Strangers as Enemies. Further Reflections on the Aporias of Transnational Citizenship

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Preface

The Institute on Globalization and the Human Condition was highly privileged to have Étienne Balibar as its Distinguished Visiting Lecturer for 2006. This research article is the text of his remarks delivered at McMaster University on 16 March 2006. The essay ranges widely, tracing the hybridity of globalization in counterposing the new forms of exclusion, imperialism, and racialization that accompany the "flows" of information and capital in the current globalized economy. As global capitalism penetrates more geographical areas and commodifies more forms of human activity than ever before, its emergent supraterritoriality is accompanied by new "borders," fences, restrictions, laws, police actions, and militarization to control human movement and to secure capitalist power. Building on the key concepts of the "stranger" and the "enemy," Balibar traces these processes and situates them in the present world context. He also expands on the discussion of forms of violence that appear to dominate at the end of the most violent century in human history. Reflecting on notions like "global civil war," he worries about detaching these conflicts from their local specificities and seeing them as a unified phenomenon.

In the latter part of his address, Professor Balibar explores options for hope and for political action. Beginning with a notion of transnational citizenship, he examines the possibilities for inter-cultural translation. He uses this examination to reflect upon "cosmopolitics" as opposed to "cosmopolitanism" and the "co-citizen" rather than the "citizen of the world." He suggests considering citizenship as a differentiated and partial notion that might be shaped in various ways to provide cultural, political, and social rights, constituting a "right to reside with rights." He then discusses the potential of a double possibility: freedom of circulation and the right of residency or settlement. These notions are helpful because they provide the basis for concrete political actions in the day-to-day of our lives.

William D. Coleman, McMaster University

Introduction

These new reflections on the issue of "transnational citizenship" and its aporias, which I have the possibility to submit for discussion owing to the generous invitation of the Institute on Globalization and the Human Condition at McMaster University,[1] will be presented from a European point of view, as I have done in previous essays on the same subject. But I will try to do so also in the perspective of a comparison, or better said, a confrontation, with North America, of which you are part, and where I have been working now regularly for years, albeit across the border. I do not believe in the possibility of speaking about "the global" from a point of view itself "global" — that is, from nowhere or everywhere. But I believe in the (relative) possibility of dis-locating one's point of view, one's place of enunciation, and above all of exposing oneself to the dis-location that comes from others.

What I am offering here has no pretension to present a full doctrine of "transnational citizenship," no more than it was the case before, but I will try to clarify certain issues and to take into account some discussions that have developed over the last few years (in particular after the publication of important essays by our Italian colleagues Alessandro Dal Lago and Sandro Mezzadra),[2] which themselves were prompted by rapid transformations of the status of borders, the policies of "territorial defence" against illegal migrants, and the rise of "populist" ideologies and parties throughout Europe. All this, indeed, comes in the wake of the growing polarization of world politics after 9/11, and therefore is not unrelated to similar tendencies observable internationally.

My contention is that we are observing a growing confusion of the historical and political categories of the "stranger" and the "enemy," which in a sense only brings to the fore a tendency inherent in the structure of the nation-state, and periodically activated by situations of cold or hot war, but also "normally" limited in its expression by laws and customs, which now seems to become irresistible — as was the case in some tragic moments of the past century. But the scale is not the same, and the resulting political alternatives cannot be the same either. If the name "auto-immunity crisis," which has been proposed by the philosopher Jacques Derrida in some of his last essays (2005), is a good guiding thread, it would not be only a political question of choosing between fascism and democracy (and repelling one in the name and the perspective of the restoration of the other in its full comprehension), but more radically a meta-political or "constitutional" question of accepting a regression of the universalistic notion of citizenship, or inventing, against the current, a new historical advance of that notion. I feel indeed that we are only in the preliminary inquiries for achieving such a progress.

Walls Under Construction

In this paper, I focus on descriptive and interpretive issues concerning the "production" of the stranger, the alternative notions of a "global civil war," and a "translation process between cultures," the difficulties of cosmopolitanism and cosmopolitics. But I would like to take my departure from the consideration of an event with considerable symbolic impact and also dramatic consequences in "our" part of the world (I mean Europe): the construction of what I call the South-Mediterranean Fence. To a large extent, this "fence" is still virtual, or rather it is a complex of differentiated institutions and installations, legislations, repressive and preventive policies, and international agreements, which together aim at making the liberty of circulation not impossible but extremely difficult or selective and unilateral for certain categories of individuals and certain groups on the basis of their ethnic (i.e., ultimately racial) characteristics and their nationality. But there are two more concrete realizations of this "fence" which in the last period have become conspicuous and seem to crystallize many of the features and problems concerning space, mobility, and status, which characterize our political geography. They are located at the extremities of the "euro-mediterranean" domain, and they indeed have quite different immediate origins and rationales, but their physical similarity is striking for anybody who has visited them or seen pictures and videos, and this can suggest deeper analogies. These are the Israeli fence, currently built within the Palestinian occupied territories (which itself was preceded by a similar fence along the Gaza strip), and the fence that is currently raised and completed by other kinds of fortifications, including ditches, roads, towers of observation, the cutting of trees, and levelling of hills, on both sides of the border separating the Spanish enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla on the Moroccan side of the Strait of Gibraltar.

The Israeli fence is supposed to block incursions of suicide bombers and other terrorists into Israel, but it also has clearly other functions: to stop Palestinian workers who used to find jobs in Israel, to divide the Palestinian society, cut farmers from their land, and prepare the unilateral definition of a

state-border incorporating illegal colonies of the West Bank within the national territory. The Spanish fence, whose development was prompted by the tragic riots from last year, when African immigrants who had gathered in the neighbouring mountains tried to cross the border *en masse* in order to find themselves on "European" soil, is intended to repel would-be migrants coming not so much from Morocco than from African countries further South, who travelled across the desert in order to try this point of entry into the European Union (EU) where they are awaited as cheap labour. The fences share a property of being located on the South Bank of the Mediterranean and dividing from its environment a European (or more generally Northern) enclave, whose existence results from complex colonial processes and vicissitudes, and they are acquiring now a broader function. My hyperbolic suggestion is that they can be viewed as *sections* of a "great Wall of Europe" under construction, except, and this is very important, that the Great Wall of China was built over the centuries *inside the Empire*. The great Wall of Europe is built *on the other side* (but in fact what this shows is also that we find ourselves in a geo-historical situation in which the location of the border, and therefore also its concept, is a complex and equivocal notion). I know that there is something monstrous in this idea, but for a few paragraphs I want to associate some references and images around it.

