was still the body of a certain particularity – European culture of the nineteenth century. So, European culture was a particular one, and at the same time the expression – no longer the incarnation – of universal human essence (as the USSR would later be considered the motherland of socialism). The crucial issue here is that there were no intellectual means of distinguishing between European particularism and the universal functions that it was supposed to incarnate, given that European universalism had constructed its identity precisely through the cancellation of the logic of incarnation and, as a result, of the universalization of its own particularism. So, European imperialist expansion had to be presented in terms of universal civilizing functions, modernization, etc. The resistance of other cultures was, as a result, presented not as struggles between particular identities and cultures, but as part of an all-embracing and epochal struggle between universality and particularisms – the notion of peoples without history expressing precisely their incapacity to represent the universal.[12]

[11] "The second way of dealing with the problem of citizenship, of deciding whether it should be national or cosmopolitan in orientation, maintains that individuals have ethical obligations to the rest of the human race which can overrule their obligations to fellow citizens. This is the essence of the Kantian conception of world citizenship." Linkblater 1999, 39.

[12] Ernest Laclau, "Universalism, Particularism, and the Question of Identity," in Wilmsen, and McAllister 1996, 45-58; quotation is on pages 48-49. Tenbruck gives a more philosophical explanation of the Western attitude: "With the idea of progress, however, history acquires an inner-worldly goal and therefore also an end-point ... It is the lack of historical consciousness which evidences the vacuity and limitations of the programme of development ... Wherever the vision of an inner-worldly fulfilment of the history of mankind has become triumphant, there the existence of nations and national cultures disturbed the dream of a secular ecumenicity. The vacuity (and limitations) of this vision become apparent in the almost total absence of any serious reflections concerning the fate of these historical givens in the developmental process. The question where development as a cultural process is leading to does not form part of this thinking."

This is the final paradox regarding the idea of the world state, namely, the fact that protagonists of this chimera, evidently believing in progress and confessing to the contemporary liberal democratic ideals, represent, concurrently, and an imperialist stance in respect of the world's civilizational pluralism.

8. The World State and Civilizational Pluralism: A Conclusion

The main obstacle to the creation of a world state is not the nation-state, not the forms of federalism encouraged in such cases as the European Union, not a hegemonic or imperial order as the one in which we live now, but the existence of different civilizations which fundamentally condition every human being's life who lives in their orbit.

The crisis and demise of the nation-state, the difficulties met by those promoting some sort of continental or sub-regional federalism, and the resistance to hegemonic or imperial tendencies cannot lead to the creation of a world state because civilizational diversity is beyond and above such endeavors and will remain with us forever. Especially, success of hegemonic or imperial tendencies could only be a major force in striving for a unified political order of the world – a planetary state – if the leadership of the hegemon is universally accepted. It is really surprising that protagonists of the world state do not see the enormous danger in the contemporary situation that a hegemon, a superpower, could take over a unified world order to facilitate the achievement of its own purposes. One of the few advantages of the epoch of the Cold War was that there existed two rival superpowers saving the world from a possible hegemonic rule.

Friedrich H. Tenbruck, "The Dream of a Secular Ecumene: The Meaning and Limits of Policies of Development," in Featherstone 1990, 193-206; quotation is on pages 201-202.

CHAPTER SEVEN

A NON-CENTRALIZED AND DEMOCRATIC POLITICAL ORDER: A UTOPIC VISION?

If the future civil society will be characterized by a "reassertion of cultural identity and acceptance of cultural pluralism," according to the quotation from Camillieri and Falk at the end of the fifth chapter, thus consisting of a multiplicity of places dominated by different communities and located in a discontinuous public space, then the political order of the future cannot but be non-centralized[1] and truly democratic. It is most striking that a great eighteenth-century century thinker, Althusius, already stated the importance of non-centralized political institutions as recently discovered:

> From Althusius we can learn that the centralized territorial state is indeed only one of two alternative traditions of political organization which have both accompanied the evolution of Western civilization. The other one is a federalized plurality of rule, and this is in fact not only the older tradition, but also the dominant one during most of the course of that evolution.[2]

It is too early now, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, to try to give a complete and detailed description of the non-centralized, democratic political order of the future. What follows in the present and subsequent chapters is simply an outline of some ideas along which the coming revolution of the world's political buildup may evolve, with an emphasis on the facilities and possibilities offered by the new technologies of communication and information.

1. The New World of Political Entities in the Future

The political entities replacing our nation-states will be institutional units based on the configuration of ethnic, cultural, or religious communities representing particular identities, sometimes called segmental homogeneity or stateless forms of government. They may be imagined as a *network* of smaller or larger regions that hang together as parts of wider coordinating entities, in accordance with a continuum conception

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[1] I use the term non-centralized instead of decentralized because the latter term presupposes an existing centralized political structure which will not be the case in the situation described in the text. It is useful to juxtapose the idea of non-centralization to that of decentralization quoting, concerning the latter concept, B.C. Smith: "Decentralization means both reversing the concentration of administration at a single centre and conferring powers to local government ... [Thus], decentralization involves the delegation of power to lower levels in a territorial hierarchy." Smith 1985, 1 and 12. A federal order is more decentralized than devolution granted by the centralized state.

[2] Thomas O. Hüglin, *Re-reading Althusius for the Twenty-First Century*. Paper presented to the Althusius Symposium, held in Philadelphia, 11-12 November 1990, 21; quoted by Elkins 1995, 290, note 1.

of governance, and in the form of consensus or consociational democracies as described by Arend Lijphart.[3] Three things must be pointed out at once in this respect in order to avoid any misunderstanding:

First, these entities will not be territorially based as today's modern states are, though they will certainly occupy a given surface of the earth.[4] Non-territoriality means in this respect that territory will not be a constitutive element of a new entity or of regional or sub-regional entities as a political institution, because they will genuinely and autonomously grow out of a culturally determined context in a wider civilizational framework.

Second, related to the principle of non-territoriality, such entities only lay claim to a limited sovereignty congruent with their hanging together, similar to networks. Sovereignty is a feature of the present political-institutional system and it requires historical and nationalistic legitimation.

Third, in the framework of a *new multilateralism* the smaller political entities of the future will engage in an inter-civilizational dialogue giving a new meaning to history (Segesvary 1998/2000 and 2000). Robert Cox summed up the essence of the new multilateralism as a normative concept, among others in his contribution to a program of the United Nations University concerning "Multilateralism and the United Nations System," which means, according to him,

> A commitment to maximum participation in dialogue among political, social, economic, and cultural forces as a means of resolving conflicts and designing institutional processes ... [Whereas in the old multilateralism universals were derived from among those of the dominant society] a post-hegemonic order will have to derive its universals in a search for a common ground among constituent traditions of civilisation (Cox, and Sinclair 1996, 518-519).[5]

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[3] Arend Lijphart indicates that the term *consociational* was first used by Johannes Althusius in his book, *Politica Methodice Digesta* (1603), in the seventeenth century. Lijphart 1977, 1. Lijphart defined the essence of consociational democracy in the framework of the nation-state and, therefore, his conceptualization is not entirely applicable to the new entities described in this essay: "Consociational democracy can be defined in terms of two primary attributes – grand coalition and segmental autonomy – and two secondary characteristics – proportionality and minority veto. *Grand coalition*, also called power sharing, means that the political leaders of all of the significant segments of a plural (deeply divided) society govern the country jointly. Segmental autonomy means that decisionmaking is delegated to the separate segments as much as possible. Proportionality is the basic consociational standard of political representation, civil service appointments, and the allocation of public funds. The veto is a guarantee for minorities that they will not be outvoted by a majority when their vital interests are at stake." Lijphart 1985, 4. A consociation can be even a federation if "segmental autonomy is instituted on a territorial basis." Ibid., 5. – Daniel Eleazar, a firm proponent of federalism combined with consociationalism, distinguishes the two in the world of nation-states as follows: "While federalism involves both structures and processes of government, consociationalism involves processes only ... It is the particular process – admittedly institutionalized – of concurrent power sharing that is the principal feature of consociationalism. These processes are subject to change with relative ease when the conditions that generated them change. Both federalism and consociationalism are directed to the achievement of both unity and diversity." Eleazar 1985, 23. And he concludes "that federalism is a matter of form of a polity while consociationalism refers to a polity's regime." Ibid., 29.

[4] Saskia Sassen speaks of the effects of globalization not as affecting the state's territoriality, but as "institutional encasements of that geographic condition." Saskia Sassen. "Embedding the Global in the National," in Smith, Solinger, and Topik 1999, 158-171; quotation is on page 159.

[5] In this respect, it is interesting to quote Björn Hettne's conceptualization of the new world order: "My objection to Orwell is more or less the same as my objection to Huntington. They both seem to apply a Westphalian logic to a post-Westphalian context. The future regional actors will to my mind rather bear more similarity to traditional empires, albeit in a new world context, than to nation-states. This would imply, for instance, governance on a higher level but without cultural standardization and ethnic cleansing." Hettne, Inotai, and Sunkel 1999, 22-23.

A. CONSTITUTING ELEMENTS OF THE NEW ENTITIES

If the new political entities of the future are not based on historical and territorial claims, on what basis will they be constituted? They will encompass communities of different character – cultural, religious, or ethnic;[6] several communities simultaneously because there is hardly any region of the world in which exclusively one specific community lives. Some authors consider that communities are in the process of losing their fundamental role in our societies because they are disembedded territorially. This is, however, not correct because such communities exist not on a territorial but on a non-local, non-spatially bound basis. In this respect, contrary to the generally accepted view, communication technologies reinforce community links instead of weakening them; in addition, the commercialized symbolic forms of the media and piecemeal information of the so-called world culture can never replace the cultural foundations of authentic communities.

A new description of what I call communities is frequently used, that of *milieu*. It is pretended, following Max Scheler, that the milieu is an individual creation, and that our milieu-structure is not exposed to outside influences. Milieu, thus, can be defined as "an environment, structured according to rules of preference, which consequently displays the person's environment in its practically relevant aspects" (Eade 1997, 62-63).[7] This is also expressed as the delinking of the convergence of locale and milieu following globalization processes (ibid., 61). However, if we consider that an individual and its community live in a constant interaction, that one cannot exist without the other, then it becomes evident that milieu is nothing but a new designation of specific human worlds in which individuals and communities live together.

If the character of exclusivity – the desire of national sovereignty – is eliminated from the constitution of new political entities, there are only the memories and emotions left over from recent centuries to explain why different communities could not live together in the same political institution. All culturally relevant problems – religion, language of education and administration, cultural freedom – would be resolved, without difficulty, in such political entities if the idea of national sovereignty could be eliminated from the minds of the concerned groups of population.

Good examples for the real chances of such a co-existence of different communities in the same political entity are, first, Bosnia, where various ethnic, cultural, and religious communities peacefully existed together before modern – Serbian, Croatian, and Albanian – nationalism destroyed the framework for such a co-existence; or Transylvania, part of Romania since 1918, where two population groups – Romanian and Hungarian – may constitute an autonomous entity whence the Romanian nationalistic trend will subside.

It is, thus, important to emphasize that the political re-ordering[8] of the future will not endeavor to create one nation and one culture political units because enforcing uniformity at any price is the cause of the troubles of the nation-state. This premise makes it also possible to foresee that future institutional entities will not include only geographically contiguous territories, but may be composed of several units in several regions or in several sub-regions of the same region.[9] Such political institutions are sometimes described as *condominio*[10] or, in the words of Elkins, as constrained anarchy (Elkins 1995, 145):

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[6] As an argument, why and how even religious communities may play a role in the creation of these new entities is given by Bryan Turner in his essay "Outline of a Theory of Human Rights:" "The sociological truth of religion is not a belief in spiritual or supernatural beings but belief and practices towards the sacred which creates a social bond." Turner 1993, 166.

[7] Jörg Dürrschmidt also defines a milieu "as relatively stable and situated configurations of action and experience, in which individuals actively generate a distinctive degree of familiarity and practical competence." Eade 1997, 57.

[8] Order was defined by Hedley Bull as meaning "that [the constituents of order] are related to one another according to some pattern, that their relationship is not purely haphazard but contains some discernible principle ... By order in social life I mean a pattern of human activity that sustains elementary, primary or universal goals of social life." Bull 1995, 3-4.

[9] In respect of non-traditional organizational options, some authors use the concept of *heterarchy*: "The concept of heterarchy is particularly useful for simultaneous spatial analysis at multiple levels and for describing power relations ...

> Non-exclusive and non-congruent territories are a form of unbundling ... Non-territorial organization offers even more flexibility than any type of territorial organization ... one would expect them [organizational structures] to be less hierarchical, or to involve multiple hierarchies, to be described more often as webs or networks (ibid., 139-140).

Taking an example from Africa, from the region of the Great Lakes, a Hutu and Tutsi entity could be created in the two presently existing states, Rwanda and Burundi, which would encompass both ethnic populations now living in these states.

Björn Hettne wrote extensively on globalization and regionalism, especially in his contribution entitled "Globalization and the New Regionalism: The Second Great Transformation," included in the collection of essays he edited with Inotai and Sunkel (1999: 1-24). Though later he defined a region "as a group of countries with a more or less explicitly shared political project" (ibid., 1),[11] in an earlier writing he recognizes the fundamental role of culture, and links regionalism to cultural pluralism against the one-sided view of functionalism:

> A culture is the fundamental condition for collective existence, it is the unconscious *universal* frame of reference, which becomes *specific* only in confrontation with other cultures. [His conceptualization of a cultural world presupposes] "the realization of the biological and cultural reproduction of the group in a larger context of pluralism" (Hettne 1995, 201 and 204; italics in original).

Following Paasi,[12] Jouni Häkli distinguishes a region from a place from the point of view of everyday practices. He considers regions as having an institutional and collective character, a symbolic entity which can be object only of shared experiences, quoting Paasi[13] to the effect that a region is an "expression of time-space specific relations and structures of society" (Häkli 1994, 28).

In considering the genesis of regions, Häkli introduces as an important factor the universalizing effect of written records, because writing, as an instrument of systematization and classification, creates a horizontal

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Heterarchy refers to a particular relation among elements; they may be unranked relative to one another or may be flexibly ranked given the circumstance. Because power has multiple sources and because conditions change, the recognition of heterarchical relations among powerful entities (in addition to the more familar hierarchies) extends both description and explanation of sociopolitical structures." Hagen 1998, 80-81.

[10] Philippe Schmitter in his study *If the Nation-State Were to Wither Away in Europe, What Might Replace It?* establishes four ideal types of future political configurations based on combinations of territorial and functional constituencies. Though he does not abandon the nation-state framework and, therefore, his classification has less importance from our point of view, it is, however, interesting to quote his description of the category *condominio*, which he considers the unprecedented and really unimaginable: "Precisely what the state system has taken so long to fix into a coincident interrelation would be sundered and allowed to vary in unpredictable ways. Instead of one Europe with recognized and contiguous boundaries and, hence, a singular and definite population, there would be many Europes ... While it seems unlikely that anyone would set out deliberately to create a *condominio* – and no long-lasting historical precedents come to mind – one can imagine a scenario of divergent interests, distracted actors, improvised measures and compromised solutions in which it just emerges *faute de mieux* and rapidly institutionalizes itself as the least threatening outcome." Gustavsson, and Lewin 1996, 226; *emphasis* in original.

[11] This is implied by Hettne who writes some pages later that the "underlying logic behind contemporary processes of regionalization" is multidimensional: "Some key dimensions are cultural identity, degree of economic and political homogeneity, and security order, in particular the relative capability of conflict resolution; that is, handling and resolving regional conflicts without extraterritorial intervention." Hettne, Inotai, and Sunkel 1999, 9-10.

[12] Anssi Paasi, "Deconstructing Regions on the Scales of Spatial Life." *Environment and Planning*, (1991): 23:239-240.

[13] Anssi Paasi, "The Institutionalization of Regions: A Theoretical Framework for Understanding the Emergence of Regions and the Constitution of Regional Identity." *Fennia*, 164 (1986): 120.

space (exemplified by a formalized code of law or by titles to land ownership) in contrast to the vertical space of hierarchical societies. The role of writing was especially evident in making possible communication at a distance (such as postal services), thus surpassing the context and limits of the place (ibid., 38-40).

Regarding regionalization, Hettne states his fully justified view that

> *The two processes of globalization and regionalization are articulated within the same large process of global structural change*. The outcome in the form of a new world order depends on this dialectical rather than linear development and can therefore not be extrapolated or easily foreseen (Hettne, Inotai, and Sunkel 1999, 2; italics in original).[14]

In this study, I follow my earlier distinction (Segesvary 1999a/2001, 229-230) between regionalism and regionalization. The first term covers the spontaneous initiative of populations aiming at a regional cooperation, a movement from below – thus it coincides with the new institutional structure in the political arena envisaged here. *Regionalization*, on the other hand, means the creation of regional cooperation as a result of initiatives of nation-state governments – like the European Union.

Regionalism is a component of the globalizing, borderless world;[15] it is not in contradiction to it but represents its multidimensional character. It would only be opposed to globalization if one collapsed globalization into the idea of the world state and considered homogenizing regionalization as regionalism, similarly to Hettne (Hettne, Inotai, and Sunkel 1999, 6). As power differentials will always exist in any political structure, regionalism as well as globalism both implies a multipolar situation, but this phenomenon does not change the linkage between the two trends.

Regionalism, in the perspective traced here, cannot but be open to the world due to the interdependent character of the new entities, especially in view of their extensive connections through up-to-date technologies. It implies, this goes without saying, the prior existence of a regional civil society evolving new frameworks for the convergence of cultural values and intensified communication, denied, in the past, by antagonistic state institutions. Such a regional civil society requires regional solutions to common problems and the realization at the regional level of shared projects in all spheres of activity.

One should not exclude economic considerations as a constituting element of future political entities, though they may not play such an important role as some thinkers attribute to the economic factor in the development of nationalistic trends and, consequently, the constitution of modern nation-states. However, economic advantages of adhering to the same entity may reinforce the feeling of belonging together despite cultural or other differences and thus contribute to co-existence in a common entity evolving functional competencies; or they may, eventually, bridge over centuries-old hostilities among co-existing communities and induce them to create together an entity assuring for all component parts the economic resources needed for a decent life.[16]

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[14] "Regions cannot be defined a priori, because they define themselves by evolving from an objective, but dormant, to a subjective, active existence." Hettne, Inotai, and Sunkel 1999, 9.

