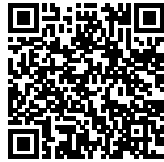# FEELINGS, *ZENTRALGEBIET*, AND THE CRITERION OF THE POLITICAL

*Posted on August 1, 2023 by Teodoro Katte Klitsche de la Grange*

Clausewitz writes, in the first pages of *Vom Kriege* (*On War*), that war, under the aspect of its main tendencies, presents itself as a compound trinity:

> War is more than a true chameleon that slightly adapts its characteristics to the given case. As a total phenomenon its dominant tendencies always make war a paradoxical trinity-- composed of primordial violence, hatred, and enmity, which are to be regarded as a blind natural force; of the play of chance and probability within which the creative spirit is free to roam; and of its element of subordination, as an instrument of policy, which makes it subject to reason alone.

> The first of these three aspects mainly concerns the people; the second the commander and his army; the third the government. The passions that are to be kindled in war must already be inherent in the people; the scope which the play of courage and talent will enjoy in the realm of probability and chance depends on the particular character of the commander and the army; but the political aims are the business of government alone (p. 89).

And just before he argues that " The more powerful and inspiring the motives for war, the more they affect the belligerent nations and the fiercer the tensions that precede the outbreak, the closer will war approach its abstract concept, the more important will be the destruction of the enemy, the more closely will the military aims and the political objects of war coincide, and the more military and less political will war appear to be" (pp. 87-88).

It emerges from these and other passages in *Vom Kriege* that the "fierce tentions" and the original violence of hatred and enmity is the element of the "trinity" that contributes most to the intensity and determination of the war effort.

According to Carl Schmitt, "The concepts of friend and foe must be taken in their concrete, existential meaning, not as metaphors or symbols; they should not be mixed and weakened by economic, moral and other conceptions, and even less should they be understood in an individualistic-private sense," because "An enemy exists only when, at least potentially, one fighting collectivity of people confronts a similar collectivity" (*Concept of the Political*, p. 28).

The enemy is only public as was already written in the *Digest*. Political opposition is the most intense and extreme; it is not limited on the outside of political unity, although on the inside it is relativized, i.e., it is struggle and not war; if it becomes this, it puts political unity in doubt. War is in itself a political means and can only be such "it would be senseless to wage war for purely religious, purely moral, purely juristic, or purely economic motives" (*Concept*, p. 36).

However, " religious, moral, and other antitheses can intensify to political ones and can bring about the decisive friend-or-enemy constellation. If, in fact, this occurs, then the relevant antithesis is no longer purely religious, moral, or economic, but political" (*Concept*, 36); and he continues: " Every religious, moral, economic, ethical, or other antithesis transforms into a political one if it is sufficiently strong to group human beings effectively according to friend and enemy" (*Concept*, p. 37).

In his essay, "The Age of Neutralizations and Depoliticizations" (1929), Schmitt argues (and this also presents interest for the "content" of the political) that Europe has changed its center of reference several times since the 16th century, which has shifted from the theological to the metaphysical, then from this to the moral-humanitarian and then to the economic.

The center of reference determines the meaning of specific concepts from time to time. What is most relevant, "If a domain of thought becomes central, then the problems of other domains are solved in terms of the central domains—they are considered secondary problems, whose solution follows as a matter of course only if the problems of the central domain are solved" ("Neutralizations," p. 86). This is also the case with the state and the friend-enemy groupings: "Above all the state also derives its reality and power from the respective central domain, because the decisive disputes of friend-enemy groupings are also determined by it. As long as religious-theological matters were the central focus, the *maxim cujus regio ejus religio* had a political meaning" ("Neutralizations," p. 87).

Having changed the center of reference, the conception of the state and the content or discriminant of the political changes, which takes on another meaning and criterion and may result in a different friend-foe grouping and thus, "The former central domain became neutralized in that it ceased to be the central domain. On the basis of the new central domain, one hoped to find minimum agreement and common premises allowing for the possibility of security, clarity, prudence, and peace. Europeans thus moved in the direction of neutralization and minimalization" ("Neutralizations," pp. 89-90).

