Democracy on the Precipice

Council of Europe Democracy Debates 2011-12

Preface by Thorbjørn Jagland

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Contents

Preface

It is an important part of the Council of Europe's mission to facilitate the exchange of good democratic practices and to foster innovative thinking with regard to democratic governance.

It was with this in mind that I took the initiative to launch the Council of Europe's Democracy Debates in April 2011. Their aim was to stimulate in-house reflection on the developments affecting European democracy today, and to forge the role of the Council of Europe as a laboratory on democratic concepts and practices.

Each Democracy Debate welcomed a scholar from a different academic background to present their views on current challenges to democracy in Europe. Ambassadors and members of the Council of Europe Secretariat, who approach these topics in a practical manner in their day-to-day work, were given the opportunity to discuss the ideas and share their experiences. And, indeed, all of the debates provided an intriguing fusion of theory and practice.

In accordance with its mandate, this Organisation is called upon to diagnose the conditions of European democracy and to anticipate future trends. The Council of Europe is the only international body to gather all European democracies as member states. Consequently, it is especially important for the Council of Europe to closely follow the evolution of concepts and practices regarding democracy.

More Europeans live in democracies than ever before. However, there is at present a widespread dissatisfaction with the practice of democracy, as well as increasing mistrust of democratic institutions and declining turnout at elections. This has led many to speak of a crisis of democracy.

The economic crisis has further intensified the symptoms of the distress. It has shown the limits of states to counter, let alone prevent, the negative consequences of economic turmoil. It has furthermore exposed an apparent lack of necessary regulation and democratic control over financial markets. The crisis might thus entail a systemic threat to the sustainability of democracy.

In the wake of the financial crisis, many European democracies have adopted austerity measures. In a number of European states, people have protested against government policies which they felt were tailored to the demands of markets, rather than to the needs of the general population. Thus, many citizens no longer feel accurately represented by their political institutions. Furthermore, general social discontent, underscored by rising unemployment and economic hardship, has contributed to a rise in xenophobia across Europe.

To overcome the threats of a weakening democracy, existing democratic structures must become more representative and allow for enhanced participation

of citizens. This would contribute to the pursuit of a common interest at all levels of power, rather than to the prevalence of particular interests.

The Council of Europe has a mission to promote and consolidate democracy. In addition, it serves as a platform to reflect on democratic governance, its risks and threats, and to identify mechanisms and procedures to overcome these.

Consequently, the Council of Europe has made it a priority to strengthen its activities in the field of democracy by addressing all issues which may affect the foundations and legitimacy of democratic institutions. To this end, it works closely with members of governments, parliaments, local authorities and civil society in its member states.

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe gathers parliamentarians from all member states, representing a total of 800 million citizens. Four times a year, they meet to hold topical debates on current political questions. The present priorities of the Assembly include the promotion of democracy, intercultural dialogue and social cohesion.

On a biennial basis, the Parliamentary Assembly discusses the state of democracy under the angle of specific topics. In 2012, the debate was focused on the crisis of democracy and the role of the state in Europe today. It explored the possibilities of restoring the primary role of politics, identified the relation between a sound state and a lively democracy and addressed the question of constituting popular sovereignty at a transnational level. The 2010 debate dealt with "Democracy in Europe: crisis and perspectives". The conclusions from the debates of the past two years have highlighted the effects of the current financial and economic crisis on the functioning of democratic institutions and public trust in them.

Furthermore, the Parliamentary Assembly disposes of a considerable expertise in the domain of election monitoring, having overseen such missions, as well as set standards about monitoring procedures. The impartial observation of elections by international bodies is crucial in order to ensure the fairness of election processes and, at the same time, it is a measure of the democratic development of a country.

The Council of Europe maintains a pioneering role in the field of local and regional governance through its Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe. The core mission of the Congress is the monitoring of the implementation of the European Charter of Local Self-Government, the linchpin of local democracy in Europe. Furthermore, the Congress takes part in observer missions for local authorities. In these missions, it does not only limit itself to assessing voting procedure, but also appraises the general political situation in the country in question, the situation of fundamental rights, the atmosphere which prevailed during the election campaign and any progress noted on the democracy front.

Human rights and democracy are separate, but closely interwoven concepts. The European Convention on Human Rights, the cornerstone of human rights in Europe, is thus fundamental to upholding democracy across the continent. Although the Convention does not include a direct reference to democracy in

its main body, its Protocol No. 1 provides for the right to regular, free and fair elections in its Article 3. The European Court of Human Rights rules on alleged violations of the civil and political rights contained in the Convention. It has found that the rights conferred by this article were "crucial to establishing and maintaining an effective and meaningful democracy governed by the rule of law".

In its extensive jurisprudence, the Court has repeatedly drawn attention to the principles characterising a democratic society. It also found that the restriction of the rights contained in articles 8 (right to privacy), 9 (freedom of thought, conscience and religion), 10 (freedom of expression) and 11 (freedom of assembly and association) of the Convention must be assessed by the yardstick of what is "necessary in a democratic society". Consequently, it is clear that democracy is the only model of political organisation compatible with the European Convention on Human Rights.

The execution of judgments in individual member states must be monitored carefully in order to ensure respect for the European Convention on Human Rights. In the Council of Europe, the implementation of judgments is supervised by the Committee of Ministers, which consists of the foreign ministers, or their permanent diplomatic representatives, of all member states. In cases where it is necessary for member states to adopt or amend legislation, the Committee of Ministers must be informed about the process in this regard. Furthermore, member states can also receive assistance from the respective Council of Europe bodies to harmonise their legislation with the Convention.

In this respect, the European Commission for Democracy through Law, better known as the Venice Commission, established in 1990, is of particular importance. It is an advisory body on constitutional matters and plays a leading role in the adoption of constitutions, which usually form the basis of functioning democracies governed by the rule of law. As a body consisting of 58 states, it contributes to the dissemination of European constitutional values throughout the continent and beyond. Furthermore, the Venice Commission provides crucial assistance in elections, by advising on electoral laws and compiling good electoral practices.

The Conference of International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGOs) gives a voice to the representatives of over 400 civil society organisations. It facilitates exchanges between civil society and members of parliament and local and regional authorities, and fosters a dialogue on the challenges that society currently faces. Its current priorities include promoting the values of the Council of Europe and giving substance to participatory democracy.

The Arab Spring was a home-grown and spontaneous movement, which demonstrated the region's longing for democracy. It is also an example of the fact that authoritarian regimes cannot provide for economic prosperity, durable social justice and peace. Moreover, it has recalled the unceasing potential of democratic governance to spread further throughout the world. It has created a unique opportunity for the southern Mediterranean to undergo credible democratic change.

For the Council of Europe it goes without question that the situation at its borders has a direct impact on its member states. As neighbours and friends, we are committed to assisting the democratisation processes in our neighbourhood. On my initiative, the Committee of Ministers adopted a new Neighbourhood Policy in May 2011 in Istanbul. In Northern Africa, we will seek to facilitate political transition by helping to strengthen the constitutional process and electoral law, as well as by participating in election monitoring. Moreover, the Council of Europe's aim in the region is to promote good governance on the basis of its relevant standards. This includes, amongst others, the independence and efficiency of the judiciary, and the fight against corruption. The Council of Europe is also closely following the developments in its other neighbouring regions, such as the Middle East and Central Asia.

In order to facilitate closer co-operation with national parliaments in the adjoining regions, the Parliamentary Assembly established the status of partner for democracy. It creates an opportunity for states to benefit from the Parliamentary Assembly's expertise in democracy-building. The partner for democracy status is an institutionalised mode of co-operation to help promote stability, good governance, respect for human rights and the rule of law. It also facilitates participation in the political debate on common challenges which transcend European boundaries, such as migration, human trafficking and organised crime.

The Council of Europe is also committed to train future generations of political, economic and social leaders in countries in transition. To this end, it has set up a total of 16 schools of political studies in its central and southern European member states since 1992. The schools organise an annual series of seminars and conferences on topics such as democratic governance, electoral systems and culture, and European integration. Their events are designed to deepen the understanding of democracy by young leaders, and benefit from the presence of national and international experts. Furthermore, the Council of Europe is currently planning the establishment of schools of political studies in Morocco, Tunisia and Kazakhstan.

The fact that the Council of Europe is active on all levels of governance within its member states, and that it tries to engage with actors from various backgrounds, is a demonstration of its all-encompassing approach towards promoting and consolidating democracy.

The democratic values of European citizens must not be limited to the exercise of their right to vote in periodic elections. Rather, it is essential to deepen the shared democratic values of Europe at all levels of society. The concept of deep security which I have tried to advance in this context stresses the importance of the protection of the common values of democracy for our feeling of security. It advocates the active participation of citizens, in addition to the passive safeguarding of democratic ideals.

The Council of Europe is now on the eve of launching a new format for discussions on democracy – the World Forum for Democracy. This first World Forum for Democracy in October 2012 is a new qualitative step and yet a natural

extension of the Forum for the Future of Democracy. The Forum for the Future for Democracy was inaugurated in 2005, with the aim of strengthening democracy, political freedoms and the participation of citizens in public affairs. To this end, it brought together high-level representatives of governments, parliaments, local and regional authorities and civil society to allow for an exchange of ideas, information and best practices. The annual sessions were held in different European cities, extending from Madrid to Stockholm and Limassol. Furthermore, both the plenary sessions and parallel seminars were held under an overarching and contemporary theme, such as "Democracy in Europe – Principles and challenges", "Power and empowerment – The interdependence of democracy and human rights" and "E-democracy".

It is now the World Forum for Democracy in Strasbourg that welcomes state officials, members of parliament, local and regional representatives, civil servants and academics to reflect on democracy and its challenges, anticipate democratic trends, share experiences and good practices, and brainstorm on new concepts to strengthen democracy. As its name indicates, it extends beyond the borders of Europe. In order to foster a global dialogue on democracy, it invites participants from all over the world. The 2012 theme of the World Forum for Democracy, "'Bridging the gap' – Democracy: between old models and new realities", reflects the acknowledgement of a turning point in the development of the concept of democracy.

The World Forum for Democracy will be based in Strasbourg, and enjoys strong support not only from the Council of Europe, but also from the city of Strasbourg, the region and the French state. It is our ambition for Strasbourg to become known for democracy in the same way as Davos is known for economics, and for the World Forum for Democracy to highlight Strasbourg's role in diplomacy and multilateralism.

We hope that the outcomes of the World Forum for Democracy will contribute to the formulation of priority and policy planning at both national and international levels.

This publication on Democracy Debates comes as a contribution to the forum. It is at the same time intended to provide a larger public with new approaches and concepts to contemporary democracy, and to provoke contemplation on the challenges confronting democracy today.

I sincerely thank all the distinguished scholars for their outstanding contributions.

Thorbjørn Jagland
Secretary General of the Council of Europe

Editor's note

The present publication contains the written versions of lectures and talks initially presented by eminent scholars within the framework of the Council of Europe's Democracy Debate series, which were conducted in Strasbourg from April 2011 to June 2012. It cannot reflect the full richness of the deliberations, nor, in particular, many of the detailed questions that were raised during the discussions. However, it summarises, in a fair manner, the main messages and points.

The Council of Europe deals with the concept of democracy from a practical aspect. However, as a platform for action, it must also consider the matter from a scientific perspective. The Democracy Debate series was conceived to serve this purpose. In the framework of these debates, the Council of Europe was very privileged indeed to be honoured by the participation of so many distinguished speakers, namely: Zygmunt Bauman, Ulrich Beck, Ayşe Kadıoğlu, John Keane, Ivan Krastev, Nikolay Petrov, Jacques Rupnik and Žiga Turk.

According to conventional wisdom, democracy is a practical concept – one might say: you do not debate democracy, you simply do it. And, the best way to understand democracy is to practise it. This is probably true. However, a deeper intellectual reflection on the concept of democracy, as we apply it in Europe during these times of serious distress, might be quite helpful. It may help us to better understand the deeper changes taking place within our societies.

There was no preconceived logic when arranging the schedule of the debates. In the book, contributions are placed in alphabetical order by speaker. The authors look at democracy from different angles; they identify specific developments or composing elements, and threats and challenges that European democratic society is facing. Sometimes they advance bold and provocative views. It goes without saying that, as an organisation, the Council of Europe cannot be identified with their personal views.

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The present condition of democracy in Europe is often linked to the overall context of the 2008-09 economic and financial crisis and its aftermath. That crisis prompted many analysts to discuss the demise of the West, in particular through the prism of the rapid development of several countries in Asia and elsewhere. To many experts, the relative decline of the role of Europe and the West as such on the global scene is a sign of the crisis of the Western model of civilisation. They explain that the marginalisation of Europe is due to the abandonment of the values upon which the success of Western civilisation was built.

In his chapter, Professor Žiga Turk addresses, in particular, the greater global context. He studies five important transformations that have drastically affected the

world, and which in part help to explain the beginning of the multipolar world and the decline of Europe. He contends that while Europe will not be ahead in quantitative terms of its labour force in the future, it could play a leading role in terms of empowerment. However, the empowerment factor heavily depends on the quality of the democratic processes and procedures. Thus, democracy is the key to ensuring the "civilisational" competitiveness of Europe on the world stage.

The European model of democracy could become the engine for prestige and growth provided that Europe is successful in overcoming its old divisions and fragmented mentalities. Professor Ulrich Beck states that Europe is currently facing risks, such as the financial crises and climate change, that cross class and national boundaries and create a "cosmopolitan moment (for Europe)". Europeans are, however, trapped in thinking along the lines of national identity, despite being under European governance. Beck hopes for the development of a pan-European identity, which would allow Europeans to face these global risks more successfully.

One of the issues with a global dimension is the link between democracy and development. Some time ago, a peculiar term was invented, "Beijing Consensus", which was supposed to mean that rapid economic and consequently social development is possible without (or with) a limited form of democracy. Some even praised the system where this rule was applied. They advocated that although the system was not democratic, it was meritocratic. The decision makers may not have been democratically elected, but they were competent, and, maybe, it was the best way to resolve problems which were on a large scale, in a huge country and within the shortest possible time. However, the Arab Spring seemed to destroy that delusion. It restored the belief that real development is not possible without democracy.

The Arab Spring of 2010-11 has also shattered many stereotypes connected to the link between religion and democracy and, in particular, the link between Islam and democracy. Many analysts speculated on possible models that could be followed by the emerging democracies on the southern rim of the Mediterranean. Many turned their eyes to Turkey. Professor Ayşe Kadıoğlu, in her lecture, pointed out that the different theories which preceded the establishment of laicism in Turkey may help to determine whether a Turkish model might be adapted to the new democracies of northern Africa. She concludes that Turkey, rather than being an Islamic democracy, is a secular state with a Muslim majority population. However, Kadıoğlu, in identifying different approaches to Islam and democracy that have been developed in Turkey, suggests that these may be a source of inspiration to the countries of the southern Mediterranean.

The euro crisis of 2011-12, and in particular the crisis in Greece and other European countries, has aggravated the sombre mood of European political discourse. After all, the crisis has removed over 20 European governments from power. Many commentators have called it a crisis of legitimacy, a crisis of democracy, to the extent that some even talk about the end of the liberal model of democracy itself. Even if this were true, however, the crisis of democracy seems rather relative. Democratic

institutions are functioning and, despite their weaknesses, no alternatives have been advanced. Nobody really fears a return to a dictatorial or any other form of authoritarian system, at least in the Western hemisphere.

In this context, Dr Ivan Krastev compares the current crisis of democracy to the 1930s and 1970s in order to understand whether it poses a transitory, or rather a radical, threat to liberal democracy today. He argues that it differs from former crises because of five transformations which democratic societies have undergone since then and that although popular trust in democratic institutions and politics is low, there is no suggestion of a swing from democracy to another form of political organisation. Krastev likens the change southern Europe is currently undergoing to the changes in central and eastern Europe in the 1990s, and he stresses that southern Europe today has less compelling incentives to push for more reform than central Europe did then.

One of the manifestations of the crisis of democracy in Europe has been the rise of extremist parties. They widely resort to populism and nationalism. Xenophobic and nationalist rhetoric is prone to develop, in particular, during economic crises when social tensions grow and frustration is on the rise. In several European countries, parties with quite xenophobic attitudes have grown in popularity and support. What is even more worrying is the fact that elements of extremist language have managed to enter mainstream political parties and that this is still too often tolerated. Above all, this shows the weakness of the existing political parties. Instead of leading, they are succumbing to the frustration of the electorate. Unfortunately, both nationalism and xenophobia do well at the ballot boxes.

Professor Zygmunt Bauman argues that the political future of Europe depends on the cultural future of Europe: Europe has learnt to overcome historical antagonisms and has mastered the art of living with the "other". Increased migration throughout Europe is dissociating community identity from territory and Bauman contends that central Europe has pertinent and recent experience with a similar phenomenon and this could thus serve as a reminder for Europe to embrace its acquired cultural values, rather than to push for forced assimilation.

Democracy has clearly been affected by technological progress. Many people believe that in the age of new technologies, and in particular in the era of the Internet, traditional working methods of democracy are too slow, too abstract, and that the political institutions are too bureaucratised and too ritualised. In the search for alternative solutions, they turn to new movements. This explains the rise of alternative parties, which is not a new phenomenon in Europe. In the past, when protest movements emerged in the 1970s and 1980s, they were associated with the green parties. In some countries, the green parties have disappeared, in others they have become part of the political establishment. Today, contestation is symbolised by the pirate parties movement. Some experts say it is ephemeral, others maintain that it is going to change the very mechanics of democracy and call them the new meta parties. The ideological expression of the phenomena is reflected in the concept of "liquid democracy".

In his chapter, Professor John Keane explores the effects on democracy of the ongoing communications revolution and asserts that it democratises access to information, undermines the well-established distinction between public and private spheres, diversifies media sources and puts elected officials under closer scrutiny, while at the same time generating unelected officials who are capable of mobilising persuasive power. Keane concludes that, historically speaking, all forms of democracy have been characterised by a predominant type of communication, and that today's age of communicative abundance is transforming the spirit, meaning and institutions of contemporary democracy.