[15] The term *borderless world* was first used by Kenichi Ohmae in his *The Borderless World: Power and Strategy in the Interlinked Economy*. (New York: HarperCollins, 1990).

[16] The limits of economic cooperation and homogenization can be shown by two well-known examples: first, free trade areas in which countries with unequal economic endowment participate lead to tensions and not to a sustained regional cooperation; second, the so-called conditionalities imposed by the IMF, and Western methods of development employed by the World Bank, both proved to be ineffectual to stimulate economic development during the past decades.

B. CO-ORDINATION BETWEEN POLITICAL ENTITIES AT REGIONAL OR SUB-REGIONAL LEVELS

It is certain that most criticisms against the ideas suggested in this study will come from those who insist on the unavoidable necessity of centralized efforts in various fields of political, economic, and social activities. It is evident that co-ordination and cooperation are indispensable in environmental policies and protection; division of labor in accordance with resource endowments (but abandoning the old idea of competitive advantage, which lost its aura in the technological age); infrastructure building and maintenance; control of the globalized organizations of criminality such as trade in drugs, prostitutes, falsified currency; as well as in many other domains of activity.

Coordination, resulting in cooperation which follows decisions reached in common, will be carried out with the maximum use of technological means, by regional and sub-regional coordinating centers. These centers will be set up for solving problems common for a determined area and, therefore, may be organized for handling overall policy problems (environment), or sectoral programs (infrastructure), or activities for the satisfaction of social and other needs of certain population segments (immigration, educational requirements, equivalences of diplomas). They will have a restricted number of personnel and will probably be supervised by committees composed of representatives of component entities.

The communication feedback will be all the more important in relations between sub-regional or regional coordinating centers, on the one hand, and the entities participating in the coordinating setup, on the other hand, as an incessant flow of information and communication will have to ensure that such entities are enabled to act through these feedback procedures without delay in correcting coordinating action at all levels.

2. Governance in the New Political Entities

At first glance, problems of governance may seem to be insurmountable in the new political structure. This is, however, an optical illusion because we are so much accustomed to seeing every problem in public life through the glasses inherited from a centuries- long existence in modern, democratic states. The essence of democratic regimes in general is well summarized by Dieter Grimm, who pointed out that

> The democratic nature of a political system is attested not so much by the existence of elected parliaments, which is today guaranteed almost everywhere, as by the pluralism, internal representativity, freedom and capacity for compromise of the intermediate area of parties, associations, citizens' movements and communications media. Where a parliament does not rest on such a structure ... democratic substance is lacking even if democratic forms are present (Gowan and Anderson, 1997, 251).[17]

In this perspective, the model of consociational democracy, already referred to above, analyzed and put forward by Arend Lijphart in his classic *Democracy in Plural Societies*, will be applicable in the new entities as well as in larger units consisting of sub-regions or regions. The model is based on the cooperative attitude of leaders of different segments of the population in a plural society. It was Harry Eckstein who first referred to a plural society as manifesting segmental cleavages between its component groups.[18] Referring also to

[17] In a much-criticized article Robert Kaplan wrote that "in a society that has not reached the level of development Tocqueville described, a multi-party system merely hardens and institutionalizes ethnic and regional divisions." Later he added: "The nominal system of government is less significant than the nature of the society in which it operates." Kaplan 1997, 60 and 69.

[18] Lijphart refers to Eckstein when pointing out that "segmental cleavages may be of religious, ideological, linguistic, regional, cultural, racial, or ethnic nature. A further characteristic already implied by Eckstein's definition, is that political

Pye, Geertz and Furnivall, Lijphart clearly indicates that in civilizational orbits other than the Western, political institutions are based on communal structures or, as Geertz calls them, primordial loyalties.[19]

In fact, European feudalism was an ignored precursor to non-centralized political institutions. This was clearly established by Jenö Szücs in his masterly study about the *Three Regions of Europe* (Keane 1988, 291-332):

> The territorial consequences of Western feudalism, a large number of small provinces each with its own customary law, also provided a far more suitable soil for the development of direct legality in general and for the thorough predominance of laws as "custom" (*mos terrae*) than would political and administrative frameworks broken up roughly and superficially from above. Decentralization was the medium through which, at local levels, the "ascending" principles of law and government could overcome the "descending" mechanisms of exercising power ... In the fully developed feudal structure, the state's administrative, military, fiscal and legal functions became entirely divorced from the power of the monarch. They were distributed among the tiers of the feudal society ... Territorial status and feudal dependence did not necessarily coincide. In the long run, this paradox had enormous significance: the notion of sovereignty had become entirely relative and its fragments were scattered in an uncertain way into the sphere of society" (ibid., 302-303).[20]

This long quotation from a little-known text evidences that the proposed re-ordering of the political sphere has precedents – that does not mean, of course, that it is necessary to turn back the wheel of history to go back to the Middle Ages. The greatest advantage of the suggested new setup will be, without contest, its *non-centralized* nature. No democratic regime, built on the principle of majoritarian consensus, can be effective in a highly centralized context – as all our contemporary democracies are. The abandonment of centralization is a *sine qua non* condition of democracy's good functioning because:

First, a non-centralized institutional structure, meaning to return to local authorities and populations all decision-making powers, automatically and obligatorily excludes from the power over the lives of millions, every type of bureaucracy with its inherent characteristics, e.g., the impersonal handling of public affairs. Bureaucratic administration and management are among the principal causes of the undeniable reality that people lose their interest in participating in democratic procedures because they know that they have, anyway, no control whatsoever over the work of bureaucracies. It is a fact that in the course of the evolution of modern society bureaucracies adjudicated themselves more and more power from the elected representatives of the people, be they statal, party, judiciary, or various types of corporate bureaucracies. The same must be said for bureaucracies born out of regional integration efforts.

Second, it ensures the application of the principle of subsidiarity: this means that it brings all types of decision-making as near as possible to those effected by the decisions taken.[21] And the application of the

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parties, interest groups, media of communication, schools, and voluntary associations tend to be organized along the lines of segmental cleavages." Hettne, Inotai, and Sunkel, 1999, 3-4.

[19] Lucian W. Pye, "The Non-Western Political Process." *Journal of Politics*, 20, No. 3 (1958); Clifford Geertz, "The Integrative Revolution: Primordial Sentiments and Civil Politics in the New States," in Geertz 1963. *Old Societies and New States: The Quest for Modernity in Asia and Africa*. (New York: Free Press, 1963), 109-113; J.S. Furnivall, *Colonial Policy and Practice: A Comparative Study of Burma and Netherlands India*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1948).

[20] Concerning the introduction of the principle of representativity in political practice during the feudal age, see István Bibó's *Az európai társadalomfejlődés értelme: Történelemfilozófiai és politikaelméleti vázlat* (The Meaning of the European Evolution of Society: Contribution to the Philosophy of History and to Political Theory). Bibó István, *Összegyűjtött munkái*. (Bern: Európai Protestáns Magyar Szabadegyetem, 1982), 2:578.

[21] Neunreither gives a good definition of the subsidiarity principle: "Subsidiarity means that a larger unit only assumes functions insofar as the smaller units of which it is composed are unable or less qualified to fulfil their role. Starting from the individual, civil associations, communes, regions to national states and beyond, each larger unit has only a subsidiary role. The notion of subsidiarity has been used by Aristotle, Thomas Aquinas, Proudhon, Tocqueville and others. In this century the main source is without doubt the papal encyclical 'Quadragesimo Anno' of 1931, which outlines a concept of society and public order." Neunreither later quotes a document of the European Commission, *The Principle of*

subsidiarity principle is not decided by those in power, by those in charge of governance in countries with huge territories and populations, but by the people themselves empowered through the institutional structure. In this manner, the non-centralization inherent in the existence of new, smaller, culturally based or regional or subregional entities, eliminates the cause of people's disinterestedness in politics – an undeniable phenomenon in today's democracies as evidenced by the growing absenteeism in elections or popular votes. Therefore, Lynn Miller is right in saying "*the best social order would permit very great local control and autonomy in policy-making but link us in a global network of social solidarity*" (Miller 1994, 89; italics in original).[22]

As examples of advantages of the subsidiarity principle's effective application, one can refer to fiscal revenues and welfare policies. Fiscal policies will be restricted, on the one hand, to cover local expenditures reflecting the real needs of the population, and, on the other hand, to cover expenditures common to all entities in a larger region, decided upon through electronic communication in the respective coordinating centers. Public expenditures will be enormously reduced in this way because (1) the heavy bureaucratic structures which overburden public budgets at all levels will be eliminated; (2) prestige expenditures or those inspired by personal or corporate interests will also be eliminated, as well as (3) the malicious practice of transferring budgetary revenues from one region or from one sector of activity to others – as happens today following central authorities self-interested or ideologically motivated decisions.

As far as welfare is concerned, detailed programs of welfare policies will be much easier to be controlled by the population in smaller political entities than in today's huge states, where nobody knows where the money goes under the label of welfare assistance. The most important effect in bringing closer the formulation of welfare policies to the people will, however, be that the population will endeavor to respond to permanent needs and occasional misfortunes through channels of community or group solidarity.[23] Solidarities will be much more active than now when everybody expects that the state's relevant departments or municipalities' social assistance services will take care of those in need or requiring immediate but momentary help.

To give other examples of policy advantages, we can refer to:

(1) The designation of candidates between, whom the voter is now obliged to choose without having a say in their selection, by the communities themselves instead of powerful bosses of political parties;

(2) The end of the inadmissible mingling of judges in family affairs in defending the rights of children against parents – without, of course, referring here to criminal cases – thus putting an end to judiciary bureaucracy;

Subsidiarity. Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament [DOC (SEC/92) 1990 final, dated 27 October 1992], which also points out that "the subsidiarity principle is based on the concept that the powers which a state or a federation of states wields in the common interest are only those which individuals, families, companies and local or regional authorities cannot exercise in isolation. This 'common sense' principle would therefore dictate that decisions should be taken at the level closest to the ordinary citizen and that action taken by the upper echelons of the body politic should be limited." Karlheinz Neunreither, "Subsidiarity as a Guiding Principle for European Community Activities." *Government and Opposition*, 28 (1993): 206-217; quotations are on page 207.

[22] Reversing of the dominant trend in present-day democracies would be of immense importance because, as Lawrence Grossman summed it up: "We are approaching a society increasingly characterized by single-issue politics, as local proximity and local identity are diminishing in importance. Concern for the common interest and the general welfare is being displaced by a pervasive focus on individual interests that are capable of being mobilized across the nation. In such an environment, the question arises, how do we form communitywide coalitions and make the political compromises and accommodations that are necessary for the *general interest* to be served?" Grossman 1995, 252; italics in original.

[23] Leiss rightly argues that "our society has split the process of caring that was united in traditional socialization networks. Caring for others outside the domain of the nuclear family, in terms of basic needs, has been relegated increasingly to public agencies. At the same time the formation of a sense of personal identity and well-being has been detached from the network of caring relationships and routed instead through the market-place – which ... cannot successfully perform this function." W. Leiss, *Under Technology's Thumb*. (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1989), 123.

(3) The end of the arbitrary production guidelines of corporate decision-makers who determine from what assortment of merchandise the consumer should be able to choose what he desires, that is, who determine the possibilities and limits of the so-called consumer sovereignty.

Finally, when one looks at the irresponsible administrative decisions of the Brussels Commission in respect of any matter – literally everything from the preparation of cheese and pizzas to the shape of wine bottles and the policies of local authorities concerning investment and employment in their area – then one cannot but be horrified by the blunders committed by such supra-national bureaucratic bodies.

Governance of the new entities using the possibilities of communication offered by recent technologies will depend on *the participation of all people in the decision-making and feedback processes*. One cannot put enough emphasis on the importance of:

Feedback procedures – the backbone of the technological administration of new entities, representing the means to control and reorient, if necessary, by the interested population, the actions undertaken by executive organs, and on

Participation in popular governance – that will give the real measure of the (hitherto untested) interest of people in making function democratic regimes.

The governing structures of the new entities and sub-regional or regional units will be constituted of legislative and executive organs, as such organs are unavoidable in any political-institutional context. The legislative organs will probably be local councils and, on most important questions, the entire population will vote with the help of electronic means; whereas the executive organs will be regularly elected, but their entire work – planning, contract awarding, establishment of regulations and ordinances, or direct execution of decisions taken by democratic majorities – will be done through communication and information media, thus made instantaneously available for feedback comments, protest, corrections, and new requests on behalf of the interested groups or the population concerned. Hence, the importance of feedback procedures and, in general, people's wholehearted participation, because this system of administration will permit all communities to continuously evaluate, approve, or re-direct the work of executive organs.

It is evident that this system of *instantaneous democracy* will not function from the beginning as expected, and it is also sure that attacks against electronic networking in democratic procedures will concentrate on the disinterest of people to be engaged, besides their regular professional occupations, in public life and public affairs which are their own. This will certainly be a test of the willingness of populations to take into their hands the management of their own affairs – a test of democratic capabilities and readiness. However, it can also be foreseen that after some happy, and also painful, experiences a process of civic maturation of citizens will automatically set in as people realize the effectiveness of their interventions and the importance of their involvement for their own interest. This hope appears to be realistic because feedback procedures will be obliging the citizens to act instantaneously; the best example to evaluate the importance of problem-solving in a context of such nearness to populations is the coupling of community solidarities with public assistance in the field of social and welfare activities, demonstrating the ineffectiveness and wasteful management by distant and impersonal administrators who do not know anything about an actual situation.

Whether democracy as political institution is practicable in all societies, especially in the non-Western world, is an open question. Therefore, Robert Kaplan is certainly right in saying that

> Indeed, our often moralistic attempts to impose Western parliamentary systems on other countries are not dissimilar to the attempts of nineteenth-century Western colonialists – many of whom were equally idealistic – to replace well-functioning chieftaincy and tribal patronage systems with foreign administrative practices ... Democracy often weakens states by necessitating ineffectual compromises and fragile coalition governments in societies where bureaucratic institutions never functioned well ... Social stability results from the establishment of a middle class. Not democracies but authoritarian systems, including monarchies, create middle classes (Kaplan 1997, 60-61).

It is, therefore, perfectly justified to ask the question with Kaplan, regarding peoples living in the orbit of non-Western civilizations, "whether for them democracy was just a moment?" In contrast, non-centralized

political institutions applying the principle of subsidiarity are certainly in harmony with the nature of societies in these civilizations.

3. Legal Pluralism in a Fragmented Political Structure

As a consequence of the fragmented character of the new political institutions, and independently of the globalizing trend, legal pluralism will dominate the world without states. The bearer of such an emerging legal system will be a plural civil society at planetary level in which globalized socioeconomic processes take place.[24] This law will represent a legal order in its own right, and the already existing transnational law of economic transactions (*lex mercatoria*) offers a good example of such an order. The pluralistic legal world order, based upon consensual mechanisms, will thus not constitute a unified system but will represent variations because

> The social source of global law is not the lifeworld of globalized personal networks, but the proto-law of specialized, organizational and functional networks which are forming a global, but sharply limited, identity (Teubner 1997, 7).

The structure of the global law will be self-regulatory, emerging spontaneously from the negotiation of public or private parties, a "highly asymmetric process of legal self-reproduction" (ibid., 11). This conception of an autonomous law, issued from self-organizing processes in which legal acts and structures mutually constitute themselves, will also incorporate privately concluded contracts and agreements as a legislative source. There will be no rules in this law in the sense of Kelsen's *Grundnormen*, no sanctions – who could sanction legal principles applied worldwide? – but the symbolic order will reflect the law's global validity determining the local, regional, or global character of each case in an iterative process of legal acts. Thus, global law will be a positive law unavoidably submitted to pressures of economic and political interests. In Teubner's formula

> *Legal pluralism is then defined no longer as a set of conflicting social norms but as a multiplicity of diverse communicative processes in a given social field that observe social action under the binary code of legal/illegal* ... The multiple orders of legal pluralism always produce normative expectations, excluding, however, merely social conventions and moral norms since they are not based on the binary code legal/illegal (ibid., 14; italics in original).[25]

4. Economic Policies and Management

In analyzing the impact of global networks on economic activities, based on information technology, Golden enumerates four aspects of such networks:

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[24] On the problem of global law without states see Günther Teubner's "'Global Bukowina': Legal Pluralism in the World Society," in Teubner 1997, 3-28.

[25] It may be useful here to refer to the differentiation in Japanese society between authority and power. According to John Haley "authority is used to mean an accepted entitlement to command and to receive respect and compliance. With authority inevitably comes influence, but not necessarily power in the sense of a capacity to force or coerce others to do what they would not otherwise do ... Compliance is best explained by a tacit understanding or an explicit decision by those subject to the command that they choose without being compelled to obey, the commander may be said to have authority without power." John O. Haley, "Consensual Governance: A Study of Law, Culture, and the Political Economy of Postwar Japan," in Kumon, and Rosovsky 1992, 34-35.

First, the evolution from coordination within multinational enterprises to arrangements emphasizing cooperation and coordination across enterprises;

Second, the creation of new physical networks (that is, equipment and software infrastructure) with dependence on external factors and sensitive to organizational pressures for external integration;

Third, the creation of organizational networks enabling economic agents to respond to the fast pace of technological change by engendering lower cost and improved capabilities for horizontal coordination; and,

Fourth, the introduction of important changes in the internal organizational structures of enterprises by external networks for coordination. A good example of this is the necessity of a fundamental shift to flexible teams grouping workers with mixed relevant skills to produce a product or a service. Such an internal re-organization allows for quick passage of information, such as feedback from users, and for higher creativity stimulated by a decentralized organizational pattern (Golden 1994, 78).[26]

Regional and global networking will help economic policies and management to follow the new configuration of the political system. Thus, in the system of networks, and corresponding to local and regional identities and to civilizational givens, various communities will have the possibility of developing a certain degree of self-reliance:

> Self-reliance on any scale also means the development of territorial communities relying to a higher degree on their endogenous cultural and ethnic characteristics, on their endogenous human and institutional resources, on endogenously-determined decision-making processes guided by cooperative rather than hierarchical principles (Coombes, Rees, and Stapleton 1991, 123).