First, let us note that fortified borders or hyper-borders — between geopolitical spaces and not only states or nations — either in the material form of walls or fences or in equivalent more mobile and more sophisticated forms, have existed throughout history, and have been associated with conflicts represented as clashes of civilizations, resistance against a "barbarian" threat, and confrontation between political systems. Not only the Wall of China comes to mind, but also the Roman *limes*, or more recently the electric fence that the French built along the borders of Algeria during its war of independence, or the "Iron curtain" and the "Berlin Wall" (which, it should be noted, was basically built by the Communist regimes against the mobility of their *own citizens*, their using a "right to escape," *diritto di fuga*, to put it in the words of Sandro Mezzadra). So, in a sense, history repeats itself, as always, albeit with new complexes of economic, political, and ideological causes.

Second, let us note that this is not a purely European phenomenon today: the closest analogy, in fact, is with the fence that the United States is erecting at its Southern border with Mexico, which also has a function to partially block the road of immigration for citizens of all Latin American countries, and particularly Central America, who travel across Mexico to enter the US territory (partially, but not entirely, since a complete blockage would deprive the US economy of a necessary source of cheap and unprotected labour). The fence already exists physically along the Californian border, where it has considerably affected the environment, and its prolongation along the borders of Arizona and New Mexico, which would cost millions, is under acute discussion right now. It is also very interesting to recall that part of the ideological rationale for this project, within established political science, is provided by the same Prof. Huntington who theorized the "Clash of Civilizations," and who in his recent book, *Who Are We?* (2004) explicitly compares the "Hispanic challenge" to "American" (i.e., US) identity with the "Muslim challenge" to European identity.

Finally, I want to note that the two "fences" to which I was alluding, the Israeli and the Spanish fence, become much more significant if you locate them on a map which also includes other "instruments" to control migrations in a repressive unilateral manner, particularly the "camps" of refugees and asylum seekers located at the external and internal borders of Europe. The attention of lawyers and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) has been drawn for some time now to the fact that these camps — a double-edged institution because they create a lot of trouble in their immediate environment — are now increasingly to be located not on the European territory itself, but on the territory of its Southern neighbours. There are projects to build more through administrative

agreements with such countries as Morocco, Libya, and Turkey.[3] The result of this dis-location has been called by some Moroccan and Algerian sociologists like Driss Ajbali (*Libération*, 18 October 2005) a "transfer of culpability," because it tends to "export" the violence of the police operations that the Northern States and economies have to perform in order to select and survey their immigrant labour force into the Southern space. The non-European states are thus compelled to take charge of the violence, and are therefore also compelled to be blamed by world opinion when the immigrants are conspicuously exposed to the risk of violent death, starvation, or deportation.

Production of the Stranger

All these phenomena, which indeed would deserve a much more careful description and distinctive analysis, nevertheless shed a new light on the importance of considering such questions as: who surveys a border, and for whom? Who crosses a border, or not, depending on the direction of the trip (or, if you prefer, for whom is a border a "symmetric" entity, and for whom a "dissymmetric" one)? What or whom does a border bring together, and what or whom does it divide? How can paradoxical border effects such as enclosing outside and liberating inside walls be explained? All these questions are related to the political complexity of contemporary borders, which is indeed as typical as global communications for the analysis of the contemporary world, or rather form its indissociable reverse side, and which testify to the new ambiguity of the distinction between stranger and enemy. Let us note in passing that in English or German there are two words: *foreigner* and *stranger*, *Ausländer* and *Fremde*, where the French has only one: *l'étranger*. Which means that the French at the same time conceals and accentuates what is here at stake: a shift of the status of the Foreigner from Stranger to Enemy, but also a perversion of the category of the Stranger. These are at the same time very concrete questions, belonging to everyday life, and very speculative questions, which direct our attention towards the *impolitical side of the political* — that is, its destructive but also constitutive contradictions.

I want to locate these questions within a philosophical horizon that questions the relationship between the construction of the stranger (or the reproduction of *strangeness*) and the status of the "citizen." I see citizenship not as a fixed notion, with a permanent essence that would become simply adapted to successive political cadres, but as a permanently open problem, which has already been subjected historically to mutations, collapses, and redefinition. In recent discussions concerning the new functions of borders and their relationship to Europe's becoming, not exactly a "sovereign" entity, but rather what we might call a "space of exception," it has been a question not only of the fact that "borders" tend to become really dis-located, if not ubiquitous, but also of another characteristic which has to do with the *inversion* of the relationship between the "border" and the "stranger/foreigner." Apparently, and legally, *foreigners* are those "other humans" or precisely *strangers* who already belong to other spaces, who are citizens from different states, either by descent or by adoption, and the borderlines (with the associated institutions: passports, ID controls, differential treatments in the public space, different social rights) merely register this preliminary fact. But increasingly it is the working of the border, and especially the difference between geopolitical economic and security borders and mere administrative separations, which constitutes, or "produces" the stranger/foreigner as a social type.

