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WHAT CAN BE EXPECTED?

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THE END OF EUROPE'S ILLUSIONS

It only makes sense to talk about a future, either when a final view of perfection has been promised to the subject of history or when the subject of history promises himself that same perfection. However, what is nowadays considered a promise within the Western society?

Our democratic ideal, based upon a free-ranged accepted contract and which allowed the dream of a society led by values, such as good, proper and true, did indeed start in the technical era, as it gave in to boredom, in a sanitary and selfish everyday political absenteeism and indifference. Currently agonizing, due to the institutions impotence and decadence, as well the crumbling of the social State and loss of belief in the political area, this is now corrupted by the speculative and agiota nature of the economical financial capitalism, to which it was undertaken.

Simultaneously, on the one hand, European institutions fade; on the other hand, our everyday experience is set down by the media constant hustle, a loud record, which denies that same risk-taking quotidian. So, we are carried away by smooth trips and unthreatening adventures into a kingdom of elusion with striking and unbelievable features that delight us with feelings and masquerade the human adventure into an euphoria cracked by the handle (Martins, 2002:182).

As the Berlin wall fell, Europe seemed to come close to an end: either the demographic depression corroded it, or the breakthrough of the Soviet Union marginalized it. Regarding strategic terms, Europe was out of the race. However, after ten years, the demographic decline was briefly overcome by the large working force coming from East Europe. Moreover, Russia was being rebalanced, which would be enough to even the world.

This particular point of view mirrored things to be quite perfect in Europe. The Euro was a success as a single currency. The consolidation of an open, co-operant and sympathetic Union comes from the decision to widen it to Central, Oriental and Mediterranean Europe.

Meanwhile, "Convention on the Future of Europe" (2001) was being launched in order to rethink its institutional development. So, it was the end of the symbolic and low profile "European Coal and Steel community" (1951) those fifty years ago had an important part on the unique political adventure, called "European construction".

As this last idea was being shaped, the whole Europe also followed a pragmatic and civilized order, which dreamt with success and fantasized of a closed condo to do with as well pleased - our democratic ideal succumbed to security imagery. Afterwards, Europe would be part of "Zero tolerance" and "Zero risk" campaigns against a real menace: drugs, alcohol, banditry (both urban and suburban), terrorism, toxic waste and pollution.

However, the political power, after the broadening to twenty-seven member states, has been uneasy for over a decade now (2007). In the meantime, with the perspective of a new widening, which included the countries in the Western Balkans, as well as the rest of the Central European countries and the East European countries, nobody felt safe anymore. The European Council meetings were now side by side with a growing popular and violent demonstration. Even the debate regarding "intergovernmental conferences" to restructure Europe had become pointless. A sort of trend was being created all over Europe against "Brussels bureaucrats". Nowadays, as regards the economical and financial European crisis underlined in all the South European countries, the Euro is more of a reaching

point than a starting point. Therefore, a unique currency seems to have failed concerning the building of the market, primarily destined by "Rome treaty" to be open and aimed at economical agents. Furthermore, it was barely shaped as the political union, an initial dream, meant for the Nation State and the citizens.

In order to confirm that Europe was indeed politically not viable, Blair, Aznar, Berlusconi, Rasmussen and Barroso were, in 2005, in charge of getting rid of all doubts, as security imagery has launched it, along with the United States, to a democracy in the "desert campaign". A United Kingdom, that never believed in the Euro, accompanied by a hesitant Denmark, and the wounded countries of South Europe, Italy, Spain and Portugal, all of which always dragged their feet or ignored what was said by Germany or France, finally joining the United States in an unmoral way.

For several months, Washington had predicted the future by rolling the dice, by observing birds fly and the chickens' guts (bowels). Based on what was said by its fortune tellers - politics, survey sellers or professional media - America learned that Osama Bin Laden was oppressor of Bagdad. What is more, the "Empire of Evil", filled with sulfur, crying and ranger of teeth had settled in the new surroundings of desert caves in the Mid- East. At that moment, a howling crossed Europe. Birds flying and chickens' bowels were now repeating what was had been predicted by a persuasive America: the 11th September monster had been produced inside the Saddam Hussein's wicked guts.

