RESIDENT FOREIGNERS

A PHILOSOPHY OF MIGRATION

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A Philosophy of Migration

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Dedication

To my grandfather Francesco La Torre,
anarchist and socialist,
who set off from Marseilles
and landed, clandestinely,
at Ellis Island in 1925

Introduction: In Short

In this book, the reader will find no 'answers' to questions like 'how migration flows ought to be governed', what criteria should be used to 'distinguish between refugees and economic migrants', or how they should be 'integrated'. Rather, this work poses a fundamental challenge to such questions. For they are all inscribed in a politics that, while it claims to be pragmatic, responds only to the self-immunizing logic of exclusion. No solutions are to be found along these lines. This politics, which goes so far as to portray even barring entry to the migrant as an expression of concern for her wellbeing, and her rejection as an act of consideration towards her, aims only to defend the state's territory, understood as a closed-off space under collective ownership. But the nation cannot invoke any *ius soli* as a reason to deny hospitality, any more than it can a *ius sanguinis.* It is no surprise that two ancient spectres – the blood and the soil, which have forever been the linchpins of discrimination – have re-emerged in Europe in recent years.

Today's world is subdivided into multiple states that face one another, confront one another, and support one another. For the children of the nation, the state appears as a natural, almost eternal entity; since birth, they have shared the dominant state-centric perspective, which still holds firm. Migration is, then, a deviance to be held in check, an anomaly to be got rid of. The migrant at the outer margin reminds the state of its historical becoming and discredits its mythical purity. That is why any reflection on migration must also rethink the state itself.

This book is the first of its kind to outline a 'philosophy of migration'. Not even philosophy has thus far recognized the

migrant's citizenship rights. Only recently has it accepted her within its borders – and even then it keeps her under strict surveillance, ready to push her away again with the first expulsion order.

The first chapter reconstructs a debate between the partisans of closed borders and the champions of open borders – a very intense debate in the Anglophone and German contexts. These two positions each correspond in their own way to liberalism, and indeed reveal liberalism's impasse: one of these positions supports sovereign self-determination, while the other demands an abstract freedom of movement. This book, for its part, is not willing to gaze out at the shipwreck from the shore. It sets itself at a distance from both positions.

A philosophy that starts out from migration, and which makes the reception of immigrants its first theme, allows migrating – released from *arché*, the founding principle of sovereignty – to become the point of entry, and lets migrants become the protagonist of a new and anarchic landscape. The migrant's point of view cannot but have effects on politics as well as on philosophy, as it re-energizes both.

To migrate is not a biological drive, but rather an existential and political act. But the right to migrate is yet to be recognized. This book is intended as a contribution to the demand for a *ius migrandi*, in an age in which there is such a breakdown in human rights that it seems quite legitimate to ask whether the end of hospitality has already been sealed.

Looking back at our own time, future history books will not simply indulge today's hegemonic narrative. They will have to say that Europe – the homeland of human rights – denied hospitality to people who were fleeing war, persecution, abuse and rape, desolation and hunger. The potential guest

was instead stigmatized *a priori* as an enemy. In the pages of these future history books, those who were safe and protected by state borders will bear the burden and the responsibility for the lives – and deaths – caught up in this history.

As well as the land, the sea has an important place in these pages. It is an in-between space that both unites and separates. It is a passageway that steers clear of borders, erases any trace of appropriation, and preserves the memory of another clandestinity – the clandestinity of opposition, resistance and struggles. This is clandestinity not as a stigma – 'the illegals' – but rather as a choice. The sea route points to the overturning of order, to the challenge of the elsewhere and the other.

For too long, philosophy has wallowed in the edifying use of the word 'other'. It has upheld an idea of hospitality as an absolute and impossible demand, unbound from politics and relegated to the level of religious charity or ethical engagement. This has had fatal results. Anachronistic and out of place, the acts of hospitality carried out by 'humanitarians' – those beautiful souls who still believe in justice – have been the target of derision and denunciation. They are first of all targeted by that politics which believes that it must govern in obedience to welfare chauvinism and the cynicism of 'securitarianism'.

