

THE EUROPEAN NEW RIGHT FORTY YEARS LATER: TOMISLAV SUNIC'S *Against Democracy and Equality**

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In 1990, as the current of thought known as the “European New Right” (ENR) celebrated its twenty-first birthday, a Croatian friend of mine, Tomislav Sunic published in English the first edition of his book on the New Right. It was originally written as his doctoral dissertation, which had been defended two years earlier at the University of California, Santa Barbara.¹ Having acquired a very good knowledge of French during his studies at the University of Zagreb, Sunic was keen to probe very early on into the ENR. Moreover, he also had the opportunity to read ENR works in the original French. Unlike many other commentators, who spoke of the ENR on the basis of hearsay and formed judgments from second-hand sources, he demonstrated the ability to go right to the core of the issue. He showed sympathy for the ENR, which distinguished him from the above-mentioned commentators.

Obviously the book was not interesting merely because it was sympathetic. The importance of his book is due to its pioneer character. Certainly, by the late 1980s, several books (and also a number of scholarly articles) had been published on the ENR, but they were almost all in French. Sunic's book was one of the first to appear abroad, a privilege he shared with some Italian authors. Presenting the history and main ideas of the ENR to a public that had never heard of it before was not an easy task. Thanks to his knowledge, his

* This text is Alain de Benoist's Preface to the new Croatian edition of Tomislav Sunic's book on the European New Right: *Europska nova desnica: Korijeni, ideje i mislioci* (Zagreb: Hasanbegovic Zlatko, 2009), translated from the original French by Tomislav Sunic and Greg Johnson. We wish to thank Alain de Benoist for his help with the translation.

¹ Defended in 1988, this thesis was first published by Peter Lang (New York) in 1990, then reprinted by Noontide Press of Newport Beach California in 2004, with a preface by Paul Gottfried and a foreword by David J. Stennett.

talent for synthesis, and also his knowledge of his audience, Sunic succeeded handily.

Sunic's book was written in English since the author then resided in the United States—a country he knew from the inside out and regarded in a rather critical manner (as evidenced by his latest book, *Homo Americanus*²). When addressing the English-speaking world, Sunic faced difficulties that an Italian, Spanish, or German author would have never encountered.

The first of these difficulties is the general lack of interest in intellectual debate in the Anglo-Saxon world. The English, and even more so the Americans, pretend to be "pragmatic." In philosophy, they adhere mostly to empiricism and positivism, if not to a purely analytical philosophy. In their craving for "facts" they forget that facts cannot be dissociated from hermeneutics, i.e., from a framework of interpretation. David Hume's famous distinction between judgments of fact and judgments of value (the indicative and the imperative, what is and what ought to be) can only have relative value. As for political theory, with few notable exceptions, it often boils down to practical considerations that determine the agenda of the ruling class. This explains why Americans disdain intellectuals, and why intellectuals have never held the role of moral arbiters, as is other countries, notably France.

The expression "New Right" presented another difficulty. There were already English and American "New Rights," but far from being related to the ENR, they represented their very opposite. Combining religious fundamentalism, Atlanticism, "Westernism," the defense of capitalism, and support for the ideology of the market, these New Rights indeed represented everything the ENR had set out to radically criticize. Sympathizers of these New Rights, who might otherwise have been intrigued by Sunic's book must surely have been disappointed.

In general, and regardless of all misunderstandings that may have been caused by such a label (I will come back to that later), it must have been very hard to find the equivalent of the ENR on the other side of the Atlantic. In America "the right" really consists of two main currents: one mainstream, moderate, and middle class, corresponding to "conservative" circles (themselves divided into numerous cliques)

² Tomislav Sunic, *Homo americanus: Child of the Postmodern Age* (Charleston, S.C.: BookSurge Publishing, 2007).

whose main cause is supporting capitalism, an economic system whose main trait is to destroy everything conservatives should want to conserve.

On the other hand there is a radical minority, represented by small extremist groups who call themselves "racialists," whose ideology boils down to a mixture of nationalism and xenophobia. Not only has the ENR never identified itself with any of these Anglo-Saxon rightist cliques, it has consistently fought against their principles and presuppositions.

Other ambiguities are related to vocabulary. I will give only one example. In the realm of ideas the ENR has consistently targeted liberalism as one of its chief adversaries. Yet the word "liberal" has radically different meanings in Western Europe and the United States.