Europe has fallen into the hands of Realpolitik. Overwhelmed by internal competitions, submitted to political pressures, betrayed by the temptation of recognition and enjoying the delight of riding the winners' car, Europe was crushed by an armed army, going from our democratic ideal to simply lacing heavy boots and breading the air full of lead coming from "pax Americana". Subsequently, we were left behind by those we had elected to assure freedom, justice and peace, and then we just watched our institutions fall out of meaning. Their occupation was maintained only for purposes of reorganizing the Mid-East map, designed to assure the United States military domain and its own petrol interests. The goal of the so called "Atlantic solidarity"

became a pretty weird and twisted way of giving more importance to the Democratic spirit. We having followed the hectic and rough United States strategy, which soon turned into planetary activists, made our existence collapse – a spirit of concord or a united Europe and peace in the World.

This story is about “The empire of Good”, which rose in 2005, befuddling the air, ragging all around, from chicken paws and Europe’s pieces. Meanwhile, in 2008, a greedy and financial tsunami, usury and speculation, swiped Wall Street. From that moment on, in successive after-shocks, that same tsunami went under South European countries, Pirros’ retribution to both Germany and France, as with the economical, financial and social killing of the European countries, the “European Construction” idea goes under the surface.

THE ORIGIN OF MODERNITY

Modernity was created in a time, which had as main objectives, or starting engines, teleology (Hellenic) and eschatology (Judeo-Christian): it was always about walking towards the end, however, with a movement, perfectible and salvific.

With the project, an aim was put forward.

With the prospective, a look ahead was constructed.

With progress, a movement towards was established.

With t prediction, knowledge ahead was stated.

The purpose was declared, a target was produced.

With the program, what came ahead was set up.

At last, with the promise, that can be considered an illocutionary act guarantees about the future were possible, imagining it in a closing mode, because “there is something of immortal in a promise” (Jorge Luís Borges, em *The Unending Gift*, 1969).

Teleology and eschatology led us to an idea of time, put together by the logos, that, as well as being a word, it is also a reason [and a reasonment]: project, prospective, progress, prediction,

purpose, program; and which gives us an idea of time, organized by the symbolic, which reunites in the promise what was once loose and scattered.

The principle of hope expresses that same idea of time in its two main traditions, which created Europe, both in the secular tradition and in the religious tradition: we found this same exact principle clearly expressed in Ernst Block, in *Das Prinzip Hoffnung* (The Principle of Hope), a work that was created between 1937 and 1948, and in Jürgen Moltmann, in the *Theology of Hope*, published in 1967 and inspired in Block.

The principles of teleology and eschatology put together, determined the time which built modernity, turned us into the future, held back the present time (or kidnapped it and eclipsed it), assuming a mythical idea of a past, to which we would return in the end of times: a sort of come back to the Father's house, to the "sound of trumpets", as stated in *Apocalypse* according to Saint John, or to a society without classes, foreseen by Engels, in *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, or even to the idea before it decedes from matter, as said by Plato in the VII Book of the *Republic* or in "A Brave New World", which put together nature by itself, and made technology (specially biotechnology and information technology) its underpinning.

The coming together of the future and the past, to which we would return to in the end of times, history is wholesome and we represent just one, all of us, bent either by the progress, or by the promise.

As we are also able to promise (denying future possibilities) and, therefore, upholding eternity, that our regime is, indeed, an analogy - we are like Gods, world creators.

The present is a time of tensions, difficulties, conflicts, dualities, but also a time to make options, choices, to mislead and to hesitate. The mythical idea that the past, to where the future's utopia is guided, withholds the present, captures it and turns it into an eclipse.

The modern idea of time (teleological and eschatological) calmed us down, turning the present into a simple passage, a controlled journey, as we make the terms for the departure from a

specific point - a final one (a ground point that makes sense, an unknown territory and stable identity) into the safe shore. And between its outset and the Apocalypse (a narrative of salvation), the present assures us of an important passage to emancipation, freedom, civilization, God's kingdom, society without classes, a better world.