In this book, the migrant enters the gates of the City as a *resident foreigner*. In its attempt to understand what role this latter figure can play in a politics of hospitality, this book takes a path back in time, albeit one that does not follow any chronological order. The stages along this road are Athens, Rome and Jerusalem: three types of city and three types of citizenship which still obtain today. Distinct from Athenian autochthony, which explains many of today's political myths, was Rome's open citizenship. Foreignness

reigns sovereign in the Biblical City, where the *ger*, the resident foreigner, is the cornerstone of the community. *Ger* literally means 'he who resides'. This contravenes the logic of the solid fences that assign residency to the indigenous, to the citizen. The short-circuit contained in the semantics of *ger*, which attaches the foreigner to residency, in fact alters both terms. To inhabit does not mean to establish oneself, to settle in, to make a permanent home, or to become as one with the land. From this derive the questions that regard the meaning of 'inhabiting' and 'migration' in the present galaxy of planetary exile. Without recriminating over rootlessness, but also without glorifying wandering, it is possible to glimpse the possibility of a return. And pointing the way is the resident foreigner, who lives in the furrow of separation from the unappropriable earth and within the bond with the citizen, who, in turn, discovers that she herself is also a resident foreigner. In the City of foreigners, citizenship coincides with hospitality.

In the post-Nazi era, the idea that it is legitimate to decide with whom we should cohabit has held firm. 'To each their own home!' It is here that populist xenophobia finds its greatest strength; crypto-racism is its springboard. However, it is often unknown that this is a direct legacy of Hitlerism, i.e. the first project at a biopolitical remodelling of the planet, and one which purported to fix stable criteria for cohabitation. The discriminatory act claims an exclusive place for itself. Whoever accomplishes this act erects himself as a sovereign subject who, fantasizing about a supposed identity between himself and that place, demands his rights of ownership. As if the other, who has always already preceded him, did not have any rights or had never even existed.

To recognize the other's precedence in the place in which one lives means opening up not only to an ethics of proximity, but also to a politics of cohabitation. The *co-* (*con*

– with) implicit in such cohabitation should be understood in its broadest and deepest sense, not only meaning participation but also indicating simultaneity. This does not mean rigidly standing right next to each other. In a world criss-crossed by the combined paths of so many exiles, to cohabit means to share the spatial proximity in a temporal convergence, where the past of each person can be articulated in the common present – indeed, in the perspective of a common future.

1
MIGRANTS AND THE STATE

> In this world, shipmates, sin that pays its way can travel freely, and without a passport; whereas Virtue, if a pauper, is stopped at all frontiers.
> H. Melville, *Moby Dick*

1 Ellis Island

They journeyed for weeks across the ocean waves, in the depths of the hold, almost under the waterline, massed in dark dormitories of ever shabbier aspect, squeezed onto old straw mattresses – men, women and children, as many as 2,000 passengers. Only the third-class ones disembarked at Ellis Island. For those who had enough money to afford first or second class, there were but a few quick checks carried out on board the ship by a doctor and a civil registrar.

Imperious steamers and mighty transatlantic liners set out from Hamburg and Liverpool, Naples and Marseilles, Riga and Antwerp, Thessaloniki and Copenhagen, heading towards one same destination: the Golden Door of a fairy-tale America. After an exhausting crossing, when the ship finally entered the waters of the Hudson River, and the shore of New Jersey could be made out at a distance, the passengers headed up onto the bridge so that they could see the Statue of Liberty. It was the welcome that they had dreamed of. Emotion won out over their strains, their worries and their tiredness. Kafka describes in near-epic tones the arrival of Karl Rossmann, protagonist of his novel *Amerika*:

As the seventeen-year-old Karl Rossmann, who had been sent to America by his unfortunate parents because a maid had seduced him and had a child by him, sailed slowly into New York harbour, he suddenly saw the Statue of Liberty, which had already been in view for some time, as though in an intenser sunlight. The sword in her hand seemed only just to have been raised aloft, and the unchained winds blew about her form.[1]

The Statue of Liberty has a unique history. Brought to the New Continent as a French donation and a token of European values, over time it became a symbol of welcome for the damned of the Old Continent, the exploited and enslaved, decimated by famine, wars, misery and the hatred to which they had fallen victim. The Jewish poet Emma Lazarus called the statue the 'Mother of Exiles' in her 1883 sonnet, which was engraved on the pedestal of the statue. 'Keep, ancient lands, your storied pomp', the statue shouts with her mute lips: 'Give me your tired, your poor, Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, The wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me, I lift my lamp beside the golden door!'