The massive democratic transformation of Europe at the beginning of the 1990s was the undeniable proof of the vitality of democracy and its unstoppable potential to spread. Professor Jacques Rupnik puts forth a variety of explanations as to how democracy has spread and how to promote democratic transition in the future. As all EU member countries are democracies, democracy has become the EU's main identity trait and this subtly influences neighbouring countries to become more democratic in the hope of being included and thus more Europe-oriented. This, Rupnik argues, has been the greatest achievement of the EU and the future of democratic transitions and European integration is threatened by the shaky future of the euro and, as a consequence, the EU itself.

It is true that today many democracies in central and eastern Europe are facing serious challenges and sometimes they must even backtrack. The political preferences there are quite volatile and can change rapidly. Experts call this phenomenon "the pendulum factor", manifesting itself particularly in central and eastern European countries. It is interesting to note that every election in central and eastern Europe resulted in the formation of a new government, with some exceptions, such as, in particular, Poland (2007) and Hungary (2005). Once they have served a term in government, political parties may face the serious risk of being removed from power and may even sometimes pay the ultimate price – disappearance from the political scene altogether. In central and eastern Europe there are several parties which disappeared into oblivion after having formed a government. In some countries, this sharp change of political preference by the electorate has resulted in what is now known as "super majorities", whereby one single party takes full control of the political scene, obtaining, *inter alia*, a constitutional majority, which can thus exert influence over the media and even the judiciary. These super majorities may threaten the stability of the democratic processes as they lead to a removal of checks and balances.

Disappointment with democracy and its institutions and procedures may give rise to absenteeism. When people do not believe that their vote can make a difference, more and more of the electorate abstain from casting their vote on the day of elections. In some central and eastern European countries this has resulted in the prolonged and chronic alienation of the voter.

Another challenge that has emerged in some parts of Europe over the past 20 years is the concept of managed democracy. The concept as such was invented in South-East Asia. It has also become a feature in Europe. Managed democracy

is different from a dictatorship – it is based on some form of political contract between the people and power. It is not necessarily practised without at least tacit acceptance by the people. The essence of the contract is that the people are offered a large degree of personal freedom, predictability and stability in terms of a professional and social future, as well as welfare, but in return for limited political choice. Dr Nikolay Petrov depicts the workings of the political institutions in such a system. One of the lessons to be learned from these experiences is that in order to function well, democracy first of all needs the very solid foundation of the rule of law. One cannot build a democracy without the rule of law.

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As the saying goes – democracy is a work in progress. We will probably never be satisfied with its condition. However, without a sound democracy and political culture, Europe will not be able to take up the challenges now and in the future. Consequently, the efficiency of democracy must never be taken for granted.

Today's discussion on democracy is in sharp contrast to the enthusiasm and euphoria of the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s. At that time, more than 20 years ago, following the collapse of the communist system, people seemed to be convinced that Western liberal democracy was the ultimate stage in the development of political culture and political order and that it would spread everywhere of its own accord. We know now that this deterministic scenario does not work so simply. We have learnt that democracy can go into decline and even regress in some countries. The Arab Spring has brought back and confirmed that there are always tough challenges ahead.

As a political intergovernmental organisation, the Council of Europe has a particular responsibility to reflect upon the state of European democracy and to serve as a platform for assessing the condition of democracy and elaborating ideas – ideas, not solutions.

The Council of Europe works primarily with standards. As pointed out in the Secretary General's preface, many of the Council of Europe's conventions are highly relevant to the quality of the political and democratic life of its member states. But, for obvious reasons, there is no separate convention on democracy. Yet there is a variety of instruments and mechanisms to help apply democratic standards and they can make the difference!

Dr Piotr Świtalski
Ambassador, Director of Policy Planning

What is central in central Europe?[1]

Zygmunt Bauman
Professor Emeritus at the University of Leeds

Before we confront in earnest the question in the title, we need to answer another question: where to look for and where to find Europe? Answering the other question is much less straightforward than it seems, but we can hardly attempt to competently answer the question in the title before we decide on what grounds we are entitled to ascribe "centrality" to central Europe. Also to what kind of entity or entities have we the right to assign this name. It is the identity of Europe which decides what is "central" – to its unique history, present predicament, and the challenges which it is facing at the entry into its future. In contemporary usage, the term "Europe" stands for at least three different, and not at all overlapping, phenomena. One is geographical; another political; and yet another cultural. Let us consider them in that order.

"Whoever speaks of Europe is wrong: it is a geographical notion" – opined, dismissively, Otto von Bismarck. Bismarck was a politician through and through, and so no wonder he said what he said: what he referred to was, after all, a "brute fact" of his time. Then, Europe was everything but a political reality – the sole reality with which Bismarck was concerned. Every notion derives its meaning from the opposition in which it stands to another notion: for Bismarck at the threshold of the 20th century, "being geographical" meant "not being political". "Politics" was then, as it is now, coterminous with a presidency or a throne, a *Kanzlerei,* ministries, a Bundestag, and a dense network of governmental and quasi-governmental offices. Even if Carl Schmitt went a bit too far in his vivisection of the original act and the defining feature of politics when he reduced it to the appointment of "a common enemy", he was right when tracing the essence of politics to the naming of, and dealing with, "the other". Politics, we may say, is about creation and manipulation of oppositions and drawing boundaries between "inside" and "outside", and consequently differentiating between the way in which each of the two members of the opposition, and so also each of the two sides of the border, are dealt with. Within its geographical borders as drawn by cartographers, Europe (that is, "geographical Europe") performed none of those functions: it had no institutions which would render performance of functions plausible and, indeed, feasible.

Moreover, it is interesting to observe that at that time, and until half a century ago, all enemies of European governments were other Europeans. The case of Poland

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1. Debate held on 16 June 2011.

provides overwhelming evidence of that fact: between the two world wars, for instance, the country was surrounded by enemies at every border.

Thus, Bismarck was right when implying that Europe was not, in his time, a political reality. However, he was not necessarily right when asserting that Europe was only a geographical reality. Rather, one may suggest that Europe had in Bismarck's time some distinct and tangible geography-related realities which it has subsequently lost – particularly in the last half century or so – simultaneously with its concentration on the construction of its present-day political reality.

Firstly, in the course of the last five centuries, the military and economic might of that north-western peninsula of the Asiatic continent which was called "Europe" tended to be topped with the unchallenged position of Europe as the reference point for the evaluation, praise or condemnation of all alternative, past and present forms of human life, and as the supreme court where such assessment was authoritatively pronounced and made binding. It was enough just to be a European, says Ryszard Kapuściński, arguably the most astute and insightful reporter and recorder of the state of world affairs in the late 20th century, to feel like a boss and a ruler everywhere in the world. Even a mediocre person of humble standing and low opinion in his or her native (but European) country rose to the highest social positions upon arriving in Malaysia or Zambia. Today, however, this is no longer true.

Until quite recently, Europe was that centre that made the rest of the planet a periphery. As Denis de Rougemont crisply put it, Europe "discovered" one by one all the continents of the planet, but no continent ever discovered Europe; it dominated all continents in succession, but was never dominated by any; and it invented a civilisation which the rest of the world tried to imitate, but the reverse process has never (thus far, at any rate) happened. We may add that European wars, and only those wars, were world wars. Intra-European dramas were staged in the world theatre. This is no longer true, either.

Not long ago, one could still define "geographical" (in the absence of "political") Europe the way de Rougemont suggested: by its "globalising function". Europe was, for most of the last few centuries, a uniquely adventurous geographical space, unlike any other. The fact that, during a period of two to three centuries, Europe had the monopoly on modernisation created a unique situation resulting from the endemic quality of modernisation efforts. The two industries of modernisation, the "order building" and the "economic progress" industries, although following two different purposes, had the same effect, namely the production of redundant people and products. For a long period, these processes happened mostly, and even exclusively, in Europe, thus giving the continent a "globalising function" through its monopoly of these two industries of modernisation.

Having been the first part of the globe to enter the mode of life which it subsequently dubbed "modern", Europe created problems locally that no one in the world had heard of before and no one had the slightest inkling of how to resolve. But Europe also invented a way for their ultimate resolution, though in a form unfit to be universalised and deployed by lands which would encounter these,

originally exclusively European, problems at a later stage. The problems which Europe produced internally (and thus locally), Europe resolved by recycling other parts of the planet into sources of cheap energy, minerals, commodities, or inexpensive and docile labour but, above all, into dumping grounds for the by-products of modernisation – the excessive and redundant products that could not be used profitably at home, and excessive and redundant people whom it could not employ at home.

In a nutshell, Europe invented global solutions to locally produced problems – but having invented and developed them for a few centuries, Europe forced all other parts of the globe to seek, desperately, yet to no avail, local solutions to globally produced problems. Again, this is no longer true either. As a matter of fact, one of the major considerations inspiring and stimulating efforts to endow geographical Europe with a political reality was the realisation that time had arrived for Europe, much like for the rest of the world, to seek or invent "geographically local" solutions to globally produced problems: solutions at least locally effective. Global solutions to locally produced problems can, in principle, be available to only relatively few inhabitants of the planet – as long as those few enjoy superiority over the rest, benefiting from a power differential large enough to remain unchallenged (or, at least, not challenged effectively) and to be widely believed to be unchallengeable. But Europe no longer enjoys such privilege and cannot seriously hope to recover what it has lost. It was this circumstance which added a most powerful momentum to the construction of "political Europe" in the shape of the European Union, and which, to a large extent, influenced and continues to influence the stakes and objectives of European politics.

Much more than at the time of the original Schuman-Monnet-Spaak-Adenauer-de Gasperi initiatives, "political Europe" in its present shape needs to be understood as the by-product of an abrupt decline in European self-assurance. It has been the disappearance of the "we-can-do-it" self-confidence that triggered a sudden explosion of acute interest in a "new European identity", and in "redefining the role" of Europe in order to match the current planetary game – a game in which the rules and stakes have drastically changed and continue to change, albeit no longer at the behest of Europe or under its control, and with minimal, if any, European influence. Hence, a tide of neo-tribal sentiments swelling from Stockholm to Rome and from Paris to Budapest, magnified and beefed up by the deepening "enemy at the gate" and "fifth column" alerts and fears – and the resulting "besieged-fortress spirit" – manifested in the fast-rising popularity of securely locked borders and firmly shut doors.

On the other hand, however, the emergent (in fits and starts) European federation is facing the task of repeating, on a grander (and therefore potentially planetary) scale, the feat accomplished by the emergent nation states of early modernity: bringing power and politics back together, once closely interlinked but subsequently separated, and since their separation navigating (or drifting) in opposite directions. The road leading to the implementation of that task is as rocky now as it was then, at the start of the modern era and its nation-and-state-building stage. Now as much as then, the road is strewn with snares and spattered with

incalculable risks. Even worse, this road is unmapped and each successive step feels like a leap into the unknown. Furthermore, there are few signs indicating the political will to see the task through. An illustration of this is the way that the Lisbon Treaty was buried alive by electing to the posts of European President and the Head of Foreign Affairs two people who stand out most for their lack of remarkableness, as well as the remarkable, as never before, unanimous equanimity with which their appointments were received in the offices of Europe's 27 governments.

Many, maybe even most, observers doubt the feasibility of begetting, cultivating, honing and entrenching a "European identity" – a political, not to mention spiritual, identity – and score low the chances of that effort being seriously undertaken, let alone successfully completed. Sceptics do not believe in the viability of a "post-national" democracy, or any democratic political entity above the level of the nation, insisting that the allegiance to civic and political norms would not replace "ethnocultural ties"[2] and that citizenship is unworkable on a purely "civilisational" (legal-political) basis without the assistance of "Eros" (the emotional dimension). They assume that the ethnocultural ties and Eros are uniquely and inextricably linked to each other as well as to the kind of "past- and destiny-sharing sentiment" which went down in history under the name of nationalism. They believe that communal-style solidarity can take root and thrive only inside this connection and cannot be rebuilt or established anew in any other way. That the nationalistic legitimisation of state power was but a historically confined episode and but one of the many alternative fashions of a possible politics-power union, or that the modern blend of statehood and nationhood bore more symptoms of a marriage of convenience than of the verdict of providence or historical inevitability, or that the marriage itself was anything but a foregone conclusion and when arranged proved to be as stormy as most divorce procedures tend to be – all such possibilities are thereby dismissed by the simple expedient of begging the question.

Jürgen Habermas, arguably the most consistent and the most authoritative spokesman for the opposition to this kind of scepticism, points out that a democratic order does not inherently need to be mentally rooted in "the nation" as a pre-political community of shared destiny. The strength of the democratic constitutional state lies precisely in its ability to fill the gaps of social integration through the political participation of its citizens.[3] Already in this form the argument sounds quite convincing – and yet, it may be pushed even further. The nation, as any promoter of a "national idea" would eagerly admit, is as vulnerable and frail without the protection of a sovereign state (assuring its *mêmeté*, its continuing identity), as the state would be without a nation which legitimises its demands for obedience and discipline. Modern nations and states are twin products of the

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2. See Denis de Rougemont (1994), "L'aventure mondiale des Européens", in *Ecrits sur l'Europe,* Editions de la Différence, Paris (article originally published in 1962).
3. Jürgen Habermas (2001), *The Postnational Constellation: Political Essays,* translated by Max Pensky, Polity Press, p. 76.

same historical constellation. One might "precede" the other only for a short time, while trying necessarily to make that short time as short as possible by filling it with efforts to replace priority with simultaneity – through forcing the equation mark between the ostensibly autonomous partners. The French state was "preceded" by Provençals and Bretons, not the French; the German state by Bavarians, Saxons or Prussians, not Germans. Provençals and Bretons would have hardly turned into French people, and Bavarians and Prussians into Germans, let alone stayed French or German for good, were not their reincarnation "power assisted" by, respectively, the French and the German states. For all practical intents and purposes, modern nations and modern states alike emerged in the course of two simultaneous, and closely intertwined, processes of nation- and state-building. These were anything but cloudless or friction-free processes, and anything but processes guaranteed a priori to succeed. To say that a political framework cannot be established without a viable ethnocultural organism already in place is neither more nor less convincing than to say that no ethnocultural organism is likely to become and stay viable without a working and workable political framework. This is a chicken-and-egg dilemma, if ever there was one. And just as neither chickens nor eggs in themselves are insured against extinction and guaranteed eternal existence, they can continue to exist only together – while both are doomed to extinction if one of them dies without issue.

Due to the evaporation of much of its previously held power into the global space, which Manuel Castells characterises as the "space of flows", the inherited political framework of the nation state now finds it increasingly difficult to sustain by itself the ethnocultural organism, which, by common consent, is in turn its indispensable companion. The symbiosis between the two threatens to fall apart were it to stay, as before, confined to the nation-state level; most state units in Europe, just as on other continents, currently dispose of too little power to avoid the lot of plankton – buffeted by tides they can neither control nor even effectively navigate. What clearly cannot be achieved single-handedly perhaps stands a better chance of success if undertaken jointly.

At this point, let us remind ourselves of another famous saying of Otto von Bismarck: "I have always found the word 'Europe' in the mouth of those politicians who wanted from other powers something they did not dare to demand in their own name". If he were still alive, Bismarck would likely repeat that sentence with even greater reassurance; and he would be as right today as he was a hundred years ago. Only now, unlike at the time when this sentence was first spoken, there are but few among the state politicians who would dare make demands just in their state's name (unless they address their demands to Brussels …). Even those few may have some doubts as to whether the chance of success for the demands made in the name of the state alone is equal to the chance of success for demands made in the name of Europe. We (the Europeans) are all equal in our own, separate, insufficiency – and in our need to be protected/strengthened by a power greater than each of us may boast of alone (even if it is true that some of us are more equal in this respect than others). Just as in the times of Bismarck's verdict, the word "Europe" is nowadays still said more frequently by some state

prime ministers than by others, whereas some of us, when hearing the word "Europe", feel not unlike certain Lombardians, when hearing the word "Italy": gnashing their teeth at the thought of sharing their hard-earned wealth with the slothful, improvident and happy-go-lucky Calabrians or Sicilians.

If they are to be lifted from the nation-state level and refocused at a higher, European level, the essential features of human solidarity (like the sentiments of mutual belonging and of shared responsibility for the common future, or the willingness to care for each other's well-being and to find amicable and durable solutions to sporadically inflamed conflicts) need an institutional framework for opinion-building and will-formation. The European Union aims at (and moves towards – even if infuriatingly slowly, haltingly, sometimes in a "one step forward two steps back" manner) a rudimentary or embryonic form of such an institutional framework – encountering on its way, as obtrusive obstacles, the political establishments of existing nation states and their reluctance to part with whatever is left of their once fully fledged sovereignty. The current direction is difficult to plot unambiguously, and prognosticating its future is even more difficult. In addition to being unwarranted and irresponsible, it is unwise.

One thing seems to be relatively clear, however. Whether or not arising from ethnic roots, the stimulus for political integration and the indispensable factor for keeping it on course must be a shared sense or vision of a collective mission: a unique mission, which can only be undertaken within the projected political body and which is only likely to be performed with the help of that body. Is there such a mission, a worthy mission, which Europe could perform and, by its history and its present qualities, it is predestined to perform? Europe cannot seriously contemplate matching the American military might; neither can it hope to recover its past industrial domination, irretrievably lost in our increasingly polycentric world – a world now subjected to the processes of economic modernisation in their entirety.

However, Europe can and should try to make the planet hospitable to other values and other modes of existence than those represented and promoted by the American military superpower; to the values and modes which Europe is more than any other part of the world predisposed to offer the world. More than anything else, the world needs to design, to enter and to follow the road leading to Kant's *allgemeine Vereinigung der Menschheit* and perpetual peace. Apart from being a geographical and (possibly) a political entity, Europe is also a cultural one.

George Steiner insists that Europe's assignment "is one of the spirit and the intellect".[4] The genius of Europe is what William Blake would have called "the holiness of the minute particular". It is that of linguistic, cultural and social diversity, of a prodigal mosaic which often makes a trivial distance, say 20 kilometres, a division between worlds. Europe will indeed perish if it does not fight for its languages, local traditions and social autonomy, if it forgets that "God lies in the detail".

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4. See George Steiner (2004), *The Idea of Europe,* Nexus Institute, pp. 32-34.