One of the great analysts of globalization as a cultural phenomenon, Zygmunt Bauman, has written that "all societies produce strangers; but each kind of society produces its own kind of strangers, and produces them in its own inimitable way" (1997, 17). But what we are concerned with here is a more institutional process. Since the establishment of a notion of "European citizenship," individuals from the member states are no longer "fully strange" to one another in the sense in which individuals from

"third" states ("extra-communitarian residents") are *strange* to them. But of course, the category of the "thirds" is also split, because all the places of the world are not equivalent from a European (or an American …) point of view, in terms of security, economic partnership, or cultural difference. We could push to the extreme this idea that the status of borders determines the condition of the foreigner and the very meaning of "being foreign," rather than the reverse. Virtually, this category is *dissolved*, there are no longer any "foreigners" in a simple legal sense, because some are "assimilated" — they are *less than foreign*, no longer really "strange." Instead they become "neighbours," while others are "dissimilated" — they are *more than foreign*. They become "absolutely strange" or "aliens." As a consequence, inevitably, the category of the "national" (or the *self*, of what it requires to be the *same*) also becomes split and subject to the dissolving action of "internal borders" which mirror the global inequalities. Again, there are new, unprecedented aspects in this situation, but also disturbing resurgences of traditional patterns of exclusion which contradict the formal equality associated with the constitutions of the democratic nation-states. For example, the categories of "citizens" and "subjects" in colonial nations manifests this contradiction, where the border was also a concentric *double border* (between the metropolis and the subjected territories, between the Empire and the rest of the world). That this pattern seems now to have been reversed, to strike back upon the "old" nations, is an important aspect indeed of what has been called the "post-colonial."

"Strangeness" and the various conditions referred to by the category of the Stranger are nothing natural, but they are produced and therefore also reproduced. They are not stable, but unstable and mobile. (We may remember here that, in the past history of Europe, such categories as the Jews and the colonized so-called "native" or "indigenous" people successively ceased to be strangers, or at least foreigners, but also returned to that status, which in the long run is not univocal but equivocal.) The idea that each kind of society produces its own kind of strangers is in fact not only a phenomenological or sociological one, it is also at certain moments a political one, which means that it opens the doors to antagonistic choices. This has become increasingly clear with the troubles of the European construction, which is now blocked, probably for a long time, not only because of divergences between national policies and ideologies, not only because the institutional definition of the entity called Europe proves obscure and nevertheless a source of conflict, not only because the extension of the territory that it should encompass "in the end" seems to be impossible to define, but also because this political entity already treats many strangers as enemies, while leaving these categories in the dark. The contradictions are more and more acute between a democratic and universalistic claim and self-image, and a neo-imperialist ethnocentric practice, which seems to have combined legacies from different types of "empires" that existed in Europe's past.

To make this more complicated, and again it seems to me that this is a general characteristic of contemporary processes, this imperial after-effect is *not* associated with an increase in sovereignty or the emergence of a new sovereignty — a new "sovereign moment" in the history of Europe. It is rather associated with a *fictitious power-policy*, and in the case of the control of borders, with a double-bind situation which in other places I have described as a "powerlessness of the all-powerful" — that is, *a State, which at the same time enforces a legislation and undermines it*, not without devastating effects on its credibility and its legitimacy.[4] I tend to believe that many of the forms of "petty racism" (which can become murderous indeed) in European society today are linked to this fictitious power-policy. Racism, which is never a purely "psychosociological" phenomenon, but always has a decisive *institutional* dimension (or, more precisely, involves an imaginary relationship to the institution as such, as I argued in *Race, Nation, Class* (see Balibar and Wallerstein 1991)) is encouraged by the fact that the State targets and stigmatizes immigrants, but also by the fact that, apparently, it does not want to *really* close the borders. In Foucauldian terms, it rather displays itself as a bio-political management of illegality.

I would like to suggest that the equivocal character of the stranger as virtual enemy, but also conversely the tendency to identify the enemy with the stranger in general, or the *cultural stranger*, in an indiscriminate manner, which increasingly affects the institution of the political in our societies (and in any case in Europe), forms one of the crucial points of "heresy" (or choice, alternative, bifurcation) within contemporary societies. At the same time these associate and separate antagonistic orientations, for which I discuss the allegoric names of "translation among cultures" and "global civil war," which both arise from contemporary debates. The production of the stranger as stranger is indeed a process which takes place in everyday life through a myriad of social practices and legal rules. At a deeper level, it is the site of a competition, or if you like a differential process, where extreme violence crosses a singular productivity and cultural creativity which could acquire an essential democratic function. It is this political (or perhaps meta-political) difference that I want to evoke now.

In my 2004 Humboldt Lecture (Balibar 2004), from which I will borrow some elements, I have associated the idea of a "cultural translation" or "translation between cultures" (see Glasson-Deschaumes and Ivekovic 2002; 2003), which comes from a certain post-colonial discourse, with the idea of a "philological model" of transnational citizenship. I quote again Zygmunt Baumann (1999):

> *Translating* is not an idle occupation for a limited circle of specialists, it is the texture of everyday life, the work that we perform each day and each hour of the day […] The possibility of universalism lies precisely in this common capacity to reach an effective communication without possessing in advance common meanings and interpretations. Universality is not antagonistic with differences; it does not require a "cultural homogeneity", or a "cultural purity", much less the kind of practices that are evoked by this ideological notion […] Universality is only the capacity of communication and mutual understanding, which is common to all groups, in the sense of "knowing how to proceed" reciprocally, but also knowing how to proceed when confronted with others who have the right to proceed in a different manner.[5]

This is a crucial view, but which, I believe, has to be completed with the following consideration: in our political constitutions, in particular through their association with systems of mass education, the activity of translation has acquired both a political legitimacy and a restricted definition. Our teaching programs continuously involve the use of multiple languages, the results or the actual process of translations, but they restrict these confrontations to *certain* idioms and *certain* uses and styles within these languages, presented in a strictly hierarchical manner, and subjected to the laws of what Bourdieu (1991) called the reproduction of "symbolic capital." Not only should we therefore consider it a vital objective to preserve and improve our educational capacities to teach the skills necessary for translating between multiple languages as a "daily" practice, but also we should conceive it as a basic instrument to create the transnational public space in a democratic sense, where ideas and projects can be debated by the citizens themselves across the linguistic and administrative borders. It has been often remarked that there can hardly be a question of an "active" citizenship, therefore a democratic polity, without a real circulation of ideas in a "public sphere" (Öffentlichkeit) But the material condition for such a circulation is not primarily the Internet, neither is it simply the common use of an idiom — namely "international English" — both universalized and simplified, however useful they can be in allowing transborder communications, but it is a multilateral and multicultural *regime of translations*, whose bases exist in the society itself, but must be considerably developed.