Until 1875, there was open entry onto US soil. Here these outcasts could find redemption by becoming pioneers in a virgin territory, the builders of a just society, and citizens of the New World. In this early period, Castle Garden, the old fort in Battery Park in south Manhattan, was designated as a sorting centre. Then restrictive measures began to be applied, leading to the establishment of the Ellis Island centre on 1 January 1892. Having first been unlimited, immigration became institutionalized. Nonetheless, a large influx was still allowed, and between 1892 and 1924 over 16 million people passed through Ellis Island. From 5,000 to 10,000 a day. Few of them, around 2 per cent, were

turned away – almost nothing compared to today's figures. But still around 250,000 people. There were more than 3,000 suicides.

Ellis Island emerged, through the haze, from behind the Statue of Liberty. New York, the promised land, was right there, just a short stretch across the sea. But the third-class passengers knew that their journey was not over. They were separated from the New World by that small island, almost a relic of the Old World, a transit site where everything was still in play, where those who had set off had not yet arrived, and those who had left everything behind still had nothing.

The Mohegans called it Seagull Island; the Dutch rebaptized it Oyster Island, before the merchant Samuel Ellis bought it and imposed his own name, a marker of his possession of this narrow sandbank in the Hudson. The name remained, whereas ownership passed to the city of New York, which expanded the island thanks to the landfill created with ships' ballast and the earth removed from the tunnels for the subway.[2]

For the migrants, it was simply the Island of Tears – indeed, in the languages of all the peoples who passed through it: *isola delle lacrime, île des larmes*, *isla de las lágrimas*, *ostrov slez* and so on. The lucky ones would spend just a few hours in the Federal Bureau of Immigration. Enough time, that is, to be subjected to medical checks. The symptoms of possible illnesses, or the parts of the body to be checked, were denoted by letters of the alphabet: C for chest, or tuberculosis; E for the eyes; F for the face; H for the heart; K for hernia; L for lameness; SC for scalp; TC for trachoma; and X for 'mental disease'. Making a chalk mark, the sanitary officials would draw a letter on the shoulders of these passengers, who, having been assigned for closer medical examination, were held on the island for days,

weeks or months. But when they diagnosed either a contagious disease, tuberculosis, trachoma or ringworm or 'mental disease', there followed immediate repatriation.

In their testimonies, the passengers recount their long and anguished wait, the confused noise, the painful uncertainty, and the shame felt over the marks chalked on their shoulders. Those who had passed the medical checks joined the line for the legal desk. It was here, with an interpreter's aid, that they had to answer the twenty-nine questions that were fired point-blank by the inspector on duty: 'What is your name? What country are you from? What is your final destination in America? How much money do you have with you? And where? Show it me. Who paid for your passage? Are you meeting a relative here in America? Who? Can they provide a guarantee for you? Are you coming to America for a job? Where will you work? Are you an anarchist?' If the inspector was satisfied, he then stamped the migrant's visa and bid them 'Welcome to America!' If that was not the case and he instead had doubts, he wrote two letters on a piece of paper – 'SI', meaning Special Inquiry. The passenger was then sent on to a commission made up of three inspectors, a typist and an interpreter. The interrogation resumed – this time more exacting and detailed.

Those who had passed all the inspections and questions hurried along to the ship that would take them to New York. Thus, in the course of a few hours, having gone through a couple of checks and a few vaccinations, a Lithuanian Jew, a Sicilian or an Irishman could become an American. For them, the Golden Door, the Eldorado of modernity, was open. Each of them could make a fresh start, leaving behind the past, their own history and that of their ancestors, the country to which they owed their birth, but which had denied them life. Soon, however, many must have had second thoughts. America was not the land of

freedom of which they had dreamt, and nor were the streets paved with gold. Those who had arrived first had already appropriated everything and very little remained to be shared out, except for jobs in the factories of Brooklyn and the Lower East Side where workers toiled for fifteen hours a day. As for the streets, at this point they were largely yet to be built, together with the railroads and the skyscrapers.

