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# Land and Sea



TRANSLATED AND WITH A FOREWORD BY

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Man is a terrestrial, a groundling. He lives, moves and walks on the firmly-grounded Earth. It is his standpoint and his base. He derives his points of view from it, which is also to say that his impressions are determined by it and his world outlook is conditioned by it. Earth-born, developing on it, man derives not only his horizon from it, but also his poise, his movements, his figure and his height. That is why he calls Earth the star on which he lives, although, as it is well known, the surface of the planet is three fourths water and only one fourth firm land; even the largest continents are but huge floating islands. And since we found out that our earth is spherically shaped, we have been speaking quite naturally of the 'terrestrial sphere' or of the 'terrestrial globe'. To imagine a 'maritime globe' would seem strange, indeed.

All our existence down here, our happiness, our misfortunes, our joys and our pains are the 'earthly' life for us, that is to say, a paradise or a valley of tears, depending which aspect is taken into consideration. Thus, it is easy to understand why earth is represented as the primal mother of the human beings in a great many myths and legends that give expression to the oldest memories and the innermost trials and tribulations in the lives of nations. She is considered the oldest of all the deities. Sacred writings tell us that man, emerging from earth, would return to earth. The earth is his maternal support, because he himself is the son of the earth. He sees in his siblings his ground-brothers, the inhabitants of the same earth. Among the four elements (earth, water, air and fire), it is the first which is vowed to man and which leaves its mark on him to the

fullest. The idea that he could be marked as strongly by any of the other elements appears quite chimerical at first sight: man is neither fish nor bird, and even less a being of fire - were one to exist.

Are we to surmise from all this that human existence and the human being are essentially and exclusively earthly and earth-oriented, while the other elements are but accessories of a secondary rank? The problem is not so simple. The question whether a human existence other than strictly terrestrial is possible has more sense than it appears at first sight. It is enough for you to go to the seaside and glance into the distance from the shore: the immense surface of the sea will occupy all your horizon. Is it not remarkable that a human being standing on the shore would direct its eyes quite naturally from the land towards the sea and not the other way round, that is, from the sea to the land? In people's deepest and often unconscious memories, water and the sea are the mysterious and primordial source of all life. In their legends and in their myths, most peoples conjure up deities and human beings emerging not only from the ground but also from the sea. All speak of the sons and daughters of oceans and seas: Aphrodite, for instance, the goddess of feminine beauty, had been born out of the foam of the billows. But the sea has also delivered some other children, and later on, we shall meet the 'children of the sea', as well as some wild 'sea-roamers' who have little in common with the engrossing image of feminine beauty born out of sea surf! This world which suddenly opens before you is quite different from that of the soil and of the firm land. You may now understand the reason why poets, natural philosophers and the men of science seek the origins of all life in water and why Goethe wrote these solemn verses: 'Everything is born of water, / Everything is preserved by water / Ocean, bring us your eternal rule!'

It is to Thales of Miletus, a Greek naturalist and philosopher of around 500 before our era that in general is attributed the thesis of the aquatic origin of all

life. Nevertheless, the notion is both older and newer: it is perennial. In the nineteenth century, it was a German scientist, Lorenz Oken, who claimed a maritime origin for man and all life. As a matter of fact, in the evolutionary trees drawn by the Darwinian naturalists, fishes and ground-animals coexist, follow or precede one another. The aquatic creatures appear as man's ancestors. The protohistory and prehistory of mankind seem to confirm the oceanic origin. Illustrative scientists have come to the conclusion that alongside of 'autochthonous' peoples, that is to say, people born on land, there lived 'autothalassical' peoples, that is to say, peoples exclusively shaped by the sea, peoples that had never been terrestrial and who knew only one thing about firm land, namely that it was marking the boundaries of their strictly maritime existence. In the isles of the South seas, one still comes across the last survivors of the men-fish among the maritime Polynesians, the Kanaks and the Sawu islanders. Their entire existence, their spiritual universe, their language, all are attuned to the sea. Our own representation of time and space, which we have inherited from our terrestrial surroundings, appeared to those people as strange and incomprehensible as the world of those genuinely maritime peoples is to us. So, it is worth asking: what is our element? Are we the children of the earth or of the sea? The answer is not clear-cut: we are neither through and through. The myths from times immemorial, the hypotheses of modern natural sciences and the results of the research in prehistory leave both questions open.

The word 'element' needs a short explanation. Since the age of Thales, since the Ionian natural philosophy of the pre-Socratic thinkers, and so by and large, since the year 500 before our era, the European peoples have been talking about four elements. Until now, these four

four elements, such as for instance, the exclusively terrestrial and the exclusively maritime, would have little to do with each other. They would be strangers to each other, and the mutual isolation would be all the greater as their 'exclusivity' increases. The mixed breed would produce good and bad specimens and entertain friendly or hostile relations on the pattern of chemical affinities or repulsions. Human life would be entirely programmed by nature, as would be its destiny, in the way plants and animals are. Man would be reduced to observing how some gobble the other and how still others live in a kind of symbiosis. There would be no human history in the sense of a history of man's acts and decisions.

Nonetheless, man is not a creature wholly conditioned by his medium. Through history, he has the ability to get the better of his existence and his conscience. He is aware not only of the act of birth, but also of the possibility of a rebirth. When in danger or in a desperate situation, circumstances in which the other animals and plants left to themselves are likely to perish, man can save himself and start anew by his perspicacity, the conclusions he draws from his analysis and the soundness of his decisions. The scope for his abilities and for action on history is vast. Man can choose, and at certain moments in his history, he may even go so far, through a gesture peculiar to him, as to change himself into a new form of his historical existence, in virtue of which he readjusts and reorganizes himself. In this sense, when correctly understood, man has got 'the freedom to go wherever he wants', as the poet would say.

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World history is the history of the wars waged by maritime powers against land or continental powers and by land powers against sea or maritime powers. By giving the generic title SEA AGAINST LAND (La mer contre la

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elements - earth, water, air and fire - have remained a living notion that could not be uprooted, despite all the objections raised by science. In return, modern natural science has broken up the four primal elements: nowadays, it distinguishes over ninety 'elements' with an altogether different structure, as it understands by 'element' any simple body that cannot be further decomposed or dissolved by modern chemical procedures. The four primordial elements and the elements with which modern science deals both theoretically and practically have only the term 'element' in common. No modern chemist or physicist would dare to state that any one of the four 'elements' is the one and only 'primal element' of the world, as did Thales of Miletus in regard to water, Heraclitus of Ephesus about fire, Anaximenes of Miletus, concerning air, and Empedocles of Agrigentum, who favoured a combination of the four. In rest, the quest for a precise meaning of 'primal matter', 'elements', 'origin' and 'root' would ensnare us into insoluble questions of physics and natural sciences and in no less inextricable epistemological and metaphysical inquiries. For our historical analysis, however, we retain the four elements, with their simple but evocative names. As a matter of fact, they are global designations of the various possibilities of human existence. So, we may keep on using them while talking particularly of land powers, on the one hand, and maritime powers, on the other, in the sense conveyed by these elements.

Accordingly, the 'elements' land and sea, of which we shall talk anon, must not be regarded as purely scientific entities, lest they dissolve into chemical substances, in other words, into historical nothingness. The implicit determinisms, and particularly the land and maritime forms of historical existence do not act according to a compulsory and mechanical programme. Were man merely a living being wholly determined by its medium, he would accordingly be a ground animal, a fish, a bird, or still, a fantastical combination of these elemental determinants. The different human types belonging to the

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Terre) to his book on strategy, Admiral Castex, a French military expert, resumed an old and enduring tradition.

The elemental opposition between land and sea had been acknowledged throughout history; and almost until the end of the nineteenth century, the tensions between Russia and England were given the popular image of a scuffle between a bear and a whale. The whale was leviathan, the great mythical fish of which we shall talk more later. The bear, on the other hand, was one of the many symbols of the terrestrial fauna. According to the medieval interpretations put forth by the cabbalists, world history is a combat between the strong whale, leviathan, and the no less strong behemoth, a terrestrial animal, which was represented imaginatively as a bull or an elephant. The names leviathan and behemoth had been borrowed from the Book of Job (40 and 41). According to the cabbalists, behemoth tries to tear leviathan to pieces with its horns and teeth, while in turn, leviathan tries hard to stop the land animal's mouth and nostrils with its flaps and fins, in order to deprive it of food and air. This is a graphic illustration, which only the mythological imagery can convey, of the blockade to which a sea power subjects a land power by cutting its supplies in order to starve it to death. In the end, the two opponents kill each other. But the cabbalists go on to say that the Jews solemnly observe the millennial festival 'The Feast of Leviathan', about which Heinrich Heine writes in a well-known poem of his. More often than not, the cabbalists quote Isaac Abravanel, who lived between 1437 and 1508, in the era of the great geographical discoveries, as their authority for this historical interpretation of the Feast of Leviathan. He had been treasurer firstly of the king of Portugal and then of the king of Castile, and died surrounded by honours in Venice in 1508. He had got a good idea about this world and its wealth and so knew what he was talking about.

Let us now have a look at some events in world history from this point of view of the struggle between sea and land.

The world of Ancient Greece was born of raids and wars undertaken by nations of sailors. 'It is not for nothing that the sea god trained them'. The maritime power, established on the island of Crete, chased the pirates out of the Eastern Mediterranean and laid the foundation of a culture, the originality of which has been uncovered by the archaeological excavations at Knossos. A thousand years later, it was behind a wooden wall, made up of ships, that free Athens defended herself against her enemy, 'the almighty Persians', at Salamis in 480 before our era. She owed her survival to the outcome of that naval battle. On the other hand, during the Peloponnesian War, she herself was defeated by Sparta, a land power. Because of it, though, the latter was unable to unite the cities and the peoples and place herself at the head of a Greek empire. It was the opposite with Rome, which at home was a rural republic of Italy and a genuinely continental power. She raised herself to imperial greatness in the struggle against Carthago, a commercial and a maritime power. Both with reference to this long confrontation between Rome and Carthago and in general, Roman history has often been used as term of comparison with other conflicts and events in world history. Although quite interesting at times, such comparisons may leave room for strange inconsistencies as well. In this way, the British Empire is at times compared to Rome and at other times, with Carthago. Generally speaking, such comparisons are like a stick which may be grabbed by either end.

The declining Roman Empire saw its domination of the seas snatched by the Vandals, the Saracens, the Vikings and the Normans. After a long sequel of failures, the Arabs ended by occupying Carthage in 698 and afterwards laid the foundations of Tunis, the new capital-city, and so established their age-long domination of the Western Mediterranean. The Eastern Roman Empire, that is to say, the Byzantine Empire ruled from Constantinople, was a coastal empire. It still made use of a powerful fleet and besides, had the exclusive control of a secret

weapon, the famous Greek fire. Notwithstanding, it was entirely reduced to a defensive position. In spite of that, as a maritime power, it managed to achieve what Charlemagne's, a land power, could not: it acted as a rampart, a katechon, as it is called in Greek. However weak, it held several centuries against the onslaughts of Islam, preventing the Arabs from conquering the whole of Italy. In its absence, Italy would have become part of the Moslem world, like Northern Africa, and all of the Ancient and Christian civilization would have been destroyed. Then a new maritime power emerged in Christian Europe, as a result of the Crusades: Venice.

