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Appendix 2. Diversity or Sameness? Reflections on Differences between Europe and the United States.

To understand why America, like Goethe, has two guiding spirits (*zwei Seele in einer Brust*) and to understand why Europe and America have very distinct approaches to the world, requires a detour into history and psychology. We shall begin with notions of law to explore how a psychology of the "good guy, initially associated with the American West, shaped American definitions of difference, values and law into something very different than European world-views. Understanding these differences and their consequences will help us to understand the deeper roots of what US citizens sometimes perceived as simple anti-American sentiments. They will also cast light on the immensity of the problems that have been set in motion by a small group of individuals acting in the name of a great nation.

Psychology of the Good Guy

The East Coast of the United States saw itself as building on the great traditions of Greco-Roman and Judaeo-Christian law, with a strong influence from the Anglo-Saxon tradion. It was not always so in the all too often Wild West. This inspired a whole genre of cowboy movies. It also focused attention on a particular kind of hero, epitomized in figures such as the *Lone Ranger* or *Zorro*: where individuals, claiming to work for the right, took the law into their own hands, and sometimes killed and destroyed, without regard for local authorities and jurisdictions. If one was the good guy, the end justified the means. In the often chaotic climate of those times, order was above the law. In time, such cowboys moved to the cities where a new kind of urban cowboy emerged with names such as *Superman*, *Batman, Spiderman, Spiderwoman and Catwoman.* They began as comic strip figures and then moved to television programmes and later the film screens. In recent years, such television heroes have more modern equipment and trendier names such as *Knight Rider* and *Airwolf.* Although the names changed, the basic attitude of the semi-lawless days of the Wild West prevailed. There was a notion that might is right.[i] Gradually this attitude spread throughout the country. Even at Harvard, a recent study suggested that countries with the most money made the most progress and hence implied that might is right.[ii]

Parallel with this attitude of the good outside the law emerged another notion. To agree with someone was much more than to share the same view on a given topic. To agree with someone was paramount to being a friend. Those who agreed with one were friends and allies. Those who disagreed with one were enemies. Foreigners who disagreed with one became "enemy aliens."

In this context, one's beliefs were not merely a series of views one held now and might well change tomorrow. Beliefs became central to who one was perceived to be and thus became a key to acceptance in a community. This applied especially to religious beliefs. In certain fundamentalist groups this led to extremes, which others sometimes mocked and caricaturized. More insidious were milder versions, which somehow conflated themselves with the attitude of the good outside the law. On the surface, this meant that the *Lone Ranger* became an everyday citizen just as *Zorro*, *Superman* and *Batman* did in the movies. In everyday life, it meant that *Maverick* could become a name for the good guys. As long as these were private fantasies or personal styles there were no serious problems.

Indeed, for those who never left their little village this was an entirely understandable point of view. Unfortunately, it had an unexpected corollary: As a result of this attitude, we are all foreigners everywhere on earth except for our home, our ranch, or the very tiny space of the village where we began. Those who liked to travel soon found that mutual respect was an efficient way to escape being dinner of the cannibals and related less threatening scenarios. Unless we learn to accept others as equals, why should we expect them to do the same for us, especially when they often come from civilizations that are far older than our own? Cowboys did not need such niceties, cowboys that travel do. All persons that travel do. Even persons who don't travel should.

The rise of Ronald Reagan issued in a new era. Reagan confirmed that a hero in the movies could become a hero in real life. He also learned that gentle cajoling with words could be more effective in removing a Berlin Wall than bringing in the heavy artillery and mortar. At the same time, when the fantasies of a rancher from the West to become president became reality, there were more subtle problems. The traditions of personal values sometimes posed as those of a nation. As a result, those who agreed with America were friends: those who disagreed were enemies. Those of one's own particular brand of Christianity were friends: those of other beliefs and creeds were enemies and members of evil empires. No wonder Americans were confused in Beirut, which once had well over a hundred sects of Christians living amicably with Arabs and Jews.

In the Western vision that went to Washington, it was assumed that because "God is on our side", one was clearly doing the right thing, even if those things did not quite fit in with age-old laws. After all, it was a problem of living according to one's own law. The laws of foreigners, those who were different, and were the enemy did not apply anyway. So a clear challenge emerged: assert American law for Americans[iii] everywhere and deny the right of others to apply their laws under Americans at any time. Superman would have understood clearly: the International Court of Law in the Hague would have had, and continues to have, problems.

The present administration continued the western influence on the White House. The so-called wars in Afghanistan and Iraq were therefore much more than attempts to fight terrorism and spread the influence of democracy. They were attempts, perhaps ingenuous, perhaps insidious, for some of the soldiers, undoubtedly all-too-sincere attempts, to raise well-intentioned personal traditions of maverick actions of saving the day to the level of national policies, that were supposed to save the world. In the small towns of the West, this could be forgiven. In Dallas, it could be overlooked. But Bagdad was not a shanty town. It was a cradle of world culture, millennia before America was discovered by Columbus.