However, not even the "neutral" landing place that Europeans arrived at in the 20th century, namely,

technics, can realize the aspiration for the elimination of conflict; both because "Technology is always only an instrument and weapon; precisely because it serves all, it is not neutral. No single decision can be derived from the immanence of technology, least of all for neutrality" ("Neutralizations," p. 91), and also because "So far the hope that a politically dominant elite would develop out of the community of technical inventors has not been fulfilled" ("Neutralizations," p. 92). Schmitt continues: "The constructions of Saint-Simon and other sociologists who anticipated an "industrial" society are either not purely technical (but rather mixed with humanitarian-moral and economic elements) or simply fantastic. Not even the economic direction of the contemporary economy is in the hands of technicians, and until now nobody has been able to construe a social order led by technicians other than as one lacking any leadership or direction" ("Neutralizations," p. 92).

The correlation, although not always necessary and inescapable, between center of reference and friend-enemy exculpatory persuades only in part.

This is primarily because it must be coordinated with what Schmitt so often repeated, namely, that it is the concrete situation that determines the enemy. For which there is not only the pair of opposites referring to the center of reference, but there are other oppositions, sometimes more important and so decisive (or at least perceived as such) that determine situations of struggle and hostility.

For example, in the short century and particularly after the conclusion of World War II, the opposition between liberal democracies (with annexes) and communist nations repartitioned almost the entire developed world into two camps one against the other, armed, organized in alliance systems (and related organizations), opposed and ready for mutual destruction. Despite this, it did not prevent these nations states of intense hostility, up to war, within both the "two" camps and between "clients" of them, mostly not induced by the main friend-enemy discriminant.

In fact, there have been wars in the same "camp": China-Vietnam; Vietnam-Cambodia; China-Russia; (the Ussuri "incidents") for the communist one; Britain-Argentina (for the Falklands-Malvinas) as well as the Turkish occupation of part of Cyprus with the high tensions between Greece and Turkey.

Moreover, the Arab-Israeli wars did not have at all the content and ideological exculpation of the camps that, to a greater or lesser extent, helped one or the other of the contenders, but the "traditional" character of disputes for the possession of land between different peoples.

Even civil wars are not (always) ideological wars (although this has often been the case in the last two centuries). As Henry de Montherlant wrote in the prologue of his drama, _La guerra civile_ (_Civil War_), acknowledging this: "I am the civil war… I am not the war of the trenches and battlefields. I am the war of the angry square, the war of prisons and streets, of neighbor against neighbor, of rival against rival, of friend against friend." That "friend against friend" shows how the playwright saw the dissolution of the friendship relationship as the cause of civil war. Against this, the aggregation resulting from the commonality of laws, traditions, history and language, which in any case produces cohesion, does not (always) count; to this must be added the will to exist together and a common future. The failure of which induces the end of political synthesis, which, as Renan wrote, is an "everyday plebiscite."

In political reality the constant of domination and its determinants, particularly geo-political, so well enunciated by Thucydides in the famous dialogue between the Melians and the Athenian ambassadors (And it is not as if we were the first to make this law, or to act upon it when made: we found it existing before us, and shall leave it to exist for ever after us; all we do is to make use of it, knowing that you and everybody else, having the same power as we have, would do the same as we do, _History of the Peloponnesian War_, Book 5.17)—oppositions between peoples accustomed to fighting and asserting their identity over their neighbors (as, often, in the Balkans—and not only); the interests of states, such as De Gaulle's policy towards the communist world—make the main (and epochal) opposition non-decisive. (As for de Gaulle, Europe, from the Atlantic to the Urals, clearly revealed the aspiration to relativize the hostility between NATO and the Warsaw Pact and thus the exculpation).

The decisiveness of the opposition should be traced to its influence on the existence of the political community, both in an absolute sense (the destruction of the community or the institution that shapes it) and in a relative sense (the radical modification of its mode of existence).

