FLANDERS LITERATURE

The History of the World of Tomorrow

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An extract

Original title De geschiedenis van de wereld van morgen
Publisher Uitgeverij Van Halewyck, 2008
Translation Dutch into English
Translator Liz Waters

p 53-72

Chapter one

The new world order

In 1989 the Wall fell. For decades it had divided the old German capital neatly in two: West Berlin and East Berlin. It also symbolized of the division of Germany into two separate states – and of Europe into two enemy camps. Since 1947, one camp had been led by the United States, the other by what was then the Soviet Union. I say 1947, because in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War virtually everyone had hoped that with the recent horrors behind them, the victors over Nazi Germany would, as allies, lead the world into an era of cooperation and prosperity, with the United Nations as the nucleus of a new world order. But history took a different course. Beginning in 1947, a power struggle between Washington and Moscow divided the world, Europe – and Berlin. The two dominant nations came to be known as 'superpowers'. Between them they controlled the world and each had its own sphere of influence, one united by the consent of the populace, the other by force. Both superpowers proclaimed they would reshape the world in their own likeness. The result was the Cold War, which in reality was a deeply conventional power struggle with a garnish of ideology.

After four decades the balance tipped. In the space of a year, between the summer of 1989 and the summer of 1990, all the Communist states of Central and Eastern Europe disappeared. The Soviet Union followed suit. On Christmas Day 1991, Mikhail Gorbachev, the last Soviet president, signed documents confirming his resignation and simultaneously the dissolution of his country.

Worldwide, hopes were high. In March 1990 the US president, George Bush Sr., announced the coming of a new world order:

'A world in which [...] the principles of justice and fair play [...] protect the weak against the strong [...]. A world where the United Nations, freed from Cold War stalemate, is poised to fulfil the historic vision of its founders. A world in which freedom and respect for human rights find a home among all nations.'

Observers talked of a 'peace dividend' that would reduce military expenditure, freeing up resources for development aid. Others predicted that because of globalization the world was about to experience a new era of unprecedented growth. And practically everyone regarded the Cold War as

the last great conflict. From now on, war and confrontation would give way to peace and cooperation.

Prosperity for everyone in a world without war seemed within reach in 1990. And the world believed the visionaries were right. At first.

A world without war

The number of wars fell steadily. Conflicts that had dragged on for years evaporated before our eyes, like Afghanistan, where Soviet troops withdrew in 1988-89 after a decade of fighting that had seemed endless. The same went for Namibia, where the South African Army pulled out, enabling the country to achieve independence in 1990. In South Africa itself, in July 1989, President Botha received ANC leader Nelson Mandela, who had been imprisoned on Robben Island since 1962, smoothing the path to the country's post-apartheid era. In 1989 Benin was the first in a wave of democratization all across Africa that seemed to spell the end for the countless authoritarian regimes on that continent.

In the Middle East, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) recognized the state of Israel, first implicitly then explicitly, and two years later it renounced terrorism. In October 1991 in Madrid, a peace conference began that for the first time seemed to promise a breakthrough in the decades old Palestinian conflict.

In Europe too a new wind was blowing. The European project seemed to wake from long hibernation. The 'Europe 92' campaign, launched by Commission president Jacques Delors in 1985, caused a mood of euphoria. Never before had the global influence and lustre of Europe, or of Delors, been so great. In July 1989, at the Sommet de l'Arche in Paris, the G7 – made up of the seven most powerful Western industrialized countries – decided to entrust to the European Community the coordination of a massive Western aid effort aimed at easing the post-Communist transition in Poland and Hungary. This represented a recognition that Europe had become a great power. In 1993 Lester Thurow of the prestigious Massachusetts Institute for Technology (MIT) went so far as to declare Europe a new superpower for the twenty-first century.

A durable and peaceful European order, the 1960s dream of Belgian Pierre Hamel, of German Willy Brandt and of Frenchman Charles de Gaulle had become a reality. In November 1990 dozens of heads of state and government gathered in Paris to lay down Europe's new identity in a Charter for a New Europe. From that point on the political organization of the entire European continent would be founded on shared principles: the constitutional state, based on political pluralism; the market economy, tempered by social justice; and security for all.