Those who entered the United States at the dawn of the twentieth century nonetheless ought to have considered themselves privileged. Those were the years in which the peak of migrant numbers was reached. In 1907 alone, 1,004,756 migrants passed through Ellis Island. The First World War would soon contribute to reducing the great influx, but what slowed immigration were above all the measures that the federal government took to restrict it. The Chinese and other Asians had already been barred since 1870. The ban was, however, only made official in 1917 with the Immigration Act – or Asiatic Barred Zone Act – which extended the 'undesirable' label also to anarchists, homosexuals, the insane, vagrants and so on. This was also called the Literacy Act, because it stipulated that immigrants would have to prove that they could read and write in their own language, as well as be subjected to intelligence tests. A few years later, the number of entrants was further reduced, first with the 1921 Emergency Quota Act, and then the 1924 National Origin Act, which imposed an annual limit of 150,000 entrants. This latter, particularly, was a self-evidently racist measure, for it sought to put up barriers to immigration from the countries of Southern and Eastern Europe. The Italian quota, at first as much as a quarter of the total, was then reduced to 4 per cent. It is hardly surprising that, in the 1930s, these laws could also inspire Nazi politics.[3]

Ellis Island, where a psychiatric hospital and a prison had been built, ended up becoming a detention centre for irregular immigrants, and, in the interwar period, was transformed into a prison for suspected anti-US activists. In 1954, the government closed the sorting centre on the island.[4] The island and its name remained inscribed in the autobiographies of many of the children and grandchildren of this great migration. At least 40 per cent of US citizens today have an ancestor who disembarked on Ellis Island.

The America that had in little more than a century increased its population from 188 million to 258 million inhabitants – in large part of European origin – without too many scruples, then chose drastically to reduce the numbers of new entrants and to close its borders.

But how could immigration laws be reconciled with the ideals of the US Constitution, which were meant to be universal? How come some people could be rejected as 'undesirables' if the Declaration of Independence itself asserted that all men are created equal?

This conflict was at the heart of Ellis Island, a crossing to hope yet also a centre of discrimination. Between its lights and shadows, the island – this unique non-place of exile – reflects the contradiction of all US policy. The initial openness of the frontiers, which could rely on widespread consensus, was followed by the introduction of restrictive criteria when the first 'native' Americans born on the soil of the New Continent imagined that, with their birth, they had thus acquired the right to decide whom they would grant the title of 'American citizen'. Not everyone in the world seemed suitable – despite the words, engraved at the foot of the Statue of Liberty, which Emma Lazarus had directed to the outcast and the lowliest. It was then that the nation that had emerged from Ellis Island forgot about its own exile and preferred to exercise its sovereignty. Controlling

the borders became the key to fortifying and strengthening the unity of the nation-state, based on homogeneity. Ellis Island is thus the contradictory symbol of modern migration.

2 When the migrant unmasks the state

Upon her arrival, the migrant faces a state that stands up in all its supremacy. These two are the main actors, the two protagonists on this stage. The migrant's rights, starting with her right to move, crash up against the sovereignty which the state exercises over the nation and over its territorial dominion. Here we see the conflict between universal human rights and the division of the world into nation-states.

In the state's eyes, the migrant constitutes an intolerable anomaly, an anomie in its internal space and in the international space, a challenge to its sovereignty. She is not only an intruder, an outlaw, an illegal. Through her very existence, she transgresses the foundational principle that the state is built around, and undermines the precarious interconnection – standing at the basis of the world order – between the nation, the soil and the monopoly of state power. The migrant hints at the possibility of a different arrangement of the world: she represents deterritorialization, the fluidity of movement, autonomous crossing, the hybridization of identity.

Asserting its sovereign power, the state stops the migrant at the site of conflict and confrontation *par excellence* – the border. It can admit the migrant into the space it governs – after the stipulated controls, that is – or else reject her. And, to that end, the state is prepared to blatantly violate human rights. The border thus becomes not only the rock

that so many lives are shipwrecked on, but also the obstacle that is set up against any right to migrate.