Endogenous means, of course, that the population of a region or sub-region will autonomously act in all economic matters, maximizing their capabilities and potential, especially in the domain of technological innovation (some authors even speak of regional innovation systems as Braczyk, Cooke, and Heidenreich 1998).[27] New economic strategies and re-structuring will, therefore, consist of the priority given to regional frameworks in which territorial identities and scale of organization will have to be congruent.[28]

Adaptation to such political realities will necessitate (1) spatial restructuring, (2) flexible specialization, and (3) recourse to the most up-to-date information and communication technologies.[29]

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[26] "The transnational organization becomes an integrated network in which the dispersed units all contribute knowledge, skills, and insights, with some locations taking the lead in different aspects of research, production, or marketing and sharing the results with the rest of the network organization. In such a network organization complexity in balancing centralized tendencies with needs for national diversification is enormous and uncertainty is rampant, so the requirement for smooth, quick, decentralized information flows increases and the viability of formal, line management systems decreases." Golden 1994, 80-81. Golden's analysis is, of course, based on the existing situation – delimitation by nation-state borders – but can be applied as well to the non-centralized economies advocated in this study.

[27] See also Denis Maillat, "The Innovation Process and the Role of the Milieu," in Bergman, Maier, and Tödtling 1991, 103-117.

[28] For Gordon, "in this new global context, localized agglomeration, far from constituting an alternative to spatial dispersion, becomes the principal basis for participation in a global network of regional economies ... Regions and networks in fact constitute interdependent poles within the new spatial mosaic of global innovation. Globalization in this context involves not the leavening impact of universal processes but, on the contrary, the calculated synthesis of cultural diversity in the form of differentiated regional innovation logics and capabilities." Richard Gordon, *Internationalization, Multinationalization, Globalization: Contradictory World Economies and New Spatial Divisions of Labor* /Working Paper 94/ (Santa Cruz: University of California Center for the Study of Global Trnasformations, 1994, 46); quoted in Castells 1997, 1:393.

[29] For details of the analysis of economic restructuring and flexible specialization, I am indebted to Stilwell 1992, Chap. 12.

The new economic strategy will be more context-sensitive, meaning "the embeddedness of industrial practices in specific contexts and regions, and hence 'bottom-up,' [these strategies being focused] on production systems rather than on firms" (Storper, Thomadakidis, and Tsipouri 1998, 27). Non-centralized networks based on local labor markets, technology transfer between network constituents, and creation of regional service centers, together with flexibility, will be key elements in this re-orientation of the economic structure in a so-called learning economy.[30] In this framework, the principles of ownership as we know them will remain, and the market will be the main regulatory mechanism, less in the sense of the world market than in that of regional markets.

Spatial restructuring, defined as qualitative and holistic re-ordering of relations between constituent parts of economic activities, will involve a new spatial division of labor and an inter-regional spatial structuring of all economic activities. The division of labor of mutually interdependent labor markets will ensure external economies of scale, interacting with scope economies derived from restructuring. Such localized patterns of structuring, corresponding to regional and sub-regional differentiation as well as to the agglomeration of productive activities, are responsive to the overwhelming need of flexibility.

Flexible specialization means that

(1) Small and medium-scale enterprises linked by sub-contracting activities and following niche strategies in an interrelated production complex constitute flexible manufacturing networks;

(2) Quality goods and local design, coupled with the revival of craft skills and task specialization, will prevail;

(3) An easily changeable production schedule, involving short-term production runs geared to short-term and fluctuating markets of not mass but specialized products, which requires autonomous groups of skilled workers and professionals;[31]

(4) Cooperative inter-firm agreements and regional, semi-public agencies dispensing information on technological improvements and market possibilities will be set up;

(5) Cooperation among the populations based on existing social networks, and ensuring an environment of mutual trust will have to be created.[32]

The always quoted example of flexible specialization is the Center and Northeastern region of Italy (Tuscany, Umbria, Marche, Emilia-Romagna, Veneto, Trentino-Alto-Adige, and Friuli-Venezia-Giulia), among which Bologna and Emilia-Romagna demonstrated the most impressive results.

Up-to-date *information and communication technologies* require a new socio-technical organization that alone makes possible, through the imposition of new processes, the above described restructuring and

[30] "The advent of the learning economy means that standard sectoral-*filière* assessments are no longer adequate to the task. Most of the output of our economies is composed of intermediate goods, and social and spatial divisions of labor create all manner of organizational clusters in the economy that do not correspond to final output sectors, or even to the grand (and now crude) distinctions between consumer and producer goods ... Consequently, the principal unit of assessment must shift to the product, or to a technological space of products, defined by spillovers and complementarities. Products are the objects in which learning is embodied and submitted to the test of the markets. Thus, the basis of assessment becomes product technology and the potential for product-based technological learning." Storper, Thomadakidis, and Tsipouri 1998, 33.

[31] "In the twenty-first century," writes Lester Thurow, "man-made comparative advantage with an emphasis on process technologies will be the starting point for economic competition ... Brain power will create new technologies, but skilled labor will be the arms and legs that allow one to employ – to be the low-cost masters of – the new product and process technologies that are being generated." Thurow 1992, 51.

[32] "The implementation of flexible specialization turns on not only a techno-economic structure rooted in a territorially concentrated system of production but also the qualitative aspects of a social milieu. Most important are cultural factors grounded in civil society, including the degree of trust and consensus underpinning the market and the industrial climate for generating skills for the work place. In other words, informal communication of ideas about building regionalism at different levels takes place within social institutions such as ethnic groups, families, clubs, and so on." James H. Mittelman, "Rethinking the 'New Regionalism' in the Context of Globalization," in Hettne, Inotai, and Sunkel 1999, 39.

flexible specialization. A good example in respect of the role of such technologies is the case of telecommuting, that is, the decentralization of factory work and necessary services to localities distant from the main production centers. The new political setup and the modified framework of spatial integration will eliminate nefarious consequences of this old form of economic organization, like fragmentation and the low level of communication between people.

In this new world, economic policies and activities will be focused in priority on the immediate needs of the population as against the present competitive frenzy which is coupled with a running after the desert mirage of creating ever larger, but ever less manageable enterprises. The Schumpeterian principle of small is beautiful will be wholeheartedly embraced because the myth of grandness and cutthroat competition, as an apparent requirement of globalization, will be totally ignored.[33] In fact, the priority given to local needs and the abandonment of the misconceived competitive drive will also result in a right balance between economic activities directed to the home market – production, marketing, sales, or productive investment – and those oriented to foreign markets – export of raw materials, of merchandise, of capital. In addition, the labor force will be much freer to move around in a region or sub-region because jobs and requirements will be better known through network communication channels.

Schumpeter's definition of the role of leading sectors[34] will also be applicable in the new context. In his view, a leading sector represents a cluster of innovations resulting in new products with high demand, and using cheaper forms of energy and transportation. Ernest Mandel basically agreed with Schumpeter,[35] but included among the reasons for the long cycles in economic activities, in addition to innovations in production, the creation of innovative organizational structures, that is, the actual processes of production as well.

Multinational enterprises will easily adapt to the new situation. They will, of course, be obliged to decentralize their operations in accordance with the new, non-territorial institutional setup instead of continuing the trend toward a centralized structure. One can foresee that the adaptation of multinationals to the new situation will pose the least problems, except for those specialized in raw material production and exports, and those with a conglomerate profile that may not be adaptable to the new context. Such globally extended enterprises may survive, despite the disappearance of their home countries as dominating nation-states, because they will become truly multicultural.

From the monetary point of view, not the new entities but the regional co-ordination centers will be the ones which will print and guarantee regional currencies – in accordance with such monetary policy orientations that were decided in common by their participants. As some exchange rates appear to suffer particularly from chronic instability due to the truly chaotic movements characterizing global financial markets, the fragmentation of decision-making in monetary matters will counteract this growing instability. The separation of monetary policies and fiscal strategies will have a beneficial effect on the new entities' economies because these two aspects of economic governance will not be entangled with each other.

Such a transformation of the economic landscape will take a considerable time, as dismantling of technological means adapted to the mistaken globalization myth will be a painful affair. It is, however, certain that in respect of financial markets the presently dominant instantaneous operations will remain as they are, without any modification, because they will not disturb economic activities as described above. These markets will only have to adapt their operations to the information received from the coordinating centers.

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[33] One should not forget that "any laissez-faire system of organization presupposes the absence of scarcity as a basic condition. Scarcity calls for allocation; excess capacity in a system of automatic checks is consistent with unrestricted use." Richard A. Falk, "Toward Equilibrium in the World Order System." *American Journal of International Law*, 54 (1970) 4:217-224.

[34] Schumpeter puts forward the theory of leading sectors in two of his works: *Business Cycles: A Theoretical, Historical and Statistical Analysis of the Capitalist Process*. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1939); and *Capitalism, Socialism, Democracy*. (New York: Harper & Row, 1942). He was convinced that the upswings in Kondratieff's cycles were caused by the emergence of leading sectors.

[35] Ernest Mandel, *Late Capitalism*. (London: New Left Books, 1975), and *Long Waves of Capitalist Development: The Marxist Interpretation*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980).

5. Society: Equality and Solidarity

Whatever imaginary situations contemporary ideologies project, there was never any egalitarian society in known history, and there is none we know of today – if we understand under egalitarianism equality in mental capabilities between human beings as well as equality from the point of view of material possessions in life. The great effort in modernity was to ensure in our societies equality of opportunity (though not of outcome) that may enhance anyone's life chances, but this aim has not yet been achieved.

The only equality among human beings consists in *their equal dignity* due, precisely, to their being human. But even such an inherent characteristic of each individual is not automatically recognized by others when these individuals are simply part of a great mass of faceless atoms – as citizens of a state or as the universal man being part of an empirically not experienceable entity, humankind. *Real human dignity is only possessed by a person who is a member of a community in which he genuinely is acknowledged as a dignified being because his place has been determined in the communal context*.

Having a determined place in one's community means to be inserted into this community's hierarchical social order, having a place representing a certain role in the community's contexture of relationships and, therefore, ensuring to the person his place in his human world and in the cosmos.[36] This assurance is an unavoidable condition of having dignity recognized by one's fellow members in one's immediate environment, that is, in one's spiritual and mental world.

It is in this sense that having human dignity and being involved in a network of genuine human solidarity are intertwined.[37] It represents one of the greatest advantages of the small-scale political institutional framework argued for in this book, because this framework will make it possible for each individual, lost in our mass societies and ignored in the abstractness of discourses about all men, to be inserted in a communal and social context. And this context offers him the attention and care derived from the feeling of a genuine solidarity.[38] This will also lead to the dismantling of the welfare state and, in accordance with limited social policy objectives, to helping those for whose survival an organized assistance put into place by the new political institutions is needed. But the main burden of help will fall on the communities, on spontaneous solidarity which will be based on the knowledge of each other's true problems and sufferance.

Finally, the new political institutions, based on ethnically or culturally constituted communities, will also eliminate the principle of neutrality, so cherished in our contemporary states and societies, accepting all rival conceptions of the good life, all value pluralisms, in order to maintain social peace. When organizational entities are smaller they will be congruent with the plurality of ways of life to which value pluralisms are linked – precisely because the smaller units will be based on communities having the same conception of a good life.

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[36] T.N. Madan establishes an important distinction, from the Hindu point of view, between the hierarchical concept of tolerance and egalitarian pluralism. In India, according to him, "difference is hierarchised; it is neither abolished nor translated into an ideology of equality." He, therefore, concludes that "Indian [official] secularism is indeed religious." Madan 1997, 195 and 197.

[37] Orlando Patterson's opinion is the same: "The idea of civic bond makes sense only where people have some sense of community." Orlando Patterson, *Freedom*. Vol. 1. *Freedom in the Making of Western Culture*. (New York: Basic Books, 1991), 228.

[38] "A community consists of people who care about each other's well-being ... The extent of responsibility may be limited in different ways depending on the basis or type of community, but to use 'community' meaningfully there should be mutual obligations ... the defining core of a community is a sense of obligation, of mutual responsibility ... territoriality is not a necessary condition for mutual responsibility." Elkins 1995, 168. Later he adds: "The use of singular or plural is perhaps the key: belonging to 'a community' is not the same as belonging to many communities (which do not coincide or fully overlap). Thus, judgements and evaluations of the unbundled world will surely differ." Ibid., 178.

6. Planetary Coordination

It goes without saying that there will be issues in this new world of political institutions which will have to be coordinated at planetary level. However, such a coordination will be feasible between the new entities, with the help of up-to-date technologies, without creating worldwide systems as well as super-heavy worldwide bureaucracies like the United Nations and the so-called specialized agencies – FAO, UNIDO, UNESCO, WHO, or UNCTAD. Communication facilities will make it possible to have instantaneous transmission of information, debating of necessary measures in the long-term or in emergency situations, and the coordination of actions decided upon with the participation of all parties.

There are two issues, in particular, which can only be dealt with on the planetary level: security and the maintenance of peace as well as protection of the environment and of the ecological system.

A. SECURITY AND THE MAINTENANCE OF PEACE

One cannot deny that the United Nations system, destined to safeguard international security, is a complete failure. When the world was divided into two blocks, peace was maintained between them because of the well-known strategy of deterrence, though the danger of nuclear war always lurked behind diplomatic scenes. International security was always at the mercy of adventurous politicians and generals. Inside the blocks the two superpowers were policing, whenever required, in order to maintain peace or, in the case of the Communist block, to maintain the Soviet regime's unquestioned rule over captive nations.

Once the Communist regime disappeared (due to internal weakness and not to the West's winning strategies) the bipolar world was transformed into a unipolar world with one hegemon, the United States. The danger for international security now has a double aspect:

First, the still possible *nuclear war* started by irresponsible politicians and ideologues of states which possess nuclear armament, especially middle powers which feel menaced by secular enemies, or great powers like Russia, nostalgic for their lost superpower status, or China, which intends to acquire a great power status in the future.

Second, *local conflicts* (justifying United Nations peacekeeping operations at present) engendered by ethnic, national, or civilizational confrontations between or within smaller nation-states, especially in Africa, the Middle East, or Eastern Europe and the Balkans. The multiplication of such conflicts since the disappearance of the Soviet Union and the Communist block is an entirely natural phenomenon (what is really surprising is that politicians and the military in democratic regimes did not foresee such an explosion of local hostilities). In fact, during the bipolar division of the world such enmities could not come to the surface either because of the fear of repression by the Red Army, or because of the fear of pro-Western regimes that local communists would gain advantages, or because of the fear of the Western block that local wars would enhance the Soviet position at the expense of Western influence.

These local conflicts, raising issues of territory, of oppressed minorities or of human rights abuses, cannot be eliminated either by the United Nations or by the interstate directorate headed by the United States and composed of its allies, dubbed the international community, for two reasons:

(1) The unreadiness of this international community and, especially, of the only superpower, to decisively intervene because in democracies it is dangerous to lose men in a battle as it surely costs electoral votes; and

(2) The exclusive use of high-tech weaponry against poorly armed soldiers or policemen and against civilian populations, as in the Kosovo war, or in the recent uprising in Palestine. This kind of destructive intervention can only create antagonisms that cannot be eliminated and a thirst for revenge in the populations concerned.

It must be clear to the reader that the new configuration of political institutions, as proposed in this study, serves in particular to eliminate situations which may lead to such local conflicts and which will dominate mankind's future if no fundamental adjustments are carried out in the planetary political system. No

ideological discourses like those denigrating national, ethnic, or cultural identities or negating differences between different human worlds, put forward by Western protagonists of democracy or market competition, will ever persuade people worldwide to abandon their historical and civilizational heritage under diplomatic pressure, bombs, or destruction.

Nevertheless, the problem of security and, in particular, the avoidance of local conflicts will remain one of the most serious problems to be solved in the new world of planetary politics. This is so because security is not a question of communication facilities but of people who communicate and who may or may not be trustful (let's forget the fairy tales about the fundamental goodness of human nature). In this domain no previsions can be made, although it is possible to foresee that with smaller political entities, without great standing armies and without budgetary resources to produce or pay for sophisticated or nuclear armaments, the dimensions of conflicts may change. The expected disappearance of power interests together with the disappearance of nation-states, which fueled confrontations in the past, imperiling worldwide security, may also constitute an important factor in reducing dangers of war and devastation.

B. PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE ECOSYSTEM

Problems of environmental degradation cannot, by definition, be dealt with efficiently in local or regional contexts simply because they are genuinely global. What was said above concerning facilities of communication and information in respect of problems of security can be applied to deliberation concerning environmental protection, too. This general perspective does not, of course, eliminate the necessity to find solutions for many ecological problems in local contexts, or in coordination with others at regional and global levels. In this sense, the application of the principle of small is beautiful will also contribute to the maintenance of the ecosystem and to the avoidance of the environmental tragedy menacing our planet.

The environmental crisis is a consequence of the folly of human beings who think that they can reshape nature (as once Stalin proudly declared about the Soviet Union's intentions). To illustrate such efforts of reshaping nature, it suffices to refer to endeavors like the re-direction of the flow of great rivers (as was planned in the Soviet Union in the past and in China in the present) with incalculable environmental consequences; the building of dams for industrial purposes, deracinating entire populations and changing the climate of whole regions; or changing the use of lands formerly destined to absorb the overflow of great rivers when precipitation is unusually abundant into cultivated areas then followed by devastating floods and natural calamities as happens nowadays regularly in Europe and in the United States. The principal roots of ecological crises consist, however,

> In the complete planetary disequilibrium between human populations living on the surface of the earth and Gaia's resources that these populations consume ... Expressed in the customary language of economics, the global ecosystemic imbalance, thus, can be obtained by multiplying the number of people with per capita resource consumption. The ecosystem of man, part of the global ecological framework, expropriates all material inputs from the available resource reservoir of the natural environment and returns in the form of wastes, all the used resources and all the residues of transformed energies (Segesvary 1999a/2001, 281-282).