Strangely enough, a new war was the catalyst for the establishment of a new world order. When Iraq invaded its neighbour Kuwait in August 1990, the international community responded immediately. Both the UN Security Council and the Arab League condemned the Iraqi invasion. The European Community's announcement of an economic embargo was quickly followed by a worldwide maritime blockade by the Security Council. On 7 August, President George Bush Sr. decided to send 200,000 troops to neighbouring Saudi Arabia to increase pressure on Saddam Hussein's regime to withdraw from Kuwait.

Tangible economic interests were undoubtedly a factor. The West feared that having annexed Kuwait, Iraq would try to seize power in Saudi Arabia, which would bring a considerable share of the world's oil reserves under Baghdad's control. But another dimension is even more important in explaining the speed and unanimity of the international response. The crisis was felt above all to be the first conflict of the post-Cold-War era, so its implications for the new world order were ominous. In the Security Council and beyond, most UN member states arrived at the same analysis: if Saddam Hussein's military action went unpunished, it would amount to a license for would-be dictators to do as they liked, putting the new world order at risk. Saddam Hussein had

failed to realize that people would feel he had set out on a blatant collision course with positive developments elsewhere in the world. Confrontation and the use of military force were giving way to cooperation and diplomacy, and now, in the Gulf, a local tyrant had invaded a much smaller neighbour.

It was this shared vision that prompted the international community to act swiftly and in unison. An international coalition was created under the leadership of the United Nations, joined even by a majority of Arab countries. The nature of its Charter meant that most members regarded the United Nations as the only institution that could legitimately opt for the use of violence. For only the second time in its history, the UN used the mechanism of collective security – the Korean War in the 1950s was the only precedent – to enable the world community to act in solidarity against aggression.

The UN Security Council authorized the setting up of an international military force. On 3 March 1991, after six months of crisis, six weeks of aerial bombardment and a hundred hours of ground warfare, the conflict ended. The United Nations was now generally regarded as the key to international peace and security.

Appeals to the UN grew increasingly frequent. Between 1988 and 1996, almost thirty new peacekeeping forces were established, more than twice as many as in the preceding forty years. In 1993 the number of blue helmets reached a peak, at more than 70,000. UN troops were given new responsibilities: peacemaking, also known as peace enforcement; creating safe havens; guarding humanitarian convoys; preventive deployment; training local police forces; participation in the rebuilding of states; organizing elections.

Respect for human rights was increasingly seen as a guiding principle of world politics. Non-governmental organizations, such as the international charity Médicins Sans Frontières led by Bernard Kouchner, were the first to point to the responsibility of the international community to intervene whenever a government flagrantly trampled on human rights, a standpoint adopted by UN secretary general Boutros Boutros-Ghali. In Vienna in June 1993 he declared that if a state no longer respected its own citizens, the international community need not show any further respect for the national sovereignty of that state.

Prosperity for all

The implosion of the Soviet Union in 1991 was regarded as a victory not only of democracy over Communism but of the free market over the planned economy. Some commentators, such as Francis Fukuyama in his 1992 book *The End of History*, believed that the end of the Cold War represented the triumph of the ideal kind of state, liberal democracy, and the ideal economic organization, liberal capitalism – with an emphasis on the minimum possible interference from governments.

In Asia the success of the tiger economies showed that underdevelopment need not be a terminal condition. In the United States a short-lived recession in 1991 was followed by an economic boom, accompanied by a wild and seemingly endless rise of the stock market. The sky was the limit. People believed a New Economy had been born, immune to the periodic booms and busts of the old economy. The American economic model, described as the Washington Consensus and promoted worldwide through the Bretton-Woods institutions, was seen as a magic formula, heralding a new era of uninterrupted economic growth. The world had begun a love affair with deregulation, as American Nobel Prize-winning economist Joseph Stiglitz put it, and globalization seemed to make this process both irreversible and irresistible.

Globalization was front-page news. The number of books and articles with ‘global’ or ‘globalization’ in their titles increased exponentially in the 1990s. In the eyes of many, globalization seemed to herald a new chapter in world politics. After all, the term was not simply applied to economics and finance, it was used to articulate the awareness that countless issues had global dimensions which exceeded the capacities of individual countries. The realization that far-off

events could have a huge impact at home prompted a new form of cosmopolitanism, a consciousness of human solidarity worldwide.