Similar thoughts can be found in the literary legacy of Hans-Georg Gadamer.[5] It is its variety, its richness boarding on profligacy, which Gadamer places at the top of the list of Europe's unique merits; he sees the profusion of differences as the foremost among the treasures which Europe has preserved and can offer to the world. "To live with the Other, live as the Other's Other, is the fundamental human task – on the most lowly and the most elevated levels alike … Hence perhaps the particular advantage of Europe, which could and had to learn the art of living with others." In Europe like nowhere else, "the other" has been and continues to be always close, in sight and at arm's length; metaphorically or even literally, the other is a next-door neighbour – and Europeans cannot but negotiate the terms of that neighbourliness despite the alterity and the differences that set them apart. The European setting marked by "the multilingualism, the close neighbourhood of the Other, and equal value accorded to the Other in a space tightly constrained" could be seen as a school, from which the rest of the world may well gain crucial knowledge and skills making the difference between survival and demise. To acquire and share this art of learning is, in Gadamer's view, "the task of Europe". One could add: it is Europe's mission, or more precisely Europe's fate waiting to be recast into destiny.

The importance of this task, and the importance of Europe's determination to undertake it, is impossible to exaggerate, as "the decisive condition of solving vital problems of the modern world", truly a *sine qua non* condition, are friendship and "buoyant solidarity" that alone can secure "an orderly structure" for human cohabitation. Confronting that task, we may look back to our shared European heritage for inspiration: to the ancient Greeks – for whom, as Gadamer reminds us, the concept of "a friend" "articulated the totality of social life". Friends tend to be mutually tolerant and sympathetic. Friends are able to be friendly with each other however they differ, to be helpful to each other despite or rather because of their differences and to be friendly and helpful without renouncing their uniqueness, while never allowing that uniqueness to set them apart from and against each other. More recently, Lionel Jospin[6] invested his hopes for a renewed global importance for Europe in its "nuanced approach to current realities". Europe has learned, he said, the hard way and at an enormous price (paid in the currency of human suffering) "how to get past historical antagonisms and peacefully resolve conflicts", how to bring together "a vast array of cultures" and to live with the prospect of permanent cultural diversity and not see it as a temporary irritant. Let us note that these are precisely the sort of lessons which the rest of the world most badly needs. When seen against the background of the conflict-ridden planet, Europe can seem like a laboratory where the tools necessary for Kant's universal unification of humanity keep being designed, and like a workshop in which they keep being "tested in action", even if, for the time

5. See in particular Hans-Georg Gadamer (1989), *Das Erbe Europas,* Suhrkamp, here quoted after Philippe Invernel's French translation, *L'héritage de l'Europe,* Rivages poche, 2003, pp. 40 and 124.
6. See Lionel Jospin (2003), "Solidarity or playing solitaire", *The Hedgehog Review,* spring 2003, pp. 32-44.

being, in the performance of less ambitious, smaller scale jobs. The tools which are currently forged and put to the test within Europe serve above all the delicate operation (for some less sanguine observers, even too delicate for anything more than a sporting chance of success) of separating the bases of political legitimacy, of democratic procedure and willingness to a community-style sharing of assets, from the principle of national/territorial sovereignty with which they have been for the most part of modern history inextricably linked.

This challenge, however, confronts a world very different from that in which our ancestors set about the construction of modern "bodies politic" – the nation states. Whatever else can be said about Europe facing that challenge, it is not that Europe is in undivided, fully sovereign control of the territory its institutions administer. European cities, and particularly mega-cities like London, are currently refuse bins, into which problems generated by globalisation are dumped for recycling or incineration though they are also laboratories in which the art of living with those problems is experimented with, put to the test and (sometimes successfully, but always hopefully) developed. None of these two functions has been taken on by such cities voluntarily, on their own initiative; neither are municipal councils capable of rejecting them and refusing to perform. One of the hardest tasks "delegated" to the municipalities by the processes of globalisation is tackling the heterogeneous, multi-ethnic, multilingual and altogether multicultural composition of living-and-working space, the result of massive migration triggered by the globalised spread of modernisation notorious for its intense production of "redundant people", whom their native lands cannot or would not, for one reason or another, accommodate.

There were three different phases in the history of modern-era migration. The first wave of migration followed the logic of the tripartite syndrome: territoriality of sovereignty, "rooted" identity and gardening posture (hereinafter referred to, for the sake of brevity, as TRG). That was the emigration from the "modernised" centre (read: the site of order-building and economic progress – the two main industries turning out, and off, the growing numbers of "wasted humans"), partly exportation and partly eviction of up to 60 million people, a huge number by 19th-century standards, to "empty lands" (read: lands whose native population could be struck from the "modernisers'" calculations; be literally uncounted and unaccounted for, presumed either non-existent or irrelevant). Residual natives who survived the massive slaughter and epidemics had been cast by the immigrants from "modernised" countries as objects of the "white man's civilising mission".

The second wave of migration could be best conceptualised as the "Empire emigrates back" case. In the course of the retraction and dismantling of colonial empires, a number of indigenous people in various stages of "cultural evolution" followed their colonial superiors to the metropolis. Upon arrival, they were cast in the only worldview-strategic mould available: one constructed and practised earlier in the nation-building era to deal with the categories earmarked for "assimilation": a process aimed at the annihilation of cultural difference, placing "minorities" at the receiving end of cultural crusades, *Kulturkämpfe* and

proselytising missions (currently renamed, for the sake of political correctness, as "citizenship education" aimed at "integration").

This story is not yet finished: time and again, its echoes reverberate in the declarations of intent of politicians, notorious for their inclination to follow the habits of Minerva's Owl, known to spread its wings as dusk falls. After the pattern of the first phase of migration, the drama of the "empire migrating back" is occasionally tried, though in vain, to be squeezed into the frame of the now outdated TRG syndrome. The third wave of modern migration, now in full force and still gathering momentum, leads, however, into the age of diasporas: a worldwide archipelago of ethnic/religious/linguistic settlements – oblivious to the trails blazed and paved by the imperialist-colonial episode and following instead the globalisation-induced logic of the planetary redistribution of life resources. Diasporas are scattered, diffused and extend over many nominally sovereign territories; they ignore the hosts' claims to the supremacy of local demands and obligation, are locked in the double (or multiple) bind of "dual (or multiple) nationality" and dual (or multiple) loyalty. Present-day migration differs from the two previous phases by moving both ways (virtually all countries, including Britain, are nowadays simultaneously those of "immigration" and "emigration"), and privileging no routes (routes are no longer determined by the imperial/colonial links of the past). It differs also in exploding the old TRG syndrome and replacing it with a EAH one (extraterritoriality elbowing out territorial fixation of identities, "anchors" displacing "roots" as primary tools of identification, a hunter's strategy replacing the gardening posture).

This new migration raises a question over the bond between identity and citizenship, individual and place, neighbourhood and belonging. Jonathan Rutherford, astute and insightful observer of the fast changing frames of human togetherness, notes[7] that the residents of the street in London on which he lives form "a neighbourhood of different communities, some with networks extending only to the next street, others which stretch across the world. It is a neighbourhood of porous boundaries in which it is difficult to identify who belongs and who is an outsider. What is it we belong to in this locality? What is it that each of us calls home and, when we think back and remember how we arrived here, what stories do we share?"

Living like the rest of us (or most of that rest) in a diaspora (stretching how far, and in what direction(s)?) among diasporas (stretching how far and in what direction(s)?) has for the first time forced onto the agenda the issue of the "art of living with a difference". This may appear onto the agenda only once the difference is no longer seen as a merely temporary irritant and so, unlike in the past, urgently requiring composition of new arts and skills, as well as arduous teaching and learning. The idea of human rights, promoted in the EAH setting to replace or at least complement the TRG-era institutions of territorially determined citizenship, translates today as the "right to remain different". By fits and

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7. Jonathan Rutherford (2007), *After Identity,* Laurence & Wishart, pp. 59-60.

starts, that new rendition of the human rights idea leads, at best, to tolerance; it has as yet to start in earnest to lead to solidarity. It is a moot question whether it is fit to conceive group solidarity in any other form than that of loose, fickle and fey, predominantly virtual, "networks", galvanised and continually remodelled by the interplay of individual connecting and disconnecting, making calls and declining to respond to them. The new rendition of the human rights idea disassembles hierarchies and tears apart the imagery of upward ("progressive") "cultural evolution". Forms of life float, meet, clash, crash and catch hold of each other, merge and "hive off with" (to paraphrase Georg Simmel) equal specific gravity. Steady and stolid hierarchies and evolutionary lines are replaced with interminable and endemically inconclusive battles of recognition; at the utmost, with eminently renegotiable pecking orders. Imitating Archimedes, reputed to insist (probably with the kind of desperation which only an utter nebulousness of the project might cause) that he would turn the world upside down if only given a solid enough fulcrum, we may say that we would tell who is to assimilate to whom, whose dissimilarity/idiosyncrasy is destined for the chop and whose is to emerge on top, if we only were given a hierarchy of cultures. Well, we are not given it, and are unlikely to be given it soon. We may say that culture is in its liquid-modern phase, made to the measure of (willingly pursued or endured as obligatory) individual freedom of choice, and that it is meant to service such freedom. This responsibility, the inalienable companion of free choice, stays where the liquid-modern condition forced it: on the shoulders of the individual, now appointed the sole manager of "life politics". And that is meant to see to it that the choice remains unavoidable: a life necessity and a duty; but also that it becomes and remains a plausible and feasible task – a task by which Europeans would be glad to measure their progress and a task within their reach.

The future of political Europe depends on the fate of European culture. A few centuries ago, Europe harnessed "culture" to the service of the closely intertwined nation-building and state-building endeavours, as first and foremost an agent of homogenisation or indeed *Gleichschaltung* – aiming at political unity through levelling up the extant cultural diversity. With the policy of forceful assimilation no longer feasible and a tendency to voluntary assimilation no longer plausible due to the flattening of the once power-assisted hierarchy of cultures and dissipation of power-assisted "cultural systems", the increasingly diaspora-like composition of the expanding geographical space of Europe augurs the shape of things to come – with all its challenges, chances and threats. Europe's currently composed heritage for the world's future is its (far from perfect, yet relentlessly growing) capacity to live, permanently and beneficially, with cultural difference: profitably on all sides, not despite their differences, but thanks to them. Europe can offer to the globalised planet its know-how of reaching unity while leaving ossified antagonisms behind, its experience in devising and cultivating the sentiment of solidarity, the idea of shared interest and the image of a shared mission – not through the denigration of cultural variety and not with an intention to smother it, but through its promotion to the rank of uncontested value and with the intention to protect and cultivate it. Europe has learned (and continues to learn) the

art of transforming cultural differences from a handicap to cohabitation into an asset – an art which our planet needs more than any other art, a genuine meta-art, the art whose possession enables the development and acquisition of all the rest of the life-saving and life-sustaining arts. This is not, to be sure, a situation totally unprecedented in the lands covered by the summary notion of "Europe". In fact, it was apparent and pronounced from the very beginning of Europe's history and, from the beginning, ways of coping with this situation were diligently sought and successfully practised (even if subsequently, time and again, those efforts and their merits came to be pushed aside and forgotten for centuries in a row).

If we believe Titus Livius, the rise of Rome from humble beginnings to ecumenical stature and glory was due to the consistent practice of granting all conquered and annexed peoples full citizenship rights and unqualified access to the highest offices of the expanding country, while paying all due tribute to the gods whom the newcomers worshipped and endorsing the rites of worshipping them, and so closing down the long record of internecine enmity and mutual mud-slinging needed in the past to justify continuation of hostilities. For five centuries or so of Europe's early history, to many observers its most magnificent era, the growing segment of Europe lived inside the protective shield of Pax Romana, where the equal, unqualified sum-total of citizenship rights was granted to the population of every newly conquered/admitted country, while the statues of its gods were added, no questions asked, to the Roman Pantheon, thereby assuring continuous growth in the number and versatility of divinities guarding the integrity and so also the prosperity of the Roman Empire. That Roman tradition of respect for the otherness of the other and of the state thriving through variety (that is, achieving citizens' solidarity thanks to, not despite, their differences) was not, however, as already mentioned, continually observed throughout European history.

Whereas the emergent absolutist states in the west of geographical Europe were engaged in many decades of gory, devastating and seeds-of-hereditary-enmity-sowing religious wars, leading to the Westphalia settlement allocating to every ruler full rights to coerce by hook or by crook his own religious (and so, by proxy, cultural) choices on the ruled, a large chunk of Europe east of the Elbe managed, however, to escape the trend. That part of Europe stood up for its religious (and so, in substance, cultural *avant la lettre*) tolerance and communal autonomy. A star example of such an alternative was the Polish/Lithuanian "Res publica of both nations", generous in the rights of cultural self-government and identity, self-preservation lavished on its innumerable ethnic, linguistic and religious minorities – and escaping thereby the iniquities, bloodshed and other multiple horrors of religious wars that pulled the western part of Europe apart and covered it in spiritual wounds which took centuries to heal. This tradition, however, was to be brought to an abrupt end with the partition of the Polish-Lithuanian fortress of tolerance by its voracious neighbours – the dynastic empires of nation state aspirations. In the aftermath of the partition, previously autonomous cultures, small and large alike, were subjected, respectively, to a forceful Russification at its eastern side and similarly ruthless Germanisation in the west, topped by the (on the whole unsuccessful, yet no less ardent) anti-Catholic offensive by, respectively,

the Christian Orthodox and Lutheran churches. Just how sincere the advancing modernity was in its declared intention to promote the cause of freedom is a moot and to this day debatable issue, but beyond dispute is its proclivity to cultural intolerance – indeed the inseparable other face of the "nation-building" project. It was indeed the undetachable part and parcel of the twin, mutually supporting and reinforcing nation-and-state-building projects that national languages were to be formed through suppressing and delegitimising communal "dialects", state churches put together through discrimination and extermination of "sects", or national memory composed through demoting and forgetting "local follies and/or superstitions". One part of Europe – closer than any other to its "geographical centre" – resisted, however, that massive assault on the idea of culture as a matter of individual self-assertive choice and the foundation of individual autonomy. This was the Austro-Hungarian Empire, ruled from Vienna, not by chance the greenhouse of cultural creativity and incubator of by far the most exciting and seminal contributions to European philosophy, psychology, literature, music, visual and stage arts. It was where the practice of equality and self-government of cultures was raised, by the most insightful minds of the time, to the rank of a model for the future of Europe, a model constructed with the intention and hope of cleansing the coexistence of European nations from the ghastly merger of cultural identity with territorial sovereignty.

The principle of national personal autonomy ("personal principle") was elaborated at length by Otto Bauer in his 1907 book *Die Nationalitätenfrage und die Sozialdemokratie*. Bauer considered this principle a way to "organise nations not in territorial bodies but in simple association of persons", thus radically disjoining the nation from the territory and making of the nation a non-territorial association (this idea was offered for public discussion eight years earlier by another "Austro-Marxist", Karl Renner, in his 1899 essay "Staat und Nation", as well as by a Jewish Bund's leader, Vladimir Medem, in his 1904 essay "Social democracy and the national question" (written and published in Yiddish), a text synthesising the historic experiences of the Polish-Lithuanian Union and Austro-Hungarian monarchy.

Let us consider the case of a country composed of several national groups, for example Poles, Lithuanians and Jews. Each national group would create a separate movement. All citizens belonging to a given national group would join a special organisation which would hold cultural assemblies in each region and a general cultural assembly for the entire country. The assemblies would be given financial powers of their own: either each national group would be entitled to raise taxes from its members or the state would allocate a proportion of its overall budget to each of them. Every citizen of the state would belong to one of the national groups, but the question of which national movement to join would be a matter of personal choice and no authority would have any control over this decision. The national movements would be subject to the general legislation of the state, but in their own areas of responsibility they would be autonomous and none of them would have the right to interfere in the affairs of the others.[8]

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8. As recently quoted in Wikipedia after Yves Plassereaud, "Choose your own nationality or the forgotten history of cultural autonomy", in the English edition of *Le Monde diplomatique,* May 2000.

Such hopes were shattered and such blueprints drowned in blood spilt in the trenches of the Great War. And so came the Versailles Peace Conference, and Woodrow Wilson's memorable verdict that the sovereignty of nations is the universal precept of humanity which needs to be accepted as the key to the postwar reconstruction – a verdict that famously left Hannah Arendt bewildered and horrified, painfully aware and mindful as she was of the "belts of mixed population" being singularly unfit for the application "ein Volk, ein Reich" criterion.[9] Even Wilson's ignorance (or was it disdain or arrogance?) was not enough, however, to prevent yet another (though half-hearted, to be sure) attempt at seeking and finding a mode of cohabitation better suited to the condition of overlapping and criss-crossing archipelagos of diasporas, in the shape of the Yugoslav multi-ethnic state. A side remark casually made by Helmut Kohl in a moment of heedlessness (implying that Slovenia deserved independence because it was ethnically homogenous) was still needed to open another Pandora's box of neighbourhood massacres and ethnic cleansing.

We Europeans are facing today, in the emergent era of diasporas, the prospect of Europe being transformed into a steadily widening and lengthening "belt of mixed population". Unlike the previous direction of the pendulum, this present process is not (state) power-assisted; quite the contrary, state powers try as much as they can to slow down the process or grind it to a halt altogether – but the capacity at their disposal is, ever more evidently, short of what stemming the tide of the fast and unstoppable globalisation of inter-human dependence would require. The "proactive" responses to the "diasporisation" of social settings are slow, half-hearted, lacking in vision, and above all much too few and far between, if measured by their importance and urgency, and yet this is precisely the context in which the prospects of Europe as a political and cultural entity, and the exact location of Europe's "centre", need to be deliberated and debated. It is in the part of Europe claiming the qualifier "central" that the experience of communal identity separated from the issue of territorial administration is relatively fresh in memory, and (perhaps) the habits acquired, practised and enjoyed in the era of cohabitation free of *Kulturkämpfe* and assimilatory pressures are recent enough to be recalled and re-embraced. It is central Europe's memory which shows Europe's future. Could one imagine a centrality more central than that?