In America, a "liberal" is a man leaning to the center-left who advocates a redistributive state. He is also easygoing in terms of social mores and tends to be a great defender of the ideology of human rights. In France we call him a "progressive."

By contrast, in Europe, a liberal is primarily an advocate of individualism and free trade, an opponent of the state, and also a supporter of America. If one asks a Frenchman to name a well-known liberal politician, Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher would immediately come to mind. In other words, what we call "liberal" corresponds to a large extent to that what the Americans call a "conservative" – and therefore the opposite of a "liberal"!

This difference has historical origins: the Americans have retained the original meaning of the word "liberalism" which, when it first appeared in the eighteenth century, was actually a "leftist" current of thought, being the main heir to the philosophy of the Enlightenment. In Europe, by contrast, liberals were gradually pushed to the right by the rise of socialism and communism, to the point that by the late nineteenth century liberals began to identify themselves with the conservative bourgeoisie (sometimes called "Orléanists" in France). One can thus see immediately the kind of scorn – and the kind of false friends – a book presenting an "anti-liberal" current of thought might attract in America.

Finally, criticism of the United States and global Americanization, which has resulted from gradual assertion of American hegemony, has been a standard topic of the ENR. This could hardly appeal to Americans, who perceive their country as the "Promised Land," the

incarnation of the best possible society, and – for this very reason – as a model that deserves to be exported world-wide. It is significant that very few texts by ENR authors have been translated into English, although they have been translated into fifteen other languages. The ENR, as an emanation of “old Europe” (or of the “rest of the world,” which Americans will never fully comprehend unless it becomes totally Americanized), remains *terra incognita* for the vast majority of Americans.³

The English edition of Sunic’s book bears the title *Against Democracy and Equality: The European New Right* – a title that I have always considered inappropriate! I suspect the author chose this title out of sheer provocation. It must be emphasized, though, that the ENR has never been hostile to democracy and equality. Granted, it has been critical of egalitarianism and has highlighted the limits of liberal democracy – but that is quite a different matter.

Between equality and egalitarianism there is roughly the same difference as between liberty and liberalism, or the universal and universalism, or the common good and communism. Egalitarianism aims to introduce equality where it has no place and does not correspond with reality, such as the idea that all individuals have all the same skills and gifts. But above all, egalitarianism understands equality as “*sameness*,” that is, the opposite of diversity. Yet the opposite of equality is inequality, not diversity. Equality of men and women, for example, does not obliterate the reality of the difference between the two sexes. Likewise, equality of political rights under democracy does not presuppose that all citizens are identical, or have the same talents, but that they must all enjoy the same political rights because, in their political relations, they are all equally citizens in virtue of belonging to the same polity.

³ Let us mention the special issue of the magazine *Telos*, “New Right – New Left – New Paradigm?,” *Telos*, nos. 98–99 (Autumn–Winter 1993), as well as the book by Michael O’Meara, *New Culture, New Right: Anti-Liberalism in Postmodern Europe* (Bloomington, Ind.: 1stBooks, 2004). I would add that criticism of the United States by the ENR has never slid off into “Americanophobia.” Quite the contrary. The ENR has instead welcomed a number of writers and thinkers from English speaking countries. They are few in number, but not without importance, such as the theorists of communitarianism, such as Michael Sandel, the Canadian Charles Taylor, the Englishman Alasdair McIntyre, and especially Christopher Lasch, a theorist of “populist socialism,” a term which calls to mind the great George Orwell, whose ideas have also been popularized by Paul Piccone in *Telos*.

The ENR has always denounced what I call the ideology of Sameness, i.e., the universalistic ideology that, in its religious or secular forms, seeks to reduce the diversity of the world—i.e., the diversity of cultures, value systems, and rooted ways of life—to one uniform model. Implementing the ideology of Sameness leads to the reduction and eradication of differences. Being fundamentally ethnocentric, despite its universalistic claims, it unceasingly legitimizes all forms of imperialism. In the past, it was exported by missionaries who wished to convert the entire planet to the one and only God—then, in the same vein, by colonizers who, in the name of the “meaning of history” and the cult of “progress,” wanted to impose their way of life on “indigenous peoples.” Today in the name of the capitalist system, the ideology of the Same reduces all meaning to market prices and transforms the world into a vast, homogeneous marketplace where men, reduced to the roles of producers and consumers—soon to become commodities themselves—must all adopt the mentality of *Homo economicus*. Insofar as it seeks to reduce diversity, which is the only true wealth of mankind, the ideology of Sameness is itself a caricature of equality. In fact it creates inequalities of the most unbearable kind. By contrast, equality—which must be defended whenever it is necessary—is quite another matter.