Here too a key role seemed to be set aside for the United Nations. The new sense of global solidarity meant that distant problems were now felt with an immediacy that necessitated urgent and collective action. As a global organization, the UN seemed the logical choice as the central institution for the management of 'problems without a passport' – transnational or cross-border issues of a social and economic nature. Global conferences followed in quick succession: on the environment and development (Rio, 1992), human rights (Vienna, 1993), population (Cairo, 1994), social development (Copenhagen, 1995) and women (Peking, 1995). Together they created the blueprint for an ambitious global agenda, in some cases involving legally binding conventions and regular review conferences. In the international community a strong conceptual basis seemed to exist for allowing the UN to play a central role in controlling this cross-border agenda.

In 1992 Boutros Boutros-Ghali presented the United Nations with an 'Agenda for Peace'. It was the most ambitious programme describing an activist and dynamic role for the organization ever proposed by its secretary general. Plans were made to strengthen the global organization and to make it more representative. In 1995, a working group in New York under Belgian chairmanship began preparing the ground for reforms to the Security Council. A new, cosmopolitan vocabulary emerged: sustainable development, sustainability of mankind, global governance, the global neighbourhood, global commons.

Freedom for the citizen

With the end of the USSR and the implosion of Communism, the era of great stories was over, we were told. In Belgium in January 1991, the leader of the liberal opposition published a *Burgermanifest* (Citizens' Manifesto) in which he wrote animatedly about the 'wave of liberalization that has occurred in minds over the past ten or twenty years'. 'The real world' had in effect 'embarked on a revolution of free thought and free action'. He went on:

'The clash of ideas, the opposition between left and right, between socialism and liberalism, between the planned economy and the free market system is over. The dispute has been settled. Everyone is convinced now that a free market of supply and demand [...] represents the best way to serve the material and intellectual interests of every society, and of managing relationships between billions of people. This system creates as much prosperity as possible for as many citizens as possible. There is no better means of tackling poverty, ignorance and backwardness.'

The classic manifesto of liberal thought, *The Road to Serfdom* by Austrian winner of the 1974 Nobel Prize for economics Friedrich von Hayek, regained its former status. 'The era of the State as the creator and shaper of our daily life is coming to an end,' said Guy Verhofstadt. The citizen must be allowed to 'step outside the state' and make personal decisions about pensions, education, health care, and how taxes should be spent. 'He therefore ought to be given the right to step outside the politicized system of government and no longer be accompanied by such a society from the cradle to the grave.'

All political groupings took account of the new era in which the freedom of the citizen was central and globalization offered a world of opportunities and challenges. Everyone started talking about a rift between politics and the people. For too long the state had been paternalistic. Many politicians explained that with globalization eroding the power of all states, citizens must no longer expect governments to do everything for them. They were mature enough now to manage on their own, without the state holding their hands.

Chapter two: The new world disorder

In the midst of such exultation, no one saw the storm coming, although here and there developments took place that seemed entirely out of tune with the prevailing optimism. These looked like local oddities that had nothing to do with the wave of euphoria washing over the world. Violent nationalism in Yugoslavia. The repression of democracy in Beijing. The rise of orthodox Islam in the Muslim world. The new popularity of the extreme right in Europe.

At first no one recognized the significance of what was happening. However dramatic some events were, they seemed isolated remnants of an older state of affairs, but the freshly proclaimed 'new world order' was slowly toppling over into a 'world disorder'.

The revenge of geopolitics

First to become obvious, perhaps, was that wars, contrary to expectations, were not a thing of the past. When the civil war in Yugoslavia began, Europeans experienced this reality at first hand. Initially they underestimated the proportions the conflict would quickly assume. Next they thought it was understandable that multinational Yugoslavia was unravelling. After all, the same had happened to the Soviet Union. But that the main players in Yugoslavia were appealing to nationalistic sentiments was in Western European eyes an unfathomable, nineteenth-century-style turn of events, impossible to reconcile with developments in the rest of Europe. Place a *cordon sanitaire* around Yugoslavia and let people fight out their ancient feuds between themselves, was the advice at the time of one highly placed Belgian diplomat.

But it didn't stop at Yugoslavia. No continent on earth (save Australia and Antarctica) escaped the fresh eruption of military violence.