This contradiction is all the more strident in democracies. Notwithstanding the fact that upon their historical emergence they proclaim the Rights of Man and the Citizen, at the same time they base their own sovereignty on three quite other principles. These three are: the idea that the people self-determines and is both the creator and target of its own laws; the criterion of national homogeneity; and the postulate of territorial belonging. These latter two principles, in particular, frustrate mobility.

Migrants' movements thus bring to light a constitutive dilemma that undermines liberal democracies' very foundations. The philosophical dilemma gives rise to an open tension at the political level, between state sovereignty and the commitment to human rights. A democracy rooted within the nation-state's borders is caught in the web of this double bind. The irreconcilability between human rights and state sovereignty paradoxically also crops up in universal conventions and international legal documents – hence, alas, their impotence.

Migration – in the forms and means in which it manifests itself in the new millennium – is a phenomenon proper to modernity, for it is closely bound to the modern state. Seeking to keep watch over their borders, guard their territory and control their populations, nation-states discriminate and set up the barrier between citizens and foreigners. This does not mean that the empires, monarchies or republics of the past did not defend their borders. But these latter were much softer and more precarious than the borders juridically established and militarily monitored by the modern state.

The clash between the migrant and the state thus extends beyond the protagonists themselves. And it is thus possible

to understand why reflection on migration also means rethinking the state. Without that discrimination, already carried out in advance, the state would not exist. Borders take on an almost sacred value and point back to a semi-mythical origin. For they are both the result and the proof of its distinctive task, its mission of drawing boundaries. It is thanks to this task of definition and discrimination that the state context can establish itself, maintain its strength and stability – or, indeed, be a *state*. A state is the exact opposite of mobility. The more imperative this task is – as in the case of the nation-state – the more tenacious the aspiration to homogeneity and integrity proves to be. For the sons and daughters of the nation, who have shared the state's internal outlook from birth, the state has an obvious immediacy. It is an internal fact, whose natural character seems beyond dispute.

The migrant, however, unmasks the state. From its external edge, she interrogates its very foundations, pointing an accusing finger against discrimination. She ties the state back to its historical emergence and discredits the myth of its purity. And she thus insists that the state itself be reconsidered. In this sense, migration bears a subversive charge.

3 The state-centric order

Today's world is subdivided into a multiplicity of bordering nation-states, which both adjoin and confront one another. This state-centric order is assumed to be normal. Everything that happens is considered and judged within the confines of a state-based perspective. Migration is also seen within the terms of the state and its territorial rootedness, and is thus itself considered a contingent and marginal phenomenon. If the state is the essential fulcrum of the political order, migration is an accident.

This world order has begun to be profoundly shaken by the recent, epoch-defining waves of migration. The state-centric outlook nonetheless holds firm and remains dominant. This is the reason why the viewpoint of those who belong to a state and look out from within that internal position, entrenched behind barriers, is always tacitly assumed when the questions raised by the 'migrant crisis' are discussed in public debate. It is no accident that the question marks revolve only around the ways of governing and regulating the 'flows' of migrants. Such differences as do exist, at most, separate those who see immigrants as an opportunity – something useful – from those who instead warn that they represent a danger. The state-centric outlook is always also a normative one. Citizens, those who belong to the state, are recognized *a priori* as having the right to decide, the prerogative to either welcome or exclude the foreigner knocking on their door.

The sovereign power to say 'no' seems to stand beyond doubt or challenge. States claim the capacity to establish who can enter within their borders and who must instead be stopped at the border. In a state-centric global order threatened by migration, the right to exclude thus becomes the means of asserting and cross-checking the state's sovereignty. For it is a proof and measurement of the state's power. Nation-states assert their claim to manage their own territorial and political borders also by resorting to force. Whoever transgresses the borders runs the risk of being interned, as she awaits expulsion. Even if she is let in, it is again up to state authority to decide whether to recognize her as a new member of the community or to reject her.

International law and its norms do nothing but confirm and validate the prerogative to which states lay claim. It is possible to become an expatriate, to leave the national territory, just as it is possible to move within it.[5] But one

cannot freely transfer to another state, become part of that state or make one's home there. The principle of *non-refoulement* is the exception that confirms the rule: it establishes that the asylum-seeker cannot be expelled into those countries 'where his life or freedom would be threatened on account of his race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion'.[6] This is, however, a very limited principle, which moreover applies only to those who are already on the soil, or under the control, of the (putative) country of asylum.