Political conflict is thus determined primarily by the community's need for existence: if another human group is perceived as an enemy-in the sense of being a (concrete) danger to the existence of the threatened community—the same religious, ideological, economic "differences" take a back seat. "Values" and the correlative "canon," mostly stated, in modern states, in the Constitutions, take a back seat at the moment when the existence of the community is at stake. This is done on both the internal side (the decision on the state of exception) and the external side (the decision on the enemy), in homage to the maxim, _salus rei publicae suprema lex_. The enemy is the one who is such for the _salus_ of the state institution (and the community). It is the concrete situation and the danger to the collective existence, and the hostile feeling that follows from it, more than the contrast on the mode of existence

of a people that designates the enemy. Thus, it belongs to each community to decide who is such, and whether the epochal opposition is more or less important than the other oppositions, which have the character not only of concreteness but also of particularity. As Freund wrote, "To fall into error about the enemy out of ideological stupor… is to expose oneself to putting, sooner or later, one's existence in danger" (*Essence du Politique*, p. 496).

Gentile wrote that "The political sense is the soil (humus) in which the tree of the State sends down its roots" (*Genesis and Structure of Society*, p. 182). This statement is complementary to Clausewitz's statement about the tendency/component/constant of war constituted by the blind instinct—and with that, the political feeling —that "corresponds" to the people. Gentile writes that the living (i.e., vital) state needs political feeling: "This structure must have life, such as it can have only if it is a feeling, a political sense, the secret source of every passion that the political activity of the individual brings to light. When this fountain dries up, political action loses all sincerity and warmth; it is emptied of all constructive energy and decays into a mere game for dilettanti" (*Genesis*, p. 183), and he continues: "The more vigorous this political sense is, the more powerful and effective political action becomes" (*Genesis*, p. 183).

Without political feeling there is neither war nor viable state—that one thus has the possibility of being waged and, in the case, won; in this it is resolved in the relativization of oppositions and conflicts, particularly that between rulers and ruled in the consent of the latter to the former, in an *idem sentire de republica*. This appears to be the meaning given to consent by Gentile: "This consent may be spontaneous or it may be procured by coercion. The moral ideal of the State, within which the government exercises its authority, requires that spontaneity be increased to a maximum and coercion reduced to a minimum; but it is impossible that either element should ever stand alone, unaccompanied by its opposite. The nations swing restlessly between the two poles of a minimum of coercion with a maximum of spontaneity, and a maximum of coercion with a minimum of spontaneity: between democracy and absolutism, for it is very hard to attain that mutual—tempering of the opposed principles which is their dialectical synthesis… For neither of the two terms can stand alone; and the necessity of their synthesis is a consequence of the essentially dialectical character of the spiritual act" (*Genesis*, pp. 123-124; 125).

The problem of the legitimacy of consent and integration, which contemporary jurists often resolve in legality, without considering that this is based on the conviction of the legitimacy of those who exercise power, and not vice versa; so that, wrote Gentile, there is no police that can provide for it, if the social

order is not shared: "Peace takes definite and determinate form as the system of social order, the maintenance of which is the primary task of every State; and no one can pretend that the police force is all that is required to meet this essential and fundamental need. The police may be helpful in preserving peace, but only if order reigns in men's hearts by virtue of the political sense in which the State is rooted and from which alone it gets its vital sap. Police work is a medicine; and just as no medicine can keep alive an organism threatened by an inner failure of vitality, so no police force can restore the health of a State when the *vis medicatrix naturae* has run out" (*Genesis*, p. 182).

A phenomenological analysis of the friend-foe relationship must start from the factual observation that conflict is in itself irrepressible both within and outside the political synthesis. A society, so harmonious as to know no internal conflict is the result of utopianism; that is, of that variant of utopian thought aimed at imagining impossible fantasies because they are opposed to the factual *datum*.