There was still extreme unrest on the borders of Russia, with periodic outbreaks of fighting of which the war in Chechnya was unquestionably the most brutal and the most costly in human lives. In Latin America, Peru and Ecuador attempted to settle an old border dispute by resorting to military force. In Africa armed conflicts arose between Ethiopia and Eritrea, between Cameroon and Nigeria, in Congo and in Sudan. In Asia, Kashmir sparked a war between Pakistan and India that smouldered on for a while and then flared up again – especially after 1998 when both countries took the decisive step of carrying out weapons tests that qualified them as members of the select club of states with a nuclear capability. Elsewhere in Asia, distrust between states came to a head periodically: China and Taiwan; Japan and North Korea; tensions around the South China Sea. In the Middle East the peace process between Palestinians and Israelis stalled. In 1999 there was once again war in Europe, this time over Kosovo.

Far more horrific even than these conflicts between states were the civil wars within them. Liberia, Sierra Leone, Somalia and Central Africa imploded, with tens of thousands killed. In Rwanda, widespread genocide cost hundreds of thousands of lives. Ethnic cleansing, nationalism and extremism were clearly alive and well, and they reignited old differences.

These explosions of violence went far beyond the capacity of the United Nations to cope. The tragic failure of its operations in Yugoslavia, Somalia and, worst of all, Rwanda meant the UN had lost credibility. Although prime responsibility could be said to lie not with the global organization itself but with its member states, it nevertheless lost its aura of infallibility and its right to claim a leading role in the new world order.

In 1993 millions of American television viewers watched militias led by a local warlord in the Somali capital Mogadishu drag the bodies of eighteen US servicemen through the streets. The same images were featured in the film *Black Hawk Down*. This humiliation unquestionably reduced

American willingness to join similar operations under the UN flag – once a central element of the new world order announced by Bush senior. The United States, up to that point the main advocate of multilateralism, now hastily turned against both this approach and the global organization itself. The most powerful state in the world saw itself less and less as a guardian of the international system and more and more as its leader. From the second half of the 1990s onwards, unilateralism emerged as the basic tenet of US foreign policy.

It was not only the United States that turned away from the United Nations. The number of UN peace missions fell as quickly as it had risen. Member states were no longer ready to provide soldiers to carry out risky operations in the name of an imaginary international community.

In January 1995, Boutros Boutros-Ghali published a supplement to his 'Agenda for Peace' of three years before. Concluding that peacekeeping was far more difficult than had been thought, he noted the declining willingness of member states to set new peace missions in train. He warned against the danger of becoming involved too readily in civil wars. Instead of peace missions under UN command, he suggested it would be better to involve regional organizations, such as NATO. This was a pale shadow of the faith in the ability of the organization to influence the international community that had characterized the original document.

For anyone still hoping that the end of the Cold War had consigned military force and geopolitics to the past, 11 September 2001 was the moment of ultimate disillusion. It seemed as though a new enemy had been born to take the place of defeated Communism. 'International terrorism' was declared the most significant worldwide threat. In the name of a War on Terror, two attacks were launched, in Afghanistan in 2001 and two years later in Iraq. The first of the two received a mandate from the Security Council of the United Nations, but not the Iraq War. The United States had by then completely turned its back on the global organization and decided unilaterally to bring down Saddam Hussein. Kofi Annan, Boutros-Ghali's successor as secretary general, labelled it an illegal war, and a large part of the international community agreed.

Military force and national security had returned to the heart of world politics – the precise mirror-image of expectations in the early 1990s. This looked like a repeat of a similar disillusionment a hundred years earlier. In 1890 the American Press Association brought together the world's best minds to sketch out a view of the world in the new century that was approaching. They were all extremely optimistic, believing that because of new technologies and the flourishing of world trade they were on the eve of a prosperous century. None predicted the twentieth century's dark side: two world wars, the development of chemical and nuclear weapons, genocide.

Economic catastrophe

In 1995 President Clinton became probably the first head of state to include the words 'dark side of globalization' in a policy document. He was thinking not just of phenomena such as terrorism, weapons of mass destruction, drug trafficking and international crime but of HIV-AIDS and the growing divide between the world's rich and poor. These were the less attractive aspects of a globalization process that had been presented a few years earlier as unambiguously positive.