With her, a new mythical name entered the grand stage of world history. For almost half a millennium, the Venetian Republic symbolized the domination of the seas, the wealth derived from maritime trade and that matchless feat which was the conciliation of the requisites of high politics with 'the oddest creation in the economic history of all times'. All that the Anglophiles admired in England, between the eighteenth and the twentieth centuries, had already made the fame of Venice: the great wealth, the diplomatic superiority by which the maritime power was exploiting the rivalries among the continental powers and made others fight its wars, the aristocratic system of government which seems to have resolved the problems of internal, political order, the forbearance of philosophical and religious notions, the asylum extended to the political emigration and the ideas of independence. To all these may be added the magic attraction exerted by sumptuous festivals and by artistic beauty. One of those festivities had caught people's fancy in particular and helped to make Venice world-famous: the legendary 'marriage to the sea', the so-called *sposalizio del mare*. Every year, on the eve of the Assumption (or 'Sensa'), the doge of Venice would go out to sea aboard the *Bucintoro*, the official vessel of the Republic, and toss a ring into the waves, as symbol of the union with the sea. The Venetians themselves, their neighbours and even people from afar saw in that gesture a manifest sign

that gave its mythical consecration to a power and a wealth that had been surging from the seas. We shall see what was really behind this beautiful symbol as soon as we probe its deeper meaning.

The glory of this fairy-tale-like 'queen of the seas' kept expanding from the year 1000 to the year 1500. Before the year 1000, Nicophorus Phocas, the then Byzantine emperor, had been justified in stating: 'the dominion of the seas rests with me alone'. Five hundred years later, the Turkish sultan in Constantinople told the Venetians: 'Until now the sea was your bride, from now on, it is mine'. The age of Venetian supremacy over the Adriatic, the Aegean and the Eastern Mediterranean seas stretched between those two dates. The legend that would attract to Venice countless travellers, the celebrated Romantists of all the European nations, the poets and the artists, such as Byron, Musset, Wagner and Barrès, as late as the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries dates from that age. Everybody would succumb to the spell, and far from me the intention to darken the brightness of such splendour. Nevertheless, when we raise the question whether we are dealing here with a truly maritime destiny, with a genuine choice in favour of the sea element, it does not take us long to realize the smallness of a maritime power limited to the Adriatic and the Mediterranean basin alone, at a time when the huge expanses of the oceans of the world were cast open.

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In his book, COMPARED GENERAL GEOGRAPHY (Vergleichen-  
de Allgemeine Erdkunde) of 1845, Ernst Kapp, a German  
thinker and geographer, influenced by Hegel's world-  
encompassing ideas, chose water as a criterion for  
marking the great stages in the evolution of empires. He  
came out with three evolutionary stages, three acts of a  
great drama. For him, world history started with the  
'potamian' or fluvial culture of the Middle East, in

practice of maritime navigation and to build up a civilization by exploiting a favourable coastal position is altogether different from turning the entire historical and collective existence of a people from land towards the sea, another element altogether.

Venice's coastal empire made its debut round the year 1000 by a 'naval promenade' to Dalmatia. On the other hand, the control of the back country, of Croatia or Hungary, remained problematic at all times, as it always happens whenever one tries to exert one's domination over a continent merely by means of a fleet. Even with regard to the technique of navigation, the Republic of Venice did not advance beyond the Mediterranean and the Middle Ages, which in her case extended to 1797 and her demise. Like other Mediterranean nations, Venice used only the oared vessel, the galley. It was from the Atlantic ocean that the big, long-distance, sailing vessels were introduced into the Mediterranean. The Venetian fleet was and remained an oar-propelled fleet of large galleys. As in ancient times, sails had only an ancillary use, whenever a wind became favourable by blowing from behind. The improvement of the compass, as we know it generally nowadays, was a remarkable achievement. As Kapp remarked, the compass lent the ship a spiritual dimension which enabled man to develop a strong attachment to his ship, a sort of affinity or kinship. From then on, the remotest oceanic lands could come into contact with each other, and the planet opened itself to man. Nonetheless, the modern compass, which traditionally is held to have seen the light of day in the Mediterranean basin earlier, is not of Venetian origin. It was in 1302, in the Italian coastal town of Amalfi that the modern compass was born. It would have never occurred to the Venetians to make use of the new contrivance to cross the oceans.

As I have already said, the glory and the fame of Venice are beyond dispute, and I repeat that I have no intention to belittle her. But we must make clear what it means when a people decides to turn all its historical

Mesopotamia, between the Tigris and the Euphrates and on the banks of the Nile, in the Eastern empires of Assyria, Babylon and Egypt. That culture was followed by the 'thalassic' era, that is to say, the culture of closed seas and the Mediterranean basin, represented by the Greek and Roman Antiquity and the Mediterranean Middle Ages. The discovery of America and the voyages round the world marked the third and highest stage, that of oceanic civilization, the carriers of which are the Germanic peoples. In order to render our narrative as clear as possible, we shall stick to his three-category classification: river, closed seas, and ocean. As we go on, we shall see why Venice, a maritime power, came to a halt at the second stage, the thalassic stage.

As a matter of fact, such a festival as the 'marriage to the sea' makes it easy to see the difference. The symbolic act of the union with the sea is shared by other sea-oriented nations. Thus, for instance, the Indian tribes of Central America that lived off fishing and navigation would sacrifice rings and other precious jewels, animals and even human beings to their sea deities. On the other hand, I do not think that the Vikings and other genuine 'roamers of the seas' had ever resorted to such ceremonies. That does not mean that they were less pious or that they felt less the need to appeal to the divine powers. Rather, it might have never occurred to them to stage ceremonial weddings or betrothals to the sea, for the very reason that they were genuine children of the sea. They identified themselves with the sea, their element. The symbolical weddings or betrothals, on the other hand, presupposed a distinction, nay, a radical opposition between the sacrificer and the divinity to which the sacrifice was offered. Such offerings were meant to conciliate an alien element. In the case of Venice, the ceremony clearly shows that the symbolic gesture did not derive from a basically maritime way of life. Under the circumstances, a highly developed, coastal and lagoon civilization invented its own kind of ritual and celebratory symbolism. To limit oneself to the

existence towards the sea, as an altogether different element. The way naval battles were given at the time makes obvious the stakes involved. With regard to the Mediterranean basin as it was then, one cannot talk of an elemental displacement of the entire human existence seaward. In the ancient naval battles, the oar vessels threw themselves upon each other, seeking to ram and board each other. The naval battle was always a hand to hand confrontation: 'like pairs of wrestlers, the ships hurled at each other'. It was at the battle of Mylae that for the first time the Romans boarded the enemy vessels by thrusting gang planks at them as bridges and so were able to board their enemy's ships in a way that made the confrontation that followed look like a land battle. Swords were crossed on deck as on a theatre stage. It was in that manner that the great naval jousts evolved in the ancient times. The Malay and the Indian tribes waged their naval wars on the same principle, even if their weapons might have been more primitive.

The last naval battle of that kind was also the last feat in Venice's history: the battle of Lepanto, in 1571, when the Spanish-Venetian fleet set itself against the Turkish fleet and won the most spectacular victory which the Christians have ever scored against the Moslems. The confrontation took place in the same spot where at Actium, shortly before our era (30 BC), the fleets of the East and of the West, of Anthony and of Octavian, respectively, took each other's measures. The sea battle at Lepanto was given with the same technical means which by and large had been employed at Actium, a millennium and a half before. The Spanish elite footmen, the famous tercios, fought hand to hand the janissaries, the elite infantrymen of the Ottoman Empire, on their ship decks.

A few years later, in 1588, the defeat of the Armada in the English Channel, between England and the Continent, marked the turning point in the art of naval warfare. The small English sailing ships proved themselves superior to the heavy Spanish galleons. Yet, it was not the English but the Dutch that had the edge regarding

ship-building technology. Between 1450 and 1600, the Dutch alone invented more types of vessels than all the other nations taken together. By itself, the discovery of new continents and oceans would not have explained the domination of the world's seas and the deliberate option of the sea, as the element.

5

The first heroes of a sea-bound life were not the distinguished doges aboard their state barges, but enterprising adventurers, sea-roamers, daring whale-hunters, bold sailors who were criss-crossing the oceans. At the beginning, the Dutch were the undisputed role models in two essential sectors: whale-hunting and ship-building.

Here I have to add a word in praise of the whale and to the credit of its hunters. The history of the seas and of man's choice of water as his element cannot be retraced properly without mentioning the legend of leviathan and its no less legendary hunters. Indeed, the topic is daunting. My modest hymn of praise would do justice neither to the whale nor to its hunter. How could one be equal to the task when talking of two wonders of the seas: the strongest living animal, and the most astute of hunters?

As a matter of fact, if I dare to broach this subject-matter, it is because two illustrious heralds of these two marvels of the seas have already done it - the French historian Michelet, a master of the word, and the great American poet, Herman Melville. In 1861, the former published a book about the sea, which is a hymn to its beauty and to its world of unexplored marvels, to the riches of entire continents that live off and prosper at the expense of sea beds, which man, 'ruthless king of this world', has not yet conquered or fully exploited. As for Melville, he is to the world of oceans what Homer was to the Eastern Mediterranean. His *MOBY DICK* (1851) is a vivid fresco and the most beautiful epic



dedicated to the oceanic element, and in which the writer tells the story of Moby Dick, the big whale, and its hunter, Captain Ahab.

While talking indiscriminately of the whale-fish and the whale, the whale-fish hunter and the whale hunter, I am fully aware that this inconsistency would be regarded as the ignorance of the layman. I expect to be eagerly given lessons on the zoological nature of the whale, which as all schoolchildren know, is a mammal and not a fish. In his SYSTEM OF NATURE (1776), old Linne had already noted that the whale was a warm-blooded animal, breathing through lungs, unlike the fish which breathe through gills, and that the female gave birth to living babies that morphologically were very complex, and for a year or two were breast-fed and lovingly looked after by their mothers. I have no intention to argue with the cetologists, those experts in the unfathomable science of the whale. I shall explain in brief and without pedantry the reason why I shall not give up the word 'fish' altogether. Indeed, the whale is not a fish in the image of a herring or the perch. Still, by calling this strange monster a 'fish', I lay stress upon the astonishing fact that such a warm-blooded giant has been handed over to the element without having been physiologically intended for it. Let us imagine the reverse hypothesis, for an instant: a giant terrestrial animal breathing through gills! The largest and strongest sea animal, criss-crossing the seas of the world from the North Pole to the South Pole, breathes through lungs and brings its young into the world viviparously as a mammal, in this maritime medium! It is not an amphibian but a genuine mammal that is a fish in virtue of its biosphere. And the hunters of this fish were in the times that concern us here, that is, from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries, genuine hunters in a grand style, and not mere 'catchers'. This detail is not lacking in importance for our story.