What, on the other hand, is part of historical experience (and is constant) is that political syntheses exist as such as long as they succeed in relativizing internal conflicts, recomposing and deciding them; conflicts relativized by consent to a higher authority, recognized (by the governed) to make the (unappealable) decisions for the order it ensures. Where this does not happen, the result is that those conflicts move from relative to absolute, in which at stake is the existence and, gradually, the form of government, the regime of political synthesis and no longer internal disagreements. It follows that out of all the innumerable conflicts that may exist within the political synthesis, depowering one, certainly present, is a necessary presupposition of the amicable relationship: that between rulers and ruled. For it enables the recomposition of all others.

Authority, order and rules have as their fundamental requirement to settle and decide conflicts, and thus the struggle that inevitably ensues, limiting and degrading it to agonal competition.

Even more, the relativization of internal disagreements is based on the pacifying role of the third party, internal to the political synthesis, that is, in principle, the sovereign power. In principle because the activity of the third party (including internal) may not be carried out by an organ of the state and, the political result (the settlement of the disagreement), nevertheless achieved. But the role of the "third party" may not be limited to internal conflicts and, especially its action, be aimed at stirring up dissension, not recomposing it.

It has often been thought, in the post-atomic era and following the *debellatio* of Germany and Japan

(the case of Italy is different), that the end of war is identified with the military occupation of a country, previously destroyed by the victor, and thus placed in the material impossibility of defending itself; the terrible effects of a nuclear war in the collective imagination have done the rest.

In reality, a war ends when one side no longer has the will to fight. War is a clash of wills, as Clausewitz and Gentile, among others, wrote. It therefore presupposes that both contenders have the will to make it and continue it—if one of them surrenders, the war ceases.

Rightly de Maistre noted that a battle lost is one that we imagine we have lost. Indeed, De Maistre writes that "it is imagination that loses battles," but, to some extent, this is also true of the wars (*St. Petersburg Dialogues*, p. 222). In this regard, this conclusion was drawn by Gustave Le Bon who argued that often "The rout is obviously only the result of a purely psycholoiric impression, and by no means an inescapable necessity." (*La Psychologie politique*, p. 96).

Absolute war stands to real war as the (perpetual? universal?) peace of debellatio stands to a treaty (or even "dictate") of real peace. It is essential to bend the enemy's will to fight and thus the feeling of (communal belonging and) hostility. To this end, all means are good: both the prospect of superior punishment and harm and the opposite of benefits, advantages or clemency. The armistice with which the First World War ended (militarily), with Germany still master of much of Central and Eastern Europe, is one such case.

Economic pressures (the effects of the blockade), the armistice of Austria-Hungary, and the strategic prospects of this, and increased U.S. intervention contributed to depowering the will to fight.

But even in the 20th century, in the age of technical and total warfare, often determined and motivated partisan armies endured and won under conditions of (abysmal) material inferiority, at the cost of vastly greater casualties than hyper-technological enemies. The material imbalance was offset by the intensity of hostile feeling and so of morale. Enemies could not bear the (far inferior) sacrifices, so they preferred to conclude peace or otherwise give up the war. Hostile feeling is, for the weaker, the factor that can enable them to wage and win war, even though it is marked by a very considerable material asymmetry. (This was the conclusion of many liberation wars: from the Vietnamese to the Algerian to the Soviet-Afghan—and many others).

It is precisely asymmetrical warfare in its various forms that has connoted contemporary conflicts since the collapse of communism and the consequent breakup of the bipolar condominium that had characterized the second half of the 20th century.

Similarly, hostility between human groups, which shares the chameleon-like nature of its most intense product, war (characterized by the use of violence), takes intermediate forms (mostly mystified or entirely concealed). Influenced by derivations (in Pareto's sense) of pacifism; these consist in denying armed interventions the character of war, in the name of irenic intentions and especially because they are undertaken in order to maintain peace. (Often such externalized intentions match the actual purpose, but, at least as often, they do not).

But the panoply of hostility is not limited to wars in disguise.

