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Italy

Against terrorism and the war which threatens us

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WE had said that after Genoa nothing would be as it was before. Now, after the terrible deeds in New York and Washington, we must again affirm, but in an opposite sense, that nothing will be as it was before.

It is a new, dramatic difficulty that strikes the protagonists of the movement. Genoa and New York send opposite signals to us, which mark a new cycle. From Genoa we received the message that another world was possible, since new protagonists exist and a new generation is on the ground. From New York we receive a reactionary message, a terrible warning that the night of barbarism could be falling. The scene is the same: capitalist globalisation, but the two events go in opposite directions. In addition, not only the directions but also the exits are opposites. Globalisation is a modernization against modernity. Genoa opposed modernization in the name of a modernity freed from the primacy of capitalist forces (...)

Tragic

On the other hand, the tragic events of New York are against modernization and modernity. Terrorism is the work of an extreme obscure minority, a minority that expresses itself uniquely through destruction. These two opposite events speak to us about two possible and different evolutions. This is precisely why we cannot let ourselves be enclosed in the distressing perspective of war. We absolutely cannot underestimate the tragic character of this event owing to the fact that it was aimed at the United States: this offence is directed against the whole of humanity. Indifference to life goes as far as neglecting one's own life: any technology, including the most sophisticated, can be put at the service of old cultures and be used as reaction against those who produced it.

Nothing could justify terrorism. No cause, however true in itself, could be advanced as a justification for it. Our aversion to terrorism must be irreducible. No fight for social justice, however vigorous, can be carried out by this means. In fact, we are witnessing an outcome of the process of globalisation that is to be feared: the confrontation of two fundamentalisms. The fundamentalism of the market and religious fundamentalism, according to which the Occident is the Demon.

It is difficult to break out of this pincer, but it is absolutely necessary to do so, if we want to take again the path that led from Seattle to Genoa. Terrorism operates in the sphere of autonomy from politics and finally denies politics itself. It thus operates on the ground of meta-politics, i.e. the conflict of civilizations.

Grasp

It is necessary to grasp its causes, by which I mean its social causes. However, that should not prevent us from understanding that terrorism is a political phenomenon. It is necessary to take account of these two aspects, if not our politics will be dumb (...)

Is this act of terrorism directed against a particular civilization? Many people raise the question, but it is precisely this question and its affirmative answer that nourish a spirit of war: because, behind this question, there is the idea of a hierarchy of civilizations.

This cultural skid has its roots in the hegemony of the capitalist point of view, according to which what exists in the United States represents the highest condition for the development of the capitalist revolution: alone, it constitutes the salvation of humanity. A variant of this way of thinking is religious. We have to reject the idea according to which Islam as such represents a reactionary conception as a whole, on the political and social levels. At the same time we must openly fight the idea according to which it is necessary to safeguard a Christian capitalist Occident. In opposition to any hierarchical appreciation in connection with civilizations we must fight for tolerance, multiculturalism and the reciprocal contamination of cultures and traditions. That is our cultural battle.

Relations

We must establish relations with the non-fundamentalist forces, with those who fight for peace, everywhere. We must go beyond the criticism of the US not to deny it, but to combat at the same time the idea that it is possible to carry out a conflict and a war of civilization. We should unite - not only in Italy - with those who consider war and violence as enemies. I think even to forces, which, while conservative, reflect critically on the recourse to war as much for the risks it carries as for its inefficacy.

(...) In this difficult battle the fundamental recourse should be the movement of movements. Them and us, we could together be crushed. It is precisely this movement which constitutes the main, though not the only, lever against the war of which it could be the first victim. It is obviously necessary to enlarge the movement, which is today more difficult than before, but not impossible. To the reactionary aggression we must reply with a battle we cannot wage alone. The old alternative between socialism and barbarism becomes again acute and relevant.