In his book about the sea, Michelet, the French admirer of the whale, describes the whales' love- and family-life

quite touchingly. The male is the most chivalrous lover, the tenderest spouse and the most concerned parent that exists. It is also the most humane of all creatures, more humane than man who exterminates it with savage cruelty. Still how mild were the whale-hunting methods in 1861, when Michelet was writing his book, although the steamboat and the cannon had already reversed the chances, and had turned the poor whale into an easy target. What would Michelet say, he the friend of men and animals, were he to witness the industrial extraction of spermaceti and the processing of the carcasses of the cetaceans! One can no longer call 'hunt' or even 'fishing' what has since the world war of 1914-1918 become the 'pelagic' catching, with its never ceasing technological improvements: nowadays, boats of 30,000 tons, equipped with electric gadgets, cannons, grenades, planes, sound and radio detectors, true floating kitchens, penetrate the ice seas of the Antarctic. It is there that the whale has taken refuge and it is there that the dead animals are industrially processed on board the ships. At that rate, the poor Leviathan has almost disappeared from our planet. Not until 1937 and 1938 was an international agreement finally signed in London, in virtue of which the killing of whales was regulated and whaling zones marked out, and so forth, so that what was left should be protected against unrestrained extermination.

By comparison, the whale hunters, I am talking about, were true hunters and no mere 'fishermen' and even less machine-like butchers. Leaving the shores of the North sea or the Atlantic in their sailing ships or their rowing boats, they were trailing their prey across vast sea expanses, and armed with harpoons, they were fighting a giant which knew how to combine astuteness with strength. Dangerous confrontation between two creatures, which without being fishes in the zoological sense of the word, were roaming the sea, their element. In that encounter, all the means brought to it by man were set in motion by the power of his muscles: the oars, the sails, and the deadly thrust of the harpoon. The whale

was strong enough to capsize the ships and boats of its enemies by a single stroke of its tail. To man's astuteness, it knew how to oppose thousands of ruses. Harman Melville, who himself had served as a mate on a whaler, shows how a quasi-personal relationship was established between the hunter and his prey, a subtle tie made up of connivance and hostility. In this struggle, man would be lured ever farther into the elemental lower depths of a maritime existence.

The whalers were sailing the globe from the north to the south, from the Atlantic to the Pacific. Unrelentingly following the mysterious routes of the whales, they were discovering islands and continents on the quiet, so to speak. Melville makes one of these sea-combers say about the book by Captain Cook, the discoverer of Australia: this Cook writes books about such things that a whale hunter would not jot down in his deck book. In turn, Michelet would ask: who has opened the ocean to people? Who has discovered the oceanic zones and routes? The whale and the whalers! And that without Christopher Columbus and the famed gold-seekers, who with much noise merely rediscover what the fish shoals, coming from the north, from Brittany and the Basque country discovered before them. And Michelet goes on adding: these whale hunters are the highest expression of human courage. Were it not for the whale, the fishermen would have never abandoned the shores. It was the whale that freed them from the coastline and lured them on to the high seas. In that way the maritime currents were discovered, as well as the northern passages. It was the whale that guided us.

In the sixteenth century, two different types of hunters made their appearance simultaneously on our planet. The two opened up new, endless spaces that were the cradles of great empires. On land, the Russian trappers had been tracking fur animals, and having conquered Siberia, reached by land the shores of the Far East. On water, it was the whale hunters, coming from Northern and Western Europe, that ploughed the seas, and as

Michelet justly remarked, opened the world to us. They were the first born of a new, elemental form of existence, the first and the true 'children of the sea'.

This period of new beginnings coincides with an important technological achievement. In that too, the Dutch were in the forefront. In 1600, they were the undisputed masters of ship-building. It was the Dutch who perfected the new sail and the new types of sailing ships that replaced the car-vessels and made possible the navigation of the recently discovered oceans of the world.

About 1595, out of the town of Hoorn, in Western Friesland, which is in the northern part of the Netherlands, came a new type of vessel with square sails. Unlike the older boat, this kind of ship was not pushed by the wind blowing from behind but rather sideways, and could put the wind to quite a different use, unlike the traditional sail. Since then, the tackle and the art of navigation improved beyond expectations. 'The collapse of the medieval navigation looks like a catastrophe', remarks Bernhard Hagedorn, the naval historian, while talking about the event. It is the great turning point in the history of the relationship between land and sea. All that could be done out of the available materials for ships and tackles was by and large done then. One had to wait until the nineteenth century for another technological revolution in ship-building. It is Hagedorn's opinion that the scrapping of the larger sail, and the exploitation of all the advantages offered by the smaller sail must have appeared as a genuine revelation to the navigators. As a consequence of this technological accomplishment, the Dutch became the 'haulers' of all European countries. Moreover, they took over the trade of the German Hanse. Spain herself, although a world power, had to hire Dutch vessels to be able to keep her overseas traffic going.

first important colonial enterprise, despite the fact that in the long run it could not withstand the Spanish boycott. The Dutch carried the day in whale hunting and ship-building technology. As for France, her possibilities were vast, both owing to her geographic position, surrounded as she was by water on three sides (the Mediterranean, the Atlantic and the English Channel), and to her material wealth and the maritime frame of mind of the inhabitants of her Atlantic shoreline. It was a French viking, Jean Fleury, who dealt the first serious blow to Spain's world power by capturing two galleons, loaded with treasure, that Cortez had sent from America to Spain. As early as 1540, another Frenchman, Jacques Cartier, discovered Canada, the 'New France', and took possession of her in the name of his king. The corsairs who went to work from La Rochelle had a considerable share in the energetic maritime upsurge of the period. Finally, thanks to the genius of a naval secretary like Colbert, France overtook England by several decades with regard to the building of men of war in the seventeenth century.

It goes without saying that the feats of the English sailors were no less remarkable. Notwithstanding, it was only after 1570 that the English crossed the Equator. It was in the last quarter of that century that one saw the English privateers take the great plunge and join the race over the oceans and to America.

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Sea roamers of all kinds, pirates, privateers, sea trade adventurers, together with the whale hunters and the sailors, formed the vanguard of that elemental surge towards the sea, that came to fruition in the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries. Here we are dealing with another foolhardy type of 'children of the sea'. Among them there are famous names, names of heroes of sea and pirate legends: Francis Drake, Hawkins, Sir Walter

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The sixteenth century also witnessed the appearance of a new man of war, which marks another stage in naval warfare: a sailing ship, equipped with cannons that fired broadside salvos at the enemy. This kind of combat turned naval confrontations into long-distance artillery duels, undertaken with a highly perfected art of sail manoeuvring. It was then only that one could start talking of naval battles, because as we have already seen, the clashes between the crews of our ships had been but land combats 'on board'. The new and complex art of manoeuvring before, during and after the engagement was a radical about-face in the tactics of the naval battle and of the art of sea warfare, in general. The first scientific treatise, in the modern sense of the word, about this new art was compiled by a Frenchman, the Jesuit Paul Hoste and published at Lyon in 1697, under the title THE ART OF THE NAVAL ARMIES OR TREATISE OF NAVAL EVOLUTIONS (L'art des armées navales ou traité des évolutions navales). It is a critical analysis of the naval manoeuvres and battles of the Dutch, the English and the French during the wars waged by king Louis XIV against the Dutch. Other French works followed. It was only as late as the eighteenth century, and more exactly in 1782, that an Englishman, Clerk of Eldin, joined the ranks of the great theoreticians of naval tactics.

All the nations of Central and Western Europe had their part in the great epic of the discovery of the new Earth, that led to the domination of the world by the Europeans. The Italians perfected the compass and drew the nautical maps. It is above all thanks to the genius and knowledge of Toscanelli and Christopher Columbus that America was discovered. The Portuguese and the Spaniards undertook the first great exploratory expeditions and were also the first to complete the voyage round the world in their sailing ships. Great German astronomers and eminent geographers made their contribution to the new image of the world. It was a German cosmographer, Waltzemüller, who coined the name America in 1507, and the Welser venture in Venezuela was the

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Raleigh or Sir Henry Morgan, celebrated in many books. Their lives were adventurous, indeed. They would seize the silver cargo of Spanish galleons, and had that been their only feat, their stories would still have been exciting. Generally speaking, the literature on piracy is extensive, and there are quite a few great names that have found their way in it. The English have even compiled a directory, amusingly entitled **THE PIRATES' WHO'S WHO**.

Long is the list of those enterprising pirates who have won historic glory by striking the first blows at Spain's world power and trade monopoly. In the same category belong the Protestant pirates of the maritime fortress, La Rochelle, who during Elizabeth's reign, joined the Dutch 'sea-wolves' to fight the Spaniards. Then, there were the Elizabethan privateers, who played an active part in the undoing of the Spanish Armada in 1588. Queen Elizabeth's privateers were followed by those of King James I, among them, Sir Henry Mainwaring, a much feared old pirate who was pardoned by the king in 1616 and became a hunter of pirates, in turn, only to end his life overwhelmed by duties and honours. Then there were the filibusters and the wild buccaneers who would go on wide raids from their bases in Jamaica and the West Indies: French, Dutch, English. Among the latter, one finds Sir Henry Morgan who pillaged Panama in 1671, was knighted by King Charles II, and appointed governor of Jamaica. Their last brilliant feat was the seizure of the Spanish fortress of Cartagena in Colombia, in 1697, with the help of the French royal fleet, and which they plundered ruthlessly, as soon as the French were gone.

The sea element surged up through those sea roamers. Their heroic era lasted approximately a century and a half, from 1550 to 1713, or said differently, from the beginning of the struggle carried on by the Protestant powers against the world power of Catholic Spain, and until the Peace of Utrecht. Of course, pirates are of all times and in all the seas. We have already talked of those who some thousand years ago had been chased

out of the Eastern Mediterranean by the Cretan empire, while as late as the 1920's and the 1930's, those manning the Chinese junks were still attacking and plundering the merchantmen in the Far East. Nonetheless, the privateers of the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries are a chapter apart in the history of privateering. One had to wait for the Peace of Utrecht in 1713 to see the demise of piracy. It was the time when the European state system was consolidating. From then on, the war fleets of the maritime powers were capable of effectively controlling the seas. It was also then that England's new domination of the world, based on the sea element, started to affirm itself. To be sure, privateers were still making war with the consent of their governments, as late as the nineteenth century. Nevertheless, the world went on organizing itself, ship-building technology and navigation techniques kept advancing to become increasingly scientific, whereas piracy, as an English naval expert would say, was a 'pre-scientific phase of naval warfare'. The pirate acting on his own came to be regarded as a pitiful law-breaker. There were indeed exceptions, too, as always. One of them was the French captain Mison who tried to set up a strange Kingdom of Humanity in Madagascar, round 1720. Generally speaking, since the Peace of Utrecht, however, the pirate became marginal to world history. In the eighteenth century he was no longer but a wild creature, a criminal. Although occasionally, he could still be the hero of captivating stories, such as Robert Louis Stevenson's **TREASURE ISLAND**, his role in history was nil.