What posed as a war on terror thus constituted actions that terrorized the rule of law. There was an implicit assumption that certain key individuals and ultimately the nations on behalf of whom they claimed to speak, were, or at least could pretend to be, above the law or, more precisely, outside the law, because these were times when emergency was a way of life. The congressional experts cited earlier had warned that "hiding every excess as an 'emergency measure' won't work forever." The present administration seemed to have proved them wrong.

Herein lay one of the reasons why the world was uncomfortable with America. It was one thing, at the level of individuals, to perceive a polarity, whereby persons who agreed with one were friends, while those who disagreed were enemies. Translated into government policy this meant that those who disagreed with the government were unexpectedly seen as enemies of the state. In practical terms, this meant that any visitor to the United States, or the United Kingdom, could be held and imprisoned indefinitely without any documented evidence of wrongdoing.[iv] This does not appear to be the best incentive for world peace. Nor do accompanying measures particularly encourage tourism.

Closer examination of this psychological notion of the good guy reveals that it had deep-seated links with American definitions of difference and approach to the law. Each of these deserve a brief explanation.

Difference and Diversity

Marshall McLuhan spoke of a global village. Part of this message was that we were now all connected as if the whole world were a single village. The new media, especially mobile telecommunications media, were connecting persons everywhere. But the individual villages did not go away. This left open the question in respect of what one would wish or be able to communicate.

In the section above, we outlined a psychology typical of the American West, whereby agreement on views determined friendship and community. In simple terms, this meant that sameness was a point of departure. Same became something almost sacred. In England, agreement is about an unstated consensus. In America, agreement became a key to being part of the same group, which had vestiges of a clan. Hence the simple question "Do you agree?" came to mean something profoundly different than *"Etes vous d'accord?"* or *"Sind Sie einverstanden?"* These related French and German questions were about decisions to do things together, without any assumptions about having the same views. At a political level Europeans had *ententes*, *concordats*, and *concords,* which were very far removed from agreements in the American sense. American agreements meant that the person was a "good guy," "on our side" because they were ultimately "the same as us." *Ententes* assumed and promised much less: they were decisions by two parties to work together, even if they probably had very different ideas and sometimes even if they despised each other. More friendly *ententes* were heartier and therefore called *ententes cordiales*.

In Europe, understanding another viewpoint and sharing it were two actions. In America, they were typically assumed to be a single action. An American who asked: "Do you see my point?" assumed that if the other person could see, they would not only understand, but also have the same position about that point. Indeed, if there were a discrepancy between what one said (externally) and the viewpoint one had (internally), then one was being "insincere," which was "a bad thing." So Americans diligently ended all their letters with "Yours sincerely," with only a few, such as Lionel Trilling, who were aware of the ironies of this allusion to the thinkers of Saint Cyr.

In Europe, any incident which could have disrupted a situation was invariably followed by assurances that things remained the same (German: *Es ist mir egal*); that it did not matter (French: *Il n'y a pas de quoi*) or that it was really nothing at all (French: *De rien* or Spanish: *De nada* which were closely related to the Italian: *Non c'è niente*). None of these even alluded to having or sharing the same ideas. They were solely assurances that the situation, the relationship, or the matter at hand could continue in the same way. Americans, who assumed an equation between thought, word and deed, needed no distinctions between the three. Hence, Americans faced with potentially disruptive situations simply said: "No difference."

Americans typically saw differences as potentially negative. Accordingly, in human relations this implied that friends must "settle their differences" or else they would "need to go their different ways." By contrast, when Europeans asked a colleague or friend: "Do you see the difference?" this was not to complain about an obstacle in a relationship, but rather to signal a deeper level of insight, which arose from seeing more differences, having a more differentiated view (positive), which arose from making careful distinctions. This had a long tradition. *"Distinguendum est"* was one of the key activities of scholasticism in the scholar's quest towards a more transcendent understanding of the outer and inner worlds.

In the European tradition, the essence of friendship thus entailed that one saw and perceived positive differences, understood them and accepted the other person "warts and all" without any assumptions that one needed to "share the same ideas" in the sense of their being the same as the friend. This seemed to promise less than the American notion of friendship, but it meant that

persons could have very different habits, could still be accepted and even be friends. It meant that one traveled searching for variations and differences rather than "more of the same." Having something that was different became a virtue rather than a failing: one had a little *je ne sais quoi*.

The American quest for something the same led to a melting pot mentality, which was far from a European viewpoint, where difference, rather than sameness, was the essence of one's identity. In Europe, *Vive la difference*! had a deeper meaning. Hence, being Bohemian was one of many ways of being quintessentially European. In England, being an eccentric was a sign that one had arrived in society. In America, by contrast, being called an eccentric meant that one was on the edge of society and in danger of being an outsider. Hence, in America, those who were different were non-conformist, which was something on the borderline of being an American, and in times of McCarthyism was "proof" of being un-American.

