

Summary

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It would have been a good deal easier to write the summary of the events, given the extreme complexity, contradictoriness, diversity, and above all the richness of contributions, had I not listened to them.

First came the question of international order or international disorder. And here the word order has its own, shall we say, resonance, which is in my opinion different in different languages, also in different conceptual languages: ‘Ordnung’ in German has something of a normative flavour, one thinks of the discussion of *ordo-liberalism* and of a certain kind of social market, whereas ‘order’ in English sometimes, indeed more often than not, has the implications of a historical entity and the crystallization for the moment of social and cultural relations that has a certain fixity to it. But here we had the question regarding the international order as to its hierarchical and indeed its oppressive or exploitative dimensions, and the question of its position in time. The notion again emerged in the form of a very large argument as to whether international law was capable at all, under present circumstances, of even tentatively stabilizing international order or international society.

Here another discussion emerged, as an important and maybe critical subtext: do we face surface disorder with a hidden underlying order? Let us say a process of the centralization of control of wealth, power and politics or do we face a superficial order, an apparent order on the surface of world politics accompanied by the deepest and most contradictory kind of hidden and emerging disorders beneath that invalidates the pretensions, let us say of the United States, to be the sole power. I think of Madeleine Albright, whom one does not accuse of excessive imperial ambition, or one of her speechwriters at any rate, using the phrase the ‘indispensable nation’. We got into a historical argument as to where this order could be located, what were its dimensions, how it could be identified, and what kind of world we were living in.

This brought up a third set of questions: about historical agencies for change or the maintenance of a given order, about elites, about populations, about the participation of new historical actors and their roles, rights, and responsibilities, and obviously the emergence of women on the active historical scene as categorical actors with demands for rights. We again confronted the problem of control and domination: is there an international capitalist elite, whatever its national and international dimensions? To what extent is it unified? Is it unified by the system of national borders? This of course raises the question of particular interest these days to those concerned with the United States. Again, do we have a hegemonic power, namely the United States, and, if so, how long can this power last in the face

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of external challenges? We dealt much less with the internal stress, which some of us know, but which may prove rather strenuous.

We then went on to a theme which I think interests us all. I noted it as ‘the responsibility of intellectuals’ and indeed that was the title of a remarkably effective article in the *New York Review of Books* during the Vietnam War by Noam Chomsky, who later expanded it into a book called *American Power and the New Mandarins*. And the ‘new mandarins’ were the very same people referred to by David Halberstam in his book *The Best and the Brightest*, by which he meant the Kennedys and also Harvard professors and other intellectuals, recruited to serve power. Here I think most of our discussion – the intellectuals were a subtheme – in fact concentrated on technocratic experts, that is persons who have a claim to the mastery of a specific technique or area of knowledge or segment of reality, which they could in expert fashion manipulate. Above all David Kennedy served us well, I think, by asking if the experts, in effect, are so expert, and how we, inhabiting the same cultural and social space, may prevent ourselves from being subjected to a kind of dictatorship of experts. I call your attention to an American programme currently running on German television, a programme recreating the time of the Cuban missile crisis, when it turned out that the least expert person there, namely John F. Kennedy (even though he had been a senator), was able to use common sense and with Khrushchev oppose their own cabinet ministers, generals, and bureaucrats and say that this thing is getting out of control, it must be stopped. I was reminded of the famous conversation between McNamara and Kennedy, when Kennedy offered him the job of secretary of defence and McNamara said: ‘I don’t have any particular training for this job’, and Kennedy said: ‘Neither I for mine.’ I think that this discussion of the limitations of expertise then flows over into a discussion that interests us all as members of a learned profession, namely the responsibility of intellectuals or of custodians of culture for the wellbeing and the continuation of the world, which by cultural tradition is entrusted to us.