9. See Hannah Arendt, "The Origins of Totalitarianism", André Deutsch, 1986, p. 270.

Europe at risk: a cosmopolitan perspective[10]

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Europe is a moving target. It is being transformed radically and rapidly. We are thinking not only in relation to Europe, but in relation to society, politics and, most of the time, the reproduction of order. Although major theories discuss the reproduction of order, what we are experiencing is, in reality, the transformation of order. Furthermore, we are not well equipped by our thinking, disciplines or political acting to cope with a situation in which we are not only experiencing change, but also the change of change or "reflexive modernisation". Reflexive modernisation is when one is confronted with a situation in which the success of modernisation is introducing consequences, for example global risks, which undermine the institutions of modern society and open them up at the same time. "Transformation" does not signify "reform", or other forms of intended political change, but refers to unintended, and often unnoticed, change. What does "global risk" mean? Not reproduction of order, but the transformation of order and power. Europe at risk is about the unintended, unseen transformation of order and power. The question is not how to control the risk, but what financial risk does to Europe. How does this change transform the European institutions, their relation to the nation states and the whole landscape of power? This is the sociological point of view.

To start with, we need to answer a basic question: what is good about Europe? Europe is first of all an insurance against war. The European Union has created a miracle by changing enemies into neighbours. Secondly, Europe could become a response to the world at risk, which we have to cope with. But at the same time we have to realise that the financial risk, namely the euro crisis, is transforming Europe and is tearing Europe apart.

The crux of the matter is that in this transformative process, the basic rules of European democracy are being suspended or are even being inverted into their opposite, bypassing parliaments, governments and EU institutions. Multilateralism is turning into unilateralism, equality into hegemony, sovereignty into the deprivation of sovereignty and recognition into disrespect for the democratic dignity of other nations. Even France, which has long dominated European unification, has had to submit to Berlin's structures now that it must fear for its international credit rating.

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10. Debate held on 3 April 2012.

"Germany did not seek this leadership position." Rather it is, as Timothy Garton Ash argues, a perfect illustration of this transformative process under conditions of perceptions of global risk, "the law of unintended consequences."[11] It was a quid pro quo for binding united Germany into a more integrated Europe, in which France would continue to play the leading role. But the opposite has happened. Economically, the euro turned out to be very good for Germany. Even the euro crisis is empowering Germany and Angela Merkel is becoming the informal queen of Europe.

However, part of the German political and economic elite, as well as commentators in the public domain, seem to believe that the time has come to defend Germany against Europe – to defend the successful German stability model of national, democratic, social market economy against the attacks of its jealous European neighbours who want to cure their budget deficits by grabbing the German purse. There is nothing wrong in protecting German interest. But not long ago it was still commonplace to speak about the cacophony in the European Union. Now Europe has a single telephone. It rings in Berlin and for the moment it belongs to Angela Merkel.

The idea of "Europe at risk" will be developed in four theses. First, what is the impact of the risk on Europe? It puts the welfare state model into crisis and at the same time creates a common concern among the European public. Second, we have a hard time understanding this, because our thinking, our understanding of the world is still prisoner to the nation state. We mainly think of politics in nation state categories. Third, in "Europe at risk", a new logic of power is taking shape: the German model of stability is being elevated into the guiding idea of Europe. Fourth, Europe could and should become a model to cope with the world at risk. However, this model is not the Europe we have – "Brussels' Europe" – and not the Europe which is emerging in response to the euro crisis – a German Europe. Europe grows in the time of crisis. Therefore, there is a realistic utopia to create another Europe, a grass-roots Europe. This would be a Europe of the people or, preferably, it could be named, "a European Union of democracies".

First thesis: in a world at risk, Europe is put into crisis, even into failure and, at the same time, Europe is more in demand than ever

It has become commonplace that national institutions alone, in their current form, are unable to cope with the (dis)order of "world risk society",[12] namely, the challenges of regulating global capitalism and responding to new global risks of financial instability, ecological crisis and climate change. Contemporary changes and challenges are complex and comprehensive. In the spatial dimension we are confronted with risks which disregard the borders of the nation state, and indeed boundaries as such. Climate change, pollution and the hole in the ozone

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11. Timothy Garton Ash (2012), "Angela Merkel needs all the help she can get", *The Guardian,* 8 February 2012, p. 32.
12. For example, see Ulrich Beck (2009), *World at Risk,* Polity Press, Cambridge, UK/Malden, MA.

layer affect everyone, although not to the same degree. The long latency period of problems, such as the disposal of nuclear waste or the long-term effects of genetically modified foodstuffs, escape the fixed routines for dealing with industrial dangers. Finally, in the social dimension, the attribution of responsibility for potential threats and hence the question of who is liable becomes problematic. We are living in a stage of organised irresponsibility in relation to the most dangerous threats that we are confronted with. Legally speaking, it is difficult to determine who causes pollution or a financial crisis, since such events are the results of interactions between many different actors beyond national borders.

There are two highly ambivalent implications. The first lies in an account of the crisis – and perhaps failure – of the national welfare state model in Europe in a world at risk. An achievement of the 20th century, and especially in the period after the Second World War, involved the institutionalisation of a variety of centrally organised responses to the contradictions of capitalist development. One might almost call it the attempt to make good on Hegel's account of how the contradictions in civil society demand to be answered by a unifying, integrating, but also welfare-providing state. It was Bismarck's project in a very conservative and militarist version. It was a social democratic project in a much more egalitarian version achieved by collective struggles, by trade unions and social movements. But it came unstuck in an era of global competition and global risks. In the world risk society, the travails of the welfare states have been produced or exacerbated by new kinds of prevailing risks, and especially risks not contained or manageable within nation state borders.

But there is also a paradoxical effect: in the Europe at risk, Europe grows out of its shadow of pre-emptive irrelevance and is suddenly in the centre of public concern and attention, public discourse and disputes, not only in Europe and its member states but also globally. Thus, the European public sphere and civil society can be understood as a response to Europe at risk. This is of major importance. The theory of world risk society questions and replaces one of the premises of political theory, for public attention is aroused less by decisions than by perceptions of their consequences as problematic and dangerous. Decisions as such remain a source of indifference. Only perceptions of and communication concerning problematic effects make people anxious, shake them out of their apathy and egoism and create the communal and social dimensions of a transnational, post-national public space of action and conflict.[13] This is historically true in the case of "imagined nations" as Benedict Anderson tells us.[14] It might even become true in the case of Europe: imagined community of national communities or what one could call a "cosmopolitan community of European nations". To develop this thought further, it is necessary to distinguish between risk and catastrophe. Risk

13. See John Dewey (1991 [1927]), *The Public and Its Problems,* Swallow Press/Ohio University Press, Athens/Ohio; Ulrich Beck (2005): *Power in the Global Age: A New Global Political Economy,* Polity Press, Cambridge, UK/Malden, MA.
14. Benedict Anderson (2006 [1983]), *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism,* Verso, London/New York.

does not mean catastrophe, but the anticipation of catastrophe. Risks are about staging the future in the present, whereas the future of future catastrophes is in principle unknown. Without techniques of visualisation, without symbolic forms, without mass media, risks are nothing at all. Thus, global risks actually are globally mediatised risks.

The sociological and political point is that when destruction and disaster are anticipated, a compulsion to act is produced. The anticipation of threatening future catastrophes (and the euro crisis is a living example) creates all kind of turbulence within national and international institutions but also in everyday life. The perception of risk is a huge mobilisation force across borders; different from the class struggle, the proletariat, but a transnational transformative power. It creates new actors, new voices and a common vision of how to prevent the catastrophe from happening.

World risk society forces us to recognise the plurality of the world which the national outlook could ignore. Global risks open a moral and political space that can give rise to a civil culture of responsibility which transcends borders and conflicts. The dramatic experience that everyone is vulnerable and the resulting responsibilities for others, also for the sake of one's own survival, are the two sides of the world and Europe at risk.

Thus global risk is not only about disastrous events and threats. Instead, Europe at risk also generates a cosmopolitan moment. It creates a common world, a world that for better or worse we all share, a world that no longer has an "outside", an "other". After 9/11, *Le Monde* published a headline "We are all Americans". We have to recognise that, regardless of how much we hate or critique the "other", we are destined to live with the "others" in this Europe at risk. The "other" is in our midst, which means: the national "other" is included and excluded at the same time. Take this headline in a German newspaper as an example: "Today the German Parliament is deciding on Greece's future".

As the euro crisis demonstrates, global risks are Janus-faced. There is the Hegel-scenario: co-operate or fail! Kant or catastrophe! But there is also a Carl-Schmitt-scenario: normalising the state of emergency, politics of renationalisation and the emergence of xenophobia. And often those contradictory dynamics are interlinked and mixed in a way which was called "dialectics" some time ago. And it is an open future, so we are living in highly political times.

Second thesis: in our thinking we are still prisoners of the nation state. National categories of thought make the thought of Europe impossible

In order to understand this real process of Europeanisation, we have to take into account one of the fundamental beliefs about modern society, that is "methodo-logical nationalism". Methodological nationalism assumes that the nation state and society are the "natural" social and political forms of the modern world. It is the national outlook on society and politics, law, justice and history that governs the political and sociological imagination. This is not a superficial phenomenon. It is down in the blood and bones of our thinking. If we look at this thought

process in a historical perspective, as my colleague Shmuel Eisenstadt states, nation states have only been in existence for 150 years, which is insignificant in such a long human history. However, this short period of time has changed our thinking in such a way that we are unable to imagine that another type of thinking is possible: we cannot understand Europe from a national point of view. We cannot understand that Europe as Europe is neither about solely the national or the international. It is both and has a common system of currency and governance. We still have a hard time understanding what this means. It is important to explore the effect of this Europe on families, and what European families are like.[15] There is no way of finding out what European families are like, or what problems they face, as we are still focusing on the nation state. European families do not fit into our perspective as we can only understand families which fit into one nation state and have one passport. It is embarrassing for sociologists that they only focus on methodological nationalism and cannot understand what Europe is truly about.

And it is exactly this methodological nationalism that prevents the social sciences and humanities from getting at the heart of the key political dynamics of Europe at risk. The decisive point is that national organisation as a structuring principle of societal and political action can no longer serve as the orienting reference point for the social scientific observer. One cannot even understand the renationalisation or re-ethnification trend in western or eastern Europe and other parts of the world without a cosmopolitan perspective. Thus, this is not to be confused with the end of the nation state. Even if the power of the nation state in the Europe at risk increases, the nation state still loses its epistemological monopoly.

Third thesis: in the Europe at risk, a new logic of power is taking shape. The German model of stability is being elevated into the guiding idea for Europe

In Europe at risk, not only the power structure has undergone a permanent shift. Instead, a new logic of power is taking shape. Remarkably enough, Max Weber included a brief excursus on the concept of the "empire state" in his sociology of domination (though its main focus was on the state). "Even without any formal power of command", Weber wrote, an empire state "can exercise a far-reaching and occasionally even a despotic hegemony". As examples he cited the role of Prussia in the German Customs Union and the status of New York "as the seat of the great financial powers".[16] Germany's role in crisis-ridden Europe must now be added to this list.

And this is what the new power landscapes of Europe at risk look like: the grammar of power conforms to the imperial difference between creditor and debtor countries. This seems very obvious to us, but social sciences make no reference to this new dualism between creditor and debtor countries. This relationship

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15. See Beck 2009, op cit.
16. Max Weber (1978 [1922]), *Economy and Society,* 2 vols, University of California Press, Berkeley.

means a huge inequality in Europe and all over the world. When using our natural, national perspective, we do not see this new dualism. Thus, it is not a military but an economic logic. (In this respect the talk of the "Fourth Reich" is far off the mark.) Its ideological foundation is German euro nationalism. German euro nationalism is an extended European version of Deutschmark nationalism, which was the key identity after the Second World War. In this way the German model of stability is being universalised and elevated into the guiding idea for Europe. Desperate, impoverished Greeks are being told to "do their homework" by Germans. A member of the Greek Government, which has to demand the most of its citizens, spoke of national humiliation, adding that Greece was labouring "under the German boot". As a result, the ghosts of nationalism and politics past are rising from their graves, as shown for example by the atavistic smear campaign. This emphasises that Germany is now leaving a path it has been following since the Second World War.

The post-war German model was that of a hyper-modern foreign policy: postnational, multilateral, econometric, extremely pacific in all areas, preaching interdependencies in all directions, everywhere seeking friends, nowhere suspecting enemies. "Power" was a downright dirty word to be replaced by "responsibility". Like a Biedermeier console table, national interests remained discreetly hidden under a heavy table cloth into which the words "euro", "peace", "co-operation", "stability", "normality", and even "humanity" were embroidered.

Merkel speaks of "responsibility", not of "power", in trying to rescue "the debt-mad south" as West Germany rescued the communist East Germany.

In order to fully understand this, it is necessary to look at post-war Germany history. The leading idea of German politics after the Second World War was: "never again!" – never again a Holocaust and never again a German Europe. Never again is an ethical principle, based on historical experience and the hopes of repeating such catastrophes. There are many "never agains": never again colonialism, never again dictatorship, never again Soviet imperialism, never again atomic war, never again Fukushima. The German trauma is rooted in the experience of the depression in the 1930s and its social and political consequences. This first global economic crisis was the background in which the Nazi regime, its xenophobic terror, the Holocaust and Second World War arose. Thus, actually there are three "never agains": never again an economic depression; never again a Holocaust; and never again a German Europe.

The rise of a democratic West Germany was based on the "economic miracle" and the success story of the Deutschmark. As Thomas Mann, the novelist, put it back in the 1950s we strive "not for a German Europe but a European Germany". This self-understanding was reaffirmed over and over again at the beginning of the 1990s at the time of German reunification.

The unification of East and West Germany is seen as another success story of Deutschmark nationalism and the German model of stability. As Ford puts it, what is good for Ford is good for the world. Chancellor Merkel would say, what is good for Germany is good for Europe. If there is no global depression ever again, then the EU does not allow the European Central Bank to circulate money

in order to bail out states which are up to their necks in debt. Thus the fluidity crisis is transformed into a debt crisis.

Let us consider an example for this "never again". We Germans do have a problem with leadership. We cannot use the German word *Führer*. Even in the younger generation using the word *Führer* is unthinkable. In the German language we have to switch to English: a *Führer* can only be a "leader". This is an illustration of the "never again" in everyday language.

Not very long ago a form of reciprocal nationalism seemed to be the solution. In this view, each state has the autonomy and the duty to settle its own financial problems. At the same time, every nation must recognise the sovereignty of the other European nations, so that all of them avoid the negative consequences of their economic policies for others. This view rests on three principles: equal rights, co-ordinated packages of measures and mutual responsibility. To these must be added a fourth principle: the competence of the EU in economic policy must not be extended. This model of reciprocal nationalism may work well under "fair weather" conditions, but it is destined to fail at a time when the euro is threatened with collapse. Incompatible budgetary and fiscal policies and incompatible social and taxation systems are becoming ticking political time bombs in the national and international domains. No country is strong enough to pull the others out of the quagmire. At the same time, it is becoming all too clear how closely they are now interwoven: if one state goes bankrupt, it threatens to drag others with it into the abyss. This anticipation of the European catastrophe, a huge transformative power, has already fundamentally changed the European landscape of power. In fact, it is giving birth to a political Europe: a German Europe. How does this change the landscape of Europe?

The splitting of Europe is reflected in the new internal conflict between the euro countries and the European Union countries outside the eurozone. Those who do not have the euro find themselves excluded from the decision-making process which is shaping the present and future of Europe. They find themselves degraded to onlookers and are losing their political voice. This is most apparent in the case of the United Kingdom, which is sliding into European irrelevance. However, a dramatic split is also occurring in the new, crisis-torn centre of activity of the euro countries: a split between the countries which already or will soon depend on the drip feed of the rescue fund, and the countries which are financing the rescue fund. The former have no alternative but to submit to the claim to power of a German Europe.

Fourth thesis: Europe at risk is now creating more Europe. What is really at stake today is not Greece's future but Europe's future. There is a realistic utopia for a cosmopolitan Europe,[17] a European Union of democracies

Today, one in five Europeans under the age of 25 is unemployed. Better educated than ever and nourishing high expectations, they are confronting a decline in the labour markets triggered by the threat of national bankruptcies and the economic

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17. Ulrich Beck and Edgar Grande (2007), *Cosmopolitan Europe,* Polity Press, Cambridge, UK/Malden, MA.

crisis. But it is not only that. In many places young Europeans have set up camps and made public protest against the neo-liberal model and against the German/Brussels Europe, the dictate of austerity measures ignoring the level of suffering and the rising tide of poverty that is swallowing the middle class in Europe. Arguing and fighting for another Europe, they are experiencing the European fate. This is particularly interesting: it is not only war but it is the crisis that created the *Schicksalsgemeinschaft,*[18] the term which is so rich in the German language.

Suddenly, the climate is far more favourable for a political Europe – just a few years ago, this was not the case. "More Europe" was the term nobody wanted to use. The euro has not collapsed in value, the eurozone has not broken up, and Greece has not left or been kicked out – as many economists had predicted.

Of course, the crisis is not over yet. Europe is still in deep economic and political trouble. Not the celebration of the Treaty of Rome in Berlin a few years ago, but only the violence of this crisis, the shock experience of Europe at risk – that is the cosmopolitan imperative for the eurozone. "Advance or risk ruin" has proved capable of forcing Europe into "greater political integration" – as even the European foreign ministers are now asking for. The path is not going to be a short one, and it is certainly not going to be a straight line, but it is the first strong sign that people have taken on board the fragility of the Old World's nation states and the lunacy of having thrown the draft of the constitution into the trash can.

Even Angela Merkel, chatting with students in early February, said, "the Union must change its skin"; naturally, she said, "it is very difficult to give up sovereignty, but it is necessary"; and continued "it would be useful if the [European] Commission were to become a genuine government and to be accountable to a strong [European] Parliament". Such a blueprint is music to the ears of many Europeans, but we have to think about what this really means.

Are European leaders now aiming for a new Europe or for a true Europe? What should the leading vision be? Should we envision Europe as an enlarged nation and nation state, as the United States of Europe, as a federal superstate like Germany? Or as a cosmopolitan Europe, redesigning its co-operative governance? Will Europe retain its attractiveness as an example, a model for the population and elites of other countries, the Asian and the Arab countries in particular? Will Europe be able to play a positive role if, because of its current economic policies and failure to stimulate economic growth, it condemned itself to stagnation and long-term crisis?