Not so, the privateers of the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries, who played a considerable part in history. Arm in hand, they participated in the great confrontation between England and Spain. Treated as common criminals by their Spanish enemies and hanged as thieves and murderers whenever caught, they were given the cold shoulder by their own governments whenever they were an embarrassment, or international politics demanded it. It was often a matter of chance whether a

privateer ended his career as a royal dignitary holding high office or as a pirate dangling at the end of a rope on the gallows. In everyday life, we use such words as pirate, privateer or merchant-adventurer interchangeably, while in fact each has a particular meaning. Legally, there is a big difference between a pirate and a privateer: unlike the pirate, the privateer holds a legal title, a commission from his government, a formal letter of marque from his king. He is entitled to fly his country's flag. On the other hand, the pirate navigates without a legal authorization. His only flag is the black flag of the pirates. Nevertheless, this distinction, so clear and elegant in theory, was quickly blurred in practice. The privateers often exceeded the limits of their licences and navigated using forged letters of marque, and at other times, were armed only with licences from non-existent governments.

Still, there is something more important than these legal matters: all those buccaneers and adventurers had a common, political enemy: the powerful, Catholic Spain. As long as they remained true to themselves, they would capture only Catholic vessels, at least in principle, a task which in all good faith, they regarded as blessed by God. Thus, they would make the frontline of world history, on the side of world Protestantism and against the world Catholicism of the day. Indeed, this cannot justify the massacres, the arsens and the plunder which they carried out. In any case, in the general context of that ruthless age, they undeniably had their place and historic rank.

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The idea which the English monarchs had about world history, whether they were Queen Elizabeth or the Stuarts James I and Charles I, as also the English statesmen of those times, did not differ from that of most of their contemporaries. They were content to pursue their own

policies, exploited whatever advantage came their way, pocketed the profits and did their utmost to keep their offices. They would apply the law whenever the law was on their side, and protest indignantly against injustice whenever the law favoured their adversaries. All that is quite natural. The idea of God, law and the world, the awareness of the advisable course of world history, characteristic of such highly gifted personalities as Thomas Morus, Cardinal Wolsey or Francis Bacon, were no more modern than those shared by most of the politicians and diplomats of any other European country involved in high politics.

It is true that Queen Elizabeth passes for the great founder of the English maritime supremacy, and she is well deserving of the name: after all, it was she who embarked upon the path of hostilities against Spain, the Catholic world power. It was during her reign, in 1588, that the Spanish Armada was defeated in the English Channel. Likewise, it was she who honoured and sponsored such sea heroes as Francis Drake and Walter Raleigh. Finally, it was she who in 1600 granted its trade charter to the East India Company, which ultimately delivered the whole of India to the English crown. During the forty-five years of her reign (1558-1603), England was a rich country as never before. Previously, the English had been sheep-breeders who had sold their wool in Flanders. Now all the seas of the world converged upon the English Isle, unloading there the legendary booty of the English pirates and privateers. The Queen rejoiced and grew rich from it. In this respect, the Virgin Queen behaved like many of her impecunious subjects, nobles and commoners, men and women. They were all partners in the big plunder business. Hundreds, nay, thousands of men and women became corsair capitalists. That too was part of the elemental drift from land to sea, which is the subject-matter of our story.

The Killigrews of Cornwall are a handsome example of the predatory capitalism of the golden age, in its early stage. Their life-style and their world outlook

offer us a more telling and faithful picture of the ruling strata of the times and of the true 'élite' than a good many official records and various compilations that are too much tributary to the official jargon and to their time. The Killigrews were typical of their age, though in a different way than most of the diplomatists, lawyers and poets laureate. We should not forget, though, that their kin counted among them illustrious intellectuals and that the name of Killigrew features ten times or more in the British National Biographical Dictionary. Let us linger a while upon this highly interesting élite.

The Killigrews were from Arwenack in Cornwall. During Elizabeth's reign, the head of the family was Sir John Killigrew, vice-admiral of Cornwall and hereditary royal governor of Pendennis Castle. He worked hand in hand with William Cecil, Lord Burleigh, Her Majesty's chief minister. The vice-admiral's father and uncle had been pirates themselves, and even his mother, according to reliable historical sources, had been at odds with the law against piracy. A branch of the family was active along the English coast, another, in Ireland, while several impecunious cousins and more distant relatives used their resourcefulness along the shore of Devon and Dorset. They were joined by all kinds of friends and confederates. They would organize surprise attacks, raids and other strokes, ransacking the ships that ventured into their waters. They supervised the distribution of the booty, and sold shares, stations and offices. Killigrew Hall at Arwenack stood directly on the shore, in one of the sheltered nooks of Falmouth Bay, and linked to the wide sea by a secret passage. The nearest building was Pendennis Castle, the seat of the royal governor. Equipped with a hundred cannons, the fortified castle served as pirate refuge in case of emergency. The noble Lady Killigrew had earlier helped her father, a much honored 'gentleman pirate', before she herself became the zealous associate of her husband whom she did proud. She gave shelter to pirates in her house, as the perfect hostess that she was. Inns and refuges had been set

up in all the harbours of the region.

Seldom would the dealings of the Killigrews be interfered with. Only once, in 1582, did they come to grief. I shall tell you briefly what happened. A Hanseatic vessel of 144 tons, owned by two Spaniards, was cast by the storm into the Falmouth Bay. At the time, England and Spain were at peace. The Spaniards cast their anchor just in front of the Killigrew mansion at Arwenack, without giving it a second thought. From her window, Lady Killigrew saw the boat, and with her trained eye, she was quick to realize that it was loaded with expensive Dutch cloth. During the night of the 7th of January 1582, the Killigrew retainers, headed by Lady Killigrew herself, attacked the unfortunate ship, massacred the crew, threw the corpses overboard and returned home to Arwenack, loaded with the precious Holland and other trophies. As for the boat, it disappeared in mysterious circumstances, in the Irish sea. The two Spanish owners were lucky enough not to have been on board at the time of the attack. They had been spending the night on land, at a small hotel. They filed a complaint with the competent court in Cornwall, which after an inquiry, concluded that the vessel must have been stolen by unknown people, and that after all said and done, it was impossible to cast any light upon the facts. The two Spaniards happened to have highly placed political connections, and so managed to bring the matter to the highest attention in London, and so much so that a new inquiry was ordered. Lady Killigrew and her accomplices were made to appear before the court in another jurisdiction. She was found guilty and sentenced to death. Two of her assistants were executed and she herself was only pardoned at the last moment. This is the sadly true story of Lady Killigrew. For the first fourteen years of Elizabeth's reign, the largest part of the English navy was actively engaged in piracy and illegal transactions, and no more than 50,000 tons of the total were set apart for legal trade. The Killigrews embody in an exemplary way that homefront of the great hours of piracy that saw the fulfillment of

a thirteenth-century English prophecy: 'The lion's cubs will turn into the fishes of the sea'. At the end of the Middle Ages, the lion's cubs were tending sheep in the main, and the fleeces, sold in Flanders, was processed there into cloth. It was only in the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries that this nation of shepherds recast itself into a sea-roaming nation of privateers, into 'children of the sea'.

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The oceanic feats of the English are of a relatively late date, and were indeed slow to start. For already a century, the Portuguese had been racing round the world, though it is true, more often along the shores. From 1492 on, the Spaniards took over, thanks mostly to the great Conquistadors, the conquest of America. The French sailors, the Huguenots and the English followed suit. But firstly, in 1553, England set up the Muscovy Company as the basis of an overseas policy, that enabled her to pull herself forward and come level with the other colonial powers. It was only after 1570, as we have already seen, that the English crossed the Equator. The first practical document that attests to the new world outlook of the English was Hakluyt's PRINCIPAL NAVIGATIONS. It saw the light of print in 1589. In matters of whale-hunting and ship-building, the Dutch had been the teachers of the English, as of other nations.

Notwithstanding, it was the English who in the long run surpassed them all, defeated their rivals and secured world supremacy for themselves, based on their domination of the oceans. England became the heiress. It was England that inherited the great sea hunters and sailors, the pioneers and the discoverers from all the European nations. The maritime exploits and the dare-devil of the seafaring Danish, Dutch, Germans and Norwegians amassed into what one day was to become the British maritime domination of the world. No doubt, the big colonial

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empires of the other European nations continued to exist: Spain and Portugal, for instance, preserved their huge overseas possessions, but lost control of the seas and the communication routes. When in 1655 Cromwell's forces occupied Jamaica and kept her, his gesture was already affirming England's overall policy regarding the world's seas and oceans, and implicitly, her maritime victory over Spain. The Netherlands, which by 1600 had reached the zenith of their maritime power, were forcefully 'continentalized', a century later. The Dutch were compelled to defend themselves against king Louis XIV of France, and so had to erect strong land fortifications. In 1689, their stadholder, William III of Orange, became king of England, and from that year on, he took residence on that big island. William pursued an English policy, and ceased to promote any peculiarly Dutch policy. France, on the other hand, did not follow up the strong maritime impetus, associated with the Huguenot Protestantism. Ultimately, in keeping with her spiritual tradition, she pursued the line of Rome, took sides against the Huguenots, with the Night of St. Bartholomew in 1572 and Henry IV's conversion to Catholicism. By the same choice, she decided in favour of land and against the sea. Of course, her maritime potential remained quite considerable, so that even during the reign of Louis XIV, she was capable of confronting the English fleet. But when in 1672, the French king sacked Colbert, his great secretary of trade and of the navy, the choice in favour of the land element became irreversible. The long colonial wars of the eighteenth century confirmed it. As for Germany, her contribution was squandered in the religious wars and the political wretchedness of the Empire.

So it came that England became the heiress, the universal heiress of that great change in the existence of the European nations. How was that possible? The phenomenon cannot be explained by drawing sweeping comparisons with earlier historical examples of naval supremacy, whether one thinks of Athens, Carthago, Rome, Byzance or Venice. The case of England is in itself unique. Its

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specificity, its incomparable character has to do with the fact that England underwent the elemental metamorphosis at a moment in history that was altogether unlike any other, and also in a way shared by none of the earlier maritime powers. She truly turned her collective existence seawards and centred it on the sea element. That enabled her to win not only countless wars and naval battles but also something else, and in fact, infinitely more - a revolution. A revolution of sweeping scope, that of the planetary space.

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What is a space revolution?

Man has a clear awareness of his space, which historically is subject to deep-going perturbations. To the plurality of forms of existence corresponds an even plurality of spaces. Quite simultaneously, the plurality of skills or professions introduces a different environment in the acts of the everyday life of each one of us. The inhabitant of a big city has a different image of the world than does a farmer. A whale hunter has a vital space that differs from that of an opera-singer. Life and the world are seen in a different light by an airplane pilot, and they have different dimensions, depths and horizons. The differences in the perception of space are even larger and deeper among various nations and among the various periods in the history of mankind.

The scientific theories of space may practically tell us a lot or next to nothing, at one and the same time. For centuries, the few men of science who conceived of Earth as spheric were considered mentally deranged or wicked. In the modern age, various branches of science, with their increasing specialization, have come out with their particular notions of space. Geometry, physics, psychology and biology each go their own ways, separate from each other. When asked, the scientists would reply that mathematical space is entirely different from the space

of an electro-magnetic field and that the latter in turn is completely different from the space as it is understood in psychology or in biology. That gives us half a dozen notions of space! There is no conceptual unity there, and the real problem risks to be unraveled and fragmented by the irrelevant contiguity of these different notions. Neither the philosophy nor the epistemology of the nineteenth century provide us with a simple and all-encompassing answer, but in fact, leave us in the lurch.