Europeans assumed the existence of public and private dimensions in everything they did. In America, there was a greater tendency to relegate the public side to work and private side to the home. Americans turned their public side off: Europeans didn't or did so much less. Meanwhile, Americans extended their notions about being the same to both the private and the public sphere. As a result they expected not only their friends to be "of the same mind" as they were, they expected them to speak the same language as they did. Hence Americans often dismissed as too different (negative) and ignorant Europeans and others who could not speak American English as well as they did. By contrast, Europeans often dismissed as too ignorant and too undifferent Americans, who could only speak English.

This extension of sameness applied to many dimensions. Americans who travelled expected their food to be the same. Hence, Americans defended McDonaldization in terms of efficiency, often meaning that they welcomed how it was never different. A hamburger is a hamburger, is a hamburger. Meanwhile, Europeans condemned McDonaldization for its homogeneity. On the surface, the French phrase: *Une rose est une rose, est une rose*" had a repetition that seemed to praise its sameness, but was actually a paean to its difference and uniqueness.

These seemingly superficial "differences" had profound consequences. Linguistically they meant that Americans chose uni- ore more precisely mono-lingualism, whereas Europeans chose multi-lingualism. Americans sometimes assumed that persons who had not mastered American were too different to be worth trusting. Europeans sometimes assumed that persons who had not mastered a few languages were too unaware to different world views opened by other languages to be worth knowing. Alas, some naïve American tourists sometimes mistook this for anti-Americanism, because for them, persons who did not seek their friendship were assumed to be "enemies."

Architecturally, these seemingly superficial differences meant that American villages and towns generally looked the same. A corollary or implication of this approach was that one was less American to the extent that one was different and one was more "all American" to the extent that one was the same, and of the same view. This applied equally to food and architecture. All-American towns really looked the same. Towns that looked different bordered on being "un-American." An unexpected consequence of a fear of difference was an equally great fear of diversity.

In Europe, with its different assumptions, almost the reverse was true. A very European town prided itself on the extent to which it was different from neighbouring towns even if the next town was only five miles away. In Europe, because difference was a virtue, diversity became a central element of cultural expression. In Europe one went to McDonald's in those rare times when lack of time made fast food a necessity; or as an experience every once in awhile just to be

different, but for the most part McDonald's was uninteresting. Why limit oneself to a burger with a single kind of cheese on a continent with thousands of cheeses? Why limit oneself to a "choice" between a Pepsi and Coke when one had a choice of thousands of wines? In Europe, one ate and drank very diverse foods and drinks in extremely diverse architecture. One found very positive differences and much diversity. For this reason, while one could speak of un-American towns, there was no such thing as un-French towns; un-Italian towns, un-English towns. There were simply very French, very Italian and very English towns.

Since difference was not a virtue in America, everything tended to sound, look and even taste the same. And when Americans went abroad they tended to stay in hotels where as much as possible was the same as back home. For this reason, Americans liked Hiltons and Sheratons and Marriotts. By contrast, since difference was a virtue for Europeans they sought out everything that tended to sound, look, and taste different. When Europeans went abroad they typically stayed in hotels that were as different as possible as their usual homes: finding a hotel with a difference was something positive; something that made all the difference was very positive. Admittedly there were also German tourists who took their sausages on vacation in Italy; or the British who brought their bangers and mash wherever they went. But "real" Europeans chuckled about these in the same way that they chuckled at Americans with shirts in clashing colours. Just as Americans prided themselves on the extent that they were basically the same, Europeans prided themselves on their lack of sameness, on their diversity.

It would be naïve of course to pretend that Americans, the country famous for its extreme individualism, was incapable of differences. The subtle distinction is that in America, difference and, to the extent that it can exist in such a climate, diversity is a personal thing. One began at a public and social level with a commitment to sameness (and to a certain extent to conformity). Once one fitted into this norm one was accepted. That was why everyone, who was a US citizen, was first, and foremost an American. As an extra, an aside, almost as a luxury, one "did one's thing:" wore bright shirts, long hair, or other costumes for which America became famous all over the world. Significantly, the norm was that one still tended to wear the same things. So America became the land of blue jeans and Levis. This led some Englishmen to quip that it was "the land of unlimited impossibilities where nothing was so old as the new." Underneath the diversity of personal expression, were many basics that were assumed to be shared with everyone. One spoke the same language, one basically did the same things. One wore the same costumes. That was how one knew that they were "one of us." In England, and in Europe, a person's apparel was never such a giveaway. Friends might appear in the strangest costumes, enemies in the most familiar ones.

Of course, all over the world friendship is about sharing things. But there are subtle distinctions. In America, as we have seen, friends are those who are the same as us. In England, friendship is intimately connected with experiencing things together. This means that one does the same things together, but leaves open that there could be vast areas in which the two friends are not the same. European friendship sets out from another premise. Doing things together is fine but essentially friendship is about a complete trust in another person, which has nothing to do with their being the same as the friend. On the contrary, it assumes that one's fellow human is different, and friendship is ultimately a pact that one will explore differences together which are of course not the kind of differences that Americans feet need to be resolved.