As for democracy: the ENR never had any taste for despotism or dictatorship, much less totalitarianism. Democracy, the principal tenet of which is equality of political rights, may not be the best possible regime, but it best meets the requirements of our times. But we must first understand its exact meaning.

Democracy is the regime in which sovereignty resides in the people. But to be truly sovereign, the people must be able to express itself freely, and those whom it designates as its representatives must act in accordance with its wishes. That is why true democracy is participatory democracy, i.e., democracy that allows people to exercise their sovereignty as often as possible and not just during elections. In this sense, universal suffrage is only a technical means to assess the degree of agreement or consent between those who govern and the governed. As understood by the ancient Greeks, democracy, in the final analysis, is a system that allows all of its citizens to participate actively in public affairs. This means that in a democracy liberty is mainly defined as the opportunity to participate actively in the public sphere, certainly not as liberty to become oblivious of the public sphere, or to withdraw into the private sphere.

A purely representative democracy is, at best, an imperfect democracy. Ultimately political power must be exercised at all levels, and not only at the top, thanks to the principle of subsidiarity (or of sufficient competence), which means that people themselves can make decisions about what relates to them as much as possible, relegating only those decisions that interest larger communities to be made at a higher level. At a time when representatives are increasingly cut off from the people, when non-elected officials increasingly have more power than elected ones, when the politicians see themselves dispossessed of their prerogatives by a bureaucratic system of technical “experts” that dreams of modeling the government of men on corporate management or an administration of things, the essential priority is the renewal of participatory democracy—grassroots democracy, direct democracy—and the rebirth of an active public sphere, which alone is able to maintain the social bond and guarantee the exercise of shared values.

Because Sunic’s book appeared in 1990, it obviously does not take into account what has happened since then. However, over the last 18 years, the ENR has broadened its goals dramatically and published quite a bit, mainly in the field of social criticism. I will obviously not try to summarize them, however briefly, since that is the purpose of Sunic’s book. But I am pleased that the Croatian edition of his book contains as an Appendix a full translation of the “Manifesto for a European Renaissance,” published in 2000, which proposes a synthesis of the objectives of the ENR at the dawn of the twenty-first century and which, to date, has been translated into Spanish, Italian, English, German, Hungarian, and Dutch. The reader can thus review everything that the ENR has written over the past two decades about social science, Europe, postmodernity, federalism, the contrast between the nation state and the empire, the critique of the ideology of labor, the capitalist system, “governance,” the decline of the political, the crisis of democracy, the question of identity, environmental threats, the critique of “development,” and new prospects opened by critics of unlimited growth, and so on.

Nonetheless I’d like to focus on some important issues. First, I’d like to mention the continuity of the ENR’s project since 1968. The ENR is exactly forty years old now. Its main journals have shown their longevity: *Nouvelle Ecole* was launched in 1968, *Éléments* in 1973, and *Krisis* in 1988. Even if duration and continuity are not the only

things that count, one must still agree that few schools of thought have been active this long. But the ENR has more than just a history, it has an agenda. Over the last forty years, the ENR has published a considerable number of books and articles; it has organized countless conferences, symposia, meetings, summer schools, etc. In doing so, it has abandoned some tracks that it mistakenly thought promising while continually exploring new ones. Thus it has remained faithful to its "encyclopedic" inspiration from the very beginning.

I must also point out that from the very beginning the ENR viewed itself as a school of thought, not as a political movement. This school of thought has largely exceeded the organizational framework of the association first known as GRECE, *Groupement de recherche et d'études pour la civilisation européenne* (Research Group for the Study of European Civilization), founded in 1968. Through its publications, the ENR has been engaged in "metapolitics." What does "metapolitics" mean? Certainly not a different way of doing politics. Metapolitics was born from the awareness of the role of ideas in history and the conviction that intellectual, cultural, doctrinal, and ideological work is the prerequisite of any form of (political) action. This is something that activists, who constantly insist on "urgency" (if only to safeguard themselves from any kind of in-depth reflection), or who simply prefer being reactive to being reflective, have a hard time understanding. To sum it up with a simple formula: the Enlightenment came before the French Revolution, and the French Revolution would not have been possible without the Enlightenment. Before every Lenin there must be a Marx. Antonio Gramsci understood this quite well, when addressing "organic" intellectuals. He stressed that transforming the political and socio-historical structures of a given age presupposes that an immense transformation of values has already taken place.