Border policy is a dominion reserved to sovereign states. Jealous of their own powers, determined not to give in, and backed up by international legislation, they claim the right to preclude entry onto the national soil. But if their right to do so is legal, can it also be said to be legitimate? Can states impede or limit immigration?

4 A fundamental hostility

It is not difficult to guess why, in this state-centric context, the conditions that restrict and limit hospitality are dictated by an implicit and fundamental hostility. The migrant who turns up at the border is first of all perceived as a dangerous foreigner, a hidden and secret enemy, an invading savage, a potential terrorist – and certainly not a guest.

In political-media discourse – in which the meanings of words are hollowed out, if they not twisted into their very opposite – 'hospitality' today has no meaning outside the context of private morality or religious faith. Stripped of its political value, it becomes a symptom of a naïve do-gooderism. This allows the flaring-up of the rival term that has always inhabited hospitality – namely, hostility.

'Migrant reception policy' is the formula twisted to indicate the very opposite – that is, a policy of exclusion and expulsion, a police management of migrant flows, a control of the borders which stretches so far as to impose its oversight over the domestic administration of the citizenry. If openness is judged guilty of being naïve, ridiculous, migrant reception – made a taboo, as its real meaning is banished – is disfigured. It is reduced to providing a hypocritical cover, a farcical corrective, to a cynical securitarianism.

What dictates the law is the principle of state sovereignty. This principle makes the nation the norm, and migration a matter of deviance and irregularity. It is articulated in the grammar of the possessive, around which political consensus coagulates. It is the grammar of 'we' and 'ours', of what is 'our own' – property, belonging and identity. Calculation, control and selection become obvious criteria to use. Just as closedness becomes an almost incontrovertible postulate.

This principle of sovereignty operates in concert with a fundamental hostility, because it is exercised over territory, '*our* country', of which the citizens hold themselves to be the legitimate owners, and thus authorized to deny or limit access to it by foreigners, according to the conditions that they can establish in sovereign fashion. The right to property over the territory is combined with the privilege of belonging to the community and the prerogative of monitoring the borders. All this seems absolutely natural. Each citizen must then feel obliged to respond firmly, to support closing the borders, precisely in order to meet the demands of an 'open society'. The paradox of this position, however, remains well hidden.

Backed up by welfare chauvinism and the parochialism of 'our own', state xenophobia is able to cast its shadow over

migrant reception. And it does so by invoking the pretext of pragmatic realism and the impossibility of political action. Reception is always read in light of a looming threat, as the foreigner is passed off as an intruder and her arrival as an invasion. Through these undue confusions, these subtle slips, citizenship becomes equivalent to owning the land, and belonging becomes equivalent to the guarantee of equal rights. Thus, in the name of defending a social justice limited within national borders, hospitality reveals its troubling connection with hostility.

Even where it does provide some show of tolerance, the sovereign community cannot do without this prior hostility. Thus, citizens are called on to be the unchallenged referees, the supreme judges, whose responsibility it is to exclude – or else let in – newcomers. This takes place on the basis of the evidence they offer: meaning, for candidates for asylum, proof of persecution and abuse; proof of their usefulness, in the case of economic migrants; and, for all the rest, proof of their will to integrate. Foreigners' human rights are suspended by administrative accounting, while the privileges, the advantages, the immunities of citizens are upheld.

5 Beyond sovereignty: a marginal note

The state – or, better, state sovereignty – is the obstacle that prevents us even thinking about migration. In modernity, this sovereignty has been the epicentre of politics, drawing its map, tracing its limits and thus separating the domestic sphere – subjected to sovereign power – from the external one, which is, instead, given up to anarchy. In this dichotomy, it is sovereignty that prevails, in its positive value.