OUR ERA AND WHAT WE REPRESENT IN IT

The technological hastening of the era and mobility completely destroyed the categories of traditional metaphysics - despite it shaping the conditions of possibility, functioning and circulation of our thought and knowledge. The speeding up of the period and technological enlistment united the close and the distant, the future and the past, the real and the virtual, the thick and the light, the human and the non-human (bios and *teckné* joined together in post-human hybrid). By becoming the end in itself, and not just instrumental and anthropologic (Heidegger, 1954), the technique was now devoted to human and speeded us up inestimably, mobilizing us entirely into the global market.

Nevertheless, in a "means without end" regime (Agamben, 1995) and "suffering without purpose" (Lyotard, 1993: 93), the overview is of the permanent history crisis and of the permanent human crisis (Martins, 2011).

Ahead in the present, but without an assurance of a teleological and eschatological passage, "with no rock, cape or pier"] (Sophia de Mello Breyner Andresen, 1967), we are left with the men in the own ambiguity of its division: rough, slimy, hesitant ("Swollen Foot", like Oedipus, son of the earth, in the tragedy of Sophocles) and in a pathway, obliged to face its fears and to make uncertain choices about which way to follow.

In post-colonial literature there is a growing of generalized understanding that the existence of united cultures, as opposed to mixed cultures. The Occidental cultures would be unite and

omission cultures, while post-colonial cultures would be of blend and of sharing.

This thematic is accomplished, for example, by the Brazilian nation, taken into consideration, since Gilberto Freyre (1933), as a mixed culture, of miscegenation, Brazil, a country of hybrid culture, stated by Nestor Canclini (1995), a multicultural person, coming from a sharing and dialogical¹ background. The idea of a sharing and dialogical culture, originated from a multicultural country like Brazil, values different contributions - African, Amerinds, oriental and European - in the building of a national identity. All the same, the Western was built upon a united culture. It comes from the Greeks, by logos that is as much a word as it is purpose, and more importantly a supreme body of decision. As a matter of fact, the logos are unique and lone. Moreover, from another perspective, the Western also comes from the Jewish-Christian tradition, a word that has a symbolic purpose, a word that both unites and gathers. We all remember that in the Occidental symbolic, in the beginning there was the Verb and the Verb was turned towards God and the Verb was God, like it is uttered in the Prologue of St John's Gospel.

Besides, to sum up, the great myth that lies in the Western is the word, the same as in the classic tradition, Greco-Roman, or in the Jewish-Christian tradition. And the word has always joined what was out of place and scattered. It constantly worked towards a bond, giving no importance to the fact that the word was logos, or a symbol.

A thought about the unit opposed to the thought of multiplicity. The principle of identity, of Aristotle's logic, together with the Hegelian dialectics and its redemptive synthesis, and even the principle of the reunion that is the base of the symbolic figure, would rise against the diversity principle. Equally, a unity thought and logic of identity would be the foundation of the Western segregation culture.

The Western culture, a logo centric, ethno centric, imperialist and colonialist culture, which makes the difference, destroying it, has

1 For all Diana Pessoa de Barros (2012), *Preconceito e Intolerância*.

mixed with a multicultural culture, a multiple and participative culture, which has manifested in the appearance of a wide group of post-colonial countries created in a multitude of languages, in a blend of several ethnics and a boost of narratives.

The traditional metaphysics was established by the word, a space to promise. And the promise denied a future by giving us pledges about it. It seems this same unity metaphysics has ended in the Western: we no longer get ahead by launching a purpose (towards the future), based on a lost foundation. Currently, we look forward to the present. Words, based on the future, have been replaced in the West by numbers, such as economical, financial, political and social crisis: mainly, the lack of growth or negative growth of GDP (Gross Domestic Product); the chronic shortage of balance between Exports and Imports in Trade Balance; the internal/external deficit; the unemployment; the aging of the population; the spreading of the social inequalities; the drastic rupture of the demographic charts, the sinking numbers of both representation and legitimacy of democracy... This is about numbers, which are facing present and which signalize Occidental crisis. Occidental life is no longer sort out by the priest, the men of the law and the politician, because the crisis is self imposed in the present, and there is a big bluer as regards seeing the horizon; now we have the economists, the engineers and the managers to make promises. They are our own magicians - present time magicians.