The Europe we have will not be able to survive in the risk storms of the globalised world. This is a matter we have to take seriously. The eurozone has to be more than a grim marriage sustained by the frightening chaos of its breakdown. It has to build on something more positive than that. In fact, the question of how this enormous space comprising 27 member states should be governed – if, before every decision, 27 heads of government, 27 cabinets and parliaments have to be convinced – has answered itself to some extent. *De facto,* this self-blocking of the

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18. Common destiny.

European Union has diminished in the shadow of the new hegemonic structure. In contrast to the old EU, the eurozone is *de facto* a community of two speeds. In the future, only the eurozone (and not the European Union) will belong to the avant-garde of Europeanisation. This could represent an opportunity for the urgently needed institutional imagination, how to answer those challenges.

US President John F. Kennedy once astonished the world with his idea to create a Peace Corps. By analogy, the European Union, Germany and other countries could surprise the world with the insight and initiative that the euro crisis is not just about the economy but also about democratisation of Europe bottom-up, about national dignity and self-determination, about a political and cultural space in which citizens no longer confront each other as enemies who have been disenfranchised – a space in which making Europe bottom-up could become the antidote to this Europe without Europeans. Europe should be done not only among governments but also among people.

Let us create the Europe of the citizens now. Let us campaign for a European Year of Volunteering for Everyone – for taxi drivers, nurses, dentists, industrial workers, journalists, pupils, students and pensioners as a response to the euro crisis. There is already work under way on such a theoretical Magna Carta-like document which, in pushing all European countries, signed by big intellectual names, will create something like this European Year of Volunteering for Everyone. This is the very moment in which an initiative could be successful: the general public and citizens do not really know what is going on in relation to the euro crisis, and feel utterly powerless in this situation.

There are also other ideas: why not elect the President of the European Commission directly in an election involving all European citizens on the same day? This is such an important issue – to make the vote on the same day, not in national voting as we have so far mostly done – and in this sense it could create a European public and have a European discourse as well.

Why not think about European parties, giving European issues a strong voice in the national context and in the European context as well? It is a new party system, which maybe some parties have tried to practise, but it is not very common.

It might also even make sense to adopt a new constitutional convention, even when the last one was not truly successful, but in order to think about the legitimacy of this process of transforming the European Union into a European Union of democracies.

So, in summary, what should the model of the European Union of democracies look like? The concept of the national is often perceived, both in public and scientific discourses, as an obstacle for the realisation of cosmopolitan ideas. Consequently, debates about the nation revolve around its persistence or demise. Departing from this either-or perspective the formation of cosmopolitanised nations in Europe and elsewhere should be investigated as a consequence of the world risk society. This is not a normative perspective; it is a matter of fact. Actually, all big transformative processes change nation states from within: the

human rights principle, the global market, the economy, the new relationship of competition between nations and workers, global risk in crises and so on. Thus, we are not living in nation states that we think we live in; we live in somehow cosmopolitanised nations because they are interdependent and their interdependence is part of their own situation, sometimes even to some extent part of this own self-understanding.

A cosmopolitan outlook is the necessary condition of a multinational, multi-religious Europe in a globalising order. Cosmopolitan nationalism is the only form of national identity compatible with such an order. And cosmopolitan nationalism means being citizens of a nation and citizens of Europe at the same time, which is actually the situation we are in anyway. According to the "realist" theory, nations and power blocs, acting in the selfish pursuit of their interests, are the main actors in the world arena. This becomes historically wrong in the context of world risk society. States, which face risks and dangers rather than enemies, have no need to see the world in realist terms. Even more than that: faced with global risks, nationalism becomes the enemy of the nation.

But in fact, the future, which is taking shape in the laboratory of the euro rescue, resembles to some extent nationalism and re-nationalisation, although not in the same sense as the nationalism that grew in the early 20th century. Altogether it is a new kind of nationalism which is actually trying to counteract the "cosmopolitanisation" of the nation. Germany is something of a test case for cosmopolitan nationalism in the context of Europe, because the country officially denies its multiculturalism. But the fact is: every third child under five years old has a migration background in Germany. A cosmopolitan nation needs values to which all are committed, but also has to accept what could be called a tolerance for ambiguity, and of course not only accepting but maybe even wanting cultural diversity. These are very complicated processes as we know, but still it is important to realise this. Neither the one nation state enlarged nor the many doing-it-alone nation states are the solution. Rather the European Union of democracies needs institutionalised co-operation on the basis of the cosmopolitan principle of "co-operate or fail". This is necessary in order to develop the institutional imagination of what the two-speed Europe is. The eurozone is going to be the avant-garde – introducing, for example, a new tax on financial transactions, which might even be called a European tax, according to the conservative-liberal government in Germany, which is quite a change in politics. The money which comes out of this tax could go to Europe and should go to Europe.

And maybe we could and should work on the vision of a social Europe. A "Europe for the workers", because the workforce must be able to see that the social securities of the national welfare states are not only being dismantled, but could be rebuilt and extended in part via Europe. And there are components of democratisation of the national democracies: a European vote for a European president, and, last but not least, the financing a European Year of Volunteering for Everyone.

This cosmopolitan vision differs from Europe becoming a nation state writ large or a United States of Europe. This is important, because this cosmopolitan vision

is about acknowledging the nation state, not overcoming it. The cosmopolitan vision is not the same as believing the nation state as it is, but the nation state as changing itself, about "cosmopolitising" itself. But the model is not the American vision of a United States of America nor a United States of Europe, because it was a completely different historical situation. The United States is a country of immigrants from all over the world, and they created a nation – one language, one nation. We have lots of nations, lots of languages, are territorially bound in history, and are proud of the history written by war and different identities. This difference is very important and therefore acknowledging the difference on the basis of nations is important. And if we call it the United States of Europe it is a different United States of Europe than the American vision. We must recognise this because otherwise we will create the same blocking as we have right now. People do not want to give up their national identities and this is not necessarily a bad thing. It is a good thing if they open up to the identities of other nations as well.

Thus we have to ask again: what is good about Europe? What is the value of Europe to us?

Which model could and should be the basis for Europe in the 21st century? Europe is a laboratory for political and social ideas which simply does not exist anywhere else. European identity is drawn on dissent and conflict, not only on integration and consensus, even if this is difficult, between the many different political cultures – of the *"Citoyen"*, the "Citizen", the *"Staatsbürger"*, the *"Burgermaatschappij"*, the *"Ciudadano"*, the *"Obywatel"*, the *"Politês"*, and so on.

Europe is also about irony; it is about being able to laugh about ourselves. There is no better way to fill Europe with life and laughter than through the coming together of ordinary Europeans acting on their own behalf.

The role of Islam in the democratic transformation of Arab countries: can Turkish laicism be a model?[19]

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A legendary Turkish thinker, Sakallı Celal or Bearded Celal, who lived in the first half of the 20th century and is best known as the author of wise idioms, famously said at one point: "The Turkish elite are men running westwards on the deck of a ship heading east". At the time, in the early years of the Turkish Republic, this statement could be regarded as quite fitting; today, however, most will agree it is no longer valid. Rather than running westward on the deck of a ship heading east, the Turkish elite appears to be running in all directions at the moment and engaging in relations with partners all around the world from the Caribbean to Spain, Germany, Tunisia, the Black Sea and the Mediterranean, along with the Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu's now sloganised expression: "zero problems with neighbours".

After forming the government in 2002, the Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi, AKP) was able to pass major constitutional and other legislative amendments in a few short years, while following a foreign policy that opted for Turkey's accession to the EU. Generally, there was an awareness of post-Cold War dynamics on the part of the AKP government in the first years. Yet, the direction that AKP foreign policy has taken since 2005 has been puzzling for some analysts.

Axis, model and empire debates in Turkish foreign policy

When discussing Turkish foreign policy, three debates are central.[20] First, there is the debate on the changing axis in foreign policy. This comes back to the observation of Bearded Celal, and how there are more and more doubts about today's validity of the same. Second, there is the debate on the empire, about neo-Ottomanism, despite the fact that the foreign minister has himself said that he is not a neo-Ottomanist, and that the AKP is not following a neo-Ottomanist policy. Still, this debate has attracted much attention from the outset of the AKP government. Third is the debate on whether or not Turkey could be a model for democratisation in the Middle East. This text sets out by elaborating on these debates, and then moves on to an evaluation of Turkish laicism.

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19. Debate held on 16 March 2012.
20. See the introduction in Kerem Öktem, Ayşe Kadıoğlu and Mehmet Karlı (2012), *Another Empire: A Decade of Turkey's Foreign Policy Under the Justice and Development Party,* İstanbul Bilgi University Press, Istanbul.

Coming back to Bearded Celal's expression once more, we need to ask if it is really still the case that the Turkish elite is running westward on a ship sailing east? The argument is that it is not the case any more, and that the Turkish elite are running in various directions all over the world.

The debate about the axis in Turkish foreign policy emerged in 2005, for a number of reasons. It gained importance in 2008, and especially in December 2008, when relations between Turkey and Israel deteriorated. In 2008, Turkey was playing the role of mediator between Israel and Syria, and during the peace talks, the Israeli Foreign Minister visited Turkey. Yet, only a few days after the visit, Israel launched the invasion of Gaza, thereby, in the words of a journalist, "humiliating and infuriating" Prime Minister Erdogan. The foreign minister's hard work over mediation collapsed and he qualified the Israeli move as an insult to Turkey. The statements over the changing direction of Turkish foreign policy reached a climax in 2009, when Prime Minister Erdogan walked out of a panel at the World Economic Forum in Davos after harshly criticising the Israeli President, Shimon Peres. Relations with Israel deteriorated even more when the Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister degraded the Turkish ambassador in Tel Aviv in January 2010. More importantly, in May 2010, the aid flotilla *Mavi Marmara*, which was on its way to Gaza, was intercepted by Israeli commandos, killing one American-Turkish and eight Turkish citizens. In Turkey, this generated major popular and government reactions to the Israeli Government.

In 2010, the *New York Times* columnist Thomas Friedman wrote that while on his 2005 visit to Turkey, he had observed the efforts of government officials to join the EU. He was shocked to see that by 2010, Turkey's "Islamist" government, as he put it, had become more interested in membership of the Arab League. Although he admitted he was exaggerating, he wrote that Turkey's Government was focused in 2010 on joining "the Hamas, Hezbollah, Iran resistance front against Israel". The argument is being made that the Turkish elite has changed its direction, though Thomas Friedman put it in a rather extreme form. By September 2011, Turkey – disappointed with the UN report about the aid flotilla incident and Israel's refusal to apologise – downgraded diplomatic relations with Israel.

Turkey began to make a bid to be a regional power at this particular juncture in history. Turkey's bid to become a regional power was really much more discussed and pronounced throughout the year 2011, especially in the aftermath of the uprisings in the streets of Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Syria, Bahrain and Yemen. Thus, the focus shifted from the axis debate to the model debate. When the old dictatorships were tumbling down, Turkey began to rise as a model for democratisation in the region. In fact, in February 2011, Turkey's Prime Minister Erdogan said: "we are not seeking to be a model, but we can be a source of inspiration since Turkey has shown that Islam and democracy can coexist perfectly". Rashid Ganushi of Tunisia's Ennahda Party has stated that the Turkish democratic model is very close to the model his party would like to pursue in Tunisia. Later there was another expression that became important in the academic circle: Kemal Kirişçi argued that the notion of "demonstrative effect", previously used by Samuel Huntington

in the context of the third wave of democratisation, was perhaps a more fitting term than "model" to explain Turkey's role in the region.[21] Kirişçi asserts that the notion of demonstrative effect conveys the concept of democratisation in progress. Thus, rather than looking at Turkey as a completed model, Turkey is a model in progress, and proof of the fact that democratic change can be achieved.

In the aftermath of the uprising in the streets of Egypt and Tunisia, the Turkish Government was on the side of democracy. In fact, in February 2011, Turkey's Foreign Minister paid a visit to Tunisia in his capacity of Chairman of the Committee of Ministers, together with the Secretary General of the Council of Europe. When it came to the uprisings in Libya and Syria, Turkey did not react as swiftly. The reasons for Turkey's initial hesitance were certainly the US$15 billion worth of Turkish investments in Libya, the need for repatriation of about 25 000 Turkish citizens who were in Libya at the time of the uprising,[22] as well as Turkey's Kurdish question. Nevertheless, the Turkish Government soon adapted to the inevitability of change, and began to back the street uprisings in both Libya and Syria. The situation in Syria is becoming increasingly important for Turkey, as more and more refugees are coming into Turkey.

The demonstrative effect of Turkey was possible mainly as a result of the intense economic relations that it has established in its region. Turkey's trade with its immediate neighbours has increased significantly in the course of the past decade. In addition to such a significant rise in trade with its neighbours, Turkey's Government developed a conscious policy to play the role of regional leader by activating the role of state organisations, such as the Turkish Development and Co-operation Agency. The agency, which can be compared to USAID, has been very active in medical projects and irrigation programmes in the region. Additionally, many non-state organisations, like the Foreign Economic Relation Board, the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey and the Turkish Confederation of Businessmen and Industrialists, are working very hard to establish close regional relations. It is safe to say that never in its history has Turkey used so many different mediums and attained such a high level of visibility.

Other factors also contributed to the government's conscious path towards establishing Turkey as a regional leader: for instance, the open-door policy, which lifted visa requirements in a number of countries. Turkey enacted major visa liberalisations with the countries in its region – Morocco, Tunisia, Syria, Albania, Libya, Tajikistan and Russia – thereby increasing the number of people travelling to Turkey from neighbouring countries and enhancing the impact of what we may refer to as Turkey's "soft power" and "demonstrative effect". In fact, immediately after the 2011 elections, which were won by AKP, Prime Minister Erdogan made the following statement: "Believe me, Sarajevo won today as much as Istanbul, Beirut won as much as Izmir, Damascus won as much as Ankara,

21. Kemal Kirişçi (2011), "Turkey's 'demonstrative effect' and the transformation of the Middle East". *Insight Turkey,* 13(2), pp. 33-55.
22. Natalie Tocci (ed.) (2011), *Turkey and the Arab Spring: Implications for Turkish Foreign Policy from a Transatlantic Perspective,* German Marshall Fund Mediterranean Paper Series.

Ramallah, Nablus, Jenin, the West Bank, Jerusalem won as much as Diyarbakır". A lot of people read this in the context of a potential neo-Ottomanist policy. Last but not least, the impact of Turkish television dramas in terms of soft power is of significant importance. The irresistible rise and unsurpassed popularity of the Turkish television dramas in the region has been immense.

During his 2011 visit to Tunisia, the Turkish Foreign Minister underlined that he was not only there as the Foreign Minister of Turkey, but also as the Chairman of the Committee of Ministers. In September 2011, the prime minister visited Tunisia, Egypt and Libya in the wake of the uprisings, and took this opportunity to stress the secular and democratic nature of Turkey. In fact, he underlined that a Muslim can govern a secular state successfully, and that despite the fact that 99% of the Turkish population are Muslim, this did not pose a problem to its secularism. In giving this message, which underlines a connection between Islam and secularism, Erdoğan was well-informed about the lack of support towards the AKP model among Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood and the Salafists.

Turkish laicism

In the context of Turkey's growing importance in the region and its very visible foreign policy in various domains, Turkish laicism became an issue: researchers began to look into the characteristics of Turkish laicism, also with the goal of studying its suitability as a model in the region.[23]

To this purpose, it is suitable to compare two competing views on religion, which were influential during the last years of the Ottoman Empire, meaning the early 20th century. The proclamation of the republic took place in 1923, so the debate on the role of religion was especially important in the early 1920s. Most of the debate on Turkish laicism occurred between 1922 and 1925. Most of the fundamental reforms in Turkish laicism, such as the abolition of the ministries of *Şeriat* and *Evkaf,* and a series of reforms in legal, educational and cultural institutions, were undertaken in 1924.

As mentioned above, there were two opposing views on religion. One view was held by members of the key republican elite such as Mahmut Esat Bozkurt and Şükrü Kaya, who emerged as important figures and who expressed ideas on religion and its relation to the state. Another representative of this view was Mustafa Kemal (Mustafa Kemal Atatürk after 1934).

The second view was developed by Ziya Gökalp, again a very important figure in the early years of the republic, in fact more of a thinker. He was not only an active politician, like the members of the first school of thought, but also an important writer. In fact, he is probably the Turkish political thinker who has been translated the most into English.

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23. See more on the nature of Turkish laicism in Ayşe Kadıoğlu (2010), "The pathologies of Turkish republican laicism", *Philosophy and Social Criticism,* 36(34), pp. 489-504.

The ensuing debate between the two opposing views on the role of religion was essential and, eventually, the views of first group, Mahmut Esat Bozkurt and Şükrü Kaya, would prevail. The key republican elite, the first group, were the driving forces behind early republican reforms, and one may describe their republican mindset as the "logic of the republic". The logic of the republic distinguished itself from other theories through its singular and unitary definition of "Turkism", which was based on a radical break from the former religious definition. This is explained by the republican elite's preoccupation with Westernisation, which can be described as their main goal. Islam was depicted as a source of backwardness by most of the republican elite at the time. In fact, it has been said that the early republican elite had a clear distaste for Islam. There was an emphasis on national morality replacing religion. This was the essence of the logic of the republic.