The ENR was founded in the late 1960s by young people who for the most part had some adolescent experiences with militant politics and thus had a sense of its shortcomings and limitations. Eager to provide the foundations of a political philosophy and a conception of a new world, they wished to some extent to start from scratch and to break with the illusions of immediate political action.

By that time, however, they had become aware of the simplistic and obsolete cleavage between left and right. They knew that every society is in need of both conservation and change. They were ready to examine tradition critically in order to identify its living and

meaningful core, while tackling the major problems of the time from a truly revolutionary perspective. Undoubtedly, this, among other things, explains their interest in the “conservative revolution” in Weimar Germany. In general, they rejected false alternatives. They followed the logic of “both-and” rather than “either-or.” They did not claim: “we are neither on the right nor on the left” – which means nothing. Rather, they decided to be *both* “on the right and on the left.” They made it clear that they were determined to examine the ideas they considered best, regardless of the labels those ideas had acquired. As far as they were concerned, there were no “rightist ideas” vs. “leftist ideas,” but only false ideas vs. true ideas.

These convictions soon found justification in the changes of recent decades. The left-right divide, having been born with modernity, is now in the process of passing away with modernity. This does not mean that in the past, the labels “right” and “left” meant nothing. But these notions were always equivocal, since there is no “absolute” left or right, but rather a large variety of different “lefts” and “rights.” The spectrum is so wide that surely some of these lefts and rights are closer to each other than to other lefts or other rights respectively. This also explains that certain issues—such as regionalism, ecology, federalism, the ideology of progress, and so on, have, in the course of time, drifted from the right to the left or vice versa.

The ideology of progress, to mention just one issue, has clearly moved into the “rightist” camp, to the point that now it is the European-style liberals and American-style conservatives who have become its avid supporters, whereas a significant part of the “left” remains radically critical of it, as part of its fight against industrialism and its defense of natural ecosystems.

Notions like right and left have become meaningless today. They only survive in the world of parliamentary politics, having become obsolete in the world of ideas. Let us mention an important fact: all major events in recent decades, far from resurrecting the left-right cleavage, have, on the contrary, revealed new dividing lines which allow us to envisage the complete reconfiguration of the political and ideological landscape. For example, the two Gulf wars, the European Union, the Balkan conflicts, have shattered the traditional left-right dichotomy and shown it to be anachronistic.

This explains why I am reluctant to use the denomination “the New Right.” It should be remembered that at first this expression was not used as a self-designation. In fact, this label was invented by

the media in 1979 to describe a school of thought and an intellectual and cultural current born eleven years earlier and which, until then, had never described itself with this label. However, because this expression became so widespread, it more or less had to be adopted. But it was never without apprehensions, for several reasons. First, this label is reductive in a two ways: (a) it suggested that the ENR was essentially a political organization—which has never been the case, and (b) it placed our school of thought in a denomination (the "Right") that we have always considered with some distance. Second, it suggested or created unjustified links to various "New Rights" in other countries, such as the aforementioned Anglo-Saxon New Rights. One can also cite other, equally significant examples from other countries. In Italy, for instance, our friends from the "*Nuova Destra*" renounced this expression long ago. We did the same in France. I happen to define myself as a "man of right-left," as a rightist from the left and a leftist from the right, i.e., as an intellectual who simultaneously refers to the ideas of the left and the values of the right.

What is equally important is the fact that the ENR has never claimed any predecessors. It has never claimed to be following a road paved by others. It is the fruit of a great deal of reading, but it has never attached itself exclusively to a single author, or a single theoretical movement. The eclecticism of its references has sometimes been criticized—wrongly in my opinion. Based on hasty and partial reading, some were quick to conclude that the ENR lacks coherence. Its many facets led both sympathetic and hostile readers to mistaken conclusions. But the approach of the ENR has always been strictly consistent, although this cannot be understood unless one realizes that the leading figures of the ENR always utilize a dynamic perspective. They do not mouth slogans, tout ideological panaceas, or hawk simplistic catechisms of fixed dogmas. Instead, they have always strived to move forward, to put their ideas into action and open up new vistas of analysis.