One can contrast nature and man's ecosystems by qualifying the first closed, and the second open. This comparison reveals that (1) in a closed system, like nature, the circulating matter does not increase or decrease but energy flows around, and such a movement does not signify quantitative changes; on the contrary, (2) the human, open ecosystem can, in principle, expand limitlessly because man is able, through his science and technology, to extract infinitely material and energy resources from the environment. The conclusion is, therefore, crystal clear:

> The difference in the functioning between the closed, global ecosystem and the open, human ecosystem, subordinated to the former, leads to the depletion of the environment's resources beyond the natural world's

regenerative capacity and the pollution, through waste, of the same natural world beyond its absorptive capacity (ibid., 282).

It is truly astounding that our economic theories and policies still consider our world in reverse: the economic system of human activities as the global framework and the natural environment as its subordinated part. Such a worldview is completely foreign to all other civilizations but the Western, as they emphasize the interdependence of all entities or elements in the universe and consider man put in charge of upkeeping the cosmos in accordance with the design of its creator (Coward 1995, in particular pages 14 through 21).

In reality, questions regarding our environment are extremely complex and concern not only economic activities but, first and foremost, our lifestyle. Because multiple aspects of ecosystemic disturbances are interrelated with human existence, it is not possible to discuss them here in detail. Many criticisms have already been made of the functionalist approach (Hettne 1995, 199-206, among others), which does not consider as costs, in economic terms, regional imbalances (due partially to the destruction of local ecosystems). The ecological tragedy does not enter the balance sheet of enterprises or of national economies.

One particular problem area, where ecological disturbances will be solved much easier in the new institutional setup of political re-ordering, is the domain called *global commons* issues consisting of:

(1) Common-pool resources (CPRs) which are not joint in consumption, just like private goods, though exclusion from their use is difficult, and

(2) Public goods the use of which is both joint and non-exclusive.

In Ostrom's explanation the term CPR "refers to a natural or man-made resource system that is sufficiently large to make it costly (but not impossible) to exclude potential beneficiaries from obtaining benefits from its use." It is necessary to distinguish within CPRs between the resource system and the resource units produced or delivered by this system. The importance of this distinction comes from the fact that whereas the resource system can be jointly provided or produced, resource units "are not subject to joint use or appropriation" (Ostrom 1990, 30-31). In consequence, users of CPRs, mostly natural resources, are always jointly affected if anything goes wrong in the system, and this unavoidable interdependence explains why in the new, more limited context of smaller entities the solution of problems due to the joint use of CPRs and of public goods will be facilitated. Mutual monitoring and exchange of information will be incomparably easier because communication and information technologies will be at the communities' disposal.

The truth is that everybody is lamenting about the environmental crisis, there are international meetings and conferences succeeding each other; however, the measures taken are negligible in comparison with the extent of the problem, and most such measures are decided at local or regional, not planetary, levels. This, of course, is a result of the opposition by those economic forces which would lose advantages and profits if environmentally-not-damaging production processes were to be imposed on them – for example, chemical industries (air, water, and soil pollution) or unions of workers in woodcutting activities (deforestation and destruction of the habitat for many species). These oppositions are the result of very shortsighted views which take into consideration only short-term, immediate advantages, such as job preservation, without considering that environmental degradation may represent the end of existence for the generations succeeding us. The major line of defense is, for these opponents of ecological intervention whose influence is extremely important in decisions taken by authorities that all the data are derived from speculations and cannot be considered as scientifically proven.

All such resistance would, however, be without success if people were to reflect on what is going on in the cosmos surrounding us, and would, as a conclusion, change their lifestyles. But who can hope today that people will renounce the everyday usage of their cars, even in cases when other means of transportation are available? (Let's not forget that to have a car is still a status symbol even in highly developed countries, and it is considered as a God-given right to possess one or more cars.) Can we hope that people will reduce their urge to fly and that organizations will reduce the number of official trips, in order to eliminate air and noise pollution? There are only a few, as of today, who would be willing to commit themselves to such sacrifices, because the possession of a car, to fly for vacation, to use chemical pollutants in industrial processes and

household activities have become in Western civilization, part of a dignified, human existence. Can one, then, wonder that people in the non-industrialized and non-Western world are not ready to make sacrifices as they consider that the main culprits, populations in the West, should take the first steps, should first apply all possible measures to eliminate the causes of environmental degradation? Why should they pay for the others' sins?

The idea of the domination of the cosmos by man (representing the highest level in the evolution of the universe) can only be discarded, the obnoxious results of our will to reshape the natural world can only be eliminated once "the re-sacralization of nature through the de-sacralization of man.. [and] the de-sacralization of reason" (Segesvary 1999a/2001, 289 and 293) is accepted, that is, once the integrity of the cosmos, of the natural environment, is put before the (sacred) interests of human beings.

It is in this sense that solely people's reflective attitude, their understanding of what danger we face regarding humanity's future, can lead to a coordinated and efficient system of environmental and ecosystemic protection in the spirit of René Dubos, one of the great scientists of the second half of the last century:

> The relationships that link mankind to other living organisms and to the earth's physical forces thus pertain to science but also transcend science. They involve a deep sense of engagement with nature and with all processes central to life. They generate a spirit of sacredness and of overriding ecological wisdom, which is so universal and timeless that it was incorporated in most ancient cultures. One can recognize the manifestations of this sacredness and wisdom in many archaic myths and ceremonials, in the rites of preclassical Greeks, in Sung landscape paintings, in the agricultural practices of preindustrial peoples. One can read it in Marcus Aurelius' statement that "all living things are interwoven each with the other; the tie is sacred" (Dubos 1972, 44).

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE INFORMATION SOCIETY AND NETWORKING POLITICAL COMMUNITIES

In the introduction of the volume they edited regarding the role that information and communication technologies (ICTs) can play in the framework of present nation-states, Hague and Loader spell out with great clarity the questions concerning the utilization of these technologies in political communities. It is worth it, then, to quote here at length the six problem areas they enumerate:

*To what extent might ICTs facilitate more accountable government (national and local)?

*To what extent might ICTs be used to create a more informed (about the business of government) citizenry?

*To what extent might ICTs facilitate citizen participation in decision making concerning affairs of the state [or community]?

*To what extent might ICTs facilitate participation by citizens in "debate and deliberation," on a "free and equal basis," concerning affairs of the state?

* To what extent might ICTs facilitate participation by citizens in "debate and deliberation," on a" 'free and equal basis," within civil society?

*To what extent might ITCs facilitate citizen participation, on a "free and equal basis," in collective decision making concerning issues that impinge upon them within civil society? (Hague, and Loader 1999, 8).[1]

[1] Both Hague and Loader work at the Community Informatics Research and Applications Unit based at the University of Teeside in England. They are closely involved in a test-project about political institutional networking at the local community level, the *Trimdon Digital Village*. They describe as follows the aims of this test operation: "Trimdon is a rural community of 3,050 inhabitants situated in the south of County Durham in the north of England. The digital village project, comprising a local network of three sites with online facilities backed by locally delivered training and support, has the following objectives:

*to develop an effective community information service system to enhance the economic competitiveness and social well-being of the community of Trimdon;

*to raise awareness of community informatics applications and their potential for adding economic and social value to rural communities;

*to provide relevant IT [information technology] training and skill development to foster innovation and creativity for individual lifelong learning and community prosperity;

*to establih access to ICTs for as many village inhabitants as possible; and

*to develop, through action research, appropriate facilitating skills and methodologies that could be used for the more widespread development of community informatics." Hague, and Loader 1999, 21, note 2.

These questions of Hague and Loader obviously indicate the necessity (1) to turn away from the so-called commoditized information reflecting the accelerating decline of cultural values; (2) to place disseminated information into a historical perspective instead of prioritizing the fleeting moment which does not know history; and, (3) to produce information corresponding to an up-to-date knowledge concerning the physical and human worlds instead of searching for sensational effects, totally or partially ignoring (not virtual) reality. This would clearly mean the re-establishment of cultural sovereignty of the politically institutionalized communities as much as of the global human community.

In addition, it is important to take into consideration social effects in the nascent information society and analyze whether, as Castells argues, it results in widening cultural and economic differences, in particular in growing disparities between income groups and growing inequalities between geographic areas. In all cases, the recently invented slogan about a digital gap is appropriately applicable.

1. The Concept of Information Reconsidered

Information is hard to define.[2] It is intangible; if one does not have it, one cannot ask for it because its existence is ignored. It is produced with difficulty and normally at an important cost, but it is easy to reproduce it and, in fact, it can be infinitely reproduced. Nevertheless, the value of more information tends to diminish rapidly with diffusion because it is more derived from its relative absence among other users than its source. Information can be the object of an exchange, of a transfer, or of a transaction as well, but its source remains always the same, it cannot be changed.

It is important to state from the beginning that information has no value unless it has a meaning, and meaning can only be given by human groups and their cultural context. As Fritz Machlup explained it some forty years ago, there are two kinds of information: one, which stands for *that which is known*, and the second, which represents *the state of knowing*.[3] All along human history, information was present and concerned relations – of course, at multiple levels and in multiple dimensions – among persons, on the one hand, and between human beings and the natural environment, on the other hand. What changed from epoch to epoch were the cultural classification and the meaning given to information available in various regions of the world. Today, information, deprived of any meaning,[4] is closely associated with the notion of progress, conceived of as a movement in the direction of high technology, and thus has become a matter of ideological confrontation, or an instrument for certain persons or certain groups to realize their objectives in social interactions.

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[2] Such a definition as given by Marc Porat in his widely known but misleading work that information is "data that have been organized and communicated" does not correspond at all to what is today understood under the label *information*. And Porat never specifies what he understands under *data*. Marc U. Porat, *The Information Economy*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Commerce, Office of Telecommunications, (1977) 1: 2.

[3] Fritz Machlup, Fritz. *The Production and Distribution of Knowledge in the United States*. (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1962), 13-15.

[4] As Klapp put it: "Information accumulating at an exponential rate is outstripping meaning formation, so that we have more and more knowledge of which we do not know what to make – a growing gap of which awareness produces symptoms so many writers have described as a crisis of meaning." Orin E. Klapp, 1982. Meaning Lag in the Information Society. *Journal of Communication*, 32 (1982), 2:56-66; quotation is on page 64. It is in this perspective that Lee Thayer expressed his evaluation of the information revolution: "What has happened, of course, is that we have come to mistake our reach for our grasp. With the modernization of consciousness has come belief that information is a reasonable substitute for knowledge, and that knowledge, rationally accumulated, is a reasonable substitute for wisdom." Lee Thayer, "Reach vs. Grasp: Communication and the Dilemma of Modern Man." (Address to the First International Colloquium on Communication, Mexico City, October 1980). Reprinted as "Alcance y Comprehensiòn." *Cuadernos de Comunicaciòn*, January 1981, 6-18; quotation is on page 12.

Anthony Wilden's distinction between analog and digital information is essential in determining the character of information in general.[5] He establishes a link between the two types of information processing by proclaiming that digitalization is nothing but a tool to maintain an overall analog relation at the general, worldwide level. "A digital code is 'outside' the sender and receiver and mediates their relationship; an analog code is the relationship" (Wilden 1972, 173, note 10). Natural language and human communication thus manifest a complementarity between the two types of information as both appear digital *and* analog in form and function, though without the digital we could not know of the analog. It is worth it to quote him extensively as he clearly sums up the differences between the two types of information systems in computer-based communication:

> Since the analog computer employs continuous linear quantities to represent other quantities, there are no significant "gaps" in the system. Equally important, there is not true zero (at "zero" the machine is "off"). All the quantities involved are positive; there are no minus quantities.[6] The quantities represented are relatively imprecise. The digital computer, on the other hand, depends upon the combination of discrete elements made possible by its on/off processes. Zero is essential to it, and since its combinatorial possibilities depend only upon the *placing* and the *ordering* of its discrete elements, rather than upon their nature or their location as such, the digital computer can represent negative entities. Its representations are relatively precise. The analog computer maps continuums precisely, whereas the digital computer can only be precise about boundaries. The units of communication or computation in the analog machine may in principle be repeatedly divided without necessarily losing their signification or use, whereas those in the digital computer cannot be divided below the level of the discrete unit on which it depends. (And the "gaps" cannot be divided at all). The direct analog computer is a concrete, *iconic* representation of the behavior it maps; the digital computer is an entirely abstract, *arbitrary*, and more nearly linguistic representation (ibid., 161-162; italics in original).

In analog thinking infinite, evaluative contexts are important, but for digital constructions contexts are irrelevant as they have no impact on the message and fall outside the message frame. Analog differences are differences of magnitude, frequency, distribution and organization; on the contrary, digital differences can be coded into distinctions and oppositions, requiring discrete elements and well-defined boundaries. The complex epistemological problem concerning the establishment of boundaries can be dealt with simply by considering that separation of different types of systems is not an objective fact but the result of a decision made by some participants in a wider frame, called from the evolutionary point of view an ecosystem.[7]

It is of particular interest that Wilden links the absence of negation, in any language, to the type of syntax. In analog computers the syntax is nothing else but a simple sequence in the positive direction, it cannot re-represent a non-existent thing because all its terms are tied, directly or indirectly, to things; therefore, the analog computer does not know the choice between either/or, only the relationship between *more or less*, *both* or *and*. On the other hand, the digital computer is entirely autonomous from things extant, and arbitrary in its relation to them. If one projects this view of things onto human communication, then it becomes clear that all non-conventional expression – body language, facial expressions, rhythm, cadence – and, above all, everything pertinent to the relational context in which such human communication takes place, can only be reflected in analog or iconic systems. In digital communication, by definition arbitrary, everything is denotative, and what is used is determined by the language's properties. Digital information invariably carries

[5] For the analysis of differences between analog and digital communication I am indebted to Wilden, 1972, 157-190.

[6] "It is of some historical interest to remember," writes Wilden, "that the Greeks thought of numbers as real and positive quntities. Both zero and minus numbers, which are more clearly relations rather than 'entities,' were invented much later." Ibid., 161-162, note 4. We can add that zero was invented by Hindu scientists, and transmitted to Europe via the mediation of such great Arab mathematicians of the Middle Ages as Ibn Sina, called Avicenne; in addition, it is certain that people in the Meso-American civilizations also used the zero.

[7] "It seems likely that all such delimitations correspond in general, not so much to the survival of the individual, organism, species, or group, but rather to the survival of the ecosystem without which no sub-system can survive. A 'territory' corresponds in no sense to 'property,' but rather to the maintenance of the necessary ecological space to regulate such things as the genetic pool and the food supply." Ibid., 159.

out a transmission or sharing or reproduction of patterns and structures, or nameable information: "The analogue is pregnant with *meaning*, whereas the digital [is the] domain of *signification*" (ibid., 163; italics in original).

Finally, communication through analog computers is imprecise and basically ambiguous; communication through digital computers, dependent on arbitrary combinations and unavoidably concerned with boundaries, is always precise and without any ambiguity. However, the relationship between one system and the other is in its totality analog. Wilden rightly believes that most knowledge is analog, and only abstraction is digital, so cherished and rightly so, as far as their domain is concerned, by the natural sciences. Therefore, most knowledge can only be communicated analogically (by imitation, among others), even though in our late modern age analog, contextual knowledge is more or less ignored, and digital, thus abstract, knowledge is favored.

Reproduction, exchange, or transfer of information requires a medium, an interconnectivity, a network in which the information has a certain value; if it does not have a value, nobody will want to have it, or to exchange it for a piece of information. Beliefs and values shared by people, revealing their common interest in a piece of information, ensures the relevance of the latter in the framework of a human setup, a community, a society – a network. Thus, information can be as much private property as a public good, but its interpretation and value clearly depend on the network members' opinion. Coherent information ensembles constitute information systems[8] focused on certain areas of life, certain problems and ideas, or certain human interests.

Information has fundamental implications "for our perception of reality. Computers increasingly mediate human experience of, and association with, physical and cultural reality," is the pretension of the Dutch philosopher, Jos de Mul (1999, 70-71). The natural scientific point of view of de Mul is evident in his definition of technology, which "can be interpreted as a combination of natural forces according to a *design* devised by man" (ibid.). He, however, recognizes that in everyday life information "denotes both a certain state of affairs in reality and the opportunity the receiver of the information obtains to gain a certain knowledge or insight into this state of affairs" (ibid., 78-79).[9] In de Mul's semiological analysis of the concept of information, that is, an analysis based on the philosophy of language and the science of signs, what is interesting from our point of view is that he emphasizes the hermeneutical perspective of the horizon of experience, which determines the meaning given to a reference contained in a particular piece of information. In this context, information overload is not only a quantitative indication, but also signifies – and that is a characteristic of the late-modern situation – increasing uncertainty as conflicting messages create confusion and the individual, unable to grasp the volume of information received, loses the feeling of existential (or ontological) security.

A word of caution is, therefore, in order here, especially in view of the euphoria reigning in public opinion, about the global information society because the disproportionate volume of information overburdens people with an information deluge, and contributes to what Baudrillard called the implosion of meaning. This phenomenon is due to

> The elevation of information to a metaphysical status: information as both the means and end of human creativity. In Technopoly, we are driven to fill our lives with the quest to "access" information. For what purpose or with what limitations, it is not for us to ask ... The world has never been confronted with information glut and has hardly had

[8] Without entering the debate about the relationship between information and knowledge, it is appropriate to note here that information systems can constitute knowledge, but not necessarily so.

[9] De Mul's writings are perceptive and interesting – if one does not forget that he is a philosopher of science and looks at the human world as he looks at the natural world (even if considering himself as writing from the anthropological point of view). He quotes, among others, Keith Devlin, who wrote that "perhaps *information* should be regarded as (or may be *is*) a basic property of the universe, alongside matter and energy (and being ultimately interconvertible with them)." Keith Devlin, *Logic and Information*. (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1991), 2. These kinds of views are, of course, contested by other authors such as Michael Benedikt who affirms that in cyberspace "to which every computer is a window, seen or heard objects are neither physical nor, necessarily, representations of physical objects but are, rather, in form, character and action, made up of data, of pure information." Michael Benedikt, "Cyberspace: Some Proposals," in M. Benedikt, *Cyberspace*. (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1991), 122-123.