Canadians, who are somewhere between the European and American models, accordingly developed their own versions of friendship. As in the United States, Canadians, especially in the White Anglo-Saxon Protestant (WASP) traditions tend towards an assumption that conformity is a reflection of virtue. However, unlike their neighbours to the South, Canadians have too many examples of other cultures in close proximity to accept this tendency uncritically. So they create

a deeper tolerance for different ways. As in the English tradition, Canadians emphasize the importance of shared experiences. Like the English there is great sensitivity to not hurting the other person. So many topics are typically avoided unless they are brought up deliberately. At the same time, thanks to the Scottish tradtion there is an unerring sense of directness and honesty which leads to an openness that is often missing in the English tradition.

As a result, Americans typically see deeper friendship as a confirmation of being the same; Europeans see deeper friendship as a process of seeing more differences, more diversity and possibly even becoming more different as one grows. Of course, Americans who set out with a commitment to sameness still have a personal freedom which allows them to do "their own thing", sometimes with such reckless abandon, that they have no problem with the "differences" of Europeans. But given their radically different points of departure it means that it is ultimately easier for Americans to be friends with Europeans, than for Europeans to be friends with Americans. Americans are only looking for persons who could be trusted because they are the same enough or at least appear to be. Europeans are looking for persons who are deep and strong enough to explore and develop differences and who can be trusted when the two individuals drop their superficial similarities and explore what lies beneath.

In the American case, the commitment to make difference a personal thing, and specifically linked to personal appearance, means that there can be diversity of dress, including wild plaid shirts or hair styles, but it also means that it goes no further. In "all-American" towns, the architecture is basically the same; the built environment remains without diversity. That is a psychological root for what the world later called McDonaldization.

This psychology of sameness helped to define the nature of tourism in America. Since towns followed the principle "if you've seen one, you've seen them all," there was little incentive to create a tourist industry traveling from one picturesque town to another as one did in Europe. So tourism became defined largely by climate. Florida was a place one went for the winter to get away from the cold up North, not because the buildings were so fascinating. For Europeans in search of the different it meant that apart from some art collections in the cities, the real attractions were not in towns and villages but in the enormous landscapes of nature especially the parks of Utah, Nevada, California and Colorado where uniqueness reigned untamed by dreams of sameness.

Significantly, this did not mean that these towns and other expressions of sameness were static. On the contrary, since they were on the frontier, which was always expanding and growing, they were free to grow and change as long as they all changed together. This unleashed a great sense of freedom and dynamism into the built environment which led ultimately to important contributions in American architecture, especially in large cities, and especially in terms of individual buildings. The large cities, tried to remain true to the commitment of sameness of the earlier towns. This was one of the reasons why American cities revived the idea of grids from the Greeks so that all their cities had the same straight streets and the same concepts of square or rectangular blocks. Not by co-incidence, European architects such as Mies van der Rohe, who had the brilliant idea of extending the two dimensional grids of squares and rectangles into the three-dimensional environment, were very successful in this climate. As a result, although the great cities such as New York or Chicago had different landmarks such as a Chrysler building or even wild buildings by Canadians such as Gehry, their general feel was of a sameness that was fundamentally distinct from the differences in Rome, Paris, London, Berlin and other great European cities.

There was also another fundamental difference between European cities such as Rome and American cities such as New York, which went far deeper than the obvious fact that Rome was

older than New York, although it was related to this detail. Rome gained its name as eternal city partly because its citizens decided that there were large bits of their city which were not open for change; even if those bits were sometimes literally in ruins. As a result, Rome could acquire buses, subways, modern buildings, but this was built around, above and sometimes even under an historical core, which one continued to study with all the tools of modern archaeology to keep alive the differences of earlier times.

This was in marked contrast to a New York, where history, which reflected difference, was necessarily relegated to buildings that reflected the personal expression of individuals. So the building that housed the Frick Collection became an historical monument, but there was no historical feel as in Rome or even an historical section (*historische Viertel* was a technical term in German not in American).

As their East and West Coast settlements and their shanty towns of the Wild West transformed themselves into the face of today's skyscraper cities, Americans were obviously not blind to the great changes that were occurring. Often, with no little nostalgia, they looked back on the greater sameness that they had once enjoyed. The European response to this universal dilemma would have been to create historical areas, where one had buildings with dates. By contrast, America saw these as dated buildings, which meant they had to go. In Europe, history meant something stayed. In America, "It's history" meant that something did not stay. It was replaced. Often this was the next modern building.

Walt Disney recognized that the nostalgia for the sameness that since had been eclipsed, reflected a deeper need, which could also lead to new business. Where a European would have tried to conserve or reconstruct an historical town of the past, Disney applied the ideal of sameness retrospectively. He constructed buildings that gave the impression of being the same as those in earlier towns of the West. Instead of trying to reproduce accurately town A to the exclusion of town B, he sought to reconstruct the sense and atmosphere of an old town. To choose any town would have led him back to the diversity of the European tradition. Choosing to build something that reflected any-town, he upheld the deep American commitment to sameness.