That brings us then to the theme that I have summarized here as culture and opposition. It is clear that law, as an instrument of culture, is used differently in different cultures. The accretion and development of international law in the West since the treaty of Westphalia was limited to given kinds of state forms in a very specific historical environment, and even the emergence, one hardly needs to stress this in Vienna, of nation-states was accompanied by severe arguments over their cultural definition. It was suggested earlier that the great international triumph of Hobbes was that he substituted in politics an argument or at least a set of observations about the conflict of interests and the necessity of maintaining a common political structure for the intrusion upon social life of the absolutism of a religion, raising our questions as to whether our hopes for a secular solution to some of these problems might not also constitute a secular religion, namely a doctrine of liberal democracy and tolerance, which again may clearly be under strain.

That brings us to the question of the future. Here there was an argument as to whether the international structures that have been created in the past fifty years in and around the United Nations – the Security Council, the various agencies, international legislation – could continue. A good deal of the international legislation

was, I think, correctly analyzed for its social and political effects, that is to say, as being organized in defence of some particular interests rather than others, and here the continuing refrain was that the social democratic solution is at an end. I am reminded of a point most emphatically made by Erwin Lanc, our senior president, who actually was a social democratic minister in a social democratic government. I am reminded of a remark about social democracy made by an American colleague, Dennis Wrong: social democracy is the highest form of capitalism. But if that was in fact the case, something in capitalism, some dynamic in capitalism concerned precisely with internationalization, is breaking down the stability, validity, and future of social democratic solutions, as evidenced by the various internal crises of the developed welfare states. Here again we get to cultural questions. Germans will know the word 'Lebensraum' (living space), which had an awful significance in late nineteenth-/early twentieth-century German debate. 'Living space' has more recently been used by the left to indicate the colonization processes, which intrude into the cultural integrity even of groups integrated into the more prosperous countries. This debate calls into question the easy universalism or the assumed universalism under which the social democratic solution has been proceeding. Finally, we arrive at phrases which are vaguely reminiscent of the old ideas of regression and progress, and I was struck by how few people used the vocabulary of progress and yet how difficult it was for people ultimately to remove themselves from the notion that there was such a thing as progress, that is to say that human agency could attain a morally just, much less violent and more humane society. At that point there was considerable discussion of religious and other fundamentalisms as a threat to the stability of any order, precisely because of their absolutist demands, including observations on the presence of religious fundamentalism in the United States. I think I can offer, along with the other Americans, reasonable reassurance that in a population of 280 million there are no more than about 90 or 100 million to worry about, most of them of course highly mobilized and politically available. But religious fundamentalism of one kind or another can also have a certain value, because if you think about the colonization of living space you arrive at the question of the defence of certain structures or of a culture of uniqueness, in the face of the homogenizing factors of a world market. There obviously are national, political, and ethnic kinds of fundamentalism. As we walk from the hotel down the Kärntnerstrasse there is a poster of one of the candidates for the chancellorship, Alfred Gusenbauer, and on it somebody has scrawled 'traitor to Austria', indicating a kind of nationalism, or fundamentalism, at work. I suppose Gusenbauer can comfort himself, if that is the word, with the thought that this person denouncing him as a traitor to Austria might well be someone who yearns for Austria's incorporation into a much larger political entity, which I do believe occurred towards mid-century. But that is another question.

Law obviously has a social regulatory function, and finally we get to the question of violence: the persistence of violence, the putative permanence of violence. While it was not much discussed, it underlay some of the discussions: modes of dealing with it, kinds of violence, or whether the newer forms of terror, in itself a highly indeterminate term, represent a totally new form of historical violence adapted for

the destruction of an old state system and the internationalization of certain kinds of cultural and social conflicts. We could also have spoken of a delegated violence, that is to say of international sub-systems, which responds to imperatives from a putative centre.

This is a highly personal reading of what took place and I will not conclude without expressing my deepest gratitude to everyone who came and to my colleagues. I learned an untruth. There is a saying in the English-speaking world: you can't teach an old dog new tricks. I find it untrue: at an age – and I hope I won't be accused of fundamentalism if I describe it as biblical or at least pre-biblical – at an age which is pretty biblical I learned an enormous amount from all of you and I am personally very grateful.