I would like to further qualify this idea of the political importance of the practice of translation by referring to other aspects of the same experience. They show that it is indeed a site of deep tensions

and paradoxes. In a recent collection of her essays our colleague Rosi Braidotti from Utrecht University reflecting on the "existential situation of a multicultural individual" writes: "The nomad is perforce a polyglot and the polyglot is a nomad of language, constantly living *between* different idioms. He/she is a specialist of the treachery nature of every language […] Nomadism is not only a theoretical option, it proves to be also an existential condition which expresses itself in a determinate style of thought" (2002, 22). I agree with this formulation, at least as an ideal case, but it is important to see that this form of nomadism directly depends on the capacity of educational institutions to adapt and develop their potentialities in the "post-national" era. We might say that translation in all its forms, as a "spontaneous," "pragmatic," as well as an "elaborated" institutional practice, is a form of *virtual deterritorialization*, which makes it possible to anticipate and control political processes where the borders are displaced, and the meaning of borders is transformed. Therefore it makes it possible also to "appropriate" or "inhabit" a transnational political space and transform it into a new public sphere. A great deal in the future of post-national "communities of citizens" like Europe depends on whether and to what extent the mass of citizens will have access to this practice which represents their real "common" idiom.

Reciprocity and *conflict* are therefore the categories that must be associated with the idea of translation, but also in a different sense, which I want to associate with a complementary reflection on the limits of translation and the *untranslatable* (*intraduisible*). There are irreducible remainders or obstacles which prevent us from finding a perfect equivalent for a given idea when passing from one language to another, because they would belong to different "communities of meaning." But, as Benjamin (1968) and others have explained, it is precisely what makes difficult the passage from one language to another, that also makes the combined use of different languages creative and even revolutionary. I have become more and more convinced that this dynamic model of the process of translation, which has political conditions and effects, but basically represents a form of practical universalism and anthropological choice, *provides an instrument* (not sufficient, to be sure), and features a *regulating ideal* for the political handling of the conflictual issues of "multi-culturalism." We need namely to overcome twin prejudices: what we might call the hypothesis of the "state of nature among cultures" (the idea that cultures are *unchanging* and *closed* totalities, which must be "at war" with one another, metaphorically or even literally), and the hypothesis of *pre-established harmony* (the idea that all cultures — be they ethnic or religious or social — *have the same universal "human" content*, albeit expressed in different ways). To imagine that cultures could become compatible without individuals circulating between them (as "nomads" or "strangers") is meaningless, but it is equally absurd to imagine this mediation to take place without a dialogic practice, and the intervention of the language(s) in which narratives are translated and compared, to the point of their irreducible differences, or where they become "untranslatable." However, this point is not "fixed," it is dependent itself on the available modalities of translation or codes.

This argument might appear as an utterly "elitist" way of posing the problem of transnational citizenship. The great difficulty is undoubtedly to elucidate what common ground there is between two experiences of circulation and association of cultures: the experience of immigrants crossing the North-South borders, deemed to be "incult" (most of the time because the average "Northern" citizen has no idea of their culture, or confuses his/her economic advantages with a cultural superiority), and the experience of the educated polyglots. Perhaps, in fact, there is no common ground *yet*, where they could merge in order to dialectically work on the issue of the untranslatable and displace it. One of the reasons for that (one of the causes of our pessimism) lies in the contradictions and the crisis of the mass educational system invented by the industrialized nation-states in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, whose relatively democratic functions clash with the logic of mass culture, communication, and entertainment dominated by one single practice of language, or a

"one-dimensional" mass culture.

I shall now turn to the other side of the point of heresy; what we are tempted to call *anti-universalistic effects* of globalization, the contemporary figure of what Marx in his *Misère de la philosophie* (1846, written in French) called "le mauvais côté," *the bad side of history* without which, nevertheless, there would be no "progress." They are not fully exterior domains, to be sure, particularly because there is little doubt that a global *war culture* is associated with the spread and imposition of one-dimensional mass communication: just look at the products of the contemporary movie industry. The idea of a global civil war — which has been increasingly used by philosophers like Hans-Magnus Enzensberger, Antonio Negri and Giorgio Agamben — is a counterpart of the declining legitimacy of the nation-state (which is not to say its suppression: it is even possible to speak of a declining legitimacy of the nation-states if some of them actually increase their interventions within civil societies, because they are no longer the sole institutions to claim collective loyalty, nor the owners of a "monopoly of organized violence"). This notion poses a problem that is not only sociological or political, but also ethical. Depending on our concept of liberty, we indeed do not see in the same manner the consequences of the policing of circulation. But above all it is related to the fact that the historical hegemony of the nation-state was constructed around an ideal differentiation between *security and war*: the police dealt with strangers, and the war concerned enemies. The notion of "civil war" was identified since the origins of the political institution with the anomaly, which should be suppressed at all costs. This identification made possible, precisely, the simplification of the political, the definition of the "public," and the fixation of borders. But this simplification was never completely achieved, at least over the long term, even in dominant or hegemonic parts of the world such as Europe. *Internal enemies* would proliferate, featuring a sort of malefic double of the external regular enemy, indicating a point where the distinction of the stranger and the enemy becomes irrelevant. Or, the stranger becomes the arch-enemy, the enemy whose simple *existence* imperils the capacity to fight enemies, as is clear in Carl Schmitt's *The Concept of the Political* (1976).

