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After I had given a very simplistic title to my lecture, I looked at my shelves and found what could have been the adequate title for the un-pretentious, un-systematic approach of what I have to say. It is the title of a book by the psychoanalyst Marie Moscovici, 'SOMETHING HAS HAPPENED'. Indeed, I converge with the author when she explains that expression: *'to discern something of a movement, of a gesture, of a displacement of emphasis and of meaning, which is at the basis of the life of the spirit. What is at stake is not only to qualify and to describe an event but to present the intellectual questioning provoked by such an event.'*

This acknowledgement that 'something has happened' is the under-current of my reflection this afternoon.

What is then this something which has happened?



I - A woman's perspective about this Congress

The first event is the public recognition and the possible contribution within the space of the European Union of the 'women's studies' or 'feminist studies'.

When the women's studies started in the USA, they acknowledged the invisibility of women in social life and its link with the absence of women in research at the academic life. The voice of women, when heard, did nothing else but to reinforce the dominant discourse. The women's studies pretended to follow new methodologies and to open new paths and formulate new proposals in different fields of knowledge.

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In the European space, the women's studies can be this 'something that has happened' if they follow consistently the initial vision, in the interdependence of reflection and action. Moreover, they appear as the most obvious case that confirms the intuition of Schrödinger, who, contrarily to some of the Physics scientists of his time (and even of today) questioned the pure objectivity by stating that *'in all observation of an object, the subject is also conveyed in that observation'*.

The theme that gathers us in this Congress cannot therefore ignore from one side, the concrete conditions of the object,

namely, the content and the compelling need for enlargement of the citizenship in Europe and, from the other side, the position of the subject, namely, the women in the multiple interfaces so well suggested in the very title of the Congress: bonds that change, boundaries that are displaced, leading to a mobility that manifests itself through diverse and unusual forms.

We are dealing then with two distinctive bodies of thoughts, two new realities. I contend that their interaction opens windows of opportunity for a change affecting both the European Union and the women. There is a synergy which leads me to the conviction that in the building of Europe as a political entity, women can contribute to accelerate the process in the dynamic way that recent events so clearly ask for.

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The central question becomes then to find out where are the entry points, the openings of the European construction and to invent the ways by which the conceptual new frames brought by women may insert themselves there.

I stress again that this is no a process of parallel findings. As Doris Lessing says in her Golden Notebook: *'it is possible to measure the world by describing the life of a woman'*, I believe then that the analysis of the lives of women can indeed become a source of new measures of the world and for the world.

I am pleading here for a new approach to study and research. All the theoretical position of Lou Andreas-Salomé puts it clearly in her 'OPEN LETTER TO FREUD':

'The theoretical questioning is the one that springs forth from the work, from the path of a human life and which, when it has weight in society, brings change and movement in the other human lives.'

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D.ra Eng.a Maria de Lourdes Pintasilgo - Coimbra - 8 July 1997



II - The citizenship of women in Europe - a new path

A fierce battle is taking place in Europe: the enlargement of the concept of citizenship as a condition for a truly democratic Union and an indispensable dimension of the European Union with a true status of a political entity.

The European Parliament and the European Commission have made serious efforts to include in the revision of the Maastricht Treaty the civic and social rights. The idea was to build the embryo of a Bill of Rights to be discussed and scrutinized by all Europeans. But the Amsterdam Summit made only a small step. It included the Charter for Social Rights of Workers and the Social Protocol in the Treaty

How far away this was from what I heard in many national Conferences of NGOs, trade-unions, academics, in 11 of the 15 Member-States! I found there a strong will to go beyond barriers and to build a European Union capable to help, through its political unity, to free the world from the unipolar trend that is increasing since the end of the Cold War. Only such a Union could, in the views of these thousands of Europeans and NGOs I heard, help to build a multipolar world, shaped by the diversity of cultures and civilizations.

Thus, the small steps taken in Amsterdam didn't change the profile of the European citizenship, shaped by:

- freedom of movement,
- vote for European Union,
- vote for local bodies when living for five years in the municipality,
- protection from the Embassy of any Member State when in the territory of a Third country.

Indeed, paraphrasing Haberman, we could say that 'the European passport is not yet associated to the rights which constitute democratic citizenship'.

This is why the civic and social rights that shape true democratic citizenship are the most pressing demand of the European peoples.

Three weeks ago the Foundation of Social Scientists of Europe gathered in Amsterdam stated vigorously:

'The Union whose citizenship does not encompass social rights cannot have our support.'