Sovereign power is exercised in an exclusive way, by way of a single authority, within a defined territorial space. By definition, it cannot recognize any higher powers. It is established in order to overcome the chaos of nature which, according to Hobbes's well-known narrative, could continue to spark civil conflict. In this reading, it is thus the fruit of a shared covenant, to which all submit. Hobbes goes so far as to make the state a 'person', an almost-anthropomorphic figure whose absolute and unchallengeable internal sovereignty corresponds to an external sovereignty, on which the sovereignty of other sovereign states puts a brake.[7] Thus, in a move that was destined to have profound and enduring effects, Hobbes projected the Leviathan – the animal of primitive chaos, chosen as an emblem of state power – beyond the borders. Though it has been contained domestically, this savage lawlessness, however, reproduces itself in international relations. If persons in flesh and bone find a peaceful way of living together, thanks to the contract that has bound them to sovereignty, outside this contract a permanent virtual war rages between the artificial persons – the sovereign Leviathans, the wolves – that are states.[8] It is thus hardly surprising that Hobbes dedicates only a few pages to the international arena, instead concentrating his attentions on the power that the state exercises within its own borders.

The dichotomy between internal and external, sovereignty and anarchy, cuts through all modern thought in different forms and through different conceptions. Continuing even today, it imposes a hierarchy of problems, prescribes solutions and justifies principles – first among them, the principle of obedience to state power. And this is a constitutive sovereignty, for it also delineates the limits of the political sovereignty that, most of the time, adapts itself to the presupposition of sovereign statehood.

This dichotomous vision more or less explicitly introduces the distinction between civilization (internal) and its absence (external). It draws the line between the norm and lawlessness, between order and chaos. It is not worth emphasizing the value judgement inherent within this: if the principle of sovereignty is positive, then anarchy must instead have a negative stamp.

The word 'anarchy' is of Greek provenance. It consists of the privative *an-* and *arché*, which means 'principle', 'beginning', but also 'command', 'authority', 'government'. It is assumed in its specific meaning as a political form that denies principles and command, or in the derivative and pejorative sense of an 'absence of government', meaning disorder. Or, rather, it is the dichotomy itself that pushes the word 'anarchy' towards this semantic usage. The intention is obvious: it legitimizes sovereignty as the only condition for order, the only alternative to the absence of government.[9] 'Anarchy' becomes another way of invoking that savage tumult which rages in the boundless 'outside' that lies beyond state sovereignty.

This separates out two counterposed spaces. On the one hand is the internal space – the one within which living well is a possible objective and where progress, with its bearers and its effects of justice, democracy and human rights, plays out. On the other hand is the external space, in which the very best outcome is mere survival, and in which there are, at most, vague cosmopolitan projects for a confederation of peoples, if not the reproposition of the state model in a global republic.

Globalization has, however, changed this landscape, deeply undermining the dichotomy between sovereignty and anarchy – even if simply because it forcefully expands the global outlook towards the unlimited. It thus brings out into the open all the limits of any politics anchored to traditional

borders. The speed with which bytes travel through telecoms networks, cancelling out what were once insuperable distances, has become emblematic of the flows that cross borders, evade controls and untie spatial binds. This compromises the entire structure of things, which thus seems to tip chaotically into a 'new global disorder'. As a promoter of globalization, the nation-state is irreparably damaged by it, for it loses that control over territory and over the body politic of citizens from which it had drawn its strength, and with which it had governed for centuries. No longer is the sovereign he who commands territory, but whoever can cross it quickest. Speed is the new power.[10]

The deterritorialization of sovereignty represents the crisis of politics in its modern form. Moreover – especially from the post–1945 period onwards – the continuing applicability of the state model to international relations seems ever more open to challenge. Those who have studied or practised in this field have acquired a different perspective. It has become clearly apparent that the scenario outside and beyond the nation's borders is being populated by other protagonists, beyond states themselves – namely, international institutions, supranational organisms and humanitarian organizations. Power now appears multiform, divided, often shared-out and difficult to pin down.

The political landscape appears more complicated than ever before. For, while sovereign nation-states continue to play the main role, providing the normative context for whatever happens, they no longer constitute a homogeneous system, and there are ever-vaster spaces, both real and virtual, opening up across borders. This demands that the anachronistic dichotomy be put to one side, in favour of a better scrutiny of what is going on outside, to take up an external standpoint, and consider internal problems also from this perspective.