Walt Disney's genius was that he extended this approach to all three phases of time: Fantasyland (the past); Frontierland and Adventureland (present) and Tomorrowland (future). The four together became Disneyland. Subsequently the Epcot Center was devoted specifically to the future. On the surface, these Disney worlds catered to individuals. At an another level they controlled experiences, depersonalized them and threatened the very idea of truly "personal" experiences in the European sense. Ultimately, they were a vehicle for recreating the community sense of sameness that Americans vaguely remembered. For this reason it could appropriately be called Fantasyland rather than Historyland. Fantasyland took visitors back to a time when sameness was still intact. A Historyland would have taken them back to a time when differences with the present were painfully obvious.

On the surface, Disney had created a brilliant new form of entertainment that evolved into the notion of theme parks, which spread throughout the world. At a deeper level, they externalized the essence of the American commitment to sameness, which was a central starting point for their approach to values and culture. Sociologists have rightly noted that McDonaldization and Disneyfication are related: they are two methods to capture and express the essence of the American psychology. Both address the quest for sameness. McDonaldization does so for the present and especially with respect to food. Disneyfication extends this to past, present and future.

As long as countries had clear borders all this made "little difference." Europeans saw that in America they did things differently and that was fine. Europeans could see this as just another example of diversity. But once the advent of new media led the values of one country to go beyond their home borders it was another story. Or to combine the American commitment to sameness with a Spanish flavour: it changed the whole *enchilada*.

A deep seated American psychology of sameness, which inspired McDonalds and Disney, was creative in an American landscape, where it inspired great examples of personal expression. But once this psychology moved from a personal level to the level of national policy an imperialism of values began to loom. Canadians responded by contrasting an American "melting pot" culture with their own commitment to multiculturalism. Hence Toronto became a city where persons from at least 72 countries maintained their own cultures in terms of language, food and religions. Parts of the city have bilingual signs in Canadian and Chinese; other parts have bilingual signs in Canadian and Greek. This solution introduces diversity mainly into the level of experience and less into the level of architecture.

When this personal American psychology of sameness became part of an American policy that was consciously exported to Europe and around the world, the first response was a gut reaction that one did not want to have other countries dictating their values and culture interfering with the home front. This led to the well-publicized protests that became associated with meetings of the G8, the World Bank, the World Trade Organization and indeed all organizations associated with globalization. These protests were described as anti-Americanism, but were really a more general protest against other countries who tried to extend their values and their rules beyond their own borders. Within Europe, sensitivity to this general problem had led the European Union to keep culture out of the forefront of its activities. (Admittedly, there was a small directorate on Culture but it ranked number 22 out of 24).[v]

Only when the American quest for sameness, which allowed personal expressions of individuality, crossed the Atlantic, could Europeans begin to understand that this was something profoundly different than the diversity that lay at the core of their values. Cultural diversity became a topic. America produced individuals but it did not foster diversity. Formalizations of the psychology of sameness as McDonaldization/ Disneyfication or M/D principle went further. They undermined and threatened the central principles of what it meant to be European.

The M/D principle ultimately did away with history: a trend reflected in the Harvard Professor, Fukuyama's *End of History*. This was incompatible with a European tradition of a cumulative building on the past. The M/D principle seemed to foster individualism. But at a more subtle level, because its quest was sameness it treated the whole world, individual persons and objects alike, in terms of the things they had in common, rather than bringing to light their uniqueness. In this sense, the M/D principle favoured universals over particulars (i.e. it was more Platonic than Aristotelian). Europe, assumed both universal and particulars. The M/D principle was a method for persons to become individuals, while learning to become the same, to fit the norm, to become normal. Those who were not normal enough were crazy. That was why psychiatry and mental hospitals were much more popular in America than in Europe.

By contrast, the European programme was to begin with a framework to assure that persons had a modicum of things in common and then help them learn to become different. That was why Europeans began with classes to familiarize them with basics of citizenship. Therafter, they were encouraged to become as different as they dared – assuming of course that remained within the bounds of the law. This produced a lot of individuals, who might sometimes seem happily crazy at carnivals, but far less mental patients. The American system boasted more freedom for individuals, but it was an individualism that too readily threatened to be become a-social or even

anti-social. Ultimately, Europe's approach to differences and diversity offered much more generous borders to the human psyche, whereby a social sense combined with individualism could grow in tandem.

These fundamental differences between the American M/D principle and the European quest for diversity affected all areas of activity, even foreign affairs. Americans typically assumed that only those who spoke English were worth speaking to: Europeans typically assumed that until they had learned the foreign language in question it was they who were not worth talking to. When Americans looked beyond their borders, they immediately measured them by indicators which were the same as their own. As a result, the CIA World Factbook is an excellent source of information and statistics concerning factors shared with America: e.g. the countries' population; their physical, especially their energy resources. But it tells almost nothing about things these other countries had which made them unique: e.g. about their libraries, their art collections etc. By contrast, Europeans' studies of other countries distinguished themselves by revealing unique things about other cultures, often things the persons in that country had forgotten about themselves. Hence, it took a Frenchman, Champollion, to decipher hieroglyphs and re-open the world of Egyptian culture. Other Frenchmen, such as Pelliot and his colleagues at the *Ecole de l'Extrème Orient* (Hanoi), had re-opened to the world the wonders of Khmer architecture that had reached their pinnacle in Anghor Wat.

