



τὸ διαλεκτικόν

THE BUDAPEST APPEAL

Budapest, 7 – 9 June 1995.

The striving for a new international “order” finds its springboard in the thirst for peace that all men share throughout the world, insofar as their spirit has not been perverted by ideologies of exclusion, hatred or death.

It was present in the “Address to Intellectuals”, voted in November 1951, by the first ordinary General Assembly of the Société Européenne de Culture, inviting them not to be the toy of history, but to work to make history. It was present in the “Letter to Political Authorities” voted by the same Assembly, making of the effort of projection and of construction of a future “order” the object of the politics of culture, understood as the re-acquaintance or the creation of values required by our times, an action that goes beyond the domain of institutions and of laws to embrace and transform all the dimensions of human existence.

Capable of tearing man away from the weights of evolution, embracing and reviving values, culture opens the horizons of possibilities and, according to the philosopher Paul Ricoeur, projects a direction and draws man forward.

Assembled in Budapest in an international colloquium from June 7 to 9, 1995, to ask themselves what stance to adopt for **men of culture facing forces of desegregation and of globalisation in today’s society**, members of the Société Européenne de Culture from twenty-three countries of Europe and America, coming from the most diverse disciplines – from stage management to economics, from literature to scientific research, from law to music, from philosophy to history and theology – were unanimous in willing to renew the “Appeal” of more than forty years ago, because there is an *urgency*.

Urgency, for if it is true that globalisation with its many dimensions – economic, technological, financial, cultural – through networks of exchanges that they weave in all domains of human existence, mightily contributes to the vast movement of recognition of man by man; globalization however can turn against him through the degradations and the destructions it causes when it establishes, in judging human activities, mechanisms, which in the name of insurmountable economic pseudo-laws, crush the weak and anoint a domination of force that no expressed democratic vote, no political power has instituted. The governance of the world economy and, more generally, of the emerging planetary civilization, is problematic, because if it is not supported by adequate institutions, moved by a policy inspired by the politics of culture, the survival of cultures will be compromised and a homogeneous “existence”, caricature of an authentic universal civilization, will tend to substitute itself in place of the “reasons to live” that the values of culture inspire.

Urgency, for if it is true according to the Russian proverb that “hope dies last”, it is critical today that, unanimously, men of culture of the former Eastern bloc, who during the worst years of the Cold War have struggled with their only means, the Word, and who hoped, once freedom of expression had been reconquered, for a joyful explosion of creativeness, allowing them – be they men of the theatre, novelists, poets, composers, painters – to “speak and to say”, feel themselves threatened in their very existence as creators by new obstacles substituting themselves for the old ones. It is neither “assistance” nor charity that they claim, nor shelter from the risks of creativity and a defence of corporate interests that they want; it is a refusal that they oppose to a ludicrous non-culture that, far from serving the values of creativity, diminishes them, reduces them to a bare survival, entrusts them to the power of money when they do not kill them. It is in such an urgency that men of culture of Western Europe too have part, insofar as they are also struggling themselves, though to a lesser degree, for they do not live through the same transitions, against something similar that impedes their possibilities of creation in the name of the same criteria and of the same power of money as king. That does not mean that one should ignore the prerequisites of a healthy management of the resources, financial and human, at the disposal of the sphere of culture; but it could not be at the service of idols when it is a question of works through which men become more human.



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Urgency, whereas the people have chosen the path of peace on the morrow of the Second World War as an indispensable condition for the survival of history, war has not ceased to inflict its ravages in the most diverse forms: wars between nations, civil wars, resurgence of national aspirations suppressed for a long time; wars that are the consequences of distant territorial carvings issued from great international treaties or from decolonisation that too often ignored the question of minorities.

Europe has contributed and contributes powerfully to globalisation, and we are justified in hoping that the more its unity will be established through institutions and multiple exchanges in all the endeavours of man it will be in a better position to make its contribution to the world. But it is necessary that it (Europe) know peace and that it should pursue its path of creation. Europe on the path to construction cannot ignore the emergence of new nations nor the awakening of ancient nations. The time of history is not synchronous. The time of global history is not identical to local times that are also history, and either anticipate or slow down global history in the making. It is absurd today, when the world requires the respect of diversity, to conceive of closed nations, hunkered around ethnic groups, around communities, around religious affinities. Every community, every group must be “open”. This is a fundamental imperative of the Politics of Culture. Welcome and conviviality are primary values for the Politics of Culture. New and old nations together must build the Europe of tomorrow: each one open to all others.

This urgency is the invention of a new order. It is imperative to call singular cultures to engage in a dialogue, to seek together a solution to the multidimensional crisis of civilisation where we find ourselves. All cultures have values that, because they are human, are universal. All have the right to share in the search for common values, and all must welcome values that were initially alien to them.

We call upon the men of culture to enter into a dialogue, in a common search to understand, to act and contribute to the construction of a more human universe, where the last word will belong to peace and to human development. It is part of their calling to awaken Hope.

Then the Budapest Appeal of 1995 will join the Venice Appeal of 1951.