

Western Europe at the cross-roads of two processes of interdependence

• Intervention (to be, but not made) at the SID 20th World Conference
"One world or several: Towards a Strategy for growth, Sustainability and Solidarity in an Interdependent World"

Amsterdam, 6-9 May 1991

Fundação Cuidar o Futuro



WE is now facing its own truth about disarmament. The reluctance in accepting the peace movement is now shown at its root: As Dan Kaldor puts it, many people "at heart wanted communism to continue, so as to provide a perpetually unfavorable contrast to capitalism and a permanent reason for maintaining high levels of armaments."

"What happened in 89 has been presented in the W media as a victory for the West - a triumph for capitalism and W military strength."

"As W's gov's struggle to impose order on the post Cold War turmoil, citizens + leaders alike need to understand the W's responsibility for the failures of the past - and for the shape of the future."

"Both sides needed to change. So far, it is mainly EE that has changed. "It is my view that democracy can only be sustained in the East if the West changes too."

"Whether or not we avoid a new economic division of Europe depends to a large extent on W aid policies. What is needed is not just an increase in the amount of aid, but a reorientation away from exclusively neoliberal policies."



• WE is the part: fights among groups/nations
expansion towards internal

• Interdependence intra-muros

a) the political ^{+ economic} process (cf. Delors - Europe 92)
Main question: widening?

b) the cultural challenge $\leftarrow \begin{matrix} ecol. \\ S+T \end{matrix}$

c) the reinforcement of democracy
(the citizen / the associations / the groups)

• Interdependence extra-muros

a) new regional spaces on security / economy
(support from WE)

b) creation of new ideology and its consequences

c) exploit of outside spaces as threat to security

• Crucial issues of interdependence for WE

Fundação Cuidar o Futuro

- crucial tasks
- a) beyond the marxist + liberal discourse, though acknowledging their relevance
 - b) what was important in the marxist understanding of society?
 - c) what is ~~more~~ important in the liberal economy approach?

- labour is redistributed through the delocalisation of enterprises in ever wider circles to all peripheries where wages are lower and, at the same time, provoke unemployment in W Europe.

A global economy is the visible part of international civil society by which it is possible to ~~give~~ ~~mean~~ create meaning for interdependence.

With the axis of the global economy determined in the last decades first by USA + then by Japan, is W Europe most + foremost attempting to be an integral part of such an international civil society?

- "The new system of power is a product of the technologies developed to re-deploy US* hegemony in the crisis of the 70's + early 80's - especially computers, fiber optics, lasers + managerial techniques drawn from cybernetic + organization theory".

Fundação Cuidar o Futuro



• The global culture is becoming more + more the culture of modernity. This culture is the culture of the dominant W powers.

~~At every attempt to emphasize other cultures~~

The culture of modernity as it evolved in the WE has been expressed in several pillars: a pillar ^{centered on} ~~of~~ the concept of sovereignty, ^{together with} market economy + welfare state, all embodying in different ways a concept of State where human rights are a fundamental vector;

a pillar centered on the geo-political place centrality, being at the same safe-guarded in regional spaces + alliances and in internal covenants; Fundação Cuidar o Futuro

a pillar built on the citizenships, expressed in the free circulation of ideas and in the diversified forms of association.

- New interdependence implies contemporaneity to all events, ideas, institutions, re-arrangements of knowledge + society. It is a challenge.

The new interdependence was for some the relations between states expressed at various levels of international organization. New political conditions have emerged. During the Cold war period, the zones of influence kept the interdependence at a stable level. The military alliances seemed to provide a platform for democratic decision for those in WE. Suddenly, the collapse of the communist block and the Warsaw Pact, has ^{fundamentally} broken that previous equilibrium. In fact, WE discovered that the whole world became under the domination of a sole power.

The discussions + the diplomatic actions previous to the Gulf war have clearly shown that there was one center of decision, at the most a few WE countries were informed, and the rest of the world was marginalized. Can we still speak of interdependence in a modern sense?