Nevertheless, the forces and the powers that forge history wait for science to make up its mind as little as did Christopher Columbus and Copernicus. Each time the forces of history cause a new breach, the surge of new energies brings new lands and new seas into the visual field of human awareness, the spaces of historical existence undergo a corresponding change. Hence, new criteria appear, alongside of new dimensions of political and historical activity, new sciences, new social systems; nations are born or reborn.

This redeployment may be so profound and so sudden that it alters not only man's outlook, standards and criteria, but also the very contents of the notion of space. It is in that context that one may talk of a spatial revolution. Actually, all important changes in history more often than not imply a new perception of space. The true core of the global mutation, political, economic and cultural, lies in it.

Three historical examples will quickly make clear this general phenomenon: the consequences of the conquests made by Alexander the Great, the Roman Empire of the first century of our era, and the impact of the Crusades upon the development of Europe.

The conquests made by Alexander the Great opened to the Greeks a new and vaster, spatial horizon. The consequence



was the Hellenistic art and culture. The great philosopher Aristotle, a contemporary of that spatial mutation, saw the inhabited worlds of the East and the West increasingly coming together. Aristarchus of Samos, who lived a little later (310-230 BC), put forth the hypothesis that the Sun, a fixed star, was at the centre of Earth's orbit. Alexandria, a city founded by Alexander on the Nile, became the centre of astonishing inventions in technology, mathematics and physics. Euclid, the founder of the geometry that bears his name, taught there. Hero made astonishing technical discoveries in that city where Archimedes of Syracuse had gone to school, before he invented some great war machines, and discovered some of the laws of nature. The director of the Alexandrian Library, Eratosthenes (275-195 BC), anticipated Copernicus' work by correctly calculating the Equator and by scientifically demonstrating the spheric shape of Earth. Notwithstanding, the Hellenistic world was not vast enough to be capable of opening itself to a revolution of the planetary space. Its knowledge remained the concern of learned circles, and no world ocean became part of its existential reality.

Three centuries later, when Julius Caesar left Rome in order to conquer Gaul and Britain, people's eyes opened upon the north-west, and the Atlantic came within reach. That was the first step towards the spatial entity that nowadays is called 'Europe'. In the first century of the Roman Empire, and particularly under Nero, the consciousness of a profound mutation became so strong and compelling that one may speak of a revolutionary transformation of space, at least as far as the leading intellectuals were concerned. That historic moment, which coincided with the first century of our era is worth special attention. The visual field expanded towards the east and the west, towards the north and the south. Wars of conquest and civil wars overhauled the space, from Spain to Persia, and from Britain to Egypt. The contact established among lands and peoples so distant from one another nourished a feeling of unity, inherent in a

common political destiny. From anywhere in the Empire, whether from Germania or Syria, Africa or Illyria, a general could be elevated by his own soldiers to the office of Emperor, in Rome. The isthmus of Corinth was pierced, and Arabia skirted on the south. Nero had sent an expedition to the sources of the Nile. Agrippa's map of the world and Strabo's geography are evidence of this spatial expansion. From then on, the reality of the spheric shape of Earth ceased to be the exclusive knowledge of a handful of astronomers or mathematicians.

It was round that time that Seneca, a famous philosopher and Nero's tutor before becoming his victim, put the quasi-planetary feelings experienced by his contemporaries in a couple of well-rounded verses and sentences. He was saying quite clearly that one could sail with the wind blowing from behind, from the Atlantic shores of Spain, that is from the east, and by navigating westwards, reach India, an eastern land, in not too many days. In his tragedy *MEDEA*, he made a strange prediction in fine verse:

The Indian drinks of the icy Araxes.

The Persians quaff the Elbe and the Rhine.

An age will come in the far-off centuries,

When Ocean will loosen the bonds of things.

And the whole broad earth will be revealed,

When Thetis\* will disclose new worlds.

And Thule will no longer be the bound.

I quote these verses because they convey a global feeling of space that was current in the first century of our era. The beginning of our era did indeed mark not only a turnabout of the feelings and the sentiments of the age, but also the realization of the global space and planetary horizon. Seneca's words cast a mysterious bridge over to the modern times and the age of the great discoveries: they would cross several centuries of spatial blindness and 'continentalization', characteristic of the European Middle Ages. They lent the reflective

\* Achilles' mother, Thetis, is here the goddess of the sea. Another version has 'Tiphys', instead, who was the pilot of the Argo, the ship that took the Argonauts to the Black Sea to win the Golden Fleece.

minds the sentiment of a vaster space, of a planetary expanse and helped to discover America. As many of his contemporaries, Christopher Columbus was familiar with Seneca's words, and in them, found the goading and the encouragement he needed to undertake his voyage to the New World, the audacious expedition to reach the East by sailing westwards, and which he did in fact. The name 'New World' (novus orbis), which Seneca had used, was immediately given to the newly discovered America in 1492.

The fall of the Roman Empire, the expansion of Islam, the Arab and Turkish invasions brought about a contraction of space and a 'continentalization' of Europe that lasted several centuries. Retreat from the sea, absence of a fleet and total territorialization are characteristic features of the early Middle Ages and its feudal system. Between 500 and 1100, Europe became a feudal and agrarian continental mass, the dominant stratum of which, the feudal lords, left the spiritual matters and even reading and writing to the church and the clergy. Famous kings and heroes of that age were unable to read and write. They had monks and chaplains for that. It was likely that in a maritime realm, the rulers could not afford ignoring those skills for long, as was the case in those realms, exclusively terrestrial and centred on a rural economy. It was the Crusades, after all, that gave the French, English and German knights and merchants the chance to discover the Near East. In the north, the German Hanse and the Teutonic knights opened a new horizon. It was the beginning of a trade and communications network that eventually came to be known as the 'world economy of the Middle Ages'.

Moreover, this spatial expansion coincided with a profound cultural mutation. Everywhere in Europe new political forms made their appearance. France, England and Sicily witnessed the emergence of centralized administrations, that to a degree, signalled the advent of the modern state. Northern and Central Italy were the stage of a new urban culture. Universities were set up, giving rise to a new theology and a jurisprudence without

precedent. The rediscovery of Roman law led to the formation of a new, cultured class, the lawyers, and put an end to the monopoly exercised by the ecclesiastical clergy, which had been typical of medieval feudalism. In the new, Gothic art, in architecture, sculpture and painting, a more forceful rhythm was set in motion, overtaking the static space of the ancient Roman art, and replacing it by a field of dynamical forces. The Gothic arch is a structure in which the elements balance and support each other simply by their weight. It conveys an entirely new sense of space, when compared to the heavy and static masses of the Roman structures. Unlike the temples of Antiquity and the Renaissance architecture that would follow it, Gothic art imparts a particular thrust and movement that dislodges space.

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Many other examples from history may be given, but all dim before the most thorough transformation of the planetary outlook and its consequences in all the known history of the world. It took place in the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries, the age of the discovery of the Americas and of the first voyage round the world in a sailing ship. It was then that a new world was born, in the most challenging sense of those words. The global conscience of the Western and the Central Europeans, and ultimately, of the whole mankind was overhauled from top to bottom. It was the first, complete, space revolution on a planetary scale, in the true meaning of those words.

A revolution unlike any other. It was not merely a quantitative enlargement of the geographical skyline, the result of the discovery of new continents and new oceans, alone. That revolution had far more repercussions. It would wipe out the traditional conceptions, ancient and medieval, and alter man's overall awareness, his very image of the planet as well as the astronomical

representation of the universe. For the first time in history, man was holding the terrestrial globe in his hand, the real one, as if it were a ball. A medieval mind, and even Martin Luther, had found ridiculous the idea that Earth was a sphere, it had been a fantasy not to be taken seriously. Nonetheless, the spheric shape of our planet was becoming tangible reality, unswerving experience, undeniable scientific truth. From then on, Earth, once an allegedly fixed star, began revolving round the Sun. Still, that was not the most radical transformation. The truly decisive factor was the appearance of the cosmic dimension and of the concept of the infinite void.

Copernicus was the first to demonstrate scientifically that Earth was turning round the Sun. His work on the revolutions of the celestial bodies, *DE REVOLUTIONIBUS ORBIIUM COELESTIUM*, dates from 1543. Although he transformed our solar system, he stuck to the idea that space, the cosmos, was a limiting field. In this way, the world, in the cosmic sense, and with it, the notion of space, remained unaltered. Several decades later, the boundaries vanished. In Giordano Bruno's philosophical scheme, the solar system, in which Earth revolves round the Sun, is but one of the many solar systems on an infinite firmament. Galileo's scientific experiments turned those philosophical speculations into a mathematically demonstrable truth. Kepler calculated the ellipses of the planets, but shuddered before the infinity of those spaces where the galaxies evolve free of conceivable boundaries and centre. With Newton's theories, the new concept of space became part and parcel of the whole, enlightened Europe. The stars, masses of matter, move while the forces of attraction and repulsion balance each other in an infinite void, in virtue of the laws of gravitation.

From then on, man could make himself an idea of the void, which he could not do earlier, despite the fact that certain philosophers had already broached the subject. Formerly, man had feared the void: he used to have

horror vacui. Then, lo and behold, he began to forget his fears and adjust to the idea that he and his world were in the void. In the eighteenth century, the writers of the Enlightenment, with Voltaire at their head, were taking pride in the very idea, scientifically demonstrable, of a world placed inside an infinite void. Try to imagine a truly empty space, a space that is not only an air vacuum, but also free of the minutest and subtlest matter. Go on and try to distinguish between matter and space within your picture, separate one from the other and think of one without the other. You may just as well think of absolute nothingness! Nonetheless, the thinkers of the Enlightenment laughed at lot at this horror vacui. Or perhaps it was only the quite understandable shudder before nothingness, the emptiness of death, before the nihilistic image and nihilism on the whole.

Such change, implicit in the notion of the infinite void, cannot be explained merely as a result of a purely geographical expansion of the known world. It is so essential and revolutionary that one may as well affirm the contrary, namely that the discovery of new continents and the voyage round the world were only the result and the manifestation of much deeper mutations. Only in that way could the landing on an unknown island inaugurate a whole era of discoveries. People coming from the West and from the East had landed in America before. It is known that about year 1000, the Vikings had discovered North America, on their way from Greenland, and that the Indians whom Christopher Columbus met must also have arrived there from somewhere. Still, it has to be acknowledged that it was in 1492, and not before, that America was 'discovered' by Columbus. The 'pre-Colombian' discoveries had not brought about any planetary space revolution, nor were they the sequel of such a revolution. Otherwise, the Aztecs would not have remained in Mexico, nor the Incas in Peru. One fair day, they would have paid us a visit in Europe, world map in hand. It would have been they who would have discovered us, and not the other way round! A space revolution presupposes more

than just setting foot on land previously unknown. It assumes the transformation of the notion of space at all levels and in all the aspects of human existence. The formidable about-face in the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries shows us all what that means.