Armchair internationalists at Harvard, such as Huntingdon, a protégé of Zbigniew Brzezinski,[vi] writing of *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of the World Order*, argued in a new way that religion was the root of all evil; that different religions were at the root of inevitable new clashes. Earlier we noted how this assumption completely overlooked fundamental Christian and Muslim tenets towards humility, love and respect that were far removed from the militant Americans' misinterpretation. By now, we are in a position to ask Socratically, whether, in terms of ideas, the real source of conflict might ultimately have nothing to do with the Middle East. The Middle East just happens to be where the oil is. In terms of beliefs and ideas, the debate is not about religion. At the deepest level, it is ultimately a secular misunderstanding arising from two very distinct approaches to difference: 1) a notion of difference as something negative whereby differences needed to be resolved; 2) a principle of difference as something positive that inspires variety and diversity.

In the simplest terms this opposition between sameness and diversity threatens to become a conflict between American sameness versus diversity in Europe and the rest of the world. If so, the so-called potential clash of civilizations has nothing to do with unseen terrorists. Ironically, it stems from America's assumptions and ideals of sameness becoming translated from the sphere of personal expression, where they are liberating, to the realm of national policy, where they pose a threat to the sovereignty of all other nations; where they challenge the cultural traditions of persons everywhere; where they pose a spectre of a uni-lingual, mono-cultural narrowness that threatens cultural diversity.

 If the *Remaking of the World Order* were truly a remaking of the world in the image of American sameness in accordance with their M/D principle, it would lead to a world disorder and threaten the future of civilization. These concerns are "nothing personal" against Americans. They are not anti-American as such. They simply resist the hubris of any country that assumes its rules should apply to everyone else: and that everyone else should have nothing to say, especially when everyone else happens to be 96% of the world's population.

This basic problem of sameness/diversity which is the source of misunderstanding became clouded because the champions of the American side are a small group who present a very one-sided view of the story. A small group, preaching in the name of Christianity, has taken a

militant stance that contradicts the peaceful ideals of both Christians and Muslims. This small group, speaking in the name of democracy, acts in the manner of an oligarchy. This small group, claiming that they are defending freedom, are systematically eroding the freedom of both individuals and nations, in striving themselves for an ultimate privileged freedom which would even be free from constraints of law. Under the pretext of a lofty ideal of free trade, this small group urges others to remove all walls and barriers to trade, while themselves living in gated communities and condoning the building of walls between Palestinians and Jews.

Old America once shocked and inspired the world with their idea that persons should honestly say what they thought and live accordingly. The so-called representatives of a new America are giving America a bad name because they are not "as good as their word" and their actions are for personal gain rather than for the greater glory. This face of a new America has made its personal idiosyncracies into national policy and is making the public good of their nation into a source for personal idiosyncracies of a less noble kind. This was why the world is increasingly puzzled, and sometimes angry: not with all Americans but with this mis-representation of almost half --some said more-- of the population that has democratically voted for a different path.

To return to McLuhan's image of a global village: it means that Americans seek to communicate what they think is the same; whereas Europeans tend to share the different things they have discovered. This is not to say that an American with a developed sense of personal expression cannot communicate with Europeans. But it does mean that often, even when speaking about simple things such as agreement, they often talk past each other.

Values

We just saw how seemingly simple decisions about sameness and difference have profound implications for the way one sees, hears, tastes, even touches and feels the world. These distinctions are essential ingredients of a country's culture. One could try to define these characteristics nationally, as America does. Or one could define these characteristics at a variety of levels, nationally, regionally and locally. Some countries such as Germany emphasize the role of regional identities (*Länder*). Then there are countries such as Italy where, notwithstanding rumours that Jerusalem lays claim to being the navel of the world, every village thinks of itself as the centre of the world, and some places such as Foligno even call themselves such (The town sign states: *Foligno. Centro del mondo*). The decisions a country makes in this respect, is one dimension of its values.

Related to this is the extent to which one believes the state should have a say or any say in such matters. Hence, traditionally each country made its own decisions about the extent to which they wished to have a welfare state; to what extent they wished to have social security and a social safety net. Ultimately these were the choices that molded society, affected their culture and influenced the extent to which countries were or were not different. Europe was traditionally more concerned with society as a whole: America was always famously individualistic: magnificent if the individual achieved their dreams, a life of bag people if things "didn't work out." At the level of everyday work, there was a further dimension. Traditionally one's employer lived in one's own town. If there were problems on the side of employer or employee, one met for a chat and discussed how things could be resolved. How one did this varied from country to country.