> time to reflect on its consequences ... in a Technopoly there can be no transcendent sense of purpose or meaning, no cultural coherence ... The milieu in which Technopoly flourishes is one in which the tie between information and human purpose has been severed, i.e., information appears indiscriminately, directed at no one in particular, in enormous volume and at high speeds, and disconnected from theory, meaning, or purpose (Postman 1993, 61, 63 and 70).[10]

Although the image of the information society is closely linked, in the public eye, to a nascent global culture as a result of globalized communications, that is, of standardized values and practices, it becomes more and more clear that ours is not a world of uniformity, and that dialogues are reflecting an organized diversity. The information society is embedded in a context of cultural and civilizational pluralism. As James Lull wrote, "culture thus oscillates dialectically between forces of permanence and change, of tradition and innovation" (Lull 1995, 148).[11]

2. The Information Society and Virtual Reality

A. DESCRIPTION OF THE INFORMATION SOCIETY

An information society is a social order in which all activities are based on the uninterrupted and irresistible flow of information. It is right to point out that the concept of the information society is an aggregate, descriptive notion characterizing society "by abundant information in terms of both stock and flow, quick and efficient distribution and transformation of information, and easy and inexpensive access of information for all members of society."[12] It is necessary to add that ignorance also belongs to the reality of the information society, whatever labels are used to classify it – misinformation, disinformation, or lack of information.

In the concept of the information society emphasis is put on the transformative capacities of ICTs[13] capable of determining the future of the whole society "because in the digital world previously impossible solutions become viable" (Negroponte 1995, 231 and 230). This view – also called post-industrial futurism or the rhetoric of the technological sublime – implies a sort of historical discontinuity with the past evolution of humanity, pretending that everything in human life will be different as a result of the effect of these technologies:

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[10] Postman is not the only one who is doubting the sense given to the information society in the euphoria of information age. Two decades ago Dupuy sensed already that more and more information may mean less and less meaning. J.-P. Dupuy, "Myths of the Informational Society," in K. Woodward, *The Myths of Information*. (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1980), 3-17; reference is made to page 10), and van Cuilenburg ironized that "the so-called information society is not by definition well informed." J. van Cuilenburg, "The Information Society: Some Trends and Implications." *European Journal of Communication*, 2 (1987): 105-122; quotation is on page 106. Several authors see the information society as the industrialization of information and knowledge in the post-industrial age.

[11] "Globalization is best considered a complex set of interacting and often countervailing human, material, and symbolic flows that lead to diverse, heterogeneous cultural positionings and practices which persistently and variously modify established vectors of social, political, and cultural power." Lull 1995, 150.

[12] Youichi Ito is quoted in Splichal, Calabrese, and Sparks 1994, 74.

[13] ICT's consist mainly of computers, communication and information software and devices, satellites and cable networks, video cassette recorders, and glass fibre cables.

> Indeed, the ability or inability of societies to master technology, and particularly technologies that are strategically decisive in each historical period, largely shapes their destiny, to the point where we could say that while technology *per se* does not determine historical evolution and social change, technology (or the lack of it) embodies the capacity of societies to transform themselves, as well as the uses to which societies, always in a conflictive process, decide to put their technological potential (Castells 1997, 1:7).[14]

The concept of the information society is, thus, a major characteristic of the late modern world, entirely hooked up on the present, which has to define the future, too. As Webster and Robins expressed it, referring to Paul Virilio: "The information society is obsessed with the future, but the future of its obsession is merely the endless continuation of the present" (Webster, and Robins 1998, 42).

This society basically is, in Linda Harasim's words, a *networld* in which social space is created or shaped by networks: "Networks are a social environment. They become a destination, a place to link with other people ... User input has transformed cyberspace into social space characterized by open, lateral communication linkages" (Harasim 1993, 15, 16 and 33).[15] In this sense, the networld represents more a cultural than a technical phenomenon, more a social force than a technology, as social relations supposedly undergo considerable modifications because hierarchical buildups and authority structures become decentralized and horizontal. In the networld, communications are freed from their ties to places, from the locational and temporal context through text-based, computerized messaging, that is, they are asynchronous. Many view this as a new form of interpersonal interaction, though establishing identity and authenticity is more difficult than in face-to-face communication.

The information society is closely linked, in public opinion, to virtual or visual reality because it has allowed for interaction in imaginary places and the endless re-configuration of those places, creating a quest for "post-humanist identities via virtual reality technologies" (McBeath, and Webb 2000, 2):

> Cyberspace is also a world in that it exists in the future ... [it] is a hope, an expectation, the future fufilment of a possibility, rather than a current reality. Its realisation always seems to depend on future or newly emerging technologies ... Cyberspace is utopian.[16]

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[14] Castells qualifies our age as the epoch of *informationalism*: "This book [the first volume of his study of the information age] studies the emergence of a new social structure, manifested under various forms, depending on the diversity of cultures and institutions throughout the planet. This new structure is associated with the emergence of a new mode of development, informationalism, historically shaped by the restructuring of the capitalist mode of production towards the end of the twentieth century." Castells 1997, 1:14. Later he spells out his definition of informationalism: "What characterizes the current technological revolution is not the centrality of knowledge and information, but the application of such knowledge and information to knowledge generation and information processing/communication devices, in a cumulative feedback loop between innovation and the uses of innovation." Ibid., 32. Thus, Castells applies the self-reflexivity of contemporary society, repeatedly emphasized by Giddens and other sociologists, to the domain of information/communication technologies, and with this move proceeds to their reification.

[15] Though this conception is dominant one can find, even in Harasim's text, statements which are more or less contrary to this widespread view: "Technological features do not assure effective communication, and technical linkage alone does not create community. While the attributes of the networks enable significant advantages for human communication, they are not a guarantee. The creation of networlds requires human intervention in organizing the technology and in shaping the human interactions to make the promise a satisfying and effective reality." Harasim 1993, 28.

[16] R. Coyne, *Designing Information Technology in the Postmodern Age*. (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1995), 154, quoted in McBeath, and Webb 2000, 8. – This view is opposed by Stone who suggests that certain terms have different meanings in cyberspace than in ordinary life, and whose interpretation is of a certain interest for our investigations as he sees virtual spaces and virtual communities as "incontrovertibly social spaces in which people still meet face-to-face, but under new definitions of both 'meet' and 'face' ... [V]irtual communities [are] passage points for collections of common beliefs and practices that unite people who were physically separated." A.R. Stone, "Will the Real Body Please stand Up?; Boundary Stories About Virtual Cultures," in M. Benedikt, *Cyberspace*. (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, (1991), 81-118, quotation is on page 85; cited in Jones 1998, 15.

Virtual reality thus projects a future world, very different from utopias,[17] which probably represent a limiting case of such worlds. Both are prescribing an ideal state of things "on the basis of the current state of those interacting factors and what we think they might develop into sooner or later" (ibid.), thereby positing a possible future configuration of the world, different from the miserable and unsatisfactory present. Both are located in the future though referring to a virtual presence existing in dreams and imaginary horizons. But whereas utopias reflect explicit value, unchangeable commitments regarding the features of the imagined state of the world in the future, and suggest the plausibility of realization, future worlds as virtual worlds represent an open system, and are characterized by the possibility of an endless re-configuration in accordance either with ideological and other trends in public opinion, or with the wishful thinking of individuals, allowing for a greater likelihood of realization. "Virtual experience is an experience of a surface world," in Simpson's words, "because in cyberspace the concept of distance is optional; locomotion and relocation are independent of time and space" (Simpson 1995, 157).

Castells' conceptualization represents the opposite of Simpson's view, and it reveals a fundamental mistake in the definition of virtuality which, nevertheless, constitutes the prime reason for the success of the idea of a virtual world. Castells considers that "cultures are made up of communication processes" (Castells 1997, 1:372) through which language determines the concept of the world for everyone; he finds in this fact the explanation why symbolic representation and symbolic environment cannot be separated from the real. Thus, symbolic becomes virtual through a skillful but unjustified reversal of terms and, hence, of the corresponding conceptualization: "Thus, reality as experienced, has always been virtual because it is always perceived through symbols that frame practice with some meanings that escape their strict semantic definition" (ibid.). This, of course, is completely false (and the philosophical-hermeneutical discussion for more than a century attests to it), because people, who are culturally conditioned, see the world as reflected through the prism of their own culture and traditions – but the world does not therefore become virtual for them. People live in their own world that is for them always the real world; to present these different human worlds as virtual worlds is just a trick to justify the concept of virtual reality supposedly created in cyberspace. Castells denies, however, that a uniform cyberculture is being born in our days.[18]

B. THE INFORMATION SOCIETY IN SPATIAL AND TEMPORAL PERSPECTIVE

> In pre-modern societies, space and place largely coincide, since the spatial dimensions of social life are, for most of the population, and in most respects, dominated by "presence" – by localised activities. The advent of modernity increasingly tears away from place by fostering relations between "absent" others, locationally distant from any given situation of face-to-face interaction. In conditions of modernity ... locales are thoroughly penetrated by and shaped in terms of social influences quite distant from them (Giddens 1990, 18-19).

The evolution of the modern conception of space, so well described by Giddens, also took place in respect of time. Fast became as beautiful as big. The shift from natural time – sun, moon, seasons – to the clock and to the computer distanced humanity not only from the locale, the context of its existence, but from

[17] Utopia is "the projection of an integrated, nomothetic structure constituted by interdependent elements bringing about a particular conception of human flourishing not obtaining at present. Utopia is a description of how humankind ought to be and will be once a novel, casual structure is in place ... The historical linkage between social theory and utopia has been largely a matter of ideology. That is, the desire to reconfigure society predicated upon a preferred set of social and moral values. Clearly one of the central characteristics of this ideological form has been its capacity to reify social values and relatios." McBeath, and Webb 2000, 2 and 6.

[18] "Yet it does not follow that there is homogenization of cultural expressions and full domination of codes by a few central senders. It is precisely because of the diversification, multimodality, and versatility of the new communication system that it is able to embrace and integrate all forms of expression, as well as the diversity of interests, values, and imaginations, including the expression of social conflicts." Castells 1997, 1:74.

nature as well. The latter development, in addition, endowed those who control time and its measurement with an increasing power, leading to unexpected consequences in the life of society.[19]

In modernity, swift modifications in information dissemination and communication across space and time depended on the transmission medium (in pre-modern times smoke and drums). Modern technologies succeeded in their effort to make mediation across time and across distance not mutually exclusive, though with the *caveat* that only communication technologies across time are automatically capable of doing the same across distances. We have known since Lewis Mumford that modern man, abandoning abstraction of space and time as the Kantian faculties of the human mind, wishes to instrumentalize spatial and temporal perspectives.[20] Cyberspace is perfectly satisfying this desire as spatiality becomes illusory, and the instantaneity of connections makes problematic the temporal perspective. Thus, cyberspace is considered not to be produced by social relations, but to produce itself such relations:

> The space of cyberspace is predicated on knowledge and information, on the common beliefs and practices of a society abstracted from physical space. Part of that knowledge and information, though, lies in simply knowing how to navigate cyberspace. But the important element in cyberspatial relations is the sharing of information. It is not sharing in the sense of *transmission* of information that binds communities in cyberspace. It is the *ritual* sharing of information that pulls it together (Jones, Steven, 1998, 15; italics in original).

It is thus better to recognize, as Vincent Mosco recently pointed out, that ICTs, though they transform spatial perspectives, did not basically change our relations to space:

> [ICTs reconstituted] the spatial map by revalorizing locations and the relations between them ... [thus] physical geography and cyberspace mutually constitute one another ... Hence, while it makes some sense to distinguish analytically between Castells' space of places and space of flows, we should not make too much of this. Physical space is easily understood as the space of places, but it is too a space through which people and objects flow, so it too is a space of flows. Similarly, cyberspace is not just a space through which our electronic transmissions flow but it is also a space of places with identifiable addresses that take on much of the same significance, economically and politically as well as socially and culturally, that traditional spaces enjoy (Boyce 1999, 42).

Manuel Castells' analysis of space and of the temporal dimension in a network society cannot, in the perspective traced above, be adopted here. His conceptualization is entirely dependent on the informational framework of society and human interaction (a framework very few of our contemporaries may adhere to), especially as he shares the opinion of many philosophers and sociologists of our age that space defines time (Castells 1997, 1:76). Of course, many aspects of Castells' thesis are undoubtedly correct, such as conceiving the configuration of space according to a variable geometry which results in the dialectics between concentration and centralization, on the one hand, and, through the respect of cultural and social diversity, between dispersion and decentralization, on the other hand. The same is true of such statements, taking into account humanity's history, that "space is crystallized time" (ibid., 411).

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[19] Analyzing the relationship between technology, time, and postmodernity, Simpson brilliantly summed up modern man's predicament: "Technology procures the simulacrum, thereby aiding and abetting control. Moreover, there are features of the postmodern context that contribute to an anxiety that *heightens* our concern about control. Disenchantment, secularization, incredulity towards metanarratives – these all put us face to face with a sense of *contingency* that heightens our insecurity, and inclines us ever more strongly to grasp to the means of controlling the future promised by technology." Simpson 1995, 140; italics in original.

[20] "Defining technology strictly in terms of objects, such as tools, machines, and appliances, implied fundamental (but ultimately illusory) distinctions between the technology, its designer, and its user. In this formulation of the term, technology, then, has been described as neutral and autonomous, having no inherent or built-in moral or political qualities. In other words a tool can be used for good or for bad." J. Terry, and M. Calvert, *Processed Lives*. (New York: Routledge, 1997), 3.

My main contention with Castells, as with many other authors professing similar opinions (see Segesvary 1999a/2001, 289-290), is, however, his support for the trend to consider space, time, and all other constitutive features of our universe as socially constructed ("Space is the expression of society," or "Spatial forms and processes are formed by the dynamics of the overall social structure" (Castells 1997, 1:410-411), that is, existing only through human beings' cognitive and collaborative endeavor. What would Newton have said or, in our century, Einstein, if somebody had told them that space is not a physical feature of the universe but "the material support of time-sharing social practices?" (ibid.). Such a conceptualization appears extravagant, even if Castells immediately adds that the concept of time-sharing social practices (1) simply means simultaneity (in time, says he, as if there could be other simultaneity than temporal) of those practices, and that (2) such a material support always bears a symbolic meaning, or is culturally embedded.

In Castells' formulation the new spatial form of the Information Age, based on electronic networks, is the space of flows as against the space of places:

> *The space of flows is the material organization of time-sharing social practices that work through flows*. By flows I understand purposeful, repetitive, programmable sequences of exchange and interaction between physically disjointed positions held by social actors in the economic, political, and symbolic structures of society (ibid., 412; italics in original).

Place is determined by the location of nodes and hubs of an electronic network, in accordance with the functions assigned to places, and the hierarchy of locations established by the network. However, place is, at the same time, "*a locale whose form, function, and meaning are self-contained within the boundaries of physical contiguity*" (ibid., 423; italics in original), – a contention nobody could really contradict.

The temporal dimension, an essential aspect of reality from the point of view of ITCs, is not only subordinated to space but completely annihilated in Castells' presentation of it as "timeless time:"

> We are not just witnessing a relativization of time according to social contexts or alternatively the return to time reversibility as if reality could become entirely captured in cyclical myths. The transformation is more profound: it is the mixing of tenses to create a forever universe, not self-expanding but self-maintaining, not cyclical but random, not recursive but incursive: timeless time, using technology to escape the contexts of its existence, and to appropriate selectively any value each context could offer to the ever-present (ibid., 433).

This passage reveals that Castells' timeless time is nothing but the eternal present, the subject of so many studies about temporality in the late modern (or postmodern) era. Besides his considering electronic, multimedia technology as the only determinant of human interaction in our age, Castells' treatment of temporality also manifests, without any doubt, his deliberate ignorance of all other, major features of human existence, because informational development cannot but break down all fundamental rhythms of the human life cycle interdependent with nature's life cycles (ibid., 446).[21]

Timeless time, or the ever-reigning present, corresponds to the concept of the space of flows, thus rendering both of the basic features of the universe – the space of places and the various forms of temporality, like biological, historical, existential, or biographical times – imaginary, unreal, objects of manipulation, and, through all this, virtual.

[21] "The whole ordering of meaningful events loses its internal, chronological rythm, and becomes arranged in time sequences depending upon the social context of their utilization. Thus, *it is a culture at the same time of the eternal and of the ephemeral*. It is eternal because it reaches back and forth to the whole sequence of cultural expressions. It is ephemeral because each arrangement, each specific sequencing, depends on the context and purpose under which any given cultural construct is solicited. We are not in a culture of circularity, but in a universe of undifferentiated temporality of cultural expressions." Castells 1997, 1:462.

If human experience can be measured in time (although this belief is not always justified), the two most praised features of transmission technologies in respect of the temporal dimension of information and communication are:

First, their reception at the same rate at which the sender is transmitting them, or the immediacy of feedback from the receiver, and

Second, the degree to which the receiver exerts control on the intake or interaction.

These qualities define the changed temporality in human communication, and they undoubtedly denote the modern sensibility to ever faster execution or happening – in everything. Face-to-face, audio, and video forms of communication are all examples of *timed communication.* In *untimed communication* such as image visuals, the rate of presentation is under the control of the receiver regardless of the content. Untimed communication is characterized by the fact that it is measured, in most cases, not on a time scale. It goes without saying that timed and untimed communications can never be merged; at least no technology exists yet for such a purpose. Receivers are often trying to find alternatives to timed electronic communication systems in order to avoid its insurmountable constraints.

Technologies of information and communication are convergent and, as mediation across time and distance are not mutually exclusive, these technologies may serve both mediative purposes at the same time. Whereas communication at a distance is a uniform perspective, communication across time can be classified in four categories: (1) temporal scale or duration, (2) sequencing, (3) pace, and (4) orientation to the past, present, or future (salience).

The first three categories represent technological variables, but the fourth depends entirely on the communicator's perceptions. While such factors must be encompassed for any real understanding of specific communication situations, one of the strengths of examining temporal variables independent of social factors is that one can address more directly the communication capabilities and constraints of any given technology (Finn 1999, 180).