They produced concepts that overcome the fallacy of mere 'quantity' that characterized policies of past decades. They showed that, if it is true that a critical mass is necessary for those

who are deprived of the most essential rights and that, then, the quantity is needed in order to reach quality, they showed also that there is in human values a precedence of quality over quantity. They raised the social from a mere correction of or adjustment to the hazards of economics to where it should stand: a category of thought bound to life and to the right for everyone to lead a life worth living.

I am not referring only to the many who are utterly destituted, unemployed, homeless.

I am thinking also of the unmet needs of the overstressed manual workers and of their executives, of the young without horizon, of the old being easily disposed of, of the impossible dual task of the generation of women between 30 and 45, coming out of the care for their children just to face a life of care for their elder relatives.

Citizen's rights are needed for millions of Europeans to face their lives with dignity, hope and joy. But the old concept of rights was an abstract one, which presumed as its subject

- a man
- of course white
- in good health
- and able to defend himself in all situations.



In the last years, our societies in Europe are discovering that their composition is diversified and that every individual human being is at the same time a subject of rights and of vulnerabilities.

The more vulnerable we are the more our rights have to be safeguarded. It is the role of the State to ensure that protection, promotion and safeguard are there, whatever the agents may be in different societies with different cultural traditions.

In this regard, citizenship in the European Union cannot lag behind.

And the women?

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It seems, at first sight, that there is no distinction between men's and women's citizenship, understood in the very limited sense spelt out in the Treaties.

I don't need to elaborate much on this aspect, so well-known are the discriminations to which the women are subjected (exceptions: Nordic countries

- and will there be a revision of the French Constitution?)

The number of women in the European Parliament doesn't change much to the analysis given the weak powers of the European Parliament .

But the other rights? food, education, health, housing, social protection, good environment? There we find a paradoxical situation. The safeguard of these rights have been seen through the ages as duties to be fulfilled by women.

Is this outdated? By no means. If it is possible today to have a meeting of the European Council who is unable to mobilize itself towards the inclusion of social rights in the Treaties, (accepting the diktat of one Member-State), it is because the social contract is still built on the implicit sexual contract by which all the tasks needed for the exercise of those rights are accomplished by women.

Am I putting women in the place of victims? No, what I am trying to stress by this is the implicit recognition that women have an aptitude to exercise in the future a multiple citizenship and to be today the main activists for a citizenship that will encompass all human rights.

This aptitude is the fruit of their history as a social group. There we can find the driving forces for their economic, social

and cultural mobility and their meaning for the most needed quantum leap towards a true citizenship of all who live in the European territory.

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III. Economic and social mobility of women

First of all, the economic and social mobility of women is one of the main events of the XXth century. It produces a cultural earthquake in the social contract.

Though they started entering the labour force during the beginning of industrialization, it is in the second half of this century that their presence, step after step, is felt in the labour market. Today, in several Member States of the European Union, they represent almost half of the labour force - in my own country they are 48 percent.

The increase of paid work of women is a fact that, leading to the economic independence of women, induces radical changes in other spheres of society. It is the marriage or non-marriage, the age at which it takes place, the composition and the very concept of family, the number and spacing of children, the growing need for community equipments to replace many of the tasks done until then by the women at home. All this happens within a short time-span. It cannot be reduced to ethical questions neither to demographic factors active as it were per se.

One of the first questions to be dealt with is the redefinition of work.

A redefinition in the very contents of works - it is necessary to get away from the binary equations belonging to the beginning of industrialization, mainly the one who shaped even the Cold War: capital/labour.

Today production is encapsulated by the information technology, by the terciarization of the all processes, by the marketing and its overwhelming publicity. In such a context, it is absurd, scientifically wrong and ethically unacceptable that everytime there is an economic difficulty in an enterprise, only labour will be penalized.

The presence of women in the conomic life cannot translate itself only *Fundação Cuidar o Futuro* in adding more numbers to the street demonstrations. It is up to women, as a group, to force the attention on the new factors of the production schemes.

Moreover, work has to be seen in practice (because in research it is already so) as a continuum, a wide gamut of activities ranging from non-paid work to the traditional full-time employment. It covers all activities which bring benefits both to the individual and to society.

But to think work in such a way, we need to enter into the active society. Some basic ingredients are needed:

- the corridors by which different forms of work can be used by individuals without losing a basic income;
- the working out of those corridors as 'transitional labour markets'; (Max Plank Institute, Berlin)
- the inventory of the tasks fulfilled invisibly in society (care for old people);
- the replacement of the unemployment allowance by proactive allowances in fields where labour is short;
- the inflection of education and the overcoming of hyper-specialization by the learning of 'transferable skills and talents', and the adequate learning corresponding to different life-cycles; (one NGO in Birmingham);
- the abandonment of the old-fashioned sequence of learning - employment - retirement.