Altogether the combination of these different attitudes and different ways of doing things, the extent to which one assumed honesty in doing things, constituted a country's values and contributed to its culture, which also varied in terms of the different kinds of expressions to which one gave special attention (e.g. fine arts such as painting, sculpture or performing arts

such as music, theatre, dance). Countries existed, their boundaries existed, partly to ensure that the values of a country could be fostered within the borders of that country. When one crossed boundaries one knew the rules changed. If one did not like the rules and expressions of that country one simply did not go there. One went back to that beach in Italy or that hut in the Austrian alps instead. *Vive la différence* !

Unintended Exports of Values

One of the most complex and unstudied dimensions of new media entails the ways that they are transforming what was, until recently, a stable landscape of clearly defined borders. Admittedly wars sometimes changed the borders of some countries, but for the most part such irregularities had usually been sorted out by the time of the next vacation.

New media and the global market transformed these relations. Many contemporary employees never see their real bosses. The employees might well be in Europe while the boss at the head office might be in America. As a result, the decisions of the head office in America have many repercussions. From the viewpoint of the head office, in a world where the next billion dollar merger counts, it takes the effects of thousands of jobs, to achieve significant savings for the decision makers. In this context the piddling amounts of a worker's salary become insignificant to the decision makers. And yet, for the individual, the absence of each of those insignificant, piddling amounts of salary makes all the difference to the life of that person and their families. When these cuts happen with reckless abandon there are more losses than the obvious material ones. More subtly they also cut away at persons' sense of self-esteem; at their/our sense of humanity, at our confidence in government and law; in our trust of governmental and social systems.

As we have noted, decisions about when one fired someone were intertwined with assumptions about one's values. As long as this happened within the borders of one's own country, this produced no unexpected results. The new global context of business means, however, that decisions America makes about its economy immediately has repercussions around the world: loss of jobs and earnings are the obvious consequences. More insidious and more dangerous is how these economic decisions made in America are closely bundled with a whole series of assumptions about the social system as a whole: for instance, to what extent workers should have compensation, insurance, health benefits, pensions, rights; to what extent the employer is committed to looking after employees' lives as opposed to simply reimbursing them for x hours of work per week. In other words, every so-called economic decision of an American executive concerning offices beyond the borders of America, is much more than a simple extraterritorial application of economic principles. Insidiously, it is also an intervention, albeit often unintended, in the value systems of the other country.

When the decisions of an executive in America can wipe thousands of jobs in countries outside America, these decisions tacitly threaten to impose America's social values on those countries. As a concrete example, in December 2004, when General Motors, headquartered in Detroit, Michigan, felt a slump in the economy, 10,000 workers in Germany working for Opel (also owned by General Motors) woke up one day to find that they had lost their jobs. Similar patterns are seen around the world.

Such examples suggest that the physical entry of armed forces into Afghanistan and Iraq is but one example of a more disturbing invasion: a metaphysical imperialism, not simply of businesses that want to make new money in old markets, but also, almost invisibly, assume that they can determine others' ways of doing business, of values and their lack. Tragically, Americans who have been trained in a culture of sameness, who begin with assumptions that agreements are with

friends who "are the same," seldom even suspect that there could be such problems. Ironically, those who are astute enough to sense the tensions, given their values and their training, would immediately be inclined to fear they had encountered unexpected anti-Americanism in persons, whom they now thought they had mistakenly thought were friends.

Aside from mutual incomprehension, these actions threaten much more than the jobs of the next few thousand who "need" to be fired to make the next merger "worthwhile." They are undermining centuries of ways of doing things; of traditions, of culture, and could threaten the very fabric of civilized life. In this scenario, there is something much more frightening and dangerous than unpredictable terrorists who might in extreme cases hijack a bus, train or plane or blow up an occasional building. The real fear lies in overenthusiastic mavericks who think that they are saving the world and in the process wreak much more havoc than the trails of their so-called smart bombs and heavy artillery suggest.

Civil or Military

We have already cited the warnings of experts in 1995 that funds were limited. The escalation of military budgets and focus on short-term gains has made that situation worse. As long as such decisions affected only those within the borders of their country, there was little reason for re-action or action, even if one felt personally and saw to it that things were done differently in one's own country.

But with the new media and unintended exports of values, the world is suddenly a different place. In the past, foreign secretaries and ambassadors kept their eyes on exports and imports, on the balance of physical trade. Now imbalances of invisible values loom as dangers potentially greater than imbalances of physical goods. If a country suddenly becomes extremely militaristic, this could have severe consequences for education, health and indeed the entire social infrastructure of a country. Contemporary Zimbabwe is sometimes cited as an example. But given invisible exports of values, unintended or not, what had traditionally been politely referred to as the domestic affairs of a country, suddenly become the often unwanted affairs of its neighbours. And if the country happens to be America, then the repercussions of decisions on the home front suddenly have consequences for the whole world. Decisions in Washington about a military-industrial complex, or about a military-industrial squeeze, are decisions that not only affect the way Americans dealt with their taxes, government, value and culture. It affects the whole world.