In those centuries of change, the Europeans simultaneously imprinted a new idea of space on all the aspects of their creative spirit. Renaissance painting forsook the space of the medieval Gothic art. From then on, the painters would place their human models and material objects in a space, which through perspective, attained a hollow depth. People and objects were now sitting and moving in space. It is in fact a different world, when compared to the space of a Gothic painting. The simple fact that the painters began to see differently, that the way they looked at things changed is full of significance for us. Great painters are not only those who place something beautiful before our eyes. Art too is a historical step in the evolution of the spatial awareness. Real artists are those who see people and things better and more accurately than the rest, more accurately in regard to the historical reality of their era. Nevertheless, the new space made itself manifest in other fields, too. Renaissance architecture erected buildings of a classical and geometrical conception, a world apart from the Gothic space. The statues of people in the Renaissance were free-standing, whereas in the Middle Ages they had been 'hooked' to pillars and to walls. On the other hand, Baroque architecture surged into a dynamic movement, and for that reason, it resembled the Gothic in more than one aspect. Nevertheless, it remained tributary to the new, modern space, born of a spatial revolution to which it had brought its own contribution. Music broke free from the constraints of the ancient tonalities and placed its tunes and harmonies inside the acoustical space of our so-called tonal system. On stage and at the opera, the characters would move in the empty depth of the stage space, separated from the audience by a curtain. All the spiritual trends

of those two centuries, Renaissance, Humanism, Reformation, Counter-Reformation and Baroque have each in their ways contributed to the spatial revolution as a whole.

It is no exaggeration to affirm that all walks of life and forms of existence, all the manifestations of man's creative genius, the arts, science and technology had their share in the new idea of space. As a matter of fact, the great changes in the geographic image of our planet are but a superficial aspect of the deep-going mutation, as suggested by the phrase 'spatial revolution', so rich in consequences. What by turn has been called the rational superiority of the Europeans, the European spirit and 'Western rationalism', has had an irresistible impact ever since. It extended to the nations of Western and Central Europe, destroyed the medieval forms of human community, set up new states, fleets and armies, invented new machines, and submitted to its will the non-European peoples. To the latter it gave the choice of adopting European civilization or be reduced to mere colonies of the former.

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Every basic order is a spatial order. To talk of the constitution of a country or a continent is to talk of its fundamental order. of its nomos\*. The true, the

\*The Greek noun 'nomos' derives from the verb 'nemein', and like the latter, has three meanings. Firstly, 'nemein' is the equivalent of the German 'nehmen', to take. Hence 'nomos' means seizure, in the first place. As to the Greek 'legein-logos' corresponds the German 'sprechen-Sprache', so too, the German 'nehmen-Nahme' corresponds to the Greek 'nemein-nomos'. At first, the seizure was of land, and later, it also became the appropriation of the sea, such of which is part of our historical review here. In the industrial sector, one speaks of the appropriation of the means of production. The second meaning is the division and distribution of what was seized. Hence also the second sense of 'nomos', the basic division and repartition of the soil and the resulting ownership order. The third meaning is to tend, that is, to usufruct, exploit and turn to good account the partitioned land, to produce and to consume. Seizing-dividing-tending are, in that sequence, the three fundamental no-

authentic, rests essentially upon distinct, spatial delimitations. It presupposes clear dimensions, a precise division of the planet. The beginning of every great era coincides with an extensive territorial appropriation. Every important change in the image of Earth is inseparable from a political transformation, and so, from a new repartition of the planet, a new territorial appropriation.

A spatial revolution as singular as that of the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries had ineluctably to lead to a territorial appropriation, as astounding and unprecedented. New spaces were opened, that seemed endless to the Europeans who swarmed out to those distant expanses, and treated the non-European and non-Christian peoples and countries which they discovered as abandoned property, devolving to the first occupier arriving from Europe. All the conquerors, whether Catholic or Protestant, invoked their mission of disseminating the Christian faith among the non-Christians. They could have done that without conquest and plunder. It was, however, the only motive and justification that they would give. There were certain monks, such as the Spanish theologian Francisco de Vitoria, who in his lecture on the Indians (DE INDIS, 1532), proclaimed that the right of peoples to their land was independent of their religious faith, and with an astonishing broad-mindedness, defended the rights of the Indians. That however did not change in the least the global, historical reality of the territorial appropriation by the Europeans. Later on, during the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries, the mandate of the Christian mission expanded into a mandate to disseminate European civilization among the uncivilized peoples. It was out of such justifications that a Christian European civil law came to be born, the law of the Christian commonwealth of Europe, distinct from the rest of the world. The Christian peoples would build up a

itions of every concrete order. More about the meaning of 'nomos' may be found in my book, DER NOMOS DER ERDE, Cologne, 1950.

'family of nations', an inter-state order. Its civil law would be based on the distinction between Christian and non-Christian, or a century later, between civilized (in the Christian European sense) and uncivilized peoples. A nation that was not civilized in that sense of the word, could not become a member of that community of states. It would be regarded not as a subject but as an object of that community's civil law. In other words, it was part of the possessions of one or another of the civilized nations, as a colony or a colonial protectorate.

Nevertheless, you must not think of that commonwealth of Christian-European nations as of a flock of peaceful lambs. They waged bloody wars among themselves. Still, that does not affirm the historical reality of a kinship and a commonwealth of Christian-European civilization. World history is a history of territorial conquests. The conquerors did not however support each other at all times. Quite often, they opposed each other, and as often, in bloody, fratricidal wars. Notwithstanding, unlike the ancient occupiers and the alien third parties, there was one thing that they shared. Intestine struggles, fratricidal clashes and civil wars are, as everybody knows, the most gruesome of all wars. The more so, in the case of land seized in common. The conflict is more intense, the higher the stakes. In this case, it was a matter of seizing a new world. In the sixteenth century, Frenchmen and Spaniards massacred each other for years, in a most atrocious manner, particularly in Florida, where they spared neither women nor children. Spaniards and Englishmen confronted each other in a century-long, bitter war, in which the most brutal hostility man is capable of seems to have reached the limit. Neither had too many scruples when it came to filling their combat ranks, openly or surreptitiously, with non-Europeans, Muslims or Indians, as auxiliaries or even as allies. The outbreaks of hostility were frightful: each side abused the other, calling it in turn such names as assassins, thieves, rapiers and

pirates. One kind of abuse was missing, though, the one which they would hurl at the Indians. Among themselves, the Christian Europeans did not accuse each other of cannibalism. In rest, nothing was missing from their repertory of abuses and deadly hostility. Yet, all that fades before the dominant fact, the collective conquest of the New World by the Europeans. The meaning and the core of the Christian-European civil law, its fundamental order, was the partition of the newly discovered Earth. Among themselves and without much planned deliberation, the Europeans were unanimous in regarding the non-European territory of the planet as colonial territory, in other words, as object of conquest and exploitation. This aspect of the historical evolution is so important that one might as well and more correctly define the age of discoveries as the era of territorial conquests by the Europeans. Heraclitus had already said it: war brings people together, while law divides them.

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Portuguese, Spaniards, Frenchmen, Dutchmen and Englishmen fought one another for the division of the new Earth. The means, though, were not exclusively military; the struggle also implied diplomatic negotiations and suits for the best legal title. At that stage, one could afford being magnanimous to the aborigines. One would land, stick a cross in the ground, carve the coat of arms of one's king in the bark of a tree, or mark a boulder with the great seal, or stick an official title between the roots of a tree. The Spaniards were partial to those solemn proclamations by which they would make known to a band of aborigines gathered at the spot that from then on, their land belonged to the Castilian crown. Such appropriations, loaded with symbols, were deemed legally sufficient to acquire whole islands and continents. No government, whether Portuguese, Spanish, French, Dutch or English, did pay any attention to the

natives' rights to the land. Another aspect was the fighting among the European conquerors themselves. In those circumstances, each would stick under the other's nose the legal title which they happened to have at hand. When useful, one would go so far as to invoke the agreements concluded with the natives and their chiefs.

As long as Portugal and Spain, two Catholic powers, were not challenged from the outside, the Pope in Rome could issue legal titles, set order in the newly conquered lands, and arbitrate between the conquering powers. In 1493, that is to say, one year after the discovery of America, the Spaniards obtained from Pope Alexander VI an edict by which the Pope, in virtue of his apostolic authority, was granting to the king of Castile and Leon, and to his heirs, the recently discovered West Indies, as a secular fief of the Church. The edict even traced a line that was crossing the Atlantic, a hundred miles west of the Azores and Cape Verde. All the territories discovered west of the line were to be held by Spain in fief from the Pope. Later on, through the Treaty of Tordesillas, Spain and Portugal agreed that all the land discovered east of that line should go to Portugal. Thus began the vast partition of the whole of the New World, although at the time, Christopher Columbus had only discovered a few isles and promontories along the coast. Nobody had yet any accurate idea of the configuration of the planet, though that fact was no obstacle in the implementation of its redistribution in all its vastness and many-sidedness. The dividing line traced by the Pope in 1493 marked the beginning of the struggle for the new fundamental order, for the new names of the planet.

For a century or so, the Spaniards and the Portuguese would refer to the Papal concessions in their attempts to refute the claims raised by the French, the Dutch and the English. Brazil, discovered in 1500 by Cabral, uncontestedly became Portuguese as long as that segment of the American coast found itself inside the eastern, that is to say, the Portuguese zone, following a shift

of the dividing line westwards. Notwithstanding, the other conquering powers did not consider themselves bound by the Spanish-Portuguese agreements, and besides, the Pope's authority was not enough to inspire them with respect for the territorial monopoly enjoyed by the two Catholic powers. With the onset of the Reformation, the nations converted to Protestantism would openly contest the authority of the Roman pontiff. Thus, the struggle for the ownership of the new Earth turned into a struggle between Reformation and Counter-Reformation, between the world Catholicism of the Spaniards, and the world Protestantism of the Huguenots, the Dutch and the English.

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The Christian conquerors did not put up a united front against the aborigines, as long as they faced no common enemy that was really threatening. On the other hand, the religious war which they waged among themselves, the world-wide contention between Catholicism and Protestantism was more ruthless, the stronger its historical impact. Under that aspect, and given the scenes of actual fighting, the partition skirmish did look like a war of religion, which it was, too. But there was something more to it, the full dimension of which became obvious only if here, too, we pay attention to the opposition between the elements, and to the simultaneous breach between the high-sea world, on the one hand, and the land-bound world, on the other.