People living in South-East Asia were the first to discover that the New Economy was an illusion. In the summer of 1997 the Thai government decided to uncouple its currency, the baht, from the dollar. No one could have imagined that this purely local decision would cause such ripples outside the country. South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, Hong Kong and especially Indonesia found themselves at the eye of a monetary storm that caused a severe economic recession, the collapse of their stock exchanges, capital flight, a rapid withdrawal by foreign investors and a domestic social crisis. Millions of people who, by their own laborious efforts, had managed to creep up above the poverty line over the past few decades found themselves once again contemplating a

future in which their children would be no better off than they were. Hunger and malnutrition increased, as did the number of children not going to school, unemployment and child labour. Children who had been sitting at school desks until two months previously were now forced to beg on the streets. Their parents could no longer pay their school fees.

A whirlwind of economic and financial uncertainty and instability spread across Asia, Latin America and Russia.

More was to come. In the spring of 2000, stock exchange euphoria burst like a soap bubble. Dotcom shares, whose value had risen relentlessly, took a nosedive, followed by spectacular falls on the Nasdaq. At first little attention was paid, but it soon became clear that the dramatic drop in the value of shares in high tech was putting more and more large technology companies in difficulties. It was one important element of a general slowdown in economic growth which in the spring of 2001 actually led to a short-lived recession in the United States. People who had been relying on an uninterrupted increase in the value of shares to provide them with decent pensions saw their retirement plans threatened.

The dream of a New Economy was over. An old truth had been rediscovered: the free market is inevitably subject to cycles of speculation and crisis, and economic unpredictability is the rule rather than the exception. Faith in the free market was severely dented and the sky's-the-limit optimists changed their tune. The notion of political intervention in the financial markets suddenly started to sound rather less unsavoury.

Here and there, in about the mid-1990s, people had begun to talk about another 'dark side'. In the space of twenty years, wrote Indian Nobel Prize-winner Amartya Sen in 2001, extreme poverty had been halved worldwide, but inequality had increased:

'The world's wealth has never been greater than today, but neither has inequality. Those who fail to recognize this painful contrast are unable to understand the scepticism evoked by the current world order. [...] Directly and indirectly, inequality is today's central issue, since it represents the greatest provocation.'

Sen thereby provided confirmation that increasing attention was being paid to the gulf between rich and poor. One of the first organizations to sound the alarm was UNCTAD, the UN forum that has kept track of trade relations between North and South since the 1960s. The forum concluded in its annual report on 1997 that growing inequality in the world might undermine the positive consequences of globalization. The report showed that although developing countries were exhibiting strong rates of economic growth (5.6 per cent), at the same time the gulf between them and the industrialized nations of the North was continuing to increase.

The UN Development Programme (UNDP) calculated in its 1998 annual report that the three richest people on earth owned capital whose value exceeded the gross domestic product of the 48 least developed nations. The property of the fifteen richest people in the world was worth more than the GDP of the whole of sub-Saharan Africa, while that of the 84 richest people was greater than the GDP of China. Four per cent of the 225 largest fortunes in the world would be enough to satisfy the basic needs of the entire world population.

An even starker picture emerged from the fact that the gulf was steadily widening. A year later the UNDP wrote that over the previous thirty years the gap between the twenty per cent of the world's population that lived in the richest countries and the twenty per cent that lived in the poorest countries had doubled. The income of the first group was now 74 times that of the second group, and with every year that passed the gap between them grew. In 1990 the average American was 38 times as rich as the average Tanzanian. By the time of the 2005 UNDP report he was 61 times richer.

It became clear that inequality was also increasing within the industrialized countries,

despite the promises of the New Economy and globalization. Nancy Birdsall, vice chair of the Inter-American Development Bank, ventured a bold comparison with the situation a century and a half earlier: 'A hundred and fifty years after the publication of the *Communist Manifesto*, inequality looms large on the global agenda,' she wrote in 1998, in the American journal *Foreign Policy*. In the United States in the 1990s, the trend towards a growing income gap was so dramatic that in 2003 American economist and *New York Times* commentator Paul Krugman spoke of a return to the inequality of the 1920s, when a tiny segment of the population owned a huge proportion of the country's wealth. Once again, Krugman believed, America would find itself with a hereditary elite that lived at a vast remove from the ordinary American.

The annual report by UNCTAD quoted above concluded in 1998 that the erosion of the middle class had become a consistent factor everywhere. In that same year the aging management guru Peter Drucker (born in 1909) warned his audience about the potential consequences of such a trend:

'I have often pointed out to managers that a 20:1 wage differential is the maximum you can apply without arousing resentment. I took this view back in the 1930s and I've been proven right. Today it is socially and morally unacceptable for managers to make huge profits while employees are sacked. Society will pay a high price.'