In the past years, even the richest countries of the world suddenly find themselves talking about eroding pensions; about less secure positions; about abandoning traditional notions of a welfare state where everyone was assured a decent life. As national security became a daily mantra, personal security is being eroded on a daily basis in terms of human rights; in terms of jobs, benefits and pensions. There are cuts everywhere and especially in health, social services and care. In most cases, these decisions are not because countries have decided consciously that they wanted to change their values or their culture. The invisible invasion of values from beyond their borders is forcing them into corners that go against the grain.

Also in December 2004, on the BBC, there were glimpses how even the pensions of senior civil servants, the bowler-hatted mandarins of Britain, were finding their futures compromised by models and schemes from across the pond. This is not just because a Labour government has suddenly turned on the Mandarins who run their country behind the scenes as civil servants had always done. It is, some would argue, because, at some point, America's choices and decisions in terms of civil society or militarism are having consequences around the world. In the old days, presidents were famous for phrases such as "The buck stops here." In a global village, an

electronic world which, in some senses, has no borders, the buck no longer stops here/there with the president. If he picks up the tab he also passes it on. If he spends too much on military parties, we all find ourselves "footing the bill."

Daily Life or Emergency as Daily Life

Related with this also are more subtle problems: that the quest to declare a state of emergency as a part of everyday life implies that everyday life in the old sense is no longer possible. If it existed there would be no emergency. Unwittingly, sometimes unwillingly, and yet inevitably, persons find, often *post facto*, that their civil rights are being eroded and taken away. In the Hollywood movie, *Enemy of the State* (1998), a prominent politician found himself murdered because he refused to endorse a new Telecommunications and Privacy Bill. In real life, "enemy of the state" is a term the US military are said to have adopted from the Nazis.[vii] In real life, in 2004, a new Telecommunications Act was passed, which said nothing about privacy in the title but had many implications for privacy between its covers.[viii] In December, 2004, a new Intelligence Bill was signed. These documents are signs of a trend whereby what were effectively decrees for emergencies are silently becoming part of what we thought were our normal lives. Traditionally the world would have rightly dismissed such developments in America as their problem. But in an interconnected, electronic world where their assumptions and decisions about privacy affects persons in other countries, and indeed sometimes affects them more than American citizens, there are very serious reasons for international concern.

Europeans, who were perfectly willing to be tolerant about Americans deciding what they did when they were home alone, are increasingly concerned that such ongoing cries of *Clear and Present Danger* are more than vaguely reminiscent of the dangers faced by the boy who cried wolf once too often. They also marvel as a disturbing paradox unravelled. On the one hand, it is technically illegal openly to criticize the government or discuss overtly anything relating to terrorism. At the same time, Hollywood produces film after film about one horror scenario after another. Freud would probably have noted that the suppression of conscious fears in everyday life, inevitably recurs in subconscious and unconscious ways. If Hollywood represents America's unconscious, then Freud would be one person who did not have to worry about losing his job for lack of work.

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[i] Cf. http://www.suntimes.com/output/couch/cst-spt-greg01.html.

[ii] Robert King, Ross Levine, "Finance and Growth: Schumpeter Might Be Right," *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, Volume 108, Issue 3, August 1993, pp. 717-37.
   <HLINK> http://ideas.repec.org/a/tpr/qjecon/v108y1993i3p717-37.html.

[iii] Michael Geist," US extends its hegemony over the Net," *Toronto Star,* 3 June 2003.
   <HLINK> http://shorl.com/jegijotejivo

[iv] <HLINK> http://www.ladlass.com/intel/archives/009069.html

[v] With Prodi's reforms the number of directorates was halved. Education (number 10) and Culture (22) were subsequently merged.

[vi] <HLINK> http://www.pnac.info/blog/archives/000012.html
      The "Clash of Civilizations" theory, developed by Harvard professor-turned President Jimmy Carter's National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski and his protégés, including Harvard Prof. Samuel Huntington, defined the Arab and Islamic world as an "arc of crisis" from the Middle East to the Islamic countries of Central Asia in the then-Soviet Union. Brzezinski wanted to use the "Islamic card" against the Soviet Union, and in so doing, began the policy of promoting Islamic fundamentalists against moderate and pro-Western Arab and Islamic governments. After the end of the Cold War, the Brzezinski/Huntington crowd updated their "arc of crisis," declaring that the Islamic religion is the enemy, in a new war in which religions, rather than political systems,

inevitably battle each other. However, trained by British and U.S. special intelligence services and the CIA, and armed by Israeli military networks, the very terrorist drug-runners in the Islamic world who were launched by Brzezinski and "adopted" by the Iran-Contra networks run by Lt. Col. Oliver North, under the elder George Bush's Executive Order 12333, have become the main suspects in terrorist attacks against the United States.

[vii] <HLINK> http://www.buzzflash.com/farrell/04/05/far04017.html

[viii] <HLINK> http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/F?c108:1:./temp/~c108fqKrY2:e1372: