

Europe at Weimar

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In the years that followed the break-up of the Berlin Wall and the crumbling of the Soviet Empire, the Maastricht Treaty became the general framework of the European policy, and the Union officially converted to the neoliberal agenda. At that point I felt my pro-Europe sentiment shaking, and I tried to silence my intimate doubts telling myself that the Union was the only protection against a comeback of nationalism.

I was wrong.

Having been turned into a financial machine whose purposes were privatisation of social services, precarisation of labor and reduction of wages, the Union fuelled nationalism, racism, and aggressiveness. And now, thirty years after, it is still doing the same.

Year after year I repeated to myself as a mantra the words written by Julien Benda in 1933: the European Union will not be the outcome of what Europe is and of what the Europeans are, because Europe is nothing but the product of the our free and rational will. In his *Discours à la nation européenne*, Benda meant that Europeans are so different that no cultural common ground of identity exists; therefore only their consciousness, only their democratic decision can be the foundation of political union.

The concept expressed by Julien Benda was appealing: Europe is the contrary of national identity, it is the free space in which democracy can give birth to a non identitarian subject. Nevertheless I am now compelled to surrender to the evidence: the concept expressed by Benda is beautiful but fake and idealistic: from a materialistic point of view it must be said that a common ground of identity does exist, and it is rooted in the modern history of colonialism, in the privilege that Europeans have gained thanks to violence and plunder of the resources of the world subjugated by them.

Why should we expect that the summing up of French and Italian, German, Spanish and British imperialisms may result into a democratic and peaceful European Union?

In fact the experience of the last thirty years has revealed that the European Union is only the marriage, conflictive as it may be, of financial authoritarianism and ethno-nationalism. The election of Ursula von der Leyen as President of European Commission is proof of this alliance: Orban and Macron are the two sides of the same coin

The concept of “ethno-nationalism”, in my view, is the best way to define the ongoing neo-reactionary movement that is sweeping the planet, from India to Poland, from Turkey to Russia, from Italy to the UK, from Brazil to The United States, to China. By the word ethno-nationalism I mean a kind of national identification that reflects the emergence of cultural supremacism, and more specifically of supremachisme. Male resentment melts with religious and ethnic aggressiveness. As the national state is more and more impotent to govern financial globalisation, national identification is essentially based on race, and on religion. This explains the ambiguous relation between the Russia of Putin and the Trump’s Us. Behind the geopolitical confrontation that persists, there is a

sense of cultural alliance: christian white males of the world unite against the emerging civilisations.

The European identity is based on the legacy of colonialist privilege, and therefore the prospect of long lasting prosperity has supported the political experiment of the Union, as long as prosperity was rising, until the end of the past Century. Eventually the European experiment lost coherence and popular consent after 2010, when the effects of the financial collapse jeopardised the economy of the continent. The reaction to the crisis was a strengthening of the financial grip on social reproduction: the economy of many countries was seriously damaged and social life impoverished by financial austerity.

Since 2015, since the Summer of the Greek humiliation, when the decision of the majority of Greek voters was crushed by the sheer force of the financial blackmail, the cement of the Union has been twofold: financial austerity imposed by the Fiscal compact and rejection of migrant people, as migrants have been finger pointed as responsible of the social impoverishment. Since Summer 2015 nationalism and racism have been on the rise in every country of the Union, and seem unstoppable, as the prevailing sentiment is fear of a foreign people invasion, and desire of vengeance against liberal democracy and the so called elite.

The year 2016 (the year of the Brexit and of the victory of Trump) was a turning point: ethno-nationalism became the dominant thread in the world and particularly in Europe.

Actually the victory of parties reclaiming national sovereignty is not destined to subvert the neoliberal trend: on the contrary, the vocal opposition of nationalists against neoliberalism and financial power has already shown to be a fake: precarity of labor and social impoverishment do not recede in the countries governed by the "souveranist" right-wing, rather the other way round. So a question comes to the mind: why people are voting for the so called populist parties if they pursue politics of privatisation and precarisation like the neoliberal ones? the answer can hardly be a political one, because the choice of voting for right wing parties is not the result of a rational judgement.

People are welcoming back nationalism for an essentially psychotic reason. Mental chaos is spreading all over in the space of the wired democracy.

People are not really expecting that nationalism will improve their life, nor that the nationalist future will be bright and glorious. Futurism is no more the cultural source of contemporary Fascism. There is no growth in the predictable future, no expansion. So there is no hope, no ideological fervour in the mounting tide of ethno-nationalism: the deep motivation of the nationalist backlash is not hope, but despair and desire of vengeance.

Feeling trapped, people resent the financial blackmail, and regard the centre-left governments of the past as responsible of their present subjection to the global power of finance. So the main target of those

people who have suffered the humiliation of political impotence is the centre-left political class that betrayed the workers interests, imposed the neoliberal rule and destroyed the welfare state in order save the bank system and to increment capital profit despite the stagnation that seems to be the trend of the economy.

Nationalism, fascism, xenophobia and sheer hatred are not (only) the effect of fake news and manipulations, but the predictable outcome of thirty years of financial depredation and of political betrayal of the left. Of course the shit-storm provoked by the techno media whirlwind is part of the story, but there is some ratio in this madness: it is the ratio of nihilist rage.

Contemporary nihilism is based on the cynical perception that devastation (environmental, social, military) is irreversible: people are tempted to think that it is too late, and that salvation for everybody is out of reach: only a small portion of the population can survive, so my family comes first, my village comes first, my nation comes first, my race comes first.

This is clearly a recipe for apocalypse, a self defeating behaviour based upon a nihilist drive.

After World War 2 and the defeat of Nazism, the liberal order was based on the assumption that racism and nationalism are bad things and cannot be exhibited in the political discourse: a sort of anti-racist political correctness acted as an antidote to the deep rooted sentiment of white supremacy. For seventy years a sort of collective Super-Ego has automatically censored the spontaneous expression of the suprematist unconscious, but the pressure of social impoverishment and the fear of the impending migration, have lately broken the filter of political correctness. The psychoanalytic suppression (*Verdrängung*) of identitarian aggressiveness has lost its grip because of the explosion of the Unconscious, and because of the acceleration of the psychosphere.

The place of the Father has been dismantled, and the Super-Ego has lost its grip on the unchaining of the collective Id: therefore the law has lost its force, and politeness has been expelled from the political game.

The liberal democratic culture is trying to reassert the name of the Father, the force of institutions and the rule of law, but this attempt cannot succeed: the father will not be revived, and liberal democracy will not be restored. The law has lost its primacy that was based on consensus and on social solidarity; brutal force is back on the scene of the world, only master of the game.

In a press Conference delivered in Osaka in June 2019, Vladimir Putin expressed the idea that Liberal democracy will never come back, as the triumph of ethno-nationalism in the world is not the temporary effect of a provisional change of electoral preferences, but the effect of something much deeper that has changed the perception of the majority of the population. According to Putin (who probably is the most expe-

rienced and cultivated among the ethno-nationalist leaders), the failure of liberal democracy is linked with the failure of the liberal approach to migration.

"The liberal idea has started eating itself," Putin said "Millions of people live their lives, and those who propagate liberal delusions are an elite segregated from the people." He also charged that the influx of migrants to Europe has infringed on people's rights. "People live in their own country, according to their own traditions, why should it happen to them?"

The emergence of a new order of the world based on the ethno-national identity has accomplished the Huntington prediction of a clash of civilisations, that Osama bin Laden and George Bush together have transformed into a political strategy finally driving the world into a state of permanent war.

What about the European Union, in the frame of this irreversible melting of the liberal order?

In 2011 a Norwegian young man whose name was Anders Breivik murdered 77 young socialist of various nationalities in sign of protest against multiculturalism, and in order to protect the identity of the white race and the Judaeo-Christian culture, as he explained in a voluminous boring collection of trivialities titled "Declaration of European Independence". In that Declaration the murderer asserts that a Muslim invasion is underway in Europe with the complicity of cultural Marxism and of Feminism.