Ziya Gökalp, representative of the second view, is well known as a Turkish nationalist. Nevertheless, he adopted what we may refer to as the "logic of the empire". Gökalp was born into a partially Kurdish family in Diyarbakir in 1876. He learned Arabic and Persian from his uncle, which allowed him to read Ghazali, Ibni Sina, Farabi, Muhiddin Arabi and Celaleddin Rumi. Gökalp was introduced to European sociology by a medical doctor, who was one of the founders of the Committee of Union and Progress, the committee which aspired to topple the Ottoman monarchy. Gökalp also studied Herbert Spencer, Gabriel Tarde and Emile Durkheim, who had a huge influence on his thinking. In his last year in high school he began to write revolutionary poems. The tensions between East and West are a popular way of characterising Turkey, and Gökalp appeared to be caught in just this tension. Today, the mix of Eastern and Western culture in Turkey is considered intriguing. When Gökalp was active, however, this was different: it was the beginning of the 20th century, thus the time of the formation of the nation state, which implied a clear tendency towards defining a single identity. Gökalp was caught between the contradictory influences between Eastern and Western ideas, and his inability to come to terms with them led him into a deep depression. He even tried to commit suicide by shooting himself in the head. Yet, he was saved: he was operated on by the doctor who introduced him to the Western canon of thought, and he was saved despite the fact that the bullet could not be removed. This bullet in Gökalp's head could just be the most powerful symbol of the tension between the Eastern and the Western schools of thought, which was so endemic to many of the ideas that emerged during the decline of the Ottoman Empire. Incidentally, Gökalp's death in 1924 was caused by inflammation of the brain: the bullet finally killed him after some 30 years.

To come back to the underlying differences between the representatives of the two views, the first group, the republican elite, clearly set themselves apart by their declared goal of Westernisation. In fact, their preoccupation with Westernisation paved the way to institutionalise state control over religion. The early republican elite was looking to disestablish folk Islam, which was not under the jurisdiction of the state, and to establish state Islam, which was ready to serve national solidarity, in its place. Even today, the Directorate of Religious Affairs *("Diyanet")* is the state authority responsible for religious affairs, and its primary aim continues

to be to further national solidarity and integrity. Thus, laicism in Turkey is really the establishment of the monopoly of state over the right of use and abuse of religion. Turkish laicism has brought about important gains, but there have also been considerable pathologies. For instance, imams in Turkey are now state employees, much like civil servants. The republican elite, declaring Islam as the source of backwardness of the Ottomans, opted for Westernisation rather than for a synthesis between "Turkism", Islam and "Westernism". Such a synthesis was promoted by Gökalp, who was still thinking with the logic of the empire. Şükrü Kaya, on the contrary, was interested in developing Turkish morals, "clean Turkish morals" as he called them, to fulfil the function of spirituality rather than religion. The idea was thus to replace religion by a Turkish national moral. In fact, some members of the republican elite went as far as discussing the possibility of changing the religion of the entire nation.

Mahmut Esat Bozkurt, for instance, argued that Islam hinders progress and that Turkey would be doomed were it to proceed with this religion. Gökalp, on the contrary, did not think that elements of culture, including religion, could be copied. As indicated earlier, he advocated a synthesis between Islam, "Westernism" and "Turkism". So, this logic of the empire, which signifies Westernisation without denouncing the significance of Islam in the local culture, was a crucial aspect of Gökalp's approach. Although Gökalp was a well-known Turkish nationalist, his logic and starting point was still the empire, whereas the others were attempting a radical break from the empire.

The period from 1920 to 1925 illustrates the change away from the logic of the empire towards a national republic. This is also clear in the evolving views of Mustafa Kemal. In 1920, he defined the entity of the Turkish nation, or the concept of national unity, on the basis of Islam. By 1925, however, he was already emphasising Turkish national identity over religion.[24] This shows that these five years were critical in the shift from the logic of the empire to the logic of the republic, which brought about a clean break with the empire and the fundamental decision to establish state control over religion.

In some respect, Turkish laicism of the early Turkish Republic had the goal of establishing control over religion in order to prevent it from becoming an obstacle to Westernisation. In the end, laicism began to signify progress, while religion was associated with backwardness. There were two fundamental pathologies that distinguished the Turkish republican project from laicism. First of all, a causal relationship was established between an understanding of laicism that denounced popular Islam and the Westernisation of Turkish society. This approach led to a fetishism regarding the Western external appearance among Turkish women and men, which became the yardstick of Westernisation and a sign of progress: a "cosmetic Westernisation". Accordingly, headscarves have become a symbol of backwardness since they represent an Islam that is not subservient to the state. Hence the issue of headscarves and their ban in universities has become an

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24. Ismail Kara (2008), *Cumhuriyet Türkiye'sinde Bir Mesele Olarak Islam,* Dergah, Istanbul.

important political issue in Turkey. Secondly, Turkish republican laicism embraced the idea of a state Islam geared towards furthering national solidarity and integration in order to attain the larger goal of Westernisation. Accordingly, the Turkish state's relations with its non-Muslim citizens such as Armenians, Greeks and Jews began to involve increasingly discriminatory practices.

At this point, it is important to pay attention to a case that is highly relevant today: the case of Hrant Dink, an Armenian-Turkish journalist who was assassinated on 19 January 2007. Dink was tried in Turkish courts on charges of "denigrating Turkishness" and sentenced on the basis of Article 301 of the Turkish Penal Code. The case was brought before the European Court of Human Rights, which in its judgment of September 2010 found there was unjustified interference with the right to freedom of expression and consequently concluded a violation of Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights had taken place. Moreover, the Court also criticised the conduct of the Turkish authorities as regards their failure to protect Dink's life and the fact that no effective investigation to expose the circumstances of his assassination had been carried out.

Hrant Dink's trial is of great importance, and goes to show that Turkey cannot and will not be a model for the Middle East or any other region in the world without acknowledging the grievances of its non-Muslim citizens and coming to grips with the tragedies of its past. It has to be underlined that, when the Istanbul court announced its decision in January 2012 that there was no evidence of a connection between the assailants and state officials, this was clearly in contradiction to the decision of the European Court of Human Rights. Not surprisingly, thousands of people demanding justice marched on the day of the fifth anniversary of Dink's assassination. Justice remains to be delivered in this case.

Conclusion

From the conceptual point of view, Turkey is not really an Islamic democracy, but is rather Muslims living in a secular state.

Perhaps, Gökalp's logic of the empire offers an opportunity for Turkey to become a model for the region, rather than the harsh republican laicist view which prevailed in Turkey. It must certainly be noted that some elements of the empire are worth studying. After all, the empire is not just about expansion in the region, it has an underlying logic to it that makes it possible to envision synthesis among seemingly contradictory currents of thought.

Today, Turkey can best be described by two concepts: paradox and balance. First, there is a paradox: Turkey has been experiencing immense change, "conservative change" (an oxymoron), which is being initiated and carried out by conservatives, the main actors of change in Turkey. Second, the challenge ahead of Turkey is the balancing act it must strike between its long-lasting Western alliances and its new role in the region. Given the fact that Turkish foreign policy moves are still viewed sceptically by its neighbours, who continue to harbour memories of Ottoman rule, perhaps the government must also find a balance between confidence and arrogance in its foreign policy.

Democracy in the age of Google, Facebook and WikiLeaks[25]

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The pace of technological advancements in the communications sector has been overwhelming over the last century: from broadcasts to fax machines and PCs, we have moved on to cloud computing, electronic books and interactive video technology. Even innovators cannot predict the advancements of the future, and it is becoming increasingly clear that we are living in a revolutionary age of communicative abundance.

In the spirit of the revolution, as in every previous revolution in the prevailing mode of communication, fascination mixed with excitement is fuelling bold talk of the transcendence of television, the disappearance of printed newspapers, the decline of the book, even the end of literacy as we have known it. There is widespread recognition that time is up for spectrum scarcity, mass broadcasting and predictable prime-time national audiences. Symbolised by the Internet, the age of communicative abundance is a new world system of overlapping and interlinked media devices which, for the first time in human history, thanks to built-in cheap microprocessors, integrate texts, sounds and images in compact and reproducible form. It allows for communication to take place through multiple user points, in chosen time, either real or delayed, within modularised and ultimately global networks which are affordable and accessible to more than a billion people scattered across the globe. In consequence, in countries such as India, the USA, South Korea and the Council of Europe member states, many people routinely sense sideways motion and forward movement in the way they communicate, even in the little things of life.

The news industry is undergoing change as savvy young people in countries such as South Korea and Japan are no longer wedded to traditional news outlets; they do not listen to radio bulletins, or watch current affairs or news on television. Digital natives, as they are sometimes known, are doing things differently; refusing the old habit of mining the morning newspaper for their up-to-date information, as four out of every five American citizens once did (in the early 1960s). Internet portals have become their favoured destination for news. It is not that they are uninterested in news; it is rather that they want lots of it, news on demand, in instant form and delivered in new ways, not merely in the mornings

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25. Debate held on 5 July 2011.

but throughout the day and night. Not surprisingly, plenty of observers, even from within the newspaper industry itself, have warned of the coming disappearance of newspapers. The claims are sometimes deliberately outlandish, designed to shock, for instance through predictions that on current trends newspapers in countries such as the United States will no longer be printed after 2040.

As in every previous communication revolution – think of the upheavals triggered by the introduction of the printing press, telegraph, radio and television – the age of communicative abundance is an age of uncertainty; it breeds exaggerations, false hopes and illusions. But there can be no doubt, when judged in terms of speed and scope, ease of reproduction and complexity, the new galaxy of communicative abundance has no historical precedent. Time-space compression has become a reality. Cheap and reliable cross-border communication is the norm for growing numbers of people and organisations. The tyranny of distance and slow-time connections is abolished. In the most media-saturated societies, people usually take instant communications for granted. Their habits of heart are exposed by the curse uttered when they lose or misplace their mobile phones, or when their Internet connections are down: they feel lost.

The novelty of all of this should be striking. When four decades ago Diane Keaton told her workaholic husband in Woody Allen's *Play it Again, Sam* (1973) that he should give his office the number of the payphone they were passing in case they needed him, it was a big joke. But farce four decades ago soon became reality. A growing number of people are now familiar with real-time communication; their waking lives resemble non-stop acts of mediated quick-time communication with others.

The grip of mediated communication is strongly evident in the United States, the most media-saturated of the old democracies. There it forms the second largest category of action after paid work; it is certainly the predominant household activity. Communication preferences are age, gender and income dependent, and distributed quite unevenly, as suggested by figures (from January 2005 to September 2010) for SMS usage (women talk and text more than men do; and 13-17 year olds do so the most, etc.) Contrary to earlier predictions, the new digital media in that country show no signs of cannibalising old media, such as television and radio and books. The overall quantity of mediated communication grows, along with ever more complex and "hybrid" patterns of usage. America's love affair with televisions continues unabashed, but in altered, more multimedia form. The average number of televisions per US household is 2.5; nearly a third of households have four or more TVs. Each week, Americans watch roughly 35 hours of TV and two hours of time-shifted TV via DVR. But in the last quarter of 2009, simultaneous use of the Internet while watching TV reached 3.5 hours a month, up 35% from the previous year; nearly 60% of Americans now use the Internet while watching TV. Internet video watching is rising fast and so is the preference for watching videos on smart phones.

Such trends towards saturation multimedia usage, or communicative abundance, are by no means restricted to the United States. The Asia and Pacific region is

arguably the laboratory of future patterns. Japan, whose citizens on average watch TV four hours a day, is the country with the most avid bloggers globally, posting more than one million blogs per month. Each of its well-entrenched social networking sites and game portals – Mixi, Gree and Mobage-town – has over 20 million registered users. Everywhere in the region, the take-up rate of new media is striking. Micro-blogging (Twitter use in India, for instance) and social networking is all the rage. Australians spend more time on social media sites (nearly seven hours per month) than any other country in the world. Every month in South Korea, the leading social networking site, Naver, attracts 95% of Internet users. Then there are the rapidly thickening cross-border connections. Three quarters of the world's Internet population has now visited Facebook, Wikipedia, YouTube or some other social network/blogging site; Internet users spend on average almost six hours per month on these sites in a variety of languages (Wikipedia has more than 5.3 million entries; less than a third (1.6 million) are in English); and two thirds visit Facebook, the number one social networking destination.

Digital democracy?

Pushed here and there by such trends, it is unsurprising that the developing culture of communicative abundance stokes political visions. The printing press spawned fantasies of "liberty of the press"; the telegraph created visions of a world without war. Communicative abundance fuels much excited talk of the "information age"; an example is the recent book by James Gleick, *The Information,* which claims that "information" has become the vital principle, the blood and fuel, of our world. There is also much talk of digital democracy, online publics, cyber citizens and wiki government, even visions of a digital world where "citizens hold their own governments accountable" and "all of humanity has equal access to knowledge and power".[26] In the spirit of the revolution, some pundits go further; they conclude that there's something like a "natural" affinity between communicative abundance and democracy, understood (roughly) as a type of government and a whole way of life in which power is subject to permanent public scrutiny, chastening and control by citizens and their representatives. Communicative abundance and liberal democracy are thought of as conjoined twins: the stunning process and product innovations in the communications infrastructure drive the process of dispersal and public accountability of power, or so it is supposed.

Let us go down into these claims, scrutinise their veracity and probe more carefully the revolutionary things that are happening inside the swirling galaxy of communicative abundance. It is not possible to have a G*esamtdarstellung,* a complete picture, and not only for reasons of time. The point is that there is too much reality for a *Gesamtdarstellung.* Its complexity is too elusive to be captured in smooth or slick formulae, statistics, hard-and-fast rules or confident

26. The words used by US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton during a January 2010 address at Washington's Newseum.

predictions. Communicative abundance is a harsh mistress: she keeps her secrets. We live in a strange new world of confusing unknowns, a thoroughly mediated universe cluttered with tools of communication whose political effects have the capacity to hypnotise and overwhelm us. Here, then, comes key conjecture: what is needed are bold new probes, fresh perspectives, "wild" new concepts which enable different ways of seeing things, more discriminating methods of recognising the novelties of our times, the democratic opportunities they offer and the counter trends that have the potential to snuff out democratic politics. Minimally, this means giving up all descriptions of communication media as the "Fourth Estate", a misleading metaphor which originated with Edmund Burke and the French Revolution. Talk of "the media" is also much too loose. Disciplinary divisions between political science and communications need to be bridged, and democracy and media must be analysed simultaneously. Just as in the 16th century, when the production of printed books and the efforts to read codex type required a fundamental shift of perspective, today, in the emergent world of communicative abundance, a whole new mental effort is required to make sense of how democracies are being shaped and reshaped by the new tools and rhetoric of communication – and why our very thinking about democracy must also change.

But how should we proceed? Which are the key trends that we need to note, to interpret, and to internalise in our thinking about democracy in the age of Google, Facebook and WikiLeaks? In support of my key conjecture, five trends are pivotal.

Democratisation of information

The most obvious effect of communicative abundance is the democratisation of information: thanks to cheap and easy methods of digital reproduction, we live in times of a sudden widening of access to published materials previously unavailable to publics, or formerly available only to restricted circles of users. Democratisation involves the dismantling of elite privileges. At the click of a mouse, often at zero cost, growing numbers of people gain access from a distance to materials once available only on a restricted geographical basis or at a high cost. The *New York Times* online, Harvard University's vast collection of Ukrainian-language materials and Piratebay.org (a Swedish website which hosts torrent files) all stand as symbols of this meaning of democratisation. But there is another sense of the democratisation of information: the process of drawing together, often for the first time, new data sets which are made publicly available to users through entirely new pathways. Examples include Wikipedia, the controversial Google Book Search, the new Computer History Museum (located in Mountain View California) and TheEuropeanLibrary.org (a consortium of libraries of the nearly 50 member states in the Council of Europe which has formed a single search engine in 35 languages) and the Arthur and Elizabeth Schlesinger Library's initiative "Capturing Women's Voices", a collection of postings by women from a wide range of blogs.

The contemporary democratisation of information has implications for the way we think about the present, the past and the future. For instance, consider its

contribution to the growth of a politics of remembering the past, evident in the important activities of the Association for the Recovery of Historical Memory in Spain, and the politics of intergenerational justice, evident for instance in the global climate change debate. Both examples illustrate the vital importance of the democratisation of information, a process which easily invites comparisons with the Reformation in Europe, which was triggered in part by the conviction that access to printed copies of the Bible could be widened, and that there were no spiritual or earthly reasons why reading its pages should be restricted to a select few who were proficient in Latin. Such comparisons are probably overdrawn, but communicative abundance undoubtedly opens gates and tears down fences separating producers and users of information, some of which is highly specialised, so that new and vitally important information banks become accessible to many more users, often at great distances, more or less simultaneously, at zero or low cost.

Making the private public

In a second trend, communicative abundance stirs up spirited controversies about the definition and ethical significance of the public–private division. Gone are the days when privacy could be regarded as "natural", as a given bedrock or substratum of a priori taken-for-granted experiences and meanings, as the "world of everyday life" *(Lebenswelt)* as it was analysed by Edmund Husserl and the young Jürgen Habermas. Today, in media-saturated societies, private life has, in principle, ceased to be private. Cheap and user-friendly methods of reproduction and access to networked tools of communication ensure that we live in the age of hyper-coverage. Everything that happens in the fields of power stretching from the bedroom and bathroom to the boardroom to the battlefield seems to be up for media grabs. With the flick of a switch or the click of a camera, the world of the private can suddenly be made public. Unmediated privacy has become a thing of the past.

These are times in which the private lives of celebrities – their romances, parties, weight problems, quarrels and divorces – are the interest and fantasy objects of millions of people. There is also (thanks to such genres as Twitter and TV talk shows and talkback radio) an endless procession of "ordinary people" talking publicly about what privately turns them on, or off. We live in times in which millions of people act as if they were celebrities by displaying details of their intimate selves on Facebook; and times in which a German media scandal led initially by the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* regarding the abuse of children by the Roman Catholic Church was triggered by a German citizen who discovered, quite by accident, online pictures of the priest who had molested him three decades earlier.

Of course, the age of media saturation and hyper-coverage of the private triggers a backlash. Some accuse high-pressure media coverage of killer instincts (an accusation first spelled out by Janet Malcolm in *The Journalist and the Murderer* and often repeated following the death of Princess Diana). Others, sensing that a private life is vital for cultivating a sound sense of self, make considered decisions not to send tweets, not to purchase a smartphone, or perhaps even

not to use e-mail; there are legal challenges to invasive junk mail, calls for the paparazzi to exercise moral self-restraint, and published legal codes of media conduct to dissuade journalists from unlimited digging and fishing expeditions (this is the subject of a major case brought before the European Court of Human Rights by Max Mosley against the *News of the World* for its headline story that he had engaged in a "sick Nazi orgy with hookers"). There is great interest in the development of privacy-enhancing technologies (PETs); and companies such as Google, Twitter and Facebook find themselves on the front-line of a tug of war between the protection of privacy and law enforcement agencies demanding private information.