The distinction of synchronous and asynchronous communication refers, as implied by their commonsense usage, to situations when sender and receiver sharing channels and having recourse to immediate feedback, exchange messages at the same time or when the feedback is delayed. "In computer parlance, synchronous events happen in a specific time relationship to each other, but may not occur simultaneously" (ibid.). This distinction is not the same as real-time and non-real-time communication of which the first, again in computer parlance, refers to immediate processing, and the second refers to batch processing for storage purposes. In everyday language, real-time communication means, of course, that sending and reception of a message takes exactly the same amount of time and, therefore, is received at all destinations at the same rate. Thus, in real-time transmission, the rate of communication is linked to the passage of time.

Finally, it is necessary to differentiate between simultaneous, that is, direct, two-way, and interruptible face-to-face communication, and non-simultaneous (recorded or stored) communication like live radio or television broadcasting – though the latter are near simultaneous. This distinction permits a range of communication options – hence its importance – because simultaneity does not constitute a continuum from less to more simultaneity, but non-simultaneity can take place at varying degrees, depending on the length of storage – examples are e-mail, voice mail, Internet chat rooms as well as newspapers, magazines, film, or books. Non-simultaneity, which will be the most frequent in political-institutional networks, is partly due to the technologies' ability to deliver content to a destination in a certain interval of time, while partly it depends on the receivers' availability. An e-mail may only be read hours or days after it arrived at a destination:

> The fundamental difference ... is that these forms of non-simultaneous communication can approach simultaneity but, because they must be stored before they can be transmitted, they can never achieve simultaneity (ibid., 183).

Any stored content of information, as communication across time implies non-simultaneity, requires storage, packaging (in most cases), and can be manipulated. The exclusion of the possibility of manipulation

of content during transmission will be the greatest technical problem to be solved in the envisaged political-institutional setup.

3. The Information Society and Political Network Communities

The concept of human communities is based upon common perceptions, due to traditions and shared experiences as well as common linguistic expressions of their members. This involves a local, that is, not extended spatial framework reflecting relationships of physical and cultural contiguity. From the cultural point of view, language has an immense role in mediating between individuals and communities, especially as it is the mechanism through which individuals and communities articulate a common set of values, and as it is instrumental in the formation of their respective identities ("Linguistic knowledge without cultural knowledge may result in using perfect pronunciation and flawless grammar to say the wrong thing").[22] In the face-to-face interaction within communities, silence and pauses between the spoken words and utterances, that is, the absence of an exchange of information, also represent an important form of communication. Daly and Cobb clearly spelled out the differences between a society and a community:

> A society should not be called a community unless (1) there is extensive participation by its members in the decisions by which its life is governed, (2) the society as a whole takes responsibility for the members, and (3) this responsibility includes respect for the diverse individualities of these members.[23]

And Jan Walls added that "community, then, must be seen as emerging from the mutual commitment, mutual involvement, mutual responsibility, and mutual respect between society and its individual members."[24]

John Dewey emphasized a long time ago that communities are created by communication ("Consensus demands communication").[25] Communication is, somewhat expanding and transforming Carey's definition (Carey 1989, 15), *a process whereby ideas and messages are transmitted and distributed over space and time*. The telegraph broke the centuries-long identity between communication and transportation as it permitted transmission of ideas and not only transportation of various materials. This definition, then, authorizes both the transmission and the ritual views of communication, which, of course, are not mutually exclusive. The first view underlines the transmission of signals or messages over distance, whereas the second is linked to emotions and attitudes of sharing, participation, association, and possession of the same beliefs and values. "A ritual view of communication is directed not toward the extension of messages in space but toward the maintenance of society in time; not the fact of imparting information but the representation of shared beliefs" (ibid., 18). The archetypal case for the transmission view of communication is delivering messages at very far distances, the archetypal case for the ritual view of communication is the sacred ceremony as it is still practiced, in various forms, in all cultures. In consequence, the second meaning of communication stands as an act of creation of a symbolic order (confirmation – representation – manifestation) and as carrying on a symbolic process – in the sense explained by Durkheim in his *Elementary Forms of Religious Life*. This double sense of communication conditions as well the birth of

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[22] Jan Walls, "Global Networking for Local Development: Task Focus and Relationship Focus in Cross-Cultural Communication," in Harasim 1993, 154-165; quotation is on page 159.

[23] Herman E. Daly, and John B. Cobb Jr. *For the Common Good: Redirecting the Economy Toward Community, the Environment, and a Sustainable Future*. (Boston: Beacon Press, 1989), 172.

[24] Walls 1993, 156.

[25] John Dewey, *Democracy and Education: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Education*. (New York: Macmillan, 1916), 5-6.

politically institutionalized network communities because information technologies, together with communication technologies, assume the role of transmission, but the latter also ascertains that, through its rituality, communication creates community or, if it exists already, it maintains and strengthens it. Both aspects of communication are predominantly public and social; they are the result not only of interaction between people but also of discovering and following models in one's own culture.

If we consider the cultural-political identity of members of particular communities in terms of local contexts, network, and memory, then it becomes understandable that ideas and actions are legitimated in tradition, on the one hand, and in more or less open public discourse, on the other hand. If memory ensures, in most cases, the coherence of the inner world, or the personality of individuals through an unreflective self-understanding, it ensures for communities legitimation and order of their cultural and social worlds. On this basis, it is correct to say, as Preston does, that

> In terms of political-cultural identity we invest our immediate attention in the practice/ideas of locale to reach more distant places. We interact with distant others as individuals (family and kin networks, and leisure), members of organizations (commercial and professional links), and members of collectivities (trade links, national units, international organizations) ... Overall, in terms of the knowledge available to guide action we are moving from the local/familiar to the general/unfamiliar. In terms of the knowledge available to guide action we are moving from a sphere dense in detail to one, which is relatively impoverished in detail (Preston 1997, 61-62).

All this is in complete contradiction to some widespread ideologies about participants in information networks who share specialized meanings and, through these meanings, also share imagined, virtual realities. Especially, some protagonists of the postmodern entirely different from the past pretend that contemporary individual subjectivities are born out of communication and correspond to realities reconfigured through language. In this view, postmodern man, a child of the overwhelming communication processes, is not only decentered but has, because of inner fragmentation, an unstable identity. Which means, of course, that postmodern man has no identity at all.

Political communities as networks represent interlinked rather than simply connected relationships, completely different from the network concept of physical structures like, in the field of telecommunications. There are, however, similarities between the two concepts: both represent information networks based on feedback by members or customers, and both may be characterized as denoting a sort of exclusivity vis-à-vis the outside world.[26] Political communities as network institutions definitely belong to an organizational model of horizontal algorithms (which coincides with the globalizing trend), in contrast to the vertical organizational algorithms which characterized modern development until recently (financial market integration versus corporate mergers, or hegemonic relationships versus colonial enterprises).

To networks of political communities it is best to apply Castells' definition of networks which are constituted by business firms:

> The components of the network are both autonomous and dependent *vis-à-vis* the network, and may be a part of other networks, and therefore of other systems of means aimed at other goals. The performance of a given network will then depend on two fundamental attributes of the network: its *connectedness*, that is its structural ability to facilitate noise-free communication between its components; its *consistency*, that is the extent to which there is sharing of interests between the networks' goals and the goals of its components (Castells 1997, 1:171).

In the information society it is current to speak of computer-mediated communication (CMC), and of communities born out of contacts on electronic pathways. However, it is also frequently recognized that

[26] Characteristics of the telecommunication industry's physical network are described in Macdonald, and Madden 1998, 295-298.

communities so created basically reflect off-line communities, that is, communities in which one lives in the real world.[27] Steven Jones emphatically states that

> The social construction of the reality that exists on-line is, however, not constituted *by* the networks CMC users utilize, it is constituted *in* the networks. It would be far easier to understand the physical, or hardwired, connections than to understand the symbolic connections that emerge from interaction ... Conspicuously absent is an understanding of how computers are used as tools for connection and community ... connection does not inherently make for community, nor does it lead to any necessary exchanges of information, meaning and sense-making at all ... The very surfeit of knowledge and information leads toward chaos and ever greater efforts are made at controlling the disorder [thus created] (Jones 1998, 5 and 7; italics in original).

Media-engendered social structures do not automatically create the same perceptual experience; one can see the same event, though mass mediated, in a completely different way, because of the off-line pre-conditioning every user brings with himself. This represents the way out of the chaos and confusion of what Carey calls "the rhetoric of electrical sublime" (Carey 1989, 9), though CMC is also organizing and making efficient contacts and symbolic processes in cyberspace, precisely because it is, simultaneously, the contextual space within which contacts occur and the tool used to enter that space. In this sense, cyberspace is considerably facilitating mobility from place to place, or from site to site.

However, computers also create boundaries and hierarchies contrary to convictions about the unifying force of cyberspace relations, through reinforcing identities and affirming differences separating certain users from others, as symbolic and ritual processes are fraught with hidden assumptions related to the off-line world. Interaction is neither a communication nor, constituted alone, a community. Computer-mediated communication is much more impersonal than the written word – reading a poem or a novel may generate a feeling of almost physical contact with its author – because on-line users "interact in a mode that is hieroglyphic."[28] This feature determines the complex nature of political-institutional communities that may or may not be composed of particular groups, united by specific purposes. "One may be 'in a group, but not of it,' while one is usually 'in and of' one's community."[29] Group strategies, therefore, are greatly determined by community relationships:

> The ideal society, therefore, will consist of an optimal blend of relationship-focused communities as well as numerous task-focused groups that exist primarily to serve the long-term interests of stable communities. The diversity and mobility of task-focused groups, in other words, are useful primarily as sources of information, ideas, and other exchanges needed to energize and revitalize stable communities.[30]

In communities, communication goes on in what one calls the public sphere or public space, in which people[31] are able to participate in the democratic process. In the perspective adopted here, public spheres or spaces are not necessarily contiguous but are shaped by cultural determinants and linked by appropriate

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[27] "A community is bound by place, which always includes complex social and environmental necessities. It is not something you can easily join. You can't subscribe to a community as you subscribe to a discussion group on the net. It must be lived. It is entwined, contradictory, and involves all our sense." S. Doheny-Farina, S. *The Wired Neighbourhood*. (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1996), 37.

[28] M. Lotfalian, "A Tale of an Electronic Community," in G. Marcus, ed., *Connected*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 117-156; quoted in Jones 1998, 15.

[29] Walls 1993, 156.

[30] Ibid., 159.

[31] I avoid using here the designation of community members as citizens because the category of a citizen designates belonging to today's nation-states.

technologies securing, consequently, accessibility to, and adequacy of, information. It is for this reason that Sclove justly points out that technologies also are contingent products of a society because their design and their development depend on the prevailing cultural norms and beliefs, and on social structures conditioned by these underlying cultural determinants (Sclove 1995, 7). ICTs, thus, may serve, in the proper institutional framework, the creation of stronger participative democracies,[32] but they may also become instruments of the state and of those in power. This danger is very real, especially because information not only represents power, but it is a multiplier of power as Karl Deutsch pointed out almost half a century ago.

This means that ICTs, when pre-set criteria of their design are assembled, may not respond to minority needs and instead become an instrument of dominating, although democratic, majorities. Finally, it has also to be taken into account that not properly designed ICTs can overburden people, as voters and decision makers, with information, aggravating their problems in grasping complex issues under time constraints, and making them subject to political maneuvering by the powers-that-be through specialists of information and communication.

4. Access to Information

The major problem concerning political communities as network institutions is the access of every member of a population to all information needed for his participation in the communicative and deliberative process – that is not always the case in spite of the exponential growth of information and communication infrastructure. Only if there is a complete, two-way information flow and a continuous exchange of views through the feedback system, can the envisaged political institutional networking be successful. This means that relevant information in all domains must be provided, taking into account requirements of information retrieval in a user-friendly format at all locations, at all times, and at an acceptable cost. Thus, the proper functioning of the public sphere in a communication community or civil society, namely, people's ability to properly assess the action of those in charge of public affairs, would be satisfied. "It is obvious that an informed and interested public is the key to self-governance ... it is essential that the public know what political alternatives are available and what their costs and consequences will be" (Grossman 1995, 31).

This is the basis of the indispensable consensus-building approach in political communities, institutionalized in networks that hang simultaneously together in local and global contexts.[33] Of course, differences in communication competence or program discrimination capabilities and the by now well-publicized digital gap represent considerable obstacles to such a consensus-building approach.[34] Only full access to information will lead to an authentic political discourse and debate because

[32] This ideal image is reflected in Elisabeth Richard's words when she writes that "as an expert information management tool, the internet blends most traditional ways of communicating with citizens ... With the same keys on the keyboard, the medium can [also] be used as a tool for deliberation and voting. The monitor offers the same mechanisms as our parliamentary democracy: questions, debate and the vote ... It has the interactivity that facilitates deliberation, the distributed structure that facilitates access and virtuality that reduces constraints of time and space." Elisabeth Richard, "Tools of Governance," in Hague, and Loader 1999, 72-86; quotation is on page 73.

[33] "Theoretically, this consensus-building approach," writes Elisabeth Richard, "with citizens-as-partners would reduce the amount of marketing needed after a decision is made. The close ties with interested communities – fostered through web sites and discussion groups – would allow trial balloons to be tested, thereby stretching the public environment analysis over the decision-making process. Initiating an online discussion and creating quick surveys on issues, is a potentially healthier way of coming to public judgement than relying on public opinion polls." Richard, op. cit. 79.

[34] Fox and Miller write about the "politics of hyperreality – a rapid sequence of images and symbols with unknown or uncertain referents racing through the public consciousness ... [where] simulation and media spectacle replace political debate." C.J. Fox, and H.T. Miller, *Postmodern Public Administration: Toward Discourse*. (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: SAGE Publications, 1995), 43.

> For democracy to flourish, it is not enough to get out the vote. We need better public judgement, and we need to know how to cultivate it. The public is not magically endowed with good judgement. Good judgement is something that must be worked at all the time and with great skill and effort. It does not exist automatically; it must be created.[35]

Thus, a recursive political debate, a deliberative process creating trust and norms of generalized reciprocity, is required for the good functioning of democracy – and the new institutional setup aims at realizing just that.

In the field of political institutions, there are selection mechanisms that reduce the range of information supplied to the public and, in turn, the same public limits the information absorbed during the process of reception. This is so because the public is fully aware of its lack of access to the mechanisms of power in a formal democracy and of its own impossibility to effectively participate in the political process; it therefore displays little interest in political matters and events and increasingly opts out of participation in the public sphere (the phenomenon of absenteeism).

The so-called many-to-many interactive communication structure, involving individuals and communities as well as sub-regional and regional coordinating centers, poses, in addition, the problem of

(1) Who is the owner of ICTs providing and controlling the required political information (after having experienced the present monopoly of mass-media power-structures), and

(2) The availability at all locations of the necessary software and hardware equipment to avoid politics being only a matter for the so-called info-rich.

It is evident that "ICTs must be embedded within community networks that enjoy remote connectivity" (Hague, and Loader 1999, 15). In turn, this means that ICTs in politically interactive communication systems should not be commodified communication apparatuses like today's television and broadcasting systems, but non-commercial undertakings or, if commercially managed (a more efficient solution than complete public ownership and management), then under close supervision of the constitutive network communities.

5. Networking in Institutionalized Political Communities

The new political re-ordering in the future that I call political-institutional networks (or communitarian democracy, but I avoid this latter term because of some hidden assumptions behind it), not territorially bounded but culturally defined, will made up of much smaller units than the present configuration of states everywhere, or several such non-contiguous units loosely hanging together in the framework of a political network. In consequence, representative democracy and the threefold division of political institutions which evolved historically in modern states in order to rationally organize and render manageable ever-growing territories and populations, will also have to undergo fundamental changes or disappear entirely.

In institutionalized-political network communities of much lesser size than the present nation-states the question will necessarily emerge whether in them other forms of democratic regimes than direct democracy will be able to survive, especially the one we know under the label of representative democracy? It seems to me that a certain degree of representation will have to remain because no political institution, even one based on self-governing citizenry, can survive without some delegation of power, but the principle of representation will be manifest in the executive-managerial functional bodies, though the legislative organs will fade away, because they will be useless in a direct voting plebiscitary setup. The fundamental disconnection between citizens and their government, so much in evidence today will be eliminated and the so-called iron-triangle of interest groups, administrative agents, and legislative bodies, in which people are inserted without a hope of freeing themselves will disappear. Some permanency and, therefore,

[35] D. Yankelovich, D. *Coming to Public Judgement: Making Democracy Work in a Complex World*. (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1991), 11.

representative character on the executive-managerial side will definitely be necessary in view of the dangers inherent in plebiscitary setups, namely the risks accompanying instant decision-making, if the required software and organization providing access for the whole population to relevant information and to the ensuing debate were not available. It goes without saying that instant reactions must be avoided, and a long process of evaluating eventual results of different solutions to given problems, the pros and cons of all decisions concerning the public, is, without doubt, indispensable in any form of democratic regime. This is all the more important as

> In a system of direct democracy decisions are too easily made by applying the majority rule. Consequently the functions that are also considered to be essential for a good democracy, such as the protection of minorities, the correcting effects of checks and balances, the restraining influence of deliberation and compromising and the arbitrating and informative effects of intermediate organizations, do not come out well enough in forms of direct democracy.[36]

A political-institutional development, as foreseen here, will also engender a thorough revamping of the role of intermediary organizations but not the disappearance of mediation altogether, that is, a total disintermediation. The designation *intermediary* covers all kinds of organizations and movements mediating between individuals and the state, such as parties or pressure groups. I believe that such organizations and movements of mediation (or re-intermediation), not between individuals and the state, but between different interest groups, between different social and cultural institutions or associations representing different ideological orientations, will nevertheless play an important role. They may as well continue to take the form of political parties, as we know them today. These mediating formations will certainly not be what one calls cybertribes sometimes, a transitory conglomeration of individuals, like-minded activists banded together in cyberspace around some common themes or single-issue protests.

The evolution envisaged will, probably, advantage a sort of leadership democracy, in which popular leaders rather than representatives will play decisive roles, especially in view of the fact that parties will not be, given the technological means at the disposal of the population, mass parties but organizations streamlining popular participation in democratic processes. A similar development will eliminate problems met by all parties in today's democracies related to changing party alignment or the gradual erosion of party membership, and influence among various groups of the population.