Other forms of it are those actions tending to the same purpose as war—to bend the will of the adversary—by non-military means (economic blockade, cyber-attacks, financial raids, all the way to peaceful invasions); that is, conducted by subjects not having the status of legitimate belligerents (*justi hostes*), a means well known even to centuries past. The common connotation of all these types of hostile acts is that, having the same purpose as "classical" war, they lack one (or more) of the requirements identified by Christian theology for there to be a just war (*justum bellum*): here the *recta intentio* is missing, there the *auctoritas*, elsewhere a justa causa belli. Hence (perhaps) they cannot be considered wars in the proper sense; but they almost always cannot be traced back to the concept of just war elaborated by theologians.

It is precisely in such wars not wars that the need to annihilate the enemy's will to resist (and to fight) assumes perhaps greater prominence than in classical wars; for the adversary knows full well, as de Gaulle wrote, that strength resides in the order of it and that breaking this destroys that.

In the "atypical" forms of warfare that connote the 21st century, this is possible in various ways, and the means must be congruent with the objectives. The loss of the enemy's political cohesion, however, appears to be decisive. The degrees of action may be different: they range, in escalation, from the replacement of the hostile government, to the abolition of the political regime, to the destruction of the political synthesis targeted by the hostile intervention.

As examples in modern history, one may recall, for the first type, the fall of governments (and then regimes) of real socialism in Eastern Europe; although, in this case, the intervention of the antagonist (the U.S. and NATO) was unimportant and entirely indirect. In fact, the endogenous cause, that is, the unpopularity of the regimes that made the amicable relationship between rulers and ruled problematic, was totally (or almost totally) decisive. However, this confirms that the amicable relationship is decisive; without this, in the long run, any political regime collapses, even without the intervention of other political actors. Another case, of the same type, although achieved in part by military means, is the Cyprus crisis in 1974 and the fall of the Joannides government. Of the second, the end of the regime was the tsarist collapse and the seizure of power by the Bolsheviks. Of the third, the end of Czechoslovakia in 1939 with the absorption into the Reich of Bohemia and Moravia and the birth of the Slovak republic of Mgr. Jozef Tiso. In all these (and other) cases, military means were not used at all; or, if used at all, were not decisive. What was decisive was the attenuation or disappearance of the friendly relationship and hostile feeling.

A common notion is that the means used and the purpose make it closer to revolution than to war: even if the end is not always revolutionary it consists of the subversion and overthrow of the hostile order (and so at least the government). Since contemporary hostile interventions have—like so many wars on the other hand—limited goals, the replacement of the government is often sufficient to achieve them.

Despite the non-use of military means, this makes it far more damaging to the principles of international law than a *justum bellum*: stirring up subversion (up to revolution) in other states has, in the view of many, constituted an international tort, often vituperated and equally practiced.

Political thought has wondered for millennia about who the enemy is, and the answers to the question have been the most varied and not even mutually exclusive. It has been held that there were enemies by nature (see, Alberico Gentili, *Il diritto di Guerra*, p. 78), and in Cromwell's speech quoted by Carl Schmitt (Concept, pp. 67-68): "Why, truly, your great Enemy is the Spaniard. He is a natural enemy. He is naturally so; he is naturally so throughout, by reason of that enmity that is in him against whatsoever is of God. 'Whatsoever is of God' which is in you, or which may be in you." Then he repeats: "The Spaniard is your enemy," his "enmity is put into him by God." He is "the natural enemy, the providential enemy," and he who considers him to be an "accidental enemy" is "not well acquainted with Scripture and the things of God," who says: "'I will put enmity between your seed and her seed'" (Gen. III:I5).");  or more often by divergence of interests, or even by customs (Alberico Gentili argues that "If there really were causes dependent on nature, the resulting war would surely be just. But causes of this kind do not exist

Men are not enemies among themselves by nature; it is activities and customs which, according to their compatibility or incompatibility, induce them to concord or discord" (*Il diritto*, p. 80); by religion, the source of so many contrasts. (On the basis of two well-known *Digest* fragments, the one who is not sovereign (and for non-public causes) is normally ruled out (*Dig.* L.16.118 and *Dig.* XXXXVII.15.24). Even more so about who is the right enemy.