• In W Europe the market econ. has been traditionally associated to what we call now "the social safety net" or, in other terms, the regulatory + distributive mechanisms. However, the changes inside WE have led to a questioning of the traditions established for several reasons:

- a) difficulty ~~to~~ to find the funds for the budget when the birth rate is still decreasing + life expectancy is growing;
- b) too much "comfort" brought about by protection from the State (too many people with sick-leave)
- c) too much bureaucracy + impersonality in most countries

Need ~~for~~ find ways + means for new processes of solidarity among groups of people; need to restructure the pattern of life according to its natural cycles + making conditions of labour compatible with such cycles; need to enunciate the minimal norms to codify the system; need to establish the organic networks of society for assuming responsibility for those who are/become marginalized by productive forces.



• WE is not "settled" into its own code of behaviour. In WE there is among many states a society ^{the conviction,} that the triangle Europe/Japan/USA, though a major element in the stability of the world economy, is still in a process of change. If left only to the market economy + if the "imperial" attitude remains unchanged, the marginalization of LA + Africa + to a less degree of Asia is unavoidable.

This is the greatest paradox of the WE: it has asked of other countries an internal democratic order expressed through political + economic conditions, but those very economic conditions, if fulfilled, contribute to the reinforcement of undemocratic + unjust democratic order.

It is ethically unsustainable to remain in this situation.

New as well as old democracies have to find paths of economic viability.

This is why we have to consider the moment we live in as a world process of transition.

This process will lead us from an interdependence which still hinges on fast forms of domination to new forms of partnerships + cooperation.

- During the Cold War and throughout the two oil shocks W. Europe lived under the feeling that it had become a new n.º 3. It used to be self-centered and all its vision of the world ~~is~~ ^{was} Euro-centered. Often this was linked with several centuries of colonial domination and of the inherent illusion that European models prevailed.

At the grass-root level, all NGOs were fighting to be attentive to each culture + not to import without any judgement the values Europe was exporting.

And now, suddenly we find ourselves facing the most persuasive ideology: it had success in Europe / USA / Japan / NIC's... and to prove it to the core is the aspiration of Eastern Europe!

Consumerism is one of the main attractions of the market economy. And yet the problems W.E. is facing with excessive consumption leads us to formulate the question:

How to devise a political economy
where we may change the patterns
of consumption without preventing
economic growth?

Like in other parts of the world
• Europe has not produced any
major original synthesis, over the last
few decades. ↳ in the political
conceptual
plane,

"In the short run, its future depends
more on its capacity to react to the
changes that have taken place in
last 20 y. than on its capacity to act
in the world."

Fundação Cuidar o Futuro

Running parallel with economic
transformations come political values
stand out as having shaped WE.

~~The French revolution brought it its~~
wake In fact what we see is the
institutionalization of legal, political,
social rights.

The civil rights were the first
to separate W society from the
feudal system that for centuries
prevailed in E. Basically the
equality of individuals before the law,
thus assuring the ~~new~~ foundation for their freedom.



Political rights were gradually established during the xix and the xx century. (association, freedom of expression, participation in elections).

Social rights during xx century giving to the individual some minimum right of econ. + social sec.

↳ the general: new rights, to culture, to a sound environment, to informal,

(Equality + security tend to play a larger role than in USA.)

↓ 100 y. of experience: some 50 y. of experiments

The new wealth created by the ind. revolut led to the demands for social securities + individual rights as well as participation in that wealth.

Social insurance, public educat, hospital organization, mental treat, unemployment relief, etc. Questions like: should all individuals be covered or only the very poor? How much should gov'ts be involved? As a permanent basis for all or temporary for those who were disadvantaged?

After the depression: a class, housing, educat + health policies

1930 - 1950 - welfare state consolidated

After WWII, with economic unprecedented growth - great expansion of w. state.

"^w w state has reached its limits in a too large + restricting state sector and too high levels of taxations."

S + T is the basic force behind a changed + new
future. WE lagging behind.

Fundação Cuidar o Futuro

- Podemos-nos relevar le défi et opérer les changements nécessaires à nos institutions afin d'obtenir une union démocratique, consacrée à la prospérité, la justice sociale, la protection de l'environnement et aux droits de l'homme?

Fundação Cuidar o Futuro