This is exactly why, at the dawn of the twenty-first century, the ideas of the ENR are more current than ever. Why? Because the world that has prevailed since the end of the Second World War has ended. With the fall of the Berlin Wall, the disintegration of the Soviet system, and the rise of globalization, we are witnessing not only the end of the twentieth century, but the end of a great historical cycle of modernity. We have entered the era of postmodernity, the age

of flows and counter-flows, communities and networks, great civilizational ensembles and continental logics.

Of course this transformation is not yet complete. We are in a period of transition, and like all such times, it is especially rich in uncertainties and outlines of new syntheses. One could characterize it as a *Zwischenzeit*, an interregnum. In such an epoch it is indispensable, more than ever, to be aware of the historical moment we live in. But we cannot analyze this historical moment and everything new it brings about (and the future developments it presages) by referring to the images of the past and especially by using obsolete points of reference and conceptual tools. It is precisely because the ENR has never hesitated to change and renew itself that it is able to furnish the necessary tools for critical thinking adapted to the realities of our time.

When Soviet communism collapsed an American, Francis Fukuyama, ventured to proclaim the “end of history.” He meant that after the fall of communism, capitalism and liberal democracy had lost their main competitor, and henceforth all peoples on Earth were destined, sooner or later, to adopt the “Western,” if not the American model. This thesis was subsequently criticized by Samuel Huntington, the theoretician of “the clash of civilizations.” Both were wrong.

Instead of the end of history, we have been witnessing, in recent years, its return. Besides, how can history ever be “finished”? Human history is always open to a range of possibilities, and this range cannot be defined in advance with certainty. History is unforeseeable, because the distinguishing trait of the human being—precisely insofar as it is a fundamentally historical being—is to be unpredictable. If history became predictable, it would no longer be human history. It would not be history at all. It is striking that none of the major events of recent decades have been predicted by specialists in futurology.

Huntington, for his part, was right in his argument against Fukuyama’s irenicism, noting that humanity is not a homogeneous unity. But his mistake was to believe that “civilizations” can become full-fledged actors in international politics, which has never been the case. Huntington’s thesis was obviously designed to legitimize an Islamophobia conducive to the hegemonic aims of the United States. (The United States needed a “replacement devil” after the disappearance of the Soviet “evil empire,” and a caricaturized Islam fit the bill.) It is also revealing that in order to perpetuate or consolidate the

"Atlantic" mentality, Huntington does not hesitate to cut Europe in two, placing its Western part into the American camp, while throwing its Eastern part on the side of Russia and the Orthodox world.

The ENR, however, has never lost sight of its main reference: Europe, conceived both historically and geopolitically. Historically, the nations of Europe, apart from what distinguishes or separates them (which is not negligible), are heirs of a common cultural matrix that is at least 5,000 years old. Geopolitically, we are entering the age of what Carl Schmitt called "great spaces," when large cultural and civilizational blocs will be the decisive powers within a globalized world. Understanding globalization at a time when nation-states are too large to meet the expectations of their citizens and too small to meet the global challenges of our time, and becoming less powerful every day, first and foremost requires thinking in terms of continents.

The ENR has always favored a federal Europe, because full-fledged federalism is the only way to reconcile the necessary unity of decision at the top with all due respect for diversity and autonomy at the base. Undoubtedly, federalism is part of the tradition of the Empire rather than that of the nation-state. Indeed, a united Europe would be meaningless if it were built on the false model of centralization inherent in Jacobinism, from which France has long suffered. Hence the need for the principle of subsidiarity mentioned above.

Unfortunately, the European Union has been and is being constructed on the very opposite of this principle. From the outset, the EU defied good sense. It gave priority to trade and economics instead of politics and culture. It was built from the top—starting with the European Commission, which soon claimed omnipotence but is devoid of any democratic legitimacy—instead being slowly built up from the bottom. It hastily expanded, admitting countries that joined solely in order to receive financial aid and move closer to America and NATO, instead of deepening its political structures. Thus it has condemned itself in advance to impotence and paralysis. It has been built without the will of the people and tried to impose on them a draft of a constitution without ever raising the question of who is the constituent power.

Furthermore, the EU has never clearly stated the goals of the whole enterprise. Should one first construct a vast free trade zone with fuzzy borders that would serve as an appendage of the United States, or rather should it first lay the foundations for a genuine

European power, with borders demarcated by geopolitics, that could simultaneously serve as an original cradle of civilization and a pole for the regulation of the globalization process? These two projects are incompatible. If we choose the first, we will live in a unipolar world subject to American power. If we choose the second, we will live in a multipolar world which can preserve its diversity. Such is the alternative Europeans face today: to be the architects of our own destiny or subject to the destiny of others.