As argued by Schmitt (and others), the 20th century saw the recognition of the status of just enemy, even to political subjects other than states (particularly revolutionary movements); thus, a legitimization of just wars, predominantly on the basis of the criterion of *justa causa belli*.

On the phenomenological level, the whole led not to the reduction but to the increase in the role of hostile feeling: in particular, war activity carried out by relatively (little) institutionalized (on this point, see "Revolution," in *Frammenti di un dizionario giuridico*, p. 224), non-state organizations led to an increase in the active role of the population in war, according to Mao Zedong's conception, and thus in political feeling.

Weak institutionalization has similarly made the role of "technical" and specialized personnel less relevant. The command—and cadres—of partisan movements are only occasionally (and rarely) military technicians and bureaucrats; for the most part they either do not possess war experience or have little. Even at the dawn of the modern partisan, we find Cardinal Ruffo, who was not a military man but a religious and civil administrator. On the other hand, he knew very well how to arouse and make use of the hostile anti-Jacobin feeling of the southern populations. So did most of his followers; something repeated in all (or almost all) modern revolutionary movements. Fra Diavolo the partisan leader was a saddler and then enlisted (some time) in the regular Bourbon army; Empecinado the farmer.

And, in this respect, it is necessary to return to Schmitt's conception, mentioned earlier, of the role of technics and technocracy, relative to political feeling, whether it be aversion to the enemy or cohesion with the friend.

Technics itself is a tool and a means, not an end.

Rather, the shift from the conception of technics (of the first half of the last century) that Schmitt writes about as "faith in an activist metaphysics, faith in man's boundless power and dominion over nature, and

thus also over human physis, faith in the limitless 'overcoming of natural obstacles,' in the infinite possibilities of change and refinement of man's natural existence in this world," so that he cannot declare it "simply a soulless, spiritless, mechanistic dead thing," reinforced the null (or scant) suitability to arouse "political feeling."

If technics at the time was conceived in a Promethean dimension (and function), it is now perceived as the satisfaction of (mostly private) needs of a society of pantomime consumers, who in any case have abdicated any sense of collective existence, other than that of producing and consuming. Which dovetails very well with Tocqueville's prophecy of mild despotism (*Democracy in America*, Vol.2, Book IV, Chapter VI. It may also be recalled, as a supplement to Tocqueville's judgment what Schmitt writes: "Great masses of industrialized peoples today still cling to a torpid religion of technicity because they, like all masses, seek radical results and believe subconsciously that the absolute depoliticization sought after four centuries can be found here and that universal peace begins here. Yet technology can do nothing more than intensify peace or war; it is equally available to both. In this respect, nothing changes by speaking in the name of and employing the magic formula of peace. Today we see through the fog of names and words with which the psycho-technical machinery of mass suggestion works"—"Neutralizations," p. 95); while according to the Plettenberg jurist, " All new and great impulses, every revolution and reformation, every new elite originates from asceticism and voluntary or involuntary poverty (poverty meaning above all the renunciation of the security of the status quo)—("Neutralizations," p. 94).

Nonetheless given that any choice, as is also the choice to make use of technology (or technologies), can provoke a friend-foe opposition it is the case to see if this (and/or those) can also constitute an aggregating/ discriminating foundation.

First, it must be remembered that the rejection of certain technical (solutions) is, more often than not, only a reflection of a choice of values; in the contemporary world this is evident for (new) technologies traceable to bioethical orientations (Although today, as in past centuries for the most part, such contrasts have not resulted in conflicts between political symbioses, the contrast in internal political struggle even if minor can always be traced back to the friend-enemy pair). The dependence of these on those makes them irrelevant or, at best, secondary.