All these developments suggest that communicative abundance exposes the contingency and deep ambiguity of the private–public distinction famously defended on First Principle grounds by John Stuart Mill and Germany's greatest philosopher of liberty, Wilhelm von Humboldt. Communicative abundance encourages individuals and groups within civil society to think more flexibly, more contextually, more contingently about the public and the private. They are made aware that their "private" judgments about matters of public importance can be distinguished from both actually existing and preferable, publicly shared norms. They learn to accept that some things should be kept private; but when confronted with mendacious politicians or men who are duplicitous about their sexual preference, or leaders (in Italy) desperate to confirm that they are men, they also learn that privacy can be a refuge for scoundrels, so that embarrassing publicity given to "private" actions – "outing" – is entirely justified.

The new muckraking

Third, the politicisation of definitions of the private–public underpins another key trend of our times: high-intensity efforts to bombard power elites with "publicity", to expose them publicly. This third trend might be described as muckraking, a charming Americanism, an earthy neologism from the late 19th century, when it referred to a style of journalism associated with Nelly Bly and other reporters who bravely fought for the cause of publicly exposing corruption and injustice.

The new muckrakers put their finger on a perennial problem for which democracy is a solution: the power of elites always thrives on secrecy, silence and invisibility; gathering behind closed doors and deciding things in peace and private quiet is their specialty. Little wonder then that in the age of communicative abundance, to put things paradoxically, unexpected revelations become predictably commonplace. Being is constantly ruptured by "events" (Alain Badiou). Muckraking becomes rife. Sometimes it feels as if the whole world is run by rogues.

There is little doubt that latter-day public disaffection with politicians, political parties, parliaments and official politics in general has much to do with the practice of muckraking under conditions of communicative abundance. Politicians are sitting ducks. The limited media presence and media vulnerability of parliaments is striking. Despite efforts at harnessing new social media, parties have been left flat-footed; they neither own nor control their media outlets and they have lost

the astonishing energy displayed at the end of the 19th century by parties such as the SPD, which was the greatest political party machine on the face of the earth, in no small measure because it was a great champion of literacy and a leading publisher of books, pamphlets and newspapers in its own right.

By contrast, we live in times when the core institutions and characters of representative democracy become easy targets of rough riding. Here are a few samples from a 12-month media cycle (2008-09) within the world's democracies: a male legislator in the Florida state assembly is spotted watching online porn while fellow legislators are debating the subject of abortion. During a fiercely fought presidential election campaign one of the candidates (Barack Obama) switches to damage control mode after calling a female journalist "sweety"; he leaves her a voice mail apology: "I am duly chastened". In Japan, a seasoned Japanese politician (Masatoshi Wakabayashi) is forced to resign from the Diet after being caught on camera during a budget debate pressing the voting button of a parliamentary colleague who had earlier left the chamber. Meanwhile, in France, according to video footage quickly uploaded onto LeMonde.fr, a French Interior Minister (Brice Hortefeux) agreed to be photographed with a young Arab supporter and responded to an onlooker's joke about "our little Arab" as a symbol of integration with the words: "There always has to be one. When there's one, it's okay. It's when there are a lot of them that there are problems."

Our great grandparents would find the whole process astonishing in its democratic intensity. But who or what drives these muckraking public disputes? Certainly not the medium alone, as believers in technological determinism might suppose, but within the infrastructure of communicative abundance there is something special about its distributed networks. In contrast, say, to centralised state-run broadcasting systems of the past, the spider's web linkages among many different nodes within a distributed network make them intrinsically more resistant to centralised control. Networks function according to the logic of packet switching: information flows, or acts of communication, pass through many points en route to their destination. If they meet resistance at any point within the system of nodes then the information flows are simply diverted automatically, re-routed in the direction of their intended destination. Messages go viral. It is this networked character of media-saturated societies that makes them prone to dissonance. Some observers go further, to claim that a new understanding of power as "mutually shared weakness" (Navarria) is required in order to make sense of the impact of networks on the distribution of power within any given social order, that the powerless readily find the networked communicative means through which to take their revenge on the powerful. The trend is summarised by the American scholar Clay Shirky: when compared to the eras dominated by newspapers, the telegraph, radio and television, the age of communicative abundance, he says, is an age where "group action just got easier" because, thanks to networked communications and easy-to-use tools, the "expressive capability" of citizens is raised to unprecedented levels.

The whole muckraking trend is reinforced by other causes and causers. For instance, the days when journalism was proud of its commitment to fact-based

objectivity, an ideal that was born of the age of representative democracy, are passing. In its place we see the rise of adversarial and "gotcha" styles of commercial journalism, forms of writing that are driven by ratings, sales and hits. We witness the growth of enclaves of self-redaction (John Hartley), of challenges to professional journalism and the spread of so-called citizen journalism. And there is another explanatory factor of at least equal importance to the spread of digital networks and the daring of journalists: the long-term growth of power-monitoring institutions, which have played a vital role in stirring up questions of power. The communications revolution of our time powerfully reinforces the post-1945 shift from representative democracy in territorial state form towards a new historical form of democracy – monitory democracy – in which many hundreds and thousands of monitory institutions – watchdog, guide dog and barking dog institutions such as courts, human rights networks, professional organisations, civic initiatives, bloggers and other web-based monitors – are in the business of scrutinising power. These monitors rely heavily on the new galaxy of communicative abundance. Monitory democracy and computerised media networks function as fused systems. The consequence, speaking figuratively, is that communicative abundance cuts like a knife into the power relations of government and civil society. It stirs up the sense that people are entitled to shape and to reshape their lives as equals. Little wonder that public objections to wrongdoing and corruption become commonplace. In the era of media saturation there seems to be no end to scandals; there are times when so-called "-gate" scandals, like earthquakes, rumble beneath the feet of whole governments. Corporations are given stick about their services and products, their investment plans, how they treat their employees and their damaging impact upon the biosphere. Power-monitoring bodies like Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International regularly do the same, usually with help from networks of supporters spread around the globe. There are even bodies (like the Democratic Audit network, the Global Accountability Project and Transparency International) which specialise in providing public assessments of the quality of existing power-scrutinising mechanisms and the degree to which they fairly represent citizens' interests. At all levels, governments are grilled on a wide range of matters, from their human rights records, their energy production plans and transport systems to the quality of the drinking water of their cities. Even their arms procurement policies – notoriously shrouded in secrecy – run into trouble, thanks to media-savvy citizens' initiatives guided by the spirit of monitory democracy.

Then there are those initiatives that lunge at the heart of secretive, sovereign power. WikiLeaks is so far the boldest and most controversial experiment in the public monitoring of secretive military power. Pundits are saying that it is the novel defining story of our times, but that fudges the point that its spirit and methods belong firmly and squarely to the age of communicative abundance. Engaged in a radical form of muckraking motivated by conscience and supported by a shadowy small band of technically sophisticated activists led by a charismatic public figure, Julian Assange, WikiLeaks takes full advantage of all the defining qualities of communicative abundance: low-cost digital reproduction,

easy-access multimedia integration organised through networks, capable of transmitting vast quantities of data around the world, virally, more or less instantly. You are well aware that it sprang to fame by releasing video footage of an American helicopter gunship crew firing on unarmed civilians and journalists; and that, posing as a *lumpen* outsider in the world of information, it then released sprawls, hundreds of thousands of top-secret documents appertaining to the diplomatic and military strategies of the United States and its allies and enemies. With the help of mainstream media, WikiLeaks did so by mastering the art of total anonymity through military-grade encryption, using software systems known as "re-mailing". For the first time on a global scale, WikiLeaks created a viable custom-made social infrastructure for encouraging knowledgeable muckrakers within organisations to release classified data on a confidential basis, initially for storage in a camouflaged cloud of servers, then to push that bullet-proofed information into public circulation, as an act of radical transparency, across multiple jurisdictions – what Assange calls an "intelligence agency of the people".

WikiLeaks is guided as well by a theory of hypocrisy. It supposes that individuals are motivated to act as whistle-blowers not merely because their identities are protected by encryption, but above all because of the intolerable gaps between their organisation's publicly professed aims and its private *modus operandi*. Hypocrisy is the night soil of muckrakers. Its rakes in the Augean stables of government and business have a double effect: they multiply the amount of muck circulated among interested or astonished publics, whose own sense of living in muck is consequently sharpened.

Muckraking in the style of WikiLeaks has yet another source, which helps explain why, even if its platform is criminalised and forcibly shutdown, it will have many successors (in addition to OpenLeaks, BalkanLeaks and EuroLeaks, which have already happened). Put simply, WikiLeaks feeds upon a contradiction deeply structured within the digital information systems of all large-scale complex organisations. Organisations such as states and business corporations take advantage of the communications revolution of our time by going digital and staying digital.

They do so to enhance their internal efficiency and external effectiveness, to improve their capacity for handling complex, difficult or unexpected situations swiftly and flexibly. In other words, and contrary to Max Weber, the databanks and data processing of these organisations cannot be hampered by red tape, stringent security rules and compartmentalised data sets, all of which have the effect of making these organisations slow and clumsy. So they opt for dynamic and time-sensitive data sharing across the boundaries of departments and whole organisations. Vast streams of classified material flow freely – which serves to boost the chances of leaks into the courts of public opinion. If organisations then respond by tightening internal controls on their own information flows, a move that Assange has described as the imposition of a "secrecy tax", the chances are that these same organisations will both trigger their own "cognitive decline", their capacity to handle

complex situations swiftly and effectively, and boost the chances of resistance to the secrecy tax by motivated employees who are convinced of the hypocrisy and injustice of the organisations which are unrepresentative of their views.

Unelected representatives

Speaking of representation, there is a fourth trend which needs to be pointed out: in the age of communicative abundance, the political geography of representation undergoes profound changes. Unelected representatives multiply, sometimes to the point where serious doubts surface about the legitimacy and viability of elected representation as the central organising principle of democracy. The phrase "unelected representatives" is of course unfamiliar. It grates on democratic ears, so it is important to understand carefully its meaning, and the trend it describes.

Unelected representatives are public figures who get media attention; they are often extroverted characters. They enjoy public notoriety; they are famous but they are not simply celebrities, a term which is too wide and too loose and too normatively burdened to capture their core quality of being unelected representatives of others' views. Unelected representatives are not just famous, or fame seekers, or "millionhorsepowered entities" (McLuhan). They are not in it for the money. They are not exaltations of superficiality; they do not thrive on smutty probes into their private lives; and they do not pander to celebrity bloggers, gossip columnists and tabloid paparazzi. The figure of the unelected representative is not what Germans call a *Hochstapler,* an imposter who boasts a lot. Unelected representatives instead stand for something outside and beyond their particular niche. More exactly: as public representatives they simultaneously "mirror" the tastes and views of their public admirers as well as fire their imaginations and sympathies by displaying leadership in matters of the wider public good.

Unelected representatives widen the horizons of the political even though they are not chosen in the same way as parliamentary representatives, who are subject to formal periodic elections. True, unelected representatives such as Wangari Muta Maathai, the first African woman to win the Nobel Prize and the founder of the pan-African grass-roots Green Belt Movement, sometimes decide to reinvest their fame, to make a lateral move into formal politics and go on to win elections, as she did in Kenya. Others, Mary Robinson, Jimmy Carter, Nelson Mandela, Al Gore, Heiner Geissler and others, do exactly the reverse, by pursuing public leadership roles after office. They demonstrate positively that the age is over when former leaders lapsed into mediocrity, or spent their time "taking pills and dedicating libraries" (as Herbert Hoover put it), sometimes bathed in self-pity ("after the White House what is there to do but drink?" Franklin Pierce reportedly quipped).

Elections are not the normal destiny or career path of unelected representatives, however. What is interesting is that they most often shun political parties, parliaments and government; they do not like to be seen as politicians and they often cross swords with them. Paradoxically, that does not make them any less

"chosen" or legitimate in the eyes, hearts and minds of their followers. It often has the opposite effect, for unelected representatives draw breath from communicative abundance. That is why there are so many different types of these representatives. Some draw their legitimacy from the fact that they are widely regarded as models of public virtue. Figures such as Martin Luther King Jr., Princess Diana and Han Han (China's hottest blogger) are seen to be "good" or "decent" or "wise" or "daring" people who bring honesty, fairness and other valuable things to the world. Others – Mother Teresa or Desmond Tutu – win legitimacy because of their spiritual or religious commitments. There are also unelected representatives whose status is based on merit; they are nobodies who become somebody because they are reckoned to have achieved great things. Amitabh Bachchan (India's screen star whose early reputation was built on playing the role of fighter against injustice), Colombian-born Shakira Mebarak and the Berliner Philharmoniker (the latter two are Goodwill Ambassadors of UNICEF) belong in this category of achievers. Still other figures are deemed representatives of suffering, courage and survival in this world (the Dalai Lama is an example). There are other unelected representatives – in contrast to political party leaders and governments who "fudge" issues – who draw their legitimacy from the fact that they have taken a principled stand on a particular issue, on which they campaign vigorously, in the process appealing for public support in the form of donations and subscriptions. Bodies like Amnesty International are of this type: their legitimacy is mediated not by votes, but by means of a monetary contract that can be cancelled at any time by admiring supporters and subscribers.

Whatever may be thought of their reputation, unelected representatives play a vital role in monitory democracies. Especially in times when politicians as representatives are suffering (to put it mildly) a mounting credibility gap, unelected representatives can contribute positively to democracy. They stretch the boundaries and meaning of political representation, especially by putting on-message parties, parliaments and government executives on their toes. They draw the attention of publics to the violation of public standards by governments, their policy failures, or their general lack of political imagination in handling so-called "wicked" problems that have no readily agreed upon definition, let alone straightforward solutions. Unelected representatives also serve as an important reminder that during the course of the past century the word "leadership" was excessively politicised, to the point where we have forgotten that the words "leader" and "leaderess", from the time of their first usage in English, were routinely applied to those who co-ordinated such bodies as singing choirs, bands of dancers and musicians and religious congregations.

Unelected leaders are having profoundly transformative effects on the meaning of leadership itself. Leadership no longer only means (as it meant ultimately in Max Weber's classic state-centred analysis) bossing and strength backed ultimately by cunning and the fist and other means of state power – a realpolitik understanding of leadership that slides towards political authoritarianism

(and until today has given the words "*Führer*" and *"Führerschaft"* a bad name in countries such as Germany).[27]

Leadership instead comes to be understood as the capacity to mobilise "persuasive power" (as Archbishop Desmond Tutu likes to say). It is the ability to motivate citizens to do things for themselves. It is the learned capacity to win public respect by cultivating "narrative intelligence" which includes (when unelected representatives are at their best) a mix of formal qualities, such as level-headed focus; inner calm; courteousness; the refusal to be biddable; the ability to listen to others; poking fun at oneself; and a certain radiance of style (one of the confidants of Nelson Mandela once explained his remarkable ability to create "many Nelson Mandelas around him"; the same thing is still commonly said of Jawarharlal Nehru). Such qualities also include the power to use media to combine contradictory qualities (strength and vulnerability; singularity and typicality, etc.) simultaneously, and apparently without effort, as if leadership is the art of gestalt switching; and, above all, an awareness that leaders are always deeply dependent upon the people known as the led – that true leaders lead because they manage to get people to look up to them, rather than hauling them by the nose.

Cross-border publics

Finally, communicative abundance makes possible the growth of cross-border publics whose footprint is potentially or actually global in scope.

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27. Max Weber's famous account of the qualities of competent political leadership *(Führerschaft)* in parliamentary democracies is sketched in "Politik als Beruf" (originally delivered as a speech at Munich University in the revolutionary winter of 1918-19), in Gesammelte Politische Schriften, Tübingen, 1958, pp. 493-548. During the speech, Weber said that democracies require leaders to display at least three decisive qualities. Genuine leadership first of all necessitates a passionate devotion to a cause, the will to make history, to set new values for others, nourished from feeling. Such passion must not succumb to what he called (Weber here drew upon Georg Simmel) "sterile excitation". Authentic leaders – this is the second imperative – must avoid "self-intoxication" all the while cultivating a sense of personal responsibility for their achievements, and their failures. While (finally) this implies that leaders are not merely the mandated mouthpieces of their masters, the electors, leaders' actions must embody a "cool sense of proportion": the ability to grant due weight to realities, to take them soberly and calmly into account. Passionate, responsible and experienced leaders, Weber urged, must be relentless in "viewing the realities of life" and must have "the ability to face such realities and … measure up to them inwardly". Effective leadership is synonymous with neither demagoguery nor the worship of power for its own sake. Passionate and responsible leaders shun the blind pursuit of ultimate goals; such blindness, Weber noted sarcastically, "does rightly and leaves the results with the Lord". Mature leaders must be guided instead by the "ethic of responsibility". Recognising the average deficiencies of people, they must continually strive, using state power, to take account of the foreseeable effects of particular actions that aim to realise particular goals through reliance upon particular means. Responsible leaders must therefore incorporate into their actions the prickly fact, in many contexts, that the attainment of good ends is dependent upon (and therefore jeopardised by) the use of ethically doubtful or (in the case of violence) even dangerous means.

The unfolding communications revolution of our time includes the networked growth of globe-girdling media whose time-space conquering effects are arguably of epochal significance. Canadian Scholar Harold Innis famously showed that communications media like the wheel and the printing press and the telegraph had distance-shrinking effects, but genuinely globalised communication only began (during the 19th century) with inventions like overland and underwater telegraphy and the early development of international news agencies like Reuters. The process is currently undergoing an evolutionary jump, thanks to the development of a combination of forces: wide-footprint geo-stationary satellites, weblogs and other specialist computer-networked media, the growth of global journalism and the expanding and merging flows of international news, electronic data exchange and entertainment and education materials controlled by giant firms like Thorn-EMI, AOL/Time-Warner, News Corporation International, the BBC, Al Jazeera, Disney, Bertelsmann, Microsoft, Sony and CNN.