Great poets set several of the protagonists of this all-encompassing war of religion on stage. The Spanish king Philip II and his enemy, Queen Elizabeth of England, became a favourite topic with the dramatists. Both appear in Schiller's outstanding tragedies, and are each placed in antithetical situations in one and the same play. They are beautiful and eloquent scenes, no doubt, but the deepest conflicts, the true friend-foe positions,

the ultimate, elemental forces and clashes would not manifest themselves in this manner. At the time, Germany could offer no such stage-worthy, heroic figures. One German alone became the hero of an important tragedy, in that age between 1550 and 1618, which was so eventless for her, and that was Emperor Rudolph II. You have heard little of him, and it is true to say that he is hardly remembered. Nonetheless, his name belongs to this context here, and it is for the right reason that another great dramatist, Franz Grillparzer, has placed him at the centre of one of his tragedies, FRATERNA STRIFE IN HABSBURG (Ein Bruderzwist in Habsburg). The very problem and greatness of this play by Grillparzer and of its protagonists lie in the fact that Rudolph II was not an active hero, but rather a brake, a delaying factor. He was something of a katechon, a concept which we came across earlier, on page 8. What could Rudolph do in the Germany of those times? It was quite a lot, as he understood that the fighting that was going on far from the German borders was no concern of Germany whatsoever! And it was an impressive achievement on his part to be able to delay the Thirty-Year War by several decades.

Peculiar to Germany at the time was the fact that the country did not take part in that war of religion, nor was it in the position to do so. No doubt, it was not free of the conflict between Catholicism and Protestantism, but that opposition inside Germany was altogether different from the planetary confrontation for the possession of the world, going on between Catholicism and Protestantism, and which had embraced the entire globe. Indeed, Germany was Martin Luther's homeland and the cradle of the Reformation. But the fighting among the world-conquering powers had long exceeded the original opposition between Catholicism and Protestantism. A more clear-cut and deeper-going conflict emerged above and away from Germany's internal problems, namely, that between the Jesuits and the Calvinists. Henceforth, the friend-foe distinction would serve as the axis of

world politics.

In Germany, the Lutheran princes and the estates, particularly the first Protestant prince of the Empire, the Prince-Elector of Saxony, did their utmost to remain loyal to their Catholic Emperor. When a military league of the Evangelical German estates was formed on the Calvinists' initiative, the so-called Union, and in turn the Catholic estates reacted to it by setting up the League, the Lutheran Prince-Elector of Saxony no longer knew where he belonged. As late as 1612, negotiations were going on in regard to his possible affiliation to the Catholic League. The hatred which the Lutherans nourished against the Calvinists was no less than their hatred of the Papists. Neither did the Catholics have any better feelings towards the Calvinists. That aversion cannot be explained only by the fact that, generally speaking, the Lutherans were more observant of the principle of obedience to authority than the more active Calvinists. The main reason lies in the fact that during that period, Germany would be pushed back and away from the European conquest of the New World, and that ultimately, she was pushed from the outside into the world-wide confrontation among the Western conquering powers. At the same time, we must not forget that the Turkish advance was threatening its south-eastern flank. Jesuits and Calvinists from Spain, the Netherlands and England would place before Germany choices that had nothing to do with her internal situation. Some of the estates and princes that were Catholic but not Jesuit, or Protestant without being Calvinist, tried to avoid a quarrel that was utterly alien to them. In order to succeed, however, they would have needed a willpower of their own, an autonomous determination. In its absence, and that is what happened eventually, they withdrew into a state, which has been rightly described as 'neutral-passive'. The result was the transformation of Germany into the battle-field of a war of conquest that was waged overseas, perfectly alien to her and in which she did not take any active part. Calvinism was the new militant

religion, perfectly adapted to the elemental thrust seawards. So it became the religion of the French Huguenots, of the heretics of the Dutch freedom, and of the English Puritans. It also became the religion of the Great Prince-Elector of Brandenburg, one of the rare German princes to have a taste for naval power and colonies. The continental Calvinist communities, those of Switzerland, Hungary and other countries, had no significant repercussions upon world politics, unless they joined the train of maritime forces. Every non-Calvinist would cringe from the Calvinist faith, and above all from the stern faith in the predestination of man for all eternity. In secular terms, the doctrine of predestination is the uppermost elevation of the human conscience that claims to belong to a world other than the doomed and corrupted world. In modern sociological terms, it may be said that it is the highest degree of self-consciousness, characteristic of an élite assured of its social position and its hour in history. To put it simply, it is the certainty of salvation, and this redemption is but the meaning of the whole world history, that eclipses any other idea. Inspired by this certainty, the Dutch villeins could sing their joyful hymn: The land will become sea, and so will be free.

When in the sixteenth century, the elemental energies started turning towards the sea, their success was such that they soon irrupted into the arena of world politics and its history. At the same time they had to translate themselves into the intellectual vernacular of the age. They could not simply remain whale-hunters, sailors or freebooters. They had to seek spiritual allies, the most daring and the most radical, of the kind that would break with the myths of the preceding age most thoroughly. That ally could not be the German Lutherans of the day, with their penchant for territorialism and continentalization. As in Germany, the end of the Hanse and of the German power in the Baltic sea coincided with the emergence of Lutheranism, so the Dutch maritime supremacy and Cromwell's ruthless decision coincided with the



basic law, the nomos, of the planet Earth.

The primordial fact of the British conquest of the seas, and the separation of land from sea need to be taken into consideration, if one is to grasp the deep-going sense of the famous slogans and maxims, so often quoted at the time, like for instance, Sir Walter Raleigh's saying: 'Whoever controls the seas controls the world trade; whoever controls world trade holds all the treasures of the world in his possession, and in fact, the whole world'. Or: 'All trade is world trade; all world trade is maritime trade'. Slogans about freedom, such as 'All world trade is free exchange', express the zenith of England's maritime and global power. Their veracity should be appreciated in relation to a particular era, to a certain world situation. Indeed, no absolute and eternal truths may be derived from them. Nevertheless, they all spell out the land-sea dichotomy, in the opposition between land warfare and naval warfare. Both strategically and tactically, land warfare and naval warfare have always been two different things. But now, their opposition came to express the presence of two distinct worlds, and two antithetical, juridical convictions.

Since the sixteenth century, the countries of continental Europe had been working out the forms of land warfare, based on the notion that war was a state-to-state affair. On each side, there stood the organized, military power of the state, while the armies were confronting each other in open, pitched battle. Only the armies present in the field took part in the hostilities: the non-combatant, civilian population remained uninvolved in the fighting. As long as it did not take part in the battle, it was not regarded as the enemy. On the other hand, the naval wars were based on the idea of the necessity of treating the enemy's trade and economy as one. Hence the enemy was no longer the opponent in arms alone, but every inhabitant of the enemy nation, and ultimately, every neutral country that had economic links with the enemy. Land warfare implied a decisive

advent of Calvinism. To be sure, little of all this has come to our knowledge. Most of the historical studies that have seen the light of day remain bound to a continental, territorial perspective. Consistently, they have eyes only for the continental space and state issues, and as far as Germany is concerned, only for the territorial evolution, and as a result, remain addicted to the narrow perspective of the petty states and confined spaces. But let us turn our eyes to the sea: almost instantly, we notice the omeosis, I would even call it the historical brotherhood, between politicized Calvinism, and Europe's released maritime energies. Even the religious battle-fields and the theological slogans of the period were pervaded by the opposition of the elemental forces that brought about the shift of historical existence from firm land to the sea.

While on the land side of the historical stage, appropriations in the grandest of styles were in progress, on the other, no less important side, that of the sea, the new distribution of our planet was being carried out. That happened as the British were taking possession of the seas. On that side of the stage, it was the result of the pan-European upsurge in that century. Through it, the fundamental line of the first, planetary space order was set, which consists in the separation of land from sea. Henceforth, the dry land would belong to a score of sovereign states. The sea, on the other hand, would belong to nobody, or everybody, but in reality, it would belong to a single country: England. The dry-land order implies the subdivision into state territories. The high seas, in turn, are free: they know no state and are not subjected to any state or territorial sovereignty. Those were the basic, spatial premises upon which the Christian-European civil law was built during three centuries. In that period, they were the

confrontation in the field. While not excluding naval combat, the maritime war, on the other hand, favoured such characteristic means as bombardment, the blockade of the enemy shores, and the capture of enemy and neutral merchantmen, in virtue of the right to capture. As such, the sea war tactics were directed both against enemy combatants and the non-combatants. Thus, a starvation blockade indiscriminately affected the entire population of the involved territory: soldiers, civilians, men, women, children and old people.

It is not merely a matter of two different but complementary aspects of one and the same order of the international civil law. Rather, it is a question of two different worlds. As the British took possession of the seas, both they and the nations in the English sphere of influence ended by getting used to it. The idea that a continental power might exercise its supremacy over the whole globe was unheard of and unbearable. That was not held to apply in the case of a world domination, built upon a maritime existence cut off from land and embracing all the oceans of the world. By turning away from firm land and opting for the sea, a relatively small island, planted in the north-west of Europe gradually became the centre of a world empire. In a purely maritime existence it found the means of establishing a world power spreading over the entire globe. As the severance of land from sea became the fundamental law of the planet, one would witness the mushrooming of theories, expositions and even scientific systems by which people tried to convince themselves of the wisdom and soundness of that position. They did not bother, however to scrutinize its origins: the British conquest of the seas, in its specific, historical context. Outstanding students of national economies, lawyers and philosophers would work out those systems, and our great grand-parents would accept them as the obvious truth. They did it so well that they could no longer imagine an alternative civil law and economics. Here you can see that the great leviathan had exerted its power over

minds and hearts, too. Of all the signs of its domination, it is indeed the most remarkable.

England is an island. But in order to deserve being called an 'island', in the sense given to that word in the sentence 'England is an island', she had first to become the carrier and the focus of the elemental transition from land to high seas and to inherit all the maritime surge released during that period. It was only by turning into an 'island' in a new sense, previously unknown, that England could succeed in conquering the oceans and win the first round of the planetary, spatial revolution.

It goes without saying that England is an island. But the simple affirmation of this geographical fact does not mean much of anything. There are many islands in the world that have had quite different political destinies. Sicily is also an island, and so is Ireland, and Cuba, Madagascar or Japan. Yet, how divergent are their histories! In a certain sense, after all, even the largest continents are but islands, and the ancient Greeks already knew that the whole inhabited land was surrounded by oceans. England herself, since she was severed from the Continent a few millennia ago (probably some 18,000 years before our era), has remained an island from a geographical standpoint, despite all the attempts to the contrary in her historical evolution. She was an island when the Celts colonized her, and afterwards, when she was conquered by Caesar for Rome; she was an island at the time of the Norman conquest (1066) and later, during the life-time of Joan of Arc (1431), when the English were occupying a good part of France.

Moreover, the inhabitants of this island felt that they were living inside a well-defended redoubt. The Middle Ages have left us beautiful poems and songs about England, sheltered by the sea as a fortress by its moat.

Nonetheless, it is in Shakespeare that one finds the best and most beautiful expression of that insular feeling:

This other Eden, demi-paradise,  
.....  
This happy breed of men, this little world,  
This precious stone set in the silver sea  
Which serves it in the office of a wall,  
Or as a moat defensive to a house.