Second, the total (or nearly total) rejection of technics, as the resultant/component of another science and civilization, has been repeated over and over again throughout history.

In particular, Toynbee considers it one of the types of behavior held by human communities not part of Western civilization (of Christianity) in the face of its planetary expansion. Regarding rejection (as opposed to assimilation/acceptance) he considered "champions" (among other rejectors) Japan before the Meiji Revolution and Abyssinia; of acceptance (modernization) he considered the most typical historical figures Peter the Great, Mehmet Ali and the Japanese statesmen of the Meiji era (Mankind and Mother Earth, p. vii): "Eminent examples of Westernizing statesmen in the first century after the beginning of the Industrial Revolution in Britain are Ranjit Singh (ruled 1 799-1839) the founder of the Sikh successor-state, in the Punjab, of the Abdali Afghan Empire; Muhammad Ali, the Ottoman Padishah's viceroy in Egypt from 1805 to 1848; the Ottoman Padishah Mahmud II (ruled 1808-39); King Mongkut of Thailand (ruled 1851-68); and the band of Japanese statesmen that, in the Emperor's name, liquidated the Tokugawa regime and took the government of Japan into its own hands in 1868. These Westernizing statesmen have had a greater effect on the history of the Oikoumene than any of their Western contemporaries. They have kept the West's dominance within limits, and they have done this by propagating, in non-Western countries, the modern West's way of life" (Mankind and Mother Earth, p. 567). And for rejections: "In 1632 the Abyssinians (present-day Ethiopians) expelled the Portuguese and also Jesuits of all European nationalities, and insulated themselves from the rest of the Oikoumene, without any foreign help. Almost simultaneously the Japanese did the same. Hideyoshi had ordered the expulsion of Christian missionaries as early as 1587. An edict banning the practice of Christianity in Japan…" (*Mankind and Mother Earth*, p. 532).

But the rejection of technics and technology was the consequence/ result of the rejection of Western civilization as a whole, in its values as well as in social organization (including law), as well as technology, and thus, in part, coincides with the first type of choice.

Even if an opposition to technics is theoretically conceivable, it does not appear in practice, as a real determinant of conflict, nor can it constitute, except in an ancillary role (although sometimes the ancillary function plays a minor, still relevant, role), a decisive and legitimizing factor of power. Every conflictual and nonconflictual situation of enmity or friendship; dissent or consensus of values or interests is left to the human will, while the choice of technics (and the validity of it) is not preference of will, but of appropriateness and expediency.

The contemporary situation, following the collapse of communism (and the institutions-alliances that determined its field) has brought to an end the bourgeois-proletariat opposition that connoted (at least) the "short century." The recent electoral assertions of movements and candidates that cannot be traced

back to the old *Zentralgebiet*, in Europe first and foremost, and, as appears from Trump's election, in the U.S. as well, bring out a new friend-foe opposition, ideologically less defined but, at least potentially, virulent. It seems clear that this opposition, as I happened to write recently, is that between nation (national identity) and globalization (see, *Nazione e globalizzazione in Nova Historica*, 15/56, 2016, pp. 39ff); (or "direct" internationalism). Compared with the old *Zentralgebiet*, especially the one generating the bourgeoisie-proletariat opposition, it has in common the character of being divisive internally no less than externally—it generates populist parties that oppose the domestic and international elites, represented by the old decaying parties, whose survival strategy is often consistent with the emergence of the new opposition (which makes the old one secondary and unimportant): they tend toward entrenchment, to bloc together (the old right and the old left), to prevent the new *amicus-hostis* "couple" from seizing power.

Although, it is often the case to speak of parallel divergences rather than entrenchment. But parallel divergences are one of the sources of alliances between different parties on so much (or everything) but united by the enemy.

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Teodoro Katte Klitsche de la Grange is an attorney in Rome and is the editor of the well-regarded and influential law journal *Behemoth*.

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Featured: *The Battle of Gorosssló* (*Allegory of the Turkish War*), by Hans von Aachen; painted ca. 1603-1604.