[36] Wim B.H.J. Van de Donk, and Pieter W. Tops, "Orwell in Athens? Informatization and the Future of Democracy," in Van de Donk, Snellen, and Tops 1995, 1-20; quotation is on page 6.

CHAPTER NINE

TECHNOLOGIES AND INFRASTRUCTURAL BUILDUP

The Internet and the World Wide Web, both representing autonomous and multifunctional public spheres, are the instruments *par excellence* of establishing networks of community wide and intercommunity communication and information.[1] This does not mean that one could say today that all technological solutions, all organizational and infrastructural modalities are already at our disposal in order to create such networks. It appears certain, however, that once the need is felt to develop these new technological – hardware and software – solutions, especially an infrastructure with such features as security, guaranteed bandwidth, accountability, authentication, and the prevention of particular anomalies will be obtained very rapidly because the foundations are there and simply new applications are required. The most important element will be to gear all future technological developments to the public's need as Lievesey-Howarth expressed it:

> We must not think of computer-literate people but people-literate computers. The information society can be built around the citizen, rather than the current trend of government building infrastructure around itself. I am talking about a citizen-direct approach, not a government-direct approach. This is a community issue, not a technology issue. We need leaders to tell industry what is good and what is bad. Regrettably there are few leaders doing this.[2]

1. Organizational Environments As Virtual Public Spheres

Anthony Wilhelm distinguishes five characteristics of the political public sphere[3] that have a considerable impact on the environments of technological systems:

First, topography – a spatial definition where users discuss issues, form opinions, or plan action;

Second, topicality – the contents or topics of interactive dialogue carried on by users that, through the diversity reflected in them, determine the deliberative process, as the flow of ideas is a necessary but insufficient condition of political decision-making;

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[1] "The technological architecture of the Internet – a labyrinth of links and nodes, where each new connection brings more strength to the network – is increasingly seen to parallel the emerging relationship between the state and the citizens. The citizen is not only a consumer in the product and service delivery chain, but also a partner in the governance process, a node in this network of lateral connections, which is the model of a healthy civil society." Elisabeth Richard, "Tools of Governance," in Hague, and Loader 1999, 72.

[2] R. Lievesey-Howarth, "Electronic Governance: The Risk to Society." *The Australian*, 25 July 1997, 32-33.

[3] Wilhelm, Anthony G. 1999. "Virtual Sounding Boards: How Deliberate Is Online Political Discussion?" in Hague, and Loader. eds. 154-178; text referred to is on pages 155-159.

Third, inclusiveness – a democratic principle to ensure that everybody has the opportunity to participate in political deliberations;

Fourth, design – to satisfy not only requirements of plebiscitary (push button) democracy, but integrating components, making possible critical-rational exchange of views; and

Fifth, deliberation – represents the essence of the democratic political process, and no political-institutional arrangement can work if all the above, but especially technology architecture (or design) and regulation, do not make possible and facilitate the deliberative process.[4]

Environments for information and communication technologies will always be at variance in future political-institutional entities because the latter's size, contiguousness, or separation by distance, and the economic and social conditions prevalent in each of them, will not be, far from that, equal or similar, like urbanized or rural environments. These different environments will influence neither the multifunction of the organization and technological infrastructure nor the regulation of access, content, or correctness of transmission.

Borrowing some of the generally used categories, one can foresee that organizational and infrastructural environments will have the following characteristics in the new political-institutional entities:

Pluralism both of media types and of information content: this is an unavoidable feature of future information flows in general, and, in particular, of information which is tailored to a specific context of public affairs or to specific contents of political-institutional issues to be determined or decided. Most questions regarding current administration – budget, fiscal policy, infrastructural projects like bridge, canal, and secondary road building, or hospital construction, – will fall into the latter category, while problems in respect of the environment, regional security, and physical infrastructural investments (e.g., road and railway building between communities) will be handled on an inter-community level.

The pluralism of content will be an expression of local, sub-regional, and regional particularism and of the different cultural identities of the new political-institutional units, and, at the same time, it will let divergent opinions, opposed ideologies, and resolutely local, contextual approaches flourish. For Castells, the "new electronic media do not depart from traditional cultures: they absorb them" (Castells 1997, 1:370), or, in Featherstone's words, the pluralistic environment will constitute a "generative frame of unity within which diversity can take place" (Featherstone 1990, 2), that is, it will, indeed, put into practice the slogan "think globally, act locally," so much repeated in our days that it hardly be taken seriously. However, this plurality will be straitjacketed in "*a common cognitive pattern*" (Castells 1997, 1:371; italics in original), that is, various cultural forms of thinking and viewing the world will be integrated into a superficial cultural framework, mixing all symbolic communication forms and representing the whole in a context of plurality.

This pluralism will also mean, first, that the number of hosts will be rapidly multiplied as the potential of the Internet will be realized regarding community wide and inter-community communication; and, second, that there will be an extensive spillover phenomenon between (1) technologically more and less developed areas – like capitals, cities, and the countryside; and (2) or non-contiguous parts of the same politically community through received satellite footprints, especially in environments characterized by low telecommunication density. Such spillover effects may be institutionalized instead of being incidental or occasional.

In addition, certain types of media, like the much cheaper sending of e-mail, will be preferred to the use of telephones, as is presently the case in Russia, or because of the very low teledensity, in Africa.[5] Reciprocal

[4] The multiplying effect of electronically linked deliberative communities is emphasized by Sproull and Faraj, who studied Usenet communities: "The benefits provided by electronic groups often extend beyond the direct participants when members act as conduits of information to people outside the group." L. Sproull, and S. Faraj. "Atheism, Sex, and Databases: The Net as a Social Technology," in B. Kahin, and J. Keller, eds., *Public Access to the Internet*. (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1995), 62-81; quotation is on page 75.

[5] The low telecommunication density makes, of course, even the establishment of Internet networks impossible and obliges people to use satellite transmission: "Whereas satellite television is easily accessed, access to the older medium of the telephone is still uneven in Africa. The problem stems from the fact that Africa has '12% of the world's people, but just 2% of the world's main telephone lines. Put another way, Africa has the lowest growth in teledensity (main telephone lines per 100 inhabitants) of any developing regions over the last 10 years' [*Internet World*, November 1995, 103].

communication that today aims at supplying information in areas with strictly regulated, and therefore limited, access by targeting particular societies from a geographical location outside those societies', will also be useful in communication between non-contiguous units of the political-institutional entities envisaged.

The decidedly pluralist nature of the information and communication flows in the future political setup will, however, safeguard the actual dualistic configuration of the Internet and the Web, as it will also other yet-to-be-born on-line infrastructure types, in the sense that the largest volume of information and communication will remain in private hands, and a much smaller part, strictly concerning debate and decision about public issues, will be handled by semi-public agencies. In the management and regulatory mechanisms of these agencies community representatives will have a controlling interest, but even these semi-public institutions will be subject to the market's competitive conditions in order to avoid bureaucratic ossification.

2. Information and Communication Systems

The major characteristics of information and communication systems relate, first, to the medium of the communication and, second, to the size and structure of the group involved in the network. The medium may be the spoken or written word, the latter with or without non-verbal cues, graphics, and other auxiliary instruments. The written word of electronic and computer-mediated communication allows individual control of the interaction, that is, of the rate and length of it. The computer, however, is the only medium, which offers a memory through storage of everything that was part of the communication process:

> The only communication systems that allow a group as part of its group communication process to modify, update, reorganize, and reclassify what has transpired as an integral part of the communication process, with members automatically kept informed of such changes, are the computer-based systems. These systems introduce a "common" memory for the use of the group ... The common or shared memory provided by the computer, its ability to manipulate this memory, and its potentially large size open the door to fundamentally new types of human communication processes (Hiltz, and Turoff 1993, 38).

New technologies also govern the size of the group or population that can effectively communicate. In fact, the difference in the number of participants in the system depends really on the protocols, that is, the cyberspace-conditioned structure agreed to in advance by the architects or constructors of various systems. CMCs, thus, structure as well as integrate programs and processes in what is called hypertexts,[6] and, in addition, fulfill all necessary auxiliary functions such as the collection, organization, filtering, formatting, feedback, and retrieving of any material required by the users. Computer-mediated communications therefore are superior to e-mail because they can be tailored according to the specific purposes of users, whereas other electronic communication devices represent a generalized system, made for everyone in a single, uniform, region wide service utility.

Moreover, around half of these telephones are located in the major cities and business capitals. Thus, it is much easier to place satellite speed-dial calls to Europe via INTELSAT (the only organization that provides comprehensive global satellite coverage and offers telephone, television and data distribution services to billions of people on every continent) than to call other African countries or even other regions within a country." Volkmer 1997, 70.

[6] The term *hypertext*, invented by Nelson in 1965, "as applied to text composition, expresses the idea that text and other media can be handled in new ways by a computer system, as compared to paper-based processes." Hiltz, and Turoff 1993, 458. Friedland describes the advantages offered by hypertexts as follows: "Using hypertext, a story can be layered vertically, with a journalist's topical narrative account that attempts to synthesize the multiple sources of a story in a more or less traditional manner; columns of opinion, or more partisan accounts; original sources or documents, including the statements from which the story was composed; and hyperlinks to other documentary sources. In this way, the reader is able to read a 'simple' narrative account, but also to pick it apart to investigate both its veracity and its underlying narrative and ideological construction." Friedland 1996, 202.

In this way, computer-mediated communication stands for what has recently been called superconnectivity, increasing considerably the number of participants in a particular system and the possible applications and combination of functions (especially through providing alternative channels of communication).

There are different versions of information systems representing a particular interest from our point of view precisely because, in addition to their function of facilitating communication at distance and providing access to stored information, they organize and structure the information made available:[7]

First, the most interesting are the issue-based information systems (IBIS). Such systems reflect the empirical truth that not all relevant information is available at the beginning of the decision-making process, and must be stated clearly and communicated to all participants of a debate in order to facilitate identification of problems and elaboration of their solutions:

> IBIS provides a framework of categories according to which the various contributions to a discussion may be arranged and which makes it possible to recognise the interrelations between these contributions. Contributions to discussions are categorised as questions, answers and arguments raised. Thus a network of problem-related information emerges.

ICTs may therefore be used as a means to organize information, precisely because they consist of unstructured communication at a distance, in an asynchronous mode.

Second, decision support systems (DSS) adopt a rational, probabilistic and formal approach, sometimes combining it with forms of visualization. Whatever assumptions are put forward, they are analyzed and evaluated together with their implications. Variables that "have an impact on the ultimate decision are interrelated and rated; subsequently, the results obtained are reviewed."

Third, group decision support systems (GDSS) "explicitly support collaborative processes within a group – e.g., agenda setting, brainstorming, commenting, voting, and documenting the results of deliberations." The good functioning of such group systems necessitates structuring the debate from technical and substantive points of view, and therefore require reliance on a facilitator.[8]

There are also specifically designed, comprehensive systems supporting participation of community members such as CSCW (Computer-Supported Cooperative Work), which not only contribute to structuring debates, but also even allocate rights to raise issues and comment on them. However, such specific systems can only be used with much caution in regard to political-institutional community networks, after thorough investigation of their underlying assumptions and, eventually, some hidden characteristics in their buildup.

Community information networks (CINs), being people-oriented and place-focused, serve users in a specific geographic area. Such electronic information systems were earlier under the control of centralized bodies and managers who decided about contents, points of access, and key network characteristics. It was only the invention of the Internet that enabled users to take control of the content and form of information of CINs, which became user-driven, interactive, multifunctional, and decentralized and are serving broader horizons of community development. Experience shows that their success depends on whether they draw most of their information from their members, using widely decentralized nodes of a network's primary information gatherers.

As a practical example of such community wide information system one can refer to *The Democracy Network* (DNet) in California.[9] The creation of DNet was inspired by interactive cable TV and interactive

[7] Information concerning these systems, except DNet of California, and all quotations regarding them, are from Claus Lenk, "Electronic Support of Citizen Participation in Planning Processes," in Hague, and Loader 1999, 87-95.

[8] GDSS frequently use Electronic Meeting Rooms comprising 12 to 24 working stations, and such software as GroupSystems V, developed at the University of Arizona.

[9] This network is described in Sharon Docter, and William H. Dutton, "The Social Shaping of The Democracy Network (DNet)," in Hague, and Loader 1999, 222-243. All information concerning DNet is taken from this study.

video-communication over ITV networks. Design of the DNet included a broadcasting component to channel one-to-many communication, and an interactive component to make possible many-to-many communication. The network was divided into six sections, of which a central broadcasting menu called *On the Issues*, was especially interesting; with this feature citizens could select issues of interest to them and compare the position of candidates with their own. In Docter and Dutton's words,

> An issue grid creates a structure of incentives for opening up the campaign to a wider array of issues. If an issue already appears on the issue grid, candidates can add their views on this issue. If candidates want to debate or state their position on a particular issue not represented on the issue grid, they can add the issue as well as a statement to the "On the Issues" section of DNet. A red check mark shows that the candidate has stated his or her position on each issue. The candidates most recently up-dating or adding to their issue position statements are bumped to the top of the list of candidates, each of which is represented by a row within the issue grid. In this way, new information supersedes old information, and old statements are archived so that it is possible for a voter or journalist to examine how a candidate's position changed over time (Hague, and Loader 1999, 228).

The issue grid in DNet is an excellent tool of information of voters who made candidates accountable for their issue statements as well as for their failure to address particular issues. The functioning of this grid was made possible by a Remote Updating System (RUS) through which candidates obtained personal identification numbers and passwords enabling them to update their statements on issues and other personal information concerning them.

In addition to the issue grid, other components included (1) a *Candidate Info*, with biographical, contact, and endorser information of the candidates; (2) a *Media* section allowing voters to read press articles pertaining to the elections, even offering links to relevant online news; (3) a *Ballot Measures* information board providing users with official information pertaining to ballot measures – their summaries and arguments for and against them; this site happened to be the most interactive, with users posting their opinions about the measures; (4) *Your Views*, a bulletin board with people's comments; (5) a *Match Poll* section permitting users to compare their own opinions with those of the candidates. This section included *Live Interviews*, on which users could communicate directly with candidates and experts; and, finally, (6) a *Take Action* list allowing voters to send e-mail directly to candidates.

Other examples of CINs are[10] *The Institute of Global Communications* (IGC), a loosely networked coalition of groups with no definite geographical horizon, incorporating specialized members such as the Advocacy Institute and the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy. On the other hand, *HandsNet* grew out of a number of California community organizations sharing a large number of interests. HandsNet also has affiliates like the Washington, D.C.-based Food Research and Action Center (FRAC) and the Center of Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP), but its most important achievement is to have created a database with the help of its member and affiliate organizations, serving its needs for specific, high-quality information. It also has a number of facilitators and so-called forum managers for electronic debates who are vested with complete editorial responsibilities in their particular issue areas.

A very interesting European example, from the point of view of this study, is the *Network Pericles* from Greece. It is entirely focused on a local, political arena,[11] and aims to reduce citizen alienation and disillusionment with the political process through recourse to the classical version of democracy, the Athenian, based on an active citizenry involved in self-government and in the debates in the public sphere. Network Pericles enables citizens to register their non-binding votes, thus conveying their views to the authorities on various issues. Roza Tsagarousianou enumerates (Tsagarousianou et al. 1998, 46-47) three principal functions of the Network, namely (1) the encouragement of the initiatives of citizens, who can submit specific proposals for debate and vote; (2) the organization of binding or consultative referenda, that is, expression of their opinion on other citizens' motions and suggestions; and (3) the possibility of recall, or

[10] Details of the following CINs are taken from Friedland, 1996.

[11] The description of *Network Pericles* is taken from Tsagarousianou et al. 1998, 43-52.

taking corrective action, whereby previous decisions and actions are corrected, amended, or annulled. In this way, the Network offers involved citizens all required information in respect of questions debated in the public sphere and provides facilities for teleconferencing.

The organizational design of Network Pericles is centered on a system of kiosks:

> The hardware the user needs in order to have access to the network is installed in special kiosks which are situated in specific central points in the participating municipalities, in order to be easily accessible to the population ... Each kiosk is dedicated to specific functions/activities and is equipped with the appropriate hardware: most kiosks provide facilities for citizen conferencing or for the supply of information, while there are a smaller number of kiosks dedicated to voting ... In addition to the terminals situated in the kiosks, access to the network is possible (although not currently available) through private PCs ... access from private PCs would enable the user to get information and be involved in citizen conferencing but *not to vote*; this restriction was deemed necessary in order to reinforce the "public" (as opposed to individualistic) character of the democratic process (ibid., 48-49).

These examples of civic networking are crucial from the point of view of the future of political-institutional network communities because they represent organizational models, using varied technological applications, which may indicate the direction in which they have to look for initial guidance.

3. Interactive Multimedia and Communication

Without considering in detail technological developments during the last century,[12] this section will summarize, *first*, essential aspects of computer-based communication networks, and, *second*, the basic features of an integrated broadband communication system (IBCS) drawing upon the telephone, cable, and computer industries – reflecting the popular trend toward convergence.

A. COMPUTER-BASED COMMUNICATION NETWORKS

The introduction of computers into network communication at a distance completely changed the concept of such a network. The computer with its peripheral devices is related to other centers and terminals by so-called data bus systems (under the direction of address and control buses), which can be expanded for specific applications. All computer-associated elements on a particular site can, in turn, be interconnected to form local area networks and even to form wide area or global networks. Using gateways located at strategic points, it can interconnect different types of networks, and using advanced switching technologies such as the Asymmetric Digital Subscriber Loop (ADSL), it allows data to flow in both directions at high speeds. The physical medium of transmission consists of twisted pairs of coaxial copper cables through radio links to optical fibers. The latter offer particular advantages in that they are free from interference of electromagnetic effects and are capable of operating in the largest broadband infrastructures.