Global media integration has its downsides for democracy. It has undoubtedly deepened visceral feelings among millions of people that our worldly interdependence requires humans to share responsibility for its fate. Yet global media linkages have encouraged loose and misleading talk of the end of barriers to communication (John Perry Barlow). Global media is said to be responsible for the rise of a "McWorld" (Benjamin Barber) dominated by consumers who dance to the music of logos, advertising slogans, sponsorship, brand names, trademarks and jingles. We should also remember the cruel facts of communication poverty: a majority of the world's population (now totalling nearly 7 billion) are too poor to buy a book; less than half have never made a phone call in their lives; and only around one quarter have access to the Internet, whose distribution patterns are highly uneven.

And even in the most media-saturated societies, such as the United States, pockets of parochialism flourish; citizens who read local "content engine" newspapers like *The Desert Sun* in Palm Springs, Cheyenne's Wyoming *Tribune-Eagle* or Pensacola's *Gulf Herald* are fed a starvation diet of global stories, which typically occupy no more than about 2% of column space. And not to be overlooked is the way governments distort global information flows. Protected by what in Washington are called "flack packs" and dissimulation experts, governments cultivate links with trusted or "embedded" journalists, organise press briefings and advertising campaigns, so framing – and wilfully distorting and censoring – global events to suit current government policies.

All these fickle counter-trends are sobering, but they do not form the whole story. For in the age of communicative abundance there are signs that the grip of parochialism upon citizens is not absolute, and that from roughly around the time of the worldwide protest of youth against the Vietnam War the global integration of media is having an unanticipated political effect: by nurturing a world stage or *theatrum mundi*, global journalism has slowly but surely contributed to the growth of global media events and, with them, a plurality of differently sized public spheres, some of them genuinely global, in which many millions of people

scattered across the earth witness mediated controversies about who gets what, when and how, on a world scale.

Of course, not all global media events – sporting fixtures, blockbuster movies, media awards, for instance – sustain global publics, which is to say that audiences are not publics and public spheres are not simply domains of entertainment or play. Strictly speaking, global publics are scenes of the political. Within global publics, millions of people at various points on the earth witness the powers of governmental and non-governmental organisations being publicly named, monitored, praised, challenged and condemned by journalists, in defiance of the old tyrannies of time and space and publicly unaccountable power.

It is true that global publics are neither strongly institutionalised nor effectively linked to mechanisms of representative government. This lack is a great challenge for democratic thinking and democratic politics. Global publics are voices without a coherent body politic; it is as if they try to show the world that it resembles a chrysalis capable of hatching the butterfly of cross-border democracy – despite the fact that we currently have no good account of what "regional" or "global" or "cross border" democratic representation might mean in practice. Still, in spite of everything, global publics have marked effects, for instance on the suit-and-tie worlds of diplomacy, global business, inter-governmental meetings and independent non-governmental organisations. Every great global issue since 1945 – human rights, the dangers of nuclear war, continuing discrimination against women, the greening of politics – every one of these issues first crystallised within these publics. Global publics have other effects, sometimes "meta-political" effects, in the sense that they work in favour of creating citizens of a new global order, in effect telling people that unless they find some means of showing that the wider world is not theirs, they are witnesses and participants in this wider world. The speech addressed to "global citizens" by Barack Obama at the Siegessaule in the Tiergarten in July 2008 is a powerful case in point, a harbinger of a remarkable trend in which those who are caught up within global publics learn that the boundaries between native and foreigner are blurred. They learn that their commitments have become a touch more multiversal. They become footloose. They live here and there; they learn to distance themselves from themselves; they discover that there are different temporal rhythms, other places, other problems, many different ways of living. They discover the "foreigner" within themselves; they are invited to question their own dogmas, even to extend ordinary standards of civility – courtesy, politeness, respect – to others whom they will never meet.

Global public spheres centred on ground-breaking media events like Live Aid (in 1985 it attracted an estimated one billion viewers) can be spaces of fun, in which millions taste the joy of acting publicly with and against others for some defined common purpose. When they come in the form of televised world news of the suffering of distant strangers, as in coverage of disasters or the photos from Abu Ghraib prison, global publics can also highlight cruelty. They render false the old maxim that half the world never knows how the other half lives. These publics make possible what Hannah Arendt once called the "politics of pity". Especially

during dramatic media events – like the nuclear meltdown at Chernobyl, the Tiananmen massacre, the 1989 revolutions in central and eastern Europe, the overthrow and arrest of Slobodan Milosevic, the terrorist attacks on New York, Pennsylvania and Washington, massive earthquakes in Chile and China, or the overthrow of a dictator in Tunisia, public spheres intensify audiences' shared sense of living their lives contingently, on a knife edge, in the subjunctive tense. The witnesses of such events (contrary to McLuhan and others) do not enter a "global village" dressed in the skins of humankind and thinking in the terms of a primordial "village or tribal outlook". When they are members of a public sphere, audiences do not experience uninterrupted togetherness. They instead come to feel the pinch of the world's power relations; they sense that our "small world" is an arena of struggle, the resultant of moves and counter-moves, controversy and consent, compromise and resistance, peace and war.

Exactly because of their propensity to monitor the exercise of power, those who champion global publics, when they do their job well, put matters like representation, accountability and legitimacy on the political agenda. They pose important questions: who benefits and who loses from the contemporary global order? Who currently speaks for whom in its multiple and overlapping power structures? Whose voices are heard, or half-heard, and whose interests and concerns are ignominiously shoved aside? And these publics imply more positive and far-reaching questions: can there be greater equality among the voices that emerge from the nooks and crannies of our global order? Through which institutional procedures could these voices be represented? Might it be possible to design alternatives that could inch our little blue and white planet towards greater openness and humility, potentially to the point where power, whenever and wherever it is exercised across borders, would come to feel more "biodegradable", a bit more responsive to those whose lives it currently shapes and reshapes, secures or wrecks?

Conclusion

The unfinished communications revolution of our time contains breathtaking dynamics which are not just without precedent, but which are also having transformative effects on the spirit and institutions and meaning of democracy. Democracy can no longer be understood (as it is still in most textbooks and among many government policy makers) as synonymous with periodic elections in territorial state form. In our times the fugitive power-questioning spirit of democracy is manifested in fair and free elections and the ongoing public scrutiny of power elites, from a variety of sites, cross-border settings included. There are positive elective affinities between this emergent monitory democracy and the advent of communicative abundance, with its democratisation of information, erosion of the public–private division, muckraking, unelected representatives and cross-border publics. Behind this conjecture stands a bigger claim: each historical form of democracy is structured by, draws strength from and shapes and reshapes a particular mode of communication. Classical assembly democracies of the Greek world were embedded in the spoken word

and messages carved in stone or written on papyrus and relayed by foot runners and donkeys. The age of representative democracy was nurtured by the advent of print culture and its books, pamphlets, novels, daily newspapers, letters and printed messages conveyed by telegraph; it was no mere coincidence that representative democracy, as a political form and way of life, was very nearly in its entirety killed off, or committed "democide", during decades rocked and ruined by the coming of radio broadcasting, film and early television and the rise of parties and leaders and whole regimes convinced that millions of people could be seduced into servitude.

Europe in crisis: is liberal democracy at risk?[28]

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The following will consider the problems which the European Union (EU) is currently facing, and to what extent these are linked to the issues of democracies at the national level. Eastern Europeans who lived through 1989 have one major existential privilege these days: they are aware of how fragile the world is, not only at the level of knowledge, but at the level of experience. In 1987 and 1988, communism in Bulgaria seemed as solid as nature itself: it was forever, until it was no longer. So, our experience shows how fragile the contemporary world is.

There is a general feeling that something is happening to our democratic systems. Different people are complaining about different things, but there is a shared sense of uneasiness. People do not know exactly how to speak about it, but surveys show that the level of trust in politicians and in political parties is very low. The numbers vary from country to country but in some cases, trust is critically low. In the countries of the EU periphery, for instance, there is a problem with the electoral process itself, as more and more elections are contested. There is a growing concern about the manner in which elections are organised, who wins them and why.

There is much debate on the rise of electoral support for extremist parties and, in fact, whilst these parties are growing less in popularity than some have feared, their influence in public life is stronger than the votes they receive. To estimate the influence of extremist parties, it is not as important to know what their leaders say, as it is to note what mainstream political leaders no longer say. Indeed, extremist parties have been doing as well as might be expected given the extent of the economic crisis. The closer they get to power, the faster they lose their appeal. Nevertheless, some of their agendas are on the rise.

There are major concerns about the state of the media. First off, print media is a victim of the economic crisis, but in different countries and in different contexts, the pressure and misuse of the media moves in two distinct directions. On one hand there is much talk about government control over the media, but as we have seen in the Murdoch scandal, there may also be a problem stemming from freedom of the media, as they invade the privacy and private life of individuals.

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28. Debate held on 24 November 2011.

Most of these issues can be summarised as a crisis of legitimacy, but there is also a crisis of governability. Many democratically elected governments have difficulty implementing any policies at all, such as Prime Minister Papandreou in Greece.

In our part of the world, there are people, often young, on the streets, and governments are unsure as to what it is these people want and how to talk to them. These factors, as well as the fear of populism, the fashion for technocratic governments which is pleasing some while worrying others, have created this strange feeling that we are seemingly witnessing a crisis of liberal democracy as we know it. The question which many political commentators are asking is, with what should we compare this crisis of liberal democracy? Are we back in the 1930s, which essentially brought about the breakdown of democratic regimes throughout Europe? Can we liken today to the 1970s, when there was a major crisis, but which did not affect democratic institutions, or is it more like 1530 when, with Gutenberg and others, a new perception of public space was emerging? Whereas all those making such comparisons may have their arguments, it is interesting to see what is happening, and it is equally interesting to see what is not happening.

There is much talk about the crisis of democracy, but there is no rise of any popular non-democratic alternative. Regardless of how mistrustful the population could be towards the democratic system, there is no open challenge to this system. From this point of view, the current situation is very different from the 1930s. For many, democracy is no longer the best imaginable form of organisation of society, but it is the default option. People are not suggesting changing it for any special reason, and even if extremist parties can be accused of being anti-liberal, it is very difficult to accuse them of being anti-democratic. Extremist parties do not contest the democratic aspect of the liberal-democratic consensus; rather they have a problem with the liberal part of it.

Furthermore, there is no violence. Although there are quite a number of people on the street, and in some countries there are very high levels of unemployment, especially amongst the youth, we are witnessing much less violence than one might expect. Compared to the 1970s, the public is much more cheerful than one would think, considering the current conditions. Furthermore, even if there are people on the street, they are not attacking the democratic process, they are voting. People in Spain said that they did not have a voice or much of a choice on candidate selection, but they did vote, and election turnout was not dramatically reduced.

The question is whether we are facing a transitory state or a transitory crisis, as a result of the economic problems, or whether we are experiencing a serious threat to liberal democracy. We do not know exactly what we should fear – are we currently experiencing a crisis or will there be a major transformation of liberal democracies in Europe and in the United States?

What distinguishes this crisis from the transformations of the 1960s or the 1970s are five revolutions which have deepened our democratic experience for the last

40 years; they are the same factors which are now making our societies and our democracies much more prone to crisis and to loss of self-confidence.

The first one is the cultural revolution of the 1960s. In a way, it was the impact of 1968 which contributed to the cultural opening up of our societies and to the dismantling of some of the authoritarian structures in our social life, starting with the family and continuing with gender relations. This was a very important factor which deepened our democratic experiences. At the same time, it was exactly because of the impact of 1968, and the subsequent placing of the individual at the centre of political life and agenda, that the idea of a common purpose and shared public space started to decline in Europe. The idea of a society as a shared project and the concept of political parties have been replaced by different claims coming from different groups, and thereby reducing politics to the politics of rights.

The second major factor which contributed to the global spread of democracy, and deepened our democratic experience, was the market revolution of the 1980s. The success of the market revolution made democracy so appealing to many people around the world, because democracy started to be equated with prosperity. At the same time, it was the same revolution which completely delegitimised the state and the government as an economic actor. We are now experiencing some of the consequences of this, because if we compare the current crisis with the economic crisis of the 1930s and 1970s, there is one major troubling difference. In the 1930s, the population lost faith in the market, but this was accompanied by a hyper-belief in the capacity of government to make miracles happen, shared by all sides from Roosevelt's New Deal to Stalinist Russia and Hitler's Nazis. In the 1970s, this belief in government was crushed, but in parallel there was a regained hope that the market can deliver. Looking at public opinion surveys today, however, shows that sadly both the market and government are mistrusted. The demonstrators occupying Wall Street are not the people who will organise a parade in the government square; they mistrust both sides. This makes the current situation much more complicated than previous ones.

The third revolution which has shaped Europe is the revolution of 1989, which reconciled the cultural revolution of the 1960s with the market revolution of the 1980s. Prior to 1989, the democratic and the liberal traditions did not sit together as easily in Europe as today's textbooks would suggest. After 1989, democracy was perceived and taught as the normal state of affairs. Thus, democratisation was reduced to simply imitating institutions and practices. The contradictory but, at the same time, much more creative nature of democracy, has been abolished and was replaced by an idea of normality which makes it more difficult for east Europeans to understand what is going on.

The fourth revolution which was critically important for democracy today is the communication revolution, and the creation of the Internet. For the first time, the utopia of direct democracy became more realistic. Very recently, the power of social networks in the Arab world has confirmed the critical importance of the Internet in empowering citizens in the face of repressive governments. However,

there is also a dark side to the Internet, exemplified in the way in which people are now living in information ghettos. Research confirms that the easiest way to become an extremist is by simply talking only to peers who confirm and reinforce ones prejudices. This is easy to do on the Internet, where people are less and less exposed to the ideas of others. As a result of this, there is a radicalisation in politics. As well as the growth of virtual ghettos, people today are less exposed to other political options in their daily lives. If people have no contact with "others" on a daily basis, it is much easier to believe that they are stupid, criminal or somebody with whom it is impossible to negotiate.

The fifth factor relevant to the transformation of democracy is the changes and advancements in the neurosciences. According to neuroscience tests, only 3% of voters' political decisions are based on rational calculations. Political consultants are following this very carefully, and from this observation it is a short step to decide that what matters in democratic politics is to manipulate emotions, rather than formulating political ideas. Democracy studies today will study Karl Popper and such like, but if they want to know how electoral politics really work, they should rather study Karl Rove.

These five revolutions have managed over 40 years to deepen our democratic experience, to awe us and give us a better understanding of power. But, on the other hand, they have increased our frustration of what can change in society. Citizens of the European Union have more rights than ever, but at the same time they feel more powerless than ever. The political process is much more transparent than ever, but at the same time the politicians are ever more mistrusted. This is the paradox of our societies; we might call it the "frustration of the empowered".

We are entering a very strange period where people tend to consider all actions of politicians as corruption, whereas politicians tend to view everything that people ask for as populism. This clash between anti-corruption discourse and anti-populist discourse is shaping the way in which our societies function, but it is not a productive discourse.

The more democratic our societies become, the more ineffective our democratic institutions become. This paradox is central; the current crisis of democracy does not result from a lack of democracy; to a certain extent, it is the result of a different level of the democratisation of society.

In Europe, especially western Europe, there is also the demographic revolution as major shifts have led to an ageing population. Europe is seeing a new political actor which one may call the "latent majority". The latent majority constitutes voters who are not the losers of today, but who believe that they will be the losers of tomorrow. They are fearful not only of real immigration, but also "imagined immigration". The same phenomenon has been seen in the Balkans at the level of ethnic groups. Democratic imagination includes the fear of how others are going to transform you. It creates a tension between cultural insecurity and economic insecurity.

Populist messages today include a rejection of the elites, who they see as offering a stark choice to voters: either to allow for immigration as a means to save the welfare system and maintain standards of living, or ending migration to preserve cultural identity but accepting a decline in living standards. This is a choice people do not want to make, and they feel manipulated by the elite. The new populism in Europe is not the same as the populism of the 19th century or even of the 1920s; it is not the populism of the Romantic notions of nation and nationalism. It is populism by those who read newspapers and opinion polls and see that, whereas their ideas are shared by the majority of the population, politics still moves in a different direction. In a certain way this is more pragmatic, but these people have a better idea of what they do not want rather than what they do want. This is one of the interesting differences between people on the streets of Athens, Madrid or Paris today and the young people in 1968. In 1968, people were on the streets because they refused to live in the world of their parents; today, people are demonstrating because they believe they have the right to live in the world of their parents. The issue of pensions and retirement is also a central topic. It will not be a surprise if the topic of health and possible reforms of the health care system replaces labour as the main point of reference in debates on what we perceive as just in contemporary societies.

Democracy will be overthrown by an unknown authoritarian regime, but the distinction between democracy and authoritarianism will be less useful than it used to be, because of the transformations which have taken place within both concepts.

What we should fear is something different: can the European Union survive the transformation of democratic politics? It is well known that European democracy is a democracy without European demos. European democracy has depended on the existence of a liberal democracy, guided by the elite.

What we are witnessing is the crisis of the elite-guided part of democracy because the elite are failing to influence decision making. There are two trends in the new paradigms of how the EU can be saved. The first is to give more electoral power to the voters, and try and solve the Union's problems through referendums. But people are never going to vote on the question they are asked to vote on, and in Europe, a referendum will never be about Europe, it will be about local political elites and the local situation. Opening European politics to the voters, thus saving the EU and regaining a new legitimacy, is good rhetoric, but no one knows if it can work.

The second option is also problematic, because it is not a secret that the model which works in the EU today is policy without politics at the Brussels level, and politics without policy at the European level. As a result of the crisis, and the fact that it has had an asymmetrical impact on different countries, this model has been destabilised. This means that in countries like Germany, public opinion has become more important than it was 10 years ago, whilst in countries like Greece and Italy, because of the nature of the crisis, the public does not have a

say on economic issues. As a result of this asymmetry, the EU has two types of democracy: a democracy of the creditors and a democracy of the debtors.

The question is how high are the chances of the debt-driven countries getting through this process without destroying their institutions and their appetite for democracy? One argument is that it can work, because it worked in central and eastern Europe. To put it bluntly, if in 1991 the question was how to transform central and eastern Europe in the way southern Europe was transformed – through democratisation – now the question is how to transform southern Europe at the economic level in the way central and eastern Europe have been transformed.

Eastern Europeans