A few days after that murder, a member of the Italian Lega, whose name is Mario Borghezio, told that the Breivik's act was, well... controversial, but his ideas were shared by hundred million European citizens. Scandal followed, of course, and Mario Borghezio was widely censored, but now, only a few years after his provocation everyone is forced to acknowledge that the scoundrel was not totally wrong: the ethno-nationalist rejection of migrants is today the common ground of the political European identity.

The majority of European citizens declare with their vote that the danger comes from the foreign people who want to find a job in the European continent, and that ethnical replacement is planned by Soros and some conspiratorial groups. This notion of a plot aiming to the ethnical substitution is bullshit, of course, but it conveys a truth that, like a phantom, is haunting the unconscious of Europe. The growing inequality, the ongoing climate change and the spread of military violence in so many places of the world are feeding a migration flow whose proportions cannot be fully predicted, but is likely to continue steadily in the years to come.

Let's not forget that in the year 2050 the African population will be strong of 1 billion and five hundred million people, and that it possible to predict a massive deterritorialisation of people following the global climate change (Bill McKibble has recently predicted in the article *Life in a*

shrinking planet that 600 million people may be forced to migrate in the next decades).

In this prospect the irrational fear of ethnic substitution takes a not so irrational sense, and the legacy of colonialism is put in question: the distribution of resources in the planet is an issue that cannot be further ignored and cannot be dealt without a process of global re-distribution of resources.

The European project is on the brink of disintegration because of the inability to face the moral and political responsibility that ensues European colonialism. This is why we are experiencing a comeback of the worst European nightmares: the rejection of migrants in fact is the condition of mass extermination and of a massive diffusion of slavery.

Countless people have been drowned and are daily exposed to the threat of drowning: rejection puts migrant people in a condition of permanent danger, of incarceration and torture in the concentration camps that are disseminated all around the Mediterranean coast.

And those who, coming from Africa and Asia manage to disembark in the Southern parts of Europe, are obliged to accept jobs that cannot be labelled otherwise than slavery. In the agrarian areas of Foggia in Italy, Almeria in Spain, and in many other sites, those who have escaped death by water are forced to work ten, twelve hours per day under the sun for a retribution of two, three euros per hour, because their undocumented condition is a permanent blackmail that makes impossible for them to reclaim their rights.

Amid rumours of economic recession, institutions seem to be stumbling on the brink of an abyss, unable as they are to govern upon humiliation, resentment, and growing aggressiveness.

Spain is taken in the turmoil of opposing nationalisms: Madrid reacts with a furious nationalist vengeance to the wave of Catalan "independentismo", and this is fuelling a nationalist reaction of the Catalans: The sentence against the political prisoners (how can be denied that Junqueras and the others are political prisoners?) is an act of violence, of humiliation that is pushing Catalonia to the brink of civil war.

In the United Kingdom Boris Johnson shuts down the Parliament, the Irish and the Scottish are preparing to break the unity of the kingdom, and the dispute with Europe is turning into open conflict while leavers and remainers look at each other as enemies.

In Italy Fascism has re-emerged from the mix of xenophobia, unemployment and cultural meltdown that follows the massive emigration of students and of intellectuals. Hardly the centre-left government will survive after passing the budget law, and the right-wing have not lost in terms of popular consensus.

In France Macron lost to Le Pen the electoral primacy in May 2019, and in Germany recession is fuelling the right-wing and feeding the desire of reasserting the dominant role of the country.

Weimar is the name of this chaos and of this stumbling.

What strategy can we imagine in such a situation? Can we invest our energy in a sort of united front for the re-establishment of democracy? No way.

If democracy is unable to separate itself from financial capitalism the social humiliation will further increment rage and desire of vengeance. We must be prepared to the unchaining of the destructive energies that financial capitalism has fed and is still unrelentingly feeding.

We must be prepared to divert these energies while the coming storm will be deploying, so to channel them toward a cultural and psychological transformation based on frugality, egalitarianism, and an overall reduction of the exploitation of labour and of the natural resources.

But the storm is here, we cannot avoid it. What we can do is preparing the ground for a psycho-political transformation when the trauma of the storm will reshape the planetary unconscious.

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