It is understandable why the English liked to quote these verses and why, in particular, the line 'This precious stone set in the silver sea' could become a household quotation. Such outbursts of English insular consciousness, though, refer to the old island. The island was still perceived as a piece of land separated from the Continent and surrounded by water. The insular consciousness was still land-bound, soil-bound and so territorial through and through. It does not take long to realize that the insular sentiment expressed a distinctively strong terrestrial rooting. So it would be wrong to think that every islander or even all of today's Britons are born sea-roamers. We have already seen what a turnabout was implicit in the transformation of a nation of sheep-breeders in the sixteenth century into a nation of sea children. It was the fundamental transformation of the political and historical essence of the island itself. Henceforth, the land would be looked at from the sea, and the island would cease to be seen as a split chipped from the Continent, but rather as part of the sea: a ship or a fish.

The terrestrial onlooker finds it hard to understand that the continental space could be perceived with a distinctly maritime eye, in virtue of an outlook moulded by the sea. Ordinary, everyday language builds up its designations out of our earthly experience. We have talked about it at the very beginning of this story. We simply call our planet and our representation of it our earth, forgetting that it might as easily be called our sea. While talking of maritime communications, we speak of maritime routes, whereas in reality, there are

but lines and no routes as on dry land. A ship on high seas recalls a piece of territory afloat, a 'floating extension of the national territory', to use the words sanctioned by the international law. A man-of-war makes us think of a floating fortress, and an island like England, of a fortified castle with waves lapping round it as in a moat. To the seamen, they were as many inexact metaphors, the fruit of a terrestrial imagination. A ship is as much a floating piece of land as it is a swimming dog. Contrarywise, from a strictly maritime point of view, the Continent is but a shore, a strand with its hinterland. Looked at from the sea, a whole country may seem the very picture of a shipwreck washed ashore by the waves. An illustration of this perceptive, extreme in its formulation and quite astounding, are Edmund Burke's words: Spain is but a whale stranded on Europe's shores.

That is why all her essential relations with the rest of the world, and particularly with the countries of the European continent were transformed as soon as England opted for an exclusively maritime existence. Henceforward, all the standards and criteria of British politics became incompatible with those of all the other European countries. Energized by her maritime and global supremacy, England, queen of the seas, built up an empire that spread to the four corners of the planet. The English world began to think in terms of bases and lines of communication. What to other nations was soil and homeland, appeared to the English as mere hinterland. The very word 'continental' was lent a retrograde connotation, and the nations concerned were thought of as backward people. As a consequence, the island of Britain, the metropolis of a world empire raised on a maritime destiny, would be uprooted and lose its territorial character. Like a fish, it was able to swim to another spot of the globe. It was no more and no less than the mobile centre of a world empire, the possessions of which were strewn in no coherent pattern over all continents. The leading politician of the Victorian era, Disraeli, would

state that the British Empire was more an Asian than a European power when looked upon from India. It was he who in 1876 added to the title of Queen of England that of Empress of India. Thus it was made apparent that the British world power owed its imperial character to India. As early as 1847, in his novel *TANCRED*, the same Disraeli had suggested that the English queen should set court in India. 'The queen would gather a powerful fleet and together with all her court and the ruling élite move the seat of her empire from London to Delhi. There, she would find an immense empire ready to welcome her, a first-rate army and considerable revenues'.

Disraeli was a nineteenth-century *Abravanel* (see page 6, above). Some of his opinions about race as engine of world history, about Judaism and Christianity, were zealously disseminated by non-Jews and non-Christians. He knew what he was talking about. When making such suggestions, he felt that England, the island, was no longer part of Europe. Her destiny was no longer necessarily linked to that of Europe. She could free herself and change seats, as metropolis of a world maritime empire. The ship could lift its anchor to go and cast it some other place. The big fish, the leviathan could set itself in motion in search of other oceans.

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It was the age of the total and uncontested supremacy of England that began after Waterloo, which had witnessed the undoing of Napoleon, at the end of a war-like adventure that had lasted twenty years. It went on through most of the nineteenth century, but reached its zenith in mid-century, that is to say, with the Paris Conference of 1856 that put an end to the Crimean war. The free-trade era coincided with the free expansion of England's industrial and economic superiority. The freedom of the sea and that of world trade merged into a concept of freedom, the carrier and guardian of which

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could be only England. It was also during that period that the universal admiration and emulation of the English model reached their peak.

An internal mutation had affected the elemental being of the great leviathan. It should have passed unnoticed in those times, but it was just the opposite that happened. Shortly after the spectacular surge of world economy had begun, a positivistic age, blinded by the rapid accumulation of wealth, started to think that the latter would keep growing indefinitely, leading to a millennial paradise on earth. The change that affected the nature of the leviathan was, however, the consequence of the industrial revolution. It had begun in England, in the eighteenth century. The first blast furnace in 1735; cast iron in 1740; steam engine in 1768; spinning mill in 1770, and mechanical loom in 1786. All saw the light of day in Britain. They are only a few examples that show clearly how big the advantage was, that England had over all the other nations. The steamship and the railway made their appearance in the nineteenth century. In those matters, too, England had the edge. Simultaneously, the great naval power became the great engineering power, and its world supremacy seemed assured. We have seen earlier what a big leap she had taken in her maritime existence, in just a few years, between the galley battle at Lepanto in 1571, and the destruction of the Spanish Armada in the Channel, in 1588. As important a step lay between the Crimean war, which opposed England, France and Sardinia to Russia, between 1854 and 1856, and the American Civil War of 1861-1863, in which the industrial North defeated the agrarian South. Whereas the Crimean war was still waged with sailing ships, the American Civil War saw the advent of the armoured steamship. The latter marks the beginning of the modern, industrial and economic wars. Under all aspects, England was still in the lead, and managed to maintain its comfortable advantage until the end of the nineteenth century, or almost. This latter step, though, also marked a new stage in the relationship

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between the two elements, land and sea.

A fish until then, the leviathan was turning into a machine. It was in fact an extraordinary transformation. The machine affected the relationship between man and the sea. The type of daredevil that had made the greatness of sea power before, lost its old significance. The intrepid performance of seamen in their sailing ships, the high art of navigation, the solid training and strict selection of a particular human type fit for it, all that was dissolved in the modern, hazard-free and technicized maritime traffic. Undoubtedly, the sea remained a great moulder of men, but the lasting impact that had transformed a nation of sheep-breeders into pirates gradually weakened, only to end by disappearing altogether. Machinery was interposed between the sea element and human life. A domination of the seas erected on the basis of the engineering industry is obviously something other than a sea power built up on a day-by-day, direct and ruthless struggle with the element. A sailing ship that is served only by muscle-power, on the one hand, and a vessel put in motion by steam-propelled wheels, on the other, represent two different attitudes towards the sea element. The industrial revolution has transformed the children of the sea into machine-builders and servants of machines.

Everybody felt the change. Some poured tears over the end of the old, heroic age, and took refuge in the romanticism of the tales about pirates. The others applauded the technological progress and hurled themselves into the utopias of the man-made paradise. In all objectivity, it must be admitted that the genuinely maritime existence, that had been the secret of the British world power, suffered a blow at its very core, at the time. Nonetheless, it passed unnoticed by the people of the nineteenth century. Fish or machine, the leviathan was gaining in strength and power, on every occasion, and its realm seemed eternal.

At the turn of the century, the American Admiral Mahan made a remarkable attempt to perpetuate the original circumstances of the English conquest of the seas into the era of the machine. Mahan was no mean student of the influence of sea power in history. That is also the title of his main work, that came to be translated into German, too. As such, it was highly appreciated by the German war navy, and particularly by its founder, Admiral Tirpitz.

In one of his articles of July 1894, Mahan wrote about the possibility of England's reunification with the United States of America. In his opinion, the deepest-going reason for such a reunification was not the community of race, language or culture. Undoubtedly, he did not subestimate those factors, which were often placed in the forefront by other authors. Nonetheless, they appeared to him just welcome accessories. What counted, though, was to maintain the Anglo-Saxon supremacy over the world seas, attainable in virtue of insularity and through the union of the two powers. In the evolving, modern world, England had grown too small, she was no longer an island, in the sense she had been before. On the other hand, the United States were the island perfectly adapted to the times. The expanse of the country had, in Mahan's opinion, prevented the realization of that fact. Nonetheless, it corresponded to the ample dimensions of our age. The insularity of the United States would make it possible to maintain and develop the maritime domination on an extended basis. America was the larger island, through which the British mastery of the seas would be perpetuated as an Anglo-American maritime dominion of the world on a larger scale.

Whereas a politician like Disraeli wanted to transfer the British world empire to Asia, the American admiral was thinking to transplant it to America. All that

was consonant with the direction which the nineteenth century thinking took naturally in such minds as that of an Anglo-American navyman. The admiral felt the change in his time, as he was witnessing the fantastic perturbation of standards and criteria, which was the unavoidable consequence of the industrial development. What he did not see, though, was that the industrial transformation was affecting the very core of the matter: the elemental relationship between man and the sea. That is also the reason why Mahan could not find his way out of the old schemes. His larger island was expected to preserve an obsolete, traditional heritage in a radically new context. As for the old island, grown too small, and all the complex derived from its naval and world power, they were to be hooked to the new island and hauled as by a gigantic trawler.

However weighty a personality Mahan's was, and his model of a bigger island, as impressive, his theory did not reach the elemental essence of a new spatial order. His theory had not been prompted by the spirit of the old seamen, but rather, by the conservative need of geopolitical security. It had nothing of the energy of the elemental irruption, which in the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries gave birth to the historical alliance between the navigators' spirit of adventure and the Calvinist predestination.

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The industrial development and the new technology did not come to a halt in the nineteenth century. They did not linger at the level of the steamship and the railway. The world was changing much faster than could be imagined even by the most machine-worshipping prophets. The age of electronics and electro-dynamics made its entrance. Electric power, the airplane, radio, all introduced such a confusion in the existing notions of space, that it could easily be regarded as evidence of

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a new stage in the first spatial revolution on the planet, or even of the beginnings of a second spatial revolution.

In a few years, between 1890 and 1914, one of the countries of continental Europe, Germany, caught up with England and even managed to surpass her in certain sectors such as machine-building, ship-building and steam-engines. Krupp had succeeded to outgrow the English in the production of cannons as early as 1868. The world war of 1914 would be waged under this new sign. Undoubtedly, nations and governments entered the war under the impression that they were fighting another of the conventional wars of the nineteenth century. They were unaware of the times, portentous of a spatial revolution. In the highly industrialized Germany of the day, English notions and the English constitutional ideals were held in high esteem and deemed classical. On the other hand, Tsarist Russia, an immense, agrarian country entered the first world war without owing one single plant that could manufacture internal-combustion engines within her borders. In fact, the step from the steamship to the modern war cruiser was no smaller than that from the galley to the sailing ship. Once more, the relationship between man and the sea element was altered completely.

The invention of the airplane marked the conquest of the third element, after those of land and sea. Man was lifting himself high above the plains and the waves, and in the process, acquired a new means of transportation, as well as a new weapon. Standards and criteria underwent further changes. Hence, man's possibilities to dominate nature and his fellow man were given the widest scope. It is easy to understand why the air force was called the 'space weapon'. The spatial revolution which it is carrying out is especially direct, forceful and obvious. Aware as one is that airplanes criss-cross the air space above seas and continents, and the waves broadcast by transmitters in every country cross the atmosphere and circle the globe in a matter of seconds,

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