Meanwhile, Information technologies, having its starting point in the Western, have created an economical and financial cosmopolitan globalization, led by the global market, to where it assembles us totally and infinitively. The globalization of the market gave us a final identity, (1) for walkers, people which accept from now on a travelling precarious lifestyle, lacking social rights; (2) a group of people always ready to go, to any type of job, adapting to the needs of the market; (3) a gathering of competitive individuals, with a sharp belief in the logic of production; (4) and at least, by performance individuals, a group that successfully accomplish things. Furthermore, there is another unity culture; English language is the key to this world-culture. Established by the information and economic technologies, globalization can't be disparate either by lonely individuals, or by

nation-states in crisis. As a result, a cosmopolitan globalization demands a multicultural globalization, which unites the people of geo-cultural enlarged areas promotes and respects the differences, glorifying national languages.

Multicultural globalization is accomplished by the mixture of, not only the ethnic miscegenation, but also by the miscegenation of memories and traditions. So, we are able to say that, instead of a poorly and one way homogenization, set up by the cosmopolitan globalization, there is the multicultural globalization, which has as an advantage being heterogeneous; the seduction of a net of strings with several colors and textures, a web of various people and countries, able to resist to a decrease into an artificial unit.

EUROPE IN THE CONTEXT OF TRANSNATIONAL IDENTITY

Despite the culture being looked at as an imaginary symbolic production, it is, nonetheless, important to persist in what the sociologist Pierre Bourdieu always believed to be crucial regarding the analysis of discursive questions. The symbolic systems are discursive phenomenon, a language issue, which has a social representation. Hence, a social logic is implicit to the social illustrations. Real definitions, or social divisions which are a big part in real division (Bordieu, 1980:65).

As a symbolic expression, European identity shape constitutes only one category of words. It embodies a vast group of words, through which a relationship between the oneself and the other, between us and others, is staged. It is used to express belongin and identities, and even to border territories².

The position where I stand from, the Bordieu's point of view, is defined by a figure of European identity as a practical cataloging,

2 Concerning collective representations, a léxicon used to invoice and express belongings and social identitites, as well as bording territories, I have written, in 1996, *Para uma Inversa Navegação*.

or a division of the social world. Due to the fact that it is a realistic classification, a figure of European identity, conditional on practical functions and oriented to the production of social effects. As a matter of fact, this is staged in a battle field, because it is, indeed, a battle, guided by a certain world symbolic order, or specific world guidance. This particular point of view is illustrated by an example. The world definitions that serve as an example are the European multilingual communities and identities, which are in direct dispute with the Lusophone community and lusophony, British community and Commonwealth, Francophone community and Francophony, Hispanic community and Hispanic rival definitions. In a post-colonial and globalised time, those same characters utter a fight for the symbolic world order. What is in play here is the division of the international community in cultural areas, shaping what Samuel Huntington (2001) calls the cultural war³.

In the meantime, transcontinental societies, which have its project spread before the globalization became autonomous as a dominant variable, were fractionated into an secondary reality: the European community converges the European countries,

3 It is rather alarming that closely following the symbolic fight, there is the polemology alert, which is taken over by the armed confrontation of several civilizations, branded by religious differences, in a specific circumstance in which all cultural areas have for the first time its own voice in the international scene and are forced to converge to globalization, that is originated by scientifically, technical and market revolution. In a recent text, Adriano Moreira (2004:4) reports the same "alarm methodology" as the one Samuel Huntington specialized in. Facing "the worrying emergency or leap ahead of other cultures or ethnicities", the Huntington awareness would have as a consequence "an organization of a security policy that is more Anglo-Saxon than Western".

Regarding politics and languages of lusophone identity, a Collective Inquiry Project was launched, in 2004, by Centro de Estudos de Comunicação e Sociedade da Universidade do Minho, called: "Lusocom: Estudo das Políticas da Comunicação e dos Discursos sobre a Identidade Lusófona", afterwards, the collective work *Comunicação e Lusofonia* (Martins, M., Sousa, H. & Cabecinhas, R. (2006) was launched. Moreover, the Federação Lusófona de Ciências da Comunicação released a Yearbook from which nine volumes were published <http://www.lusocom.org/pt/pag/livros/>. In the meantime, since 2010, in that same Centro de Estudos, the project "Identity narratives and social memory: the (re)making of lusophony in intercultural contexts" <http://www.lasics.uminho.pt/idnar/?lang=en> was carried on.