It becomes then possible, perhaps necessary, to reverse the point of view from which the wars and social conflicts are seen in the history of contemporary Europe, not to mention other parts of the world. Some historians, speaking from completely opposite ideological viewpoints, have endorsed the idea of a long "European civil war" in the twentieth century. This characterization might also apply to certain colonial wars and wars of colonial liberation, and their aftermath, such as the French-Algerian conflict where, seen from today's vantage point, the two parts cannot be said to be completely exterior to one another as I suggested in my essay "Algeria, France: One Nation or Two?" (Balibar 1999). From such examples we might be tempted to jump to the idea of a *global* "civil war," or a juxtaposition of global civil wars, which would underpin the various disorders and instabilities — the "war of all against all" — which have replaced the apparently simple distribution of conflicts of the immediate post-colonial and the Cold War era. This is, in particular, an idea which seems to be haunting the debates on the "new wars" and the "clash of civilizations." I am not sure, though, that it entirely corresponds to the reality because the tendency to merge a complex web of religious, social, ethnic, political, colonial, and post-colonial bloody conflicts into *one single* "hobbesian" state of "war of all against all," a sort of post-historical state of nature, as it were, or an "Empire of Disorder" or *Empire du chaos* (2002) as Alain Joxe aptly calls it, is *itself* a representation and perhaps a strategy used by a would-be sovereign power which seeks global leadership beyond its actual military and economic capacities. I would like to offer two sets of additional remarks on this point.

First is the idea that global civil war is not separable from a discussion on the general level of violence, and its tendency to increase or decrease in the last decade. We read very contradictory reflections on this point, because there will never be an agreement about the criteria that should be

applied. A recent and widely publicized document, called the *Human Security Report 2005. War and Peace in the 21st Century*, by the Human Security Centre at the Liu Institute for Global Issues at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada concluded that there has in fact been a decrease in political violence since the end of the Cold War, because "the number of armed conflicts has decreased by more than 40%, and the number of major conflicts has declined by 80%." It finds that "interstate wars now comprise only 5% of the armed conflicts, far less than in previous eras," that "the number of people killed in individual wars have declined dramatically in the past five decades," and that "the number of international crises fell by more than 70% between 1981 and 2001" (quoted from Rogers' commentary 17 October 2005). This kind of counting seems to rely still on a traditional definition of violence in terms of *inter-national or inter-state wars*, which paradoxically excludes the most conspicuous of the "new wars" or "new conflicts" — some of which are in fact continuations of very old conflicts, such as in the case of Israel and Palestine, and more generally the Middle East. It completely ignores the murderous effects of the superposition of "natural catastrophes," extreme poverty, ethnic wars, and social violence that tends to plague the wide dustbins of globalization.

This point is indeed what Paul Rogers of *openDemocracy* suggested in his commentary posted on 17 October 2005: "two issues in particular deserve closer attention: The first is the marked tendency […] for people to flee from major areas of conflict, seeking security either in neighbouring countries or even further afield. This means that large numbers of people are being exposed to sustained and often extreme dislocation and hardship […] The second issue is that in any case, the crude counting of casualties can be hugely misleading, especially when conflicts are happening in weak and impoverished societies […] In such circumstances, the effects of war can take years or even decades to overcome." And after he has directed our attention towards the different perception that citizens of the Global North and the Global South may have of the nature and degree of global violence, he proposes what he calls "two strong notes of caution" for the imminent future: "First, the very vigour of the American response to 9/11 may be creating the conditions for increased instability and conflict […] Second, the assessment of whether or not the world has become more peaceful needs to accommodate the greatest human test of all — the response to climate change and all the many new insecurities that will come in its wake if it is not brought under control […] The huge pressure to migrate they are likely to bring is only one of their likely effects." I cannot but compare these formulations with those of Secretary General Kofi Annan in his failed attempt at reforming the doctrine of "security" and "insecurity" at the United Nations last year, on the occasion of the Millennium project evaluation, when he urged member states to take into account a heterogeneous ensemble of "security threats," which include "terrorism" but should not be limited to it, if only because "terrorism" does not have the same definition and is not rated with the same capacity of destruction in all parts of the world.

The second remark is that the main form under which a global civil war is developing might be, precisely, what scholars like Alessandro Dal Lago and Sandro Mezzadra have described as the new European and American "war of the borders": not only can we say that we witness in "Northern" countries processes of institutional segregation which resemble apartheid, but we have to admit that political and economic entities like the New Europe are waging at their borders and also inside their territories a permanent "frontier war" where the hunting down of men is taking place along racial criteria, which is a savage way of regulating the fluxes of populations between complementary regions of the world. To adopt the model of war for an analysis of the violent control of migrations perhaps pushes reality to its extremes, but it accounts for the increasing confusion between *police operations* and *war*, and it bridges the gap with the category of "new postmodern wars" which includes other forms of repression and elimination of dangerous, unwanted, superfluous, and exploited populations. Dal Lago and Mezzadra (2002) suggest that all this violence is an answer to

the intrinsic mobility of the mass of peoples the world over, a mobility that corresponds to the final stage of capitalist modernization. They see the status of frontiers essentially as the instrument by which imperial capitalism controls and defends itself against the threat of the Transnational Proletariat that it has produced and exploits. Whether this mobility and repression actually produce a new "nomadic political subject," as the concentration of industrial workers had produced one in the era of the first development of capital according to Marx, is another question on which we can have divergences without denying the veracity of the initial picture. This also would lead us to progressively reverse the traditional way of looking at the relationship between borders and wars. It is not the existence of borders which produces or gives way to wars, but increasingly the endemic social war which "territorializes" and "spatializes" itself though the institution and the localization of borders, as much as I said a moment ago that it was the social regime that produced the stranger, rather than adapting to a pre-existing cultural reality. We have here at the same time a complementarity and a sharp antagonism with the processes of cultural translation, the creation of nomadic and diasporic identities that are characteristic for the new global regime of communications. In fact we have here a *dilemma* (whose terms, though, are not fully external to one another), opposing a constructive and a destructive side of postmodern or post-national "real" universality. It could be said that civil war is the allegoric name for the extreme form of untranslatability, or that translation is the paradoxical equivalence that takes into account the irreducibility of conflict without transforming it into a matter or a pretext of war. These are not yet fully political questions, although they inhabit current debates about the "cosmopolitical" line of evolution of contemporary societies (according to Seyla Benhabib) — an evolution that some authors see as irresistible in the long run, and others as increasingly distant and lined with obstacles. In any case, they call for a more institutional and pragmatic reflection on the political.