When Tomislav Sunic wrote his thesis on the ENR he could not predict the tragic events that accompanied the breakup of Yugoslavia: the wars and horrific bloodshed in his own Croatia and in neighboring countries. I myself witnessed those events with a broken heart. I have long-time friends who are Croat and Serb, Slovenian and Bosnian, Christian and Muslim. I saw these conflicts as a failure of Europe, and especially as a sign of its impoverishment. Every time European peoples fight each other, it is always to the benefit of political and ideological systems that yearn to see the disappearance of all peoples. Adding insult to injury, it was humiliating to see the United States military dropping bombs on a European capital, Belgrade, for the first time since 1945.

Of course I know the historical roots of all these disputes that so often lead to wars and massacres in Central and Eastern Europe. I know the reasons on all sides. These disputes still feed upon ethnic nationalism, religious intolerance, and irredentism of all kinds. Not wishing to side with either side—since I am obviously not in a position to make myself an arbitrator—I nevertheless believe that these disputes must be overcome. Many of them harken back to times that are definitively over. Irredentism, in particular, makes no sense today. Once upon a time borders played a significant role: they guaranteed the continuation of collective identities. Today, borders no longer guarantee anything and halt (almost) nothing. Flows of all kinds are the hallmark of our time, making borders redundant. Serbs and Croats, Hungarians and Romanians, Ukrainians and Russians, watch the same movies, listen to the same songs, consume the same information, use the same technology, and are subject to the same influences—and are in a same way subject to the same Americanization. I know that past antagonisms are difficult to overcome. But my deepest belief is that the identity of a people will always be less threatened by the identity of another neighboring people than by the

ideology of Sameness, i.e., by the homogenizing juggernaut of globalization, by the global system for which any collective identity whatsoever is an obstacle that needs to be erased.

Once the vise was loosened, countries that were once part of the Soviet and Communist *glacis* thought they found in the West the paradise they dreamed of so long. In reality they exchanged one system of coercion for another—different certainly, but equally fearsome. One can even say, with some experience, that global capitalism has proved much more effective than communism in dissolving collective identities. It also proved to be much more materialistic. In a few years it managed to impose on an almost global scale the model of *Homo economicus*, i.e., a creature whose sole purpose in life is production and consumption. According to liberal anthropology, this being is selfish and dedicated solely to the pursuit of self-interest.

It would be depressing to see in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe only two kinds of people: Western liberals and chauvinistic nationalists. It is also fascinating to see former apparatchiks pretending to have recovered their lost virginity then offering themselves to America with the same eagerness they offered themselves to Communism. The former satellites of Moscow seem all too eager to become vassals of Washington. Either way, Europe loses.

The ENR tries hard to identify the real enemy. The main enemy is, on the economic level, capitalism and the market society; on the philosophical level, individualism; on the political front, universalism; on the social front, the bourgeoisie; and on the geopolitical front, America. Why capitalism? Because, contrary to what communism preached, capitalism is not just an economic system. It is first and foremost an anthropological system, based on values that colonize the symbolic imagination and radically transform it. It is a system that reduces everything of value to market value, to exchange value. It is a system that considers as secondary, transient, or non-existent anything that cannot be reduced to quantitative calculation, i.e., money. Finally, it is a dynamic system whose very structure forces it to rush forward headlong. Karl Marx was not wrong when he wrote that capital considers any limitation as an obstacle. The Capitalist System consists of the logic of "always more"—more trade, more markets, more goods, more profits—in the belief that "more" automatically means better. It is the universal imposition of the axiom of self-interest, i.e., the idea that infinite material growth is possible in a

finite world. It is Heidegger's *Gestell*: the enthrallment of the whole Earth by the values of efficiency, performance, and profitability. It means transforming the planet into a giant supermarket, a giant commercial civilization.

I first met Tomislav Sunic in Washington in June 1991, in the company of Paul Gottfried. At the end of March 1993, we participated together in a symposium organized by the journal *Telos*, which was attended by the late Paul Piccone, Thomas Molnar, Gary Ulmen, Tom Fleming, Anthony Sullivan, and others. Since then, we have seen each other frequently, in Paris (in June 1993, January 2002, October 2003, March 2006, etc.), in Flanders, and elsewhere. This book enables us to meet again, but this time in his homeland. I am very pleased with that.

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