Brazil and the Hispanic States come together as Mercosul; and francophone, the British lusophone community and Pan-Arabism, develop different lines when of the African continent unit; for the time being, the Koran makes an appeal to the identity of a Muslim cord, that had its length from Gibraltar until Indonesia, and splits the world between North and South (Moreira, 2004:9). In these same circumstances, the task consists in harmonizing the multiple affiliations; on the one hand, based in the experience and history; on the other hand, encouraged by the readings of a great future; it is surely a mobilizing task for the governments, which have its power over a power crisis, but it is also a tempting investigation job (Ibidem).

What is played throughout this symbolic fight between “cosmopolitan globalization and multicultural globalization” (Martins, 2011 a) is the power to define reality, as well as the power to impose, internationally, this same definition, or division. In that same understanding, the form of European identity is very different from social reality of the distinct national communities, where this symbolic battle takes place. And due to the fact that social representations of reality are not weird to the countries social reality that shapes it, which, in my opinion, must reevaluate the procedures that tend to deny to the European’s identity, not just the symbolic efficiency, as also the political competence.

This same understanding stops us from accepting the idea that here is nothing more that can be designated as a European culture and community. And as the European community hasn’t got yet its own subject, since there is nothing that can be considered a common living mythology or an identity shared self-image. Or that there is nothing that can be interpreted as an effective value share, or ways to be in the world or how to be dealt with it.

We need only think about the existing experience being lived in the migration camp by the European community, as well as in the field of its distinctive literatures. Supplied by their own language politics, both in the migration field, as in the distinct literature field, it constitutes the faultless revelation that culture and progress are the sons of mixture. Although there is little experience, we can also state that what makes this community

stronger and makes it have a louder voice is the union of culturally solidarity countries, contributing this way to confirm its presence in the change of the international order.

The horizontal cohesion, which comes from the giving out of the equivalent multi linguistic community and the miscegenation of memories and traditions, one and the other identifying the European cultural area are what we think of as an ingredient that thickens the idea of "dependent globalization", giving thereby its contribution to "an articulation between a territorial line of political powers and a worldwide civil society line by means of a network (Moreira, 2004: 10).

In what concerns the representation of the European community the idea that progress and culture have its origin in the ethnic miscegenation, as well as the memory, traditions and landscapes miscegenation. Additionally, the imposition of an idea that it is possible that a cultural federation with plenty of space to embrace several states may blossom inside a transnational or supranational entity.

However, in a time that makes the difference by globalization, inter culture and multi culture, the European cultural space is nothing more than a plural and splintered space, with an equally plural and splintered memory. By this we defend that idea of belonging does not ignore the distinct multicultural national realities with diverse languages having a close relationship between them and, having often an internal close competition.

TWO FINAL NOTES

If we believe in the poet Paul Celan (1996:46), several accents fit our times: the acute in the present; the grave throughout history and the circumflex of eternity- the circumflex would signal expansion. Though, it is my opinion that nowadays all our punctuation marks have been lost. History, the grave accent of time, the accent of our own responsibility for the state of the world and for our state, it is now a sort of disease, as Nietzsche (1874) diagnosed, during its Second Intempestive Consideration. In the meantime, the present, the acute accent of time, has been constantly modified by the media in fait-divers, what is new is the "the new infecund surface" (Benjamin, 1982:173). And finally, everlasting, the circumflex accent, which expands time, is nothing but another fragment in a big flood that carries all the names in a constant plain presence (a ground): essence, substance, subject, conscience, existence, God, man, transcendental...(Derrida, 1967:410-411).

Together with the missing accents comes the breakdown of the Occidental experience. Anyway, the possibilities of the human adventure fell drastically, since we have lost our sense of community. In order to reinvent that horizon, a promise was carried out towards a path of perfection, of a shared community, that same notion of future awaits us.

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