What is "Cosmopolitics"?

With this notion of "cosmopolitics," I want to join, in my own way, a lively international debate concerning the forms under which it can be said that the globalizing processes have — at least potentially — produced a new transnational citizen, or opened a window for the emergence of a "post-national" institution of the political. It is the immense merit of Jürgen Habermas (1998 and 2001) to have raised this issue very early, but it seems to me that, while trying to install the question on a legal terrain of norms and institutions, he has also paradoxically reinforced the utopian element clearly involved in the "cosmopolitical idea" borrowed from Immanuel Kant. Or perhaps he made it more apparent inasmuch as the issue of cosmopolitics today is no longer one of an ideal alternative with respect to the real nation-state and its *Machtpolitik*, but becomes increasingly one of organization of already existing transnational processes, and the subjection of their current violence to an expanded and renewed notion of the rule of law. Undoubtedly, this would also involve that the figure of the stranger changes juridical, social, and also psychological or imaginary status, if it does not completely disappear. As it has been a question some years ago of a "declining significance of race" (Wilson 1980), it should be a question of the "declining significance" of the borders, in an utopian manner. The crisis of the nation state is interpreted by Habermas as a first step in the direction of its more or less inevitable (even if in a very long run) decline of the nation-state, an anticipation of its "withering away," opening the possibility of a world without borders, or only as relics of an old stage of the history of mankind.

Before I qualify this critique, which is certainly too quick, and explain what my own approach would be (at least in general terms), I need to rapidly allude to the classical dilemmas which surround any discussion about the themes of cosmopolitanism and cosmopolitics. I will do it in purely formal manner for obvious reasons of time (which is not to say that I underestimate the necessity of a more

elaborate argument). The issue of terminology is in part a conventional one, but I also believe that it covers over really significant issues.

In short, I prefer to associate the idea of cosmopolitics with a *transnational* rather than a *post-national* perspective: the first does not imply that national identities are bound to disappear, even as political identities, but that they are increasingly relativized — much in the sense in which Schmitt (1976) described what he called "pluralism" (but to reject it indeed) — that is, they must compete and take into account other kinds of identities, interests, and norms which, seen from a national point of view, escape sovereignty and cross boundaries. I prefer the notion of *cosmopolitics*, referring to a practice or an agency, as it was used by Pheng Cheah and Bruce Robbins (1998), and more recently in France in a remarkable essay by Etienne Tassin (2003) rather than the notion of *cosmopolitanism*, referring to an ideal or an ideology. But then arises the issue of what distinguishes a "cosmopolitics" which aims at organizing different institutions and practices within the perspective of a redefinition of "citizenship," or a revolutionary transformation of the historical figure of the citizen, from a more traditional notion of *geo-politics* (even if reformulated as democratic geo-politics, whose protagonists are not only states, but also emancipatory or anti-systemic movements, as in Wallerstein (see Arrighi, Hopkins, and Wallerstein 1989, Wallerstein 2004), or from a notion of *global governance* (as advocated by Daniele Archibugi and David Held (1995)) from what I understand, with a special insistence on the necessary accountability and transparency of international organizations, and their being controlled by actors of the civil society), or a notion of *multi-polarity* as advocated by Chantal Mouffe (2005) who seeks to counteract the imperial tendencies of the *global market* by shifting the traditional notion of democratic community building to a higher level of cultural and geographic integration. What, on the other hand, distinguishes it from a radical and also virtual notion of the *multitude*, or the "nomadic" alternative to state power and global capital, as it is advocated by Hardt and Negri (2004), which also largely inspires the reflection of Mezzadra (2004)? It seems to me that these fine demarcations can come only from the fact that a philosophical reflection on "cosmopolitics," while taking into account as many practical issues as possible (e.g., concerning the status of borders) explicitly addresses the paradoxes involved in an unlimited or "global" use of the category of the *citizen*, which since its ancient origins until the Kantian idea of the *Weltbürger* or "citizen of the world," was always immediately associated with a notion of *community* (*politeia* indeed first means the community of the citizens) — either a very concrete, limited, exclusive community, or an unlimited (albeit perhaps not totally inclusive), and ideal community.

The "community" associated with the idea of a "citizen of the world" in today's world can no longer remain ideal, it must become materialized in institutions, and nevertheless it can not become identified with an actually unified or unitary community. There is and will be no such thing as a "global *demos*" — even less a global "sovereign *demos*" — as has been often argued. But perhaps this is simply because, in our representation of the political, the idea of the *demos*, the constituent power, has been so profoundly shaped by the mimetic rivalry with the State, the constituted power. There can and must be democratic tendencies within national and international politics, which push in the direction of equality, participation, and accountability of governing bodies, therefore in the direction of what is at the same time necessary and literally inaccessible: a *polity* for the transnational *politis*. Hence my use (after some others) of such oxymoronic formulas as "citizenship without community" or, if I may add, "democracy without *demos*." They point at the fact that such a polity is bound to remain conflictual and fragile, contingent (in the terms of Jacques Rancière's (1998) critique of the idea of the *consensual community* as a requisite of citizenship).

Habermas' suggestions — to which I return for a moment — may sound unreal, but they present themselves precisely in the modality of a "regulatory idea." They have undisputable value because