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Linked with work, we find not only the question of minimum income but a broader question raised by the social scientists of Europe and which they call 'social quality', encompassing all aspects of citizen's life.

We are then at the heart of social cohesion, understood within the society of each Member State and among the societies of all Member States, that is, at the level of the European Union itself.



Collective security at the social level is a task of research and of political action which we are far from accomplishing. And yet, one of the remarks to make to the praise given by President Clinton to the 'global economy' is the need to raise world social and economic security to, at least, an equal level with military and territorial security (making the Security Council able to deal with those profound threats to peace in so many regions of the world).

Social cohesion should stand out in the women's agenda. Not only has it been affirmed though with other words in the UN Conference of the first half of the 90s, but it is asked in our region by the astounding figures of poverty and utter destitution. In all big cities of Europe, I have heard reference to those who are not only jobless but even homeless and sleep in the streets. The figures must be repeated loud and clear, so that we may respond to the challenge. 17 per cent of poor in the European Union, to which no country escapes: 6 per cent in Denmark, 11 per cent in Germany, 17 per cent in France and, I say it with shame and rage, 25 per cent in my own country and also in the UK.

Such figures are unacceptable. They are not, however, exclusively the responsibility of the politicians. They are the result of the pruned global economy and of the indifference and

neglect of those who should actively claim their own capacity to be fully citizens and responsible social partners in all matters affecting the basic civic and social rights of people. It is time for Europeans to be mobilized against this flagrant violation of human rights.

By their economic mobility, women have reinforced in society the dialectical interplay between the long-term and the short-term.

It is impossible to cope with the problems of today without a vision of the long-term, demanded by the change of civilization with which we enter the IIIrd millenium.

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This is particularly true with the short-term decision-making concerning the European Union. Political decisions concern the management of the short term. In the European Union the short term is indeed very short. As only the European Council has uncontrolled decision-making power we are, in fact, dealing with periods of six-months leadership. (Thus the attempts to start with its preparation or to give an outward appearance of a long-standing exercise of power.)

But indeed, how can a country in the presidency of the European Council, looking at the long term and its consequences

(the enlargement of the European Union and the global economy), say what is obvious in such a perspective: we have to change, as 'more of the same won't do'?

But, the short-term is doomed to fail if it doesn't follow already now the logics demanded by the long-term.

The governance of contemporary society, and particularly of the European Union, asks for two types of actors. While the short-term asks for the immediate answer of the political decision-makers, the long-term asks for the research, the innovation worked out by those whose task is 'to think'.

Today, the balance between these two dimensions are at the heart of any political activity. Their interplay gives the measure of the vision of both groups.

It is in these different interfaces of different actors, working within different time frames that we can find the solutions for equity and fairness to all.

No doubt that the system has to be changed.

It is clear now for all those involved that environmental questions cannot be solved at the national level. And yet the



leaders of the European Union have accepted to participate in the IInd Earth Summit without being able, at least, to maintain the commitments they had taken with Agenda 21 in Rio and even earlier in what concerns CO₂ in the Hague Conference convened by Rocard in 1989. Here we have to recognize that 'something did not happen'.

The question of work for all is similar to the question of the environment. None of our countries alone can face the globalization of the economy. But regional, as an European Union we can. We have the human and the material resources. Different possible solutions have been proposed. They encompass basically sharing work, sharing time, sharing profit. If one country, however rich it may be, does it alone, it will be crushed by competitiveness. But if the European Union takes a bold step together in this direction it is likely that we may solve the problem, though remaining competitive.

To move into this direction, a capacity to change from well-known terms of reference to still fluid ones is a daring gesture. But isn't cultural mobility exactly that gesture?

I think, in terms of the problems we are dealing with here, of a Wangari Mathai from Kenya, of Vandana Shiva, from India, who certainly made things more in the understanding of the

environmental dimension of economics. More boldly even Marilyn Aitken, from New Zealand, challenged the way national accounts are made, leaving in total invisibility unpaid work done by women. And what to say of Hazel Henderson who having been a member of the Committee for Technology Assessment at the American Congress went on developing elements for 'economic paradigms in progress'? They - and women who thought, spoke, and wrote like them - were laughed about, listened to complacently. Today, more than 300 economists from all over Europe state the 'social factor' of economics, affirming that economics cannot be limited to its financial indicators but stressing that economics involve today 'growth, work, social protection, environment'.

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