Highway systems are the most interesting form of network topologies for communication at gradually expanded circles of political units, as in an Integrated Services Digital Network (ISDN). They include communicating elements connected to a common cable; the points of connection are called nodes. Each node has a unique address and responds only to data sent to this address, and each has direct access to the network in contention with all other nodes (which makes collisions possible). The central processor unit is equipped with a bus-system consisting of several parallel path networks for its own communication

[12] Among these developments one has to mention the continued digitalization of the telephone network, advances in video compression techniques, deployment of optical fiber, and new wireless technologies.

requirements, thus catering to data, addresses and control. The bus-system can, of course, be extended in the outside world, expanding the range of the processor, but such an extension reduces, in turn, the data throughput and risks sometimes skewing the data transferred. The cable is, in fact, a transmission line only and has to be powered at each location; the frequency of transmission is controlled by a common clock placed somewhere in the middle of the network. In smaller areas, *ring networks* may also be used which follow the same principles in their setup, except that the communicating devices are connected to a single or bidirectional (or dual) ring.

Among network protocols the only one to be mentioned here is the one concerning contention techniques. It allows each terminal exclusive use of the network, and the contention between these terminals is arbitrated by a control design known as *carrier sense-multiple access* (CSMA). As each terminal, sharing the same transmission medium, listens to the network, this device is able to detect the absence or presence of a carrier. Consequently, it does not permit transmission of its own data until it discovers a gap in the transmissions. The device can be equipped with collision detection or collision avoidance complements.

Modems, intermediaries between data terminals and the transmission media, regulate operations through reception of data packages, and generate processes to transform data to be expedited into a form suitable for transmission. In general, their task is to: (1) match the channel bandwidth; (2) provide synchronism, at both ends, for the data stream; (3) handle the modulation and demodulation processes, and (4) maintain the high quality and integrity of the signals received and sent. Modems are also the instruments for the compression of data in accordance with one or another of standardized algorithms, in order to remove redundant or repetitive data that are reconstituted at the receiver end.

Among the major infrastructural network systems it is worth mentioning, in addition to the Cambridge Fast Ring, the Ethernet system, and the Fibre Distributed Data Interface network:

– The *Cambridge Fast Ring* is characterized by an increased transmission of raw data of 100 Mbit/s through improved data handling by each node. This was achieved with the help of a device matching, through a serial-parallel-serial converter, the serial network data requirement to the parallel needs of each terminal. As transition occurs in each clock period, synchronization in the data stream is possible. The network's other advantage is its adaptability, as it can use either a cable of twisted copper pairs or optical fiber. Each network has gateways or bridges to other networks, and possesses a monitoring station for network management purposes.

– The *Ethernet* system, a half-duplex, send-and-receive setup, is based on a highway and equipped with the carrier sense, multiple access collision detector. It is quite powerful, with an extendable cable length of 2.5 km (the extension is feasible when interfacing through gateways with other networks), and allows the installation of 1,024 nodes or stations in each sector.

– The *Fibre Distributed Data Interface* (FDDI) network, operating with a token ring, can easily achieve a throughput of 100 Mbit/s. The FDDI uses two optical fiber cables as transmission carriers connected to each node, and the maximum circumference of the rings can reach 100 km, with up to 500 nodes per ring. What is extremely important is the rapidity of data transmission through such networks, as ring nodes immediately release the tokens (the latter is a special information packet with a specific bit pattern, circulating around the ring in order to act as a token), and thus the freed bandwidth can be utilized for the simultaneous circulation of many more messages.

– The *Internet*, using normal telephone lines, represents the only global area network providing information resources, stored in computer controlled-databases and e-mail facilities. Particular databases can be accessed through utilization of browsers in a menu-type search. The essential tool in this is the World Wide Web, reached via a hypertext transport protocol (HTTP), equipped with uniform resource locators. The Internet is disadvantaged not only by the slow transmission via the telephone system, but by its generally too large files as well.

A most important feature of interconnected networks is the *Open Systems Interconnect* (OSI), which makes possible, through an agreed set of protocols, the exchange of data between dissimilar and incompatible devices. Its architecture is based on seven functional layers that define a system of interconnections and interactions.

B. THE INTEGRATED BROADBAND COMMUNICATION SYSTEM

The *Integrated Broadband Communication System* (IBCS) is a full service network that offers to users the whole gamut of advantages of a telecommunications infrastructure, much beyond what analog systems could accomplish. In addition, IBCS users will be able to use their time optimally. The essential elements of IBCS consist of the following:[13]

(1) A *bandwidth* broad enough to move large amounts of information and communication quickly as it determines the capacity of a communication system. Bandwidth can be compressed, thus reducing the amount of information to be transmitted, and eliminating redundancies in television frames. However, before such compression, the analog information must be digitalized.

(2) *Digitalized electronic transmission* in order to allow even visual information, almost perfectly reproducing the original, to be stored and manipulated by computers.

(3) *Hybrid fiber coaxial (HFC) infrastructure*, which removes the possibility of any leakage of over-the-air signals into the network, as entry of radio frequencies into optical fibers is impossible because they carry light. In this case photo detectors must be installed in nodes, placed in neighborhoods, in order to convert light energy back to electrical energy used in coaxial cable networks. The use of HFC architecture offers the particular advantage, for the purposes discussed in this text, that each node can be programmed independently and, consequently, different programs can be diffused over the same channel to different nodes, enabling networks, such as differential programming for sub-regions or regions.

(4) *Interactivity* between communication channels with processing equipment at each end. Interactivity is made possible through so-called servers in which more specialized or less frequently used programs are stored and sent simultaneously or sequentially to several target areas, using video switching technology and constituting an asynchronous transfer mode.

IBCSs may be located in a particular place but interconnected to other places (and networks) elsewhere. Through their interoperability with other similar systems, they offer a convenience to users not available otherwise, first as a communication facility and, second, as a source of access to an extremely large body of information and program content. It is, of course, necessary that all terminals be equipped for the navigator function, software that is instrumental in locating and accessing the information material required.

Some problems related to a wider use of IBCS, and not yet resolved, concern available bandwidth – the use of fiber limits the available bandwidth, – upstream reliability, and network powering. Such reliability is assured if fiber is used from head-end to end-location, but in this case the terminal equipment in the latter would have to be powered locally, that is, suffering when there is a power outage.

4. Cybercasting in Political-Institutional Networks

Cybercasting means new organizational arrangements and new formats of presentation corresponding to the new contents of community wide and intercommunity political-institutional communication, originated by both official and non-official sources. By non-official sources I mean the most extensive part of information and communication flows in the political/public space, generated by people's interactive debate; feedback concerning authorities' proposals; suggestions and decisions as well as exchange of views on common policies and actions through coordinating sub-regional or regional centers.

In view of the multiplicity of views and perspectives in the political-institutional field of the future, cybercasting will have to adapt to globally accessible but variegated requirements, affecting semi-public or private on-line providers everywhere. Differences to which cybercasting activities will have to be adapted will

[13] In writing this section I extensively used the work of Th. F. Baldwin, Stevens D. McVoy, and Charles Steinfield, *Convergence: Integrating Media, Information and Communication*. (London: SAGE Publications, 1996).

include: types of groups targeted; varying demand for, and categories of political-institutional information, and, thus, different development phases for on-line access packages; or differing regional technical infrastructures. The new evolution envisaged in the present study could historically be considered as the third phase of development of network infrastructure through on-line providers,[14] heralded already by such recent establishments as Africa Online, with services centered on the intention to enhance communications on the continent.

The best example one can think of today regarding the future's global/local political-institutional on-line services is represented by Yahoo!, a private, multiple service on-line provider:

> Yahoo! offers 26 topical options, including a headline news service provided by Reuters, business and commercial news services, and focused usenet newsgroups on health, the Internet, legal matters, and World Wide Web issues as well as on-line editions of U.S. and international high school and college newspapers. In total, Yahoo! offers 161 print media editions, of which about one-third are international papers. Five are virtual on-line editions: India World (which is an on-line news service); *Kamloops Daily News Online*, Canada; *Star Online*, Malaysia; *Austria Online*, and *Independent Online*, South Africa ... The range of on-line editions of papers available on Yahoo! covers transnational, national, regional and local issues ... Yahoo! offers a hyperlink to 17 wire services (Volkmer 1997, 63-64).

In political-institutional networks each participant – individual or community – will have to be hooked up to four functionally distinct, interactive communication systems,[15] involving differential temporal perspectives:

(1) *Local-level communication* resembling very closely face-to-face communication, even if it takes place via computers or other telecommunication means – network communication support systems (NCSS). Even at this level, consisting of interlocked communication cycles, there is a need for different operations such as editing, transmission, reception, feedback, and reply that take up different time periods in view of the different media involved. This is the most complete cyberspatial setup permitting network members to be separated by large distances, or acting in different time periods (implying uncertain sequencing of messages): either acting asynchronously and thus incurring possibly important delays when rapid updating is required in terms of current events or status; or interacting synchronously, safeguarding all visual modalities through which non-verbal behavior is expressed.[16]

(2) *Communication with information sources* – a network information support system (NISS), including extra-group or extra-community information centers of stored databases like archives, newspaper files, even libraries, offering potentially relevant, valuable information, shared by all members of the network or a system of networks. The problem of sharing information is truly complicated because different members of a network or, for that matter, different networks will have direct access to a different array of possible sources of

[14] "The establishment of conventional on-line providers can be regarded as the founding era of electronic outlet organization, which has been followed by a pragmatic commercial on-line mass market that has brought about new types of syndication and network models. In the second phase, the United Sates and Europe have developed a mass market and on-line services have caused 'homespun initiatives to go commercial' [*Internet World*, November 1995, 44] ... On-line providers have not only broadened their commercial interests by expanding their services to enable users to send and receive e-mail, read usenet news, browse the World Wide Web, publish information on the Web, and use telnet, FTP and Gopher, but they have also targeted groups, and consequently their selection of cybermedia and optional agendas also varies. The target groups can be divided into professionals and specialized consumers, such as frequent travelers and home office employees, but there are also regional differences in terms of usage and content of the different on-line provider services." Volkmer 1997, 56. Volkmer considers that publishing and broadcasting companies going on-line constitutes the third phase of network development, but this seems to me erroneous because it concerns only electronic outlets, part of the new world of information and communication technologies, but it does not modify the content structure of information and does not address new target groups, only enlarges the same type of audience.

[15] In respect of the following discussion I am indebted to McGrath and Hollingshead 1994, Chapter Two, "Systems: Applying Electronic Technology in Work Groups."

[16] "Nonverbal and paraverbal cues serve at least important functions in group communication: They help regulate the flow of communication; they express emotion; and they transmit subtle meanings." McGrath, and Hollingshead 1994, 18.

information, thus none can have direct access to all possible information in a given domain. The actual information possessed by a community will therefore be only an intersection, and not the totality, of the information available to network members.

(3) *Communication with groups or individuals external to the community or the network* – a network external support system (NXSS) whose contribution can be extremely important because of their experience in the same field(s) concerning debates within a community or network; and, finally,

(4) *Communication systems structuring a community network's performance* – a network performance support system (NPSS); such systems closely relate to the issues debated (idea generation and evaluation, agenda setting), the nature of the performance required (political decision making, voting, etc.), or the complexity of the relationship of internal political forces within a particular community:

> Just as systems for communication among group members ... structure the form, content, and flow of those messages, systems for channelling task inputs and responses structure both the nature of the task activities of members and the nature of the task products resulting from those activities (McGrath and Hollingshead 1994, 10).

This is extremely important because the information overload may render it impossible for network members to integrate in their minds all relevant information pertaining to a given subject or problem area. In this sense, cybercasting is an essential function making transmission of information more efficient and effective through screening, filtering, and focusing it in the proper perspective. However, in the political field an unwelcome interference can take place when rendering the information more processable by community network members, because it may be penetrated and reshaped by the distorting views of the person who is doing the cybercasting. In this respect, the role of NPSS may be fundamental.

Cybercasting and all computer-mediated communication – except, of course, immediate communication, through computer-transmission between network members – presuppose a specialized cyberspace-adapted writing competence which represents a particular mode of communication. It consists in arranging various topics in new formats; guiding users through utilization of raw data and across various levels of the mass of information available; re-establishing the potentially disrupted natural order of messages and thereby the orderly flow of communication; taking into account and linking to each other global and local perspectives.

The most important task of a cyberleader or moderator of debates in cyberspace certainly is involvement with several interactive users and adoption of different ways of handling a subject with respondents belonging to different audiences. This feature is the great innovation in comparison to traditional journalism because it means an engagement in a "focused discussion among worldwide users on a particular news item" (Volkmer 1997, 67). Nevertheless, the role of a leader or moderator also can be fraught with dangers if particular personal interests or group ideologies are introduced in the interactive debate; as Garnham pointed out in his criticism, "the controller of the network" can set the agenda and, thus, influence the outcome of the debate (Garnham 1990, 127).

The presentation of different topics in on-line menus thus includes the establishment of so-called hyperlinks, as part of hypertexts. Hyperlinks consist of brief descriptions of various options and subjects with reference not only to events or ideas of particular relevance, but also to their analysis in global and professional perspective with indication of sources such as those Web sites discussing it (by the way, this always was the usual manner of doing things in serious journalism). Vertical layering in hypertext format seems to be the most appropriate way in cybercasting:

> By presenting citizens solving problems in a narrative structure that builds context and historical understanding, a model begins to emerge for journalism that merges the two functions of the collection and dissemination of information and the provision of a forum for public debate ... A collection of views can be archived, reread, explored, and connected in new ways that offer new models of problem solving that expand the narrative boundaries of traditional journalism. These models offer an alternative to the plebiscitary model of electronic democracy that is both *deliberative* and practical (Friedland 1996, 202; italics in original).

5. Cyberspace Governance and Rule-Making

As far as political information flows and communication are concerned between political-institutional network communities, the autonomy of these information and communication channels will have to be restricted either by self-disciplining media and on-line operators, or by regulatory action carried out by the communities themselves.

This is unavoidable, first of all, because of the so-called content relativity characteristic of the Internet and Web and, especially, the character of commercial mass media. In all commercial endeavors, information content reflects the interests, and is controlled by, the owners and producers of the content in question, whereas in political communication, including the most important feedback function, content ownership will be public and content relativity will have frequently to be eliminated in favor of determined contents concerning issues of prime interest for the concerned populations. Information in this sense will be as much horizontal in spatial extension as vertical in time or historical perspective (in contrast to the a-historicity of many actual information flows). The domination and centralized orientation of global information flows by particular interests – meaning the definition and interpretation of events, and setting the context in which public discussion is framed – will have to eliminated.

Cyberspace governance will not impinge upon the importance of local or regional cultural worlds; globalism and localism will be completing each other in the life of network communities. Information and communication channels will therefore have to be, simultaneously, global and particular in their nature, reflecting general and specific viewpoints in accordance with the contexts concerned, in the sense of globalizing local perceptions and intentions and, in turn, embedding global insights and perspectives into local realities. Their multilingual character will also express the multiple facets of information and communication flows. For this reason, intercommunity information and communication channels will make necessary the creation of globally homogenized interactive languages (e.g., Java) as well as the creation of new network technologies making the access to specified Web facilities easier.

It is evident from the foregoing that the information and communication infrastructure supporting a political-institutional network of communities will necessitate firm governance in accordance with local, contextual, and global requirements of ICT's configuration. This must especially be so because "technical standards set default boundary rules in the network that tend to empower selected participants ... [Designs such as JavaScript in Netscape] set as a default rule the empowerment of Web sites" (Reidenberg 1997, 89). Four elements will characterize such rule making by technical standards organizations for political-institutional purposes:

(1) The destabilization of territorial rights corresponding to a separation of cultures from territories, or "the release of cultural signs from fixed locations in space and time" (Lull 1995, 151).

(2) The uncertainty concerning the degree and scope of protection (electronic rights management may contradict fair information rules ordered by political authorities),

(3) The multiplicity of regimes governing a given activity, and

(4) The possible existence of simultaneous rightholders.[17]

Network borders created by information and communication activities will bring the recognition of some sort of network sovereignty in clearly defined areas. In the view of certain specialists the self-disciplining or self-policing of network service and on-line providers will possibly acquire sovereignty attributes.[18] Private contractual arrangements facilitating interactive communication, concerning gateways, for example, will be concluded by participants in order to ensure interoperability in cases where reciprocity provisions concluded by political entities ensure disparate treatment of operators.

[17] The four characteristic elements partially cover those indicated by Reidenberg 1997, 86.

[18] Reidenberg, a champion of network sovereignty, adds: "Networks themselves take on political characteristics as self-governing entities; networks determine the rules and conditions of membership. Private contracts mediate the rights and responsibilities of participants ... Networks also determine the rules of participant behavior ['the netetiquette']." Ibid., 90.

However, such network empowerment cannot be applied in the political-institutional domain where people, democratically participating in debates and decisions regarding their affairs, ought to dispose of the sovereignty over information and communication channels. Technological choices, system design, and technical standards imply in the political sphere political decisions, and they may require changes in designs and a rebuilding of infrastructure. Good examples of eventually required modifications may concern encryption algorithms, key escrow mechanisms, communication switches, and other aspects of communication control aspects, of which users of information and communication channels are not aware. In addition to specific legislation, incentives provided by political entities as well as allocation of liability determined by such legislation could be useful instruments to induce private firms to adapt their practices to public policies.

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Born in Hungary, country he left after the 1956 Revolution, Victor Segesvary worked during 25 years with the United Nations in the field of economic and social development. His experiences in Asia and Africa familiarized him with the existence of different human worlds and taught him the necessity of understanding and tolerance in human relations. He obtained a PhD in Political Science and International Relations from the Gradute School for International Studies, and a D.D. from the Faculty of Protestant Theology, both at the University of Geneva (Switzerland). His vast knowledge covers such diverse fields as political science, sociology, economics, history, and philosophy as well as the "new" science of comparative analysis of civilizations. He published many books and articles, among them *Inter-Civilizational Relations and the Destiny of the West : Dialogue or Confrontation?*, reflecting his lifelong experience in the interface of great civilizations; *From Illusion to Delusion : Globalization and the Contradictions of Late Modernity*, linking the phenomenon of globalization to the dialogue of civilizations; as well as *Existence and Transcendence: An Anti-Faustian Study in Philosophcal Anthropology*, exploring the relationship between biological and cultural developments. Victor Segesvary is chronicled in Marquis' WHO IS WHO IN AMERICA and WHO IS WHO IN THE WORLD.