they pose the problem of the nature and objects of politics in the era of globalization in terms of alternatives, of transformations of the relationships between state, law, and citizenship. In this way they have directly contributed to the intensification of the discussion concerning "cosmopolitism," where other more or less convergent contributions have rejoined them from a different philosophical angle. However, because Habermas tries to interpret the post-national constellation and the emergence of a *Weltinnenpolitik* or "human security as a world not a national responsibility" controlled by its own citizens as expressing the necessary direction of progress, he also has a tendency to interpret such phenomena as the development of populist ideologies, neo-nationalist and neo-racist policies, legislations against strangers which "normalize the state of exception" (to borrow from Agamben (2005) who himself borrowed the Schmittian and Benjaminian expression in order to qualify the current stage of societies), as "irrational" and "regressive." (One should note, however, that in his most recent declarations and analyses, after 9/11, Habermas (2004) has started to question his vision of the inevitable character of this progress.) This questioning leads him — in a strange formal analogy with the once famous soviet ideology of "socialism in one country," which was supposed to produce the withering away of the state in the long run through its actual reinforcement — to describing the construction of a supranational entity like Europe (with its own constitutional identity, security instruments, and policies) as a formation, or phase of transition towards a "communication" across borders, cultures, and geo-strategic spaces, whose first phase would paradoxically consist in the emergence of new superborders. We know from experience that such "transitional" forms — if they resist their adversaries and surmount their intrinsic resistance — have a tendency to become ends for themselves. Other legal theorists [6] propose alternative institutional models (particularly what concerns the lesser or greater role of international courts and judiciary institutions), but they basically share the same linear representation. The problem, it seems to me, lies with the fact that the current conditions under which a concept of the "real cosmopolitanism" could merge impose it to consider not only ideal temporal processes, but also very material spatial, geopolitical differences and interactions.

This was my starting point when (in "Europe as Borderland") I tried to compare different cosmopolitical models within which to locate the actors, the institutions, but also the conflicts and the bifurcations of the time-space in which the idea of a "citizen of the world" ceases to be a pure moral or juridical one, to become an actual political stake. I distinguished in principle four types of representations of the cosmopolitical battlefield:

1. *"Clash of Civilizations"* model (to acknowledge the importance of the scheme popularized by Huntington, not only as a self-fulfilling prophecy, but also as a challenge increasingly real), where the Schmittian criterion of the political as distinction of friend and enemy becomes dominant again, and the stranger is essentially identified with the enemy.
2. *"Global network" model*, where the borders are practically annihilated, or bypassed, ignored by the circulation of money, goods, information, and, ideally, humans, therefore the distinctions of "domestic" and "foreign" are formally abolished and the enemy becomes an ubiquitous, ghostly figure.
3. *"Center-Periphery" model*, with successive concentric regions around the "historical core" or centre of Hegemony, which is particularly influential in Europe, but also perhaps relevant for other regions such as the Far Eastern "zone of co-prosperity" or the Latin American emerging system of regional cooperation and autonomy — in short the various poles of a would be "multipolar world," where the degrees of strangeness are hierarchized and geopolitically determined.
4. *"Cross over" model*, in which — like in the Euro-mediterranean space, but also the Euratlantic, or the Eurasiatic zones — culturally hybrid social formations (perhaps very conflictual, but precisely for that reason acquiring a vital significance for the capacity of the world to reduce

conflicts, most of which are also post-colonial social formations) are progressively taking shape, where the figures of the "stranger" and the "enemy" are conceptually and politically dissociated (but certainly not simply abolished).

The enigmatic issue of the border and its evolution linked with the successive figures of the stranger, become then seen and analyzed through the prisms of different relationships of State and political space, or "territory." As a "theoretical object," the border appears to be at the same time uniform and diversified, stable in its location and evolving in its social functions, transhistorical and in fact perishable (which could point toward processes of emancipation, but also toward catastrophic conflicts, or better said *more catastrophic* conflicts, since many are already under way). This is both a practical question, a question of facts, and a question of differences, "lines of escape," with respect to the extremely violent effects of globalization, therefore a question of openings towards new modes of "civility." Their invention will be the challenge of political theory in the twenty-first century.

Conclusion

In guise of a conclusion, what I offer is indeed only a new set of questions. I will organize them around the idea of a possible reversal of the formula "strangers as enemies," or rather several possible reversals. The question of a "cosmopolitical" institution of the citizens, or transnational citizenship, reveals itself indeed to be much more complicated as it seemed to be one or two centuries earlier, at the times of Kant, Saint-Simon, Bolivar, or Marx, as it becomes also more urgent and more practical. It finds itself clearly at the crossroads, because it could be purely and simply eliminated, but there is also a risk that such an elimination or dissolution of the utopian/ideal dimension of citizenship would also threaten citizenship as such.[7]

We can interpret this by forming the hypothesis that indeed those who are in need of a "cosmopolitical extension" of citizenship are not only those officially labelled "strangers," or the "others" in the middle of the "we," the people who see themselves and are designated as the sovereign in a given state, but also the "non-strangers." Citizenship for the strangers, or a transition from *strangers as enemies* towards *strangers as citizens* might be in fact a necessity for all. But such a reversal is haunted by other figures even more unlikely, such as the figure of the *enemies as citizens* (not so absurd, when we think of the necessity to restore certain basic protections of the "just war" theory — *jus in bello* — such as the Geneva conventions, abolished in Guantanamo); or the figure of the *Citizen as Enemy* (not really an exciting perspective, but which we cannot completely eliminate, if it were the case that the stranger cannot be physically or legally separated from the citizen, in many cases).

The political problem seems to be a circular one, and therefore an insoluble one: how to create or impose elements of a post-national citizenship or a new transnational figure of the citizen, if the conditions of world politics today are making every "democratic innovation" more and more difficult and unlikely? But also, conversely, how to "resist" the brutalization of world politics,[8] how to set up a *civic resistance* when the institutions and practices of political democracy find themselves everywhere in the midst of a deep crisis and distrust? Since such a circle cannot become dissolved through a revelation, a sudden collective decision, or a revolution (at least very few among us imagine such a possibility), the only thing to do is to explore projects and efforts, which would be attempts at *untying the knot*, in the guise of a *struggle against time* — without illusions, if not without hope.