Reports of growing unrest and resentment did indeed emerge in a number of countries. In late 1997 and early 1998, France was faced with a 'revolt of the unemployed'. The press interpreted the movement as a protest by the 'have nots' against a society characterized by record earnings on the stock exchange and by high levels of unemployment. In Indonesia in the summer of 1997 there were reports of a growing fear of the poor's 'rage'. In 2000 the Israeli stage play *The Inspector*, performed at the Cameri theatre in Tel Aviv, warned of the threat of an uprising by the poor in Israel, especially should there no longer be an external enemy to neutralize internal division. In France in 1999 a farmer called José Bové set fire to a McDonald's restaurant. His supporters painted 'Non à la mal bouffe' (no to bad grub) in large white letters on the chalk cliffs of Millau. It was the starting shot of a new social movement, the anti-globalists, who from 1999 onwards became a worldwide phenomenon with their protests against meetings of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in Seattle, Prague and Göteborg.

In Belgium the Flemish socialists, with Louis Tobback as their standard bearer, achieved an unexpected election victory with the slogan 'Your social security'. Far from everyone was sharing the fruits of the New Economy and globalization. Tobback and his communication adviser Fons Van Dyck had clearly made the correct diagnosis.

Universal unease

Each in his own way, Bové and Tobback had both sensed there was a problem. Although citizens might be free, many did not feel content. If there was one thing uniting people on all continents, it was a shared unease about the way things were going, both in the world at large and at home. In 2002 a major international opinion poll carried out by the American Pew Institute in 44 countries illustrated this. A handful of countries aside, large majorities in all nations and on all continents expressed dissatisfaction with the situation in their home countries. When they were asked how they felt about the situation in the world as a whole, their answers were even more negative.

In 1991, Guy Verhofstadt had talked about a wave of liberalization and freedom of thought occurring all over the world. That was undoubtedly true, but in the same twenty years that Verhofstadt was talking about, the universal unease that the Pew poll brought to light meant that

more and more people sought refuge in extremist and radical movements of all kinds.

In retrospect it's striking that, simultaneously, parties of the extreme right saw their support increase and Muslim countries went through a religious revival. From Sudan to Indonesia, this expressed itself in the form of a fundamentalist tendency (Salafism) that held out the prospect of a return to the apparently simple world of the time of the Prophet. In 1979 a Shiite coup in Teheran led by Ayatollah Khomeiny brought down the pro-Western regime of the shah. From then on, Islamism (also known as political Islam) figured large on the international scene. When in 1988-89 the war in Afghanistan ended with the withdrawal of Soviet troops, some believed that Islam had set out again on an unstoppable advance. Quite a few of the Muslim militants who had travelled to Afghanistan out of a sense of solidarity, to wage war against the Soviet armed forces, now returned to their own countries. As a result of the successful Afghan jihad, these veterans, who came from all over the world, from Egypt and Bosnia, Saudi Arabia and Algeria, felt more convinced than ever that the time was ripe for a jihad in their own countries. This marked the start of jihadi terrorism against the 'enemy at hand', in other words local regimes in Muslim countries. In Algeria alone, 150,000 people died in the 1990s as a result.

As it became clear over the course of the 1990s that national attempts to establish 'pure' Islamic regimes were failing, a number of jihadi activists, including the Saudi Osama bin Laden and the Egyptian Ayman al-Zawahiri, decided to try a different strategy: a major symbolic attack on the 'distant enemy', the United States, intended to breathe new life into the global jihad. The magnitude of the attack was intended to galvanize the masses in their struggle against local regimes.

While Muslim countries battled their own demons, a number of European countries experienced a parallel phenomenon: the advance of extreme right-wing and populist parties. They first raised their heads in the 1970s, broke through in the 1980s and from the 1990s managed to settle into the political landscape, apparently for good.

Religious extremism and its terrorist offshoot on the one hand, and extreme populist right-wing politics on the other had one thing in common: they offered apparently simple solutions to the complex problems of the world around us. Both provided easily understood reference points for identity. Us against Them was a worldview common to the programme of extremist religious activists and the discourse of the populist right in Europe.

If at the end of the Cold War there had been an atmosphere of euphoria, a decade later the Zeitgeist was almost exactly the opposite. The hypotheses on which faith in the new world order was based had not stood the test of time.