The first suggestion that I want to make is that the issue of "citizenship" (in the sense of the system of

rights and duties which give the "citizen" its social status) should not be addressed in a total and unitary manner, but rather in a differentiated, and therefore partial manner. Perhaps this is one of the meanings that we can attach to the notion of "constellation" used by Habermas. This formulation particularly means that there are other aspects of citizenship, perhaps equally and more important today than the *national franchise*, or the pure "political citizenship." [9] I am not saying that "permanent residents" in every country should not be given the right of taking part in the elections, as many of us, progressively developing a *diasporic model* of citizenship, argued already many years ago: but the ballot is not the key to every form of civic participation and recognition. What I have called the "national-social" state has created undoubtedly a very strong correlation of the political and the social rights, which in the democratic welfare state seemed to be consequences from one another, but since many of the social rights are (or were, until recently) attached to the condition of a wage labourer (in matters of education, health, pensions, access to employment), many immigrants in Europe partake in the rights of the "national." Conversely they are severely limited in the field of cultural rights, even in societies which claim or claimed until recently to be "tolerant," or adopted the motto of multiculturalism.[10] Contemporary politics in the "North" (the only place where the problem until now seems to have political relevance) pushes this dilemma to the appearance of incompatibility, dramatically increasing the pressure for assimilation in a context of decreasing inclusion of the "other."

In fact, I keep reflecting on an idea that I had first envisaged twenty years ago, when I wrote an article with the title "Subjects or Citizens," about the condition of post-colonial minorities in a country like France (Balibar 1984). What is important is not that strangers become French citizens, or Canadian citizens, or US citizens, but that they acquire an increasing amount of equal civic right within a given constituency. In that sense they would become rather "co-citizens" (formed after the expression: "compatriots"), which in a sense simply returns to the origins of the notion, since in Latin *civis* is a relational notion, it does not mean the unity of the citizens, but before that the *relationship between the co-citizens*, those who are "equals," or "equally enjoy" the rights or freedoms of the city. So what I suggest is to think of citizenship within new territories not in terms of *sovereignty*, or not only (including popular sovereignty, membership in the "sovereign" or the "body politic"), but rather in terms of a *droit de cité*, a *right of residing with rights* (also a possible interpretation of Arendt's (1973) notion of *the right to have rights*).

This leads me to my second suggestion. In fact the notion of a "right to reside with rights" contains a strong tension which can be also productive, if only juridically, between two "polar opposite" aspects, which the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights already expressed when they spoke (albeit in different places) of the *right to acquire a nationality* (or not to remain "apatrid") and the *right to change one's nationality*. This idea goes beyond *hospitality*; it is at the same time strictly individualistic (although its applications always concern groups), and attached to the exclusive cadre of the nation. But it can be generalized in the form of a double *freedom of circulation* and *right of residency* (*or settlement*) — which indeed is a "principle," like the freedom of opinion or expression, or the freedom of enterprise are "principles" — that is, call for institutionalization, therefore limitations, conditions, and regulations, provided these regulations do not, in fact, reduce them to nothing. This indeed raises other difficult, but important questions (especially important for the development of post-national law), particularly the question of the collective authorities which could regulate the application of such principles. This question is certainly not without relationship to the perspective of global civil war that I have been evoking at the beginning, in a dialectical manner. What the (dreadful) perspective of a "global civil war" evokes is, *a contraries*, in a negative manner, a "virtual community," or a "community without a community" (i.e., without a common tradition or historical "substance"), a "civis" and "civil" community whose

institutions and practices are precisely guarantees and obstacles before the spread of the civil war. In classical nation-states it was the institutional existence of the community which created the citizen and therefore made it possible to have a civic and civil space, but there are chances that the advances of post-national relations have reversed this relationship, without actually purely and simply destroying it. It was also this institution that created the virtuality of a perverse transformation of the stranger into an enemy that has been actualized by the Global Market. But this one in turn uses war or quasi-war as its savage instrument of regulation (or deregulation under the name of regulation), or control of the movements of populations and clashes of civilizations (which in turn makes them more chaotic and violent). Times would seem more than ripe for thinking about *dialectical* transformations of this contradiction. Walls indeed are not the solution.

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Notes

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2. I discuss their essay in (Balibar 2003). (English translation of chapter in *Diacritics*, Volume 33, Issue 3-4, Fall-Winter 2003.) Mezzadra makes a reply in (Mezzadra and Rigo 2003)

3. See the map at www.migreurop.org.

4. In recent essays, Seyla Benhabib has rightly insisted on this aspect of current political evolutions. See her forthcoming *"Twilight of Sovereignty or the Emergence of Cosmopolitan Norms? Rethinking Citizenship in Volatile Times."* On what I have called "l'impuissance du tout puissant" (*impotent omnipotence*) see (Balibar 2002).

5. I re-translate from the Italian edition, *La solitudine del cittadino globale* (2000, 201-3) Milan: Feltrinelli Editore, at the risk — inherent in translations — of moving further away from the original formulations. See also my essay: *Sub specie universitatis*, forthcoming in Topoï, 2006, special 50th issue on "Philosophy: What is To Be Done?"

6. For example, Luigi Ferrajoli, whose own concept of "world police" or *Weltinnenpolitik* I have commented on in (Balibar 2003).

7. In her essay mentioned above, Seyla Benhabib quotes from Günther Teubner (1996) the following judgment: "Today's globalization is not a gradual emergence of a world society under the leadership

of interstate politics, but a highly contradictory and highly fragmentary process in which politics has lost its leading role." She comments asking the question: "Does the 'twilight of state sovereignty' mean the end of citizenship and of democratic politics, the displacement of the political, or maybe even its eventual disappearance in the evolution of world societies?" But conversely, it can be said more than ever (with Max Weber) that politics is "world politics" or is nothing. The alternative is not between a national state politics and a cosmopolitics, but between cosmopolitics and no politics. Or the existence of politics is not necessary or "natural." It is historically contingent and depending on its agents acting on the historical stage.

8. In the sense in which George Mosse (1990) used this category for the European "long civil war" of the twentieth century.

9. That is, the *second moment* in the evolution of citizenship, according to the scheme of T.H. Marshall (1987).

10. To see how difficult it is to evaluate the real importance of "political" citizenship, it is only necessary to recall that in the "greatest democracy" in the World, namely the United States, presidents and congresses can be elected by a tiny majority of the official electorate, because 50 percent of the citizenry (at least) do not take part in the elections. But it should be recalled also that, for example, in the last (2005) local elections in Holland, the left won as a consequence of the heavy turnout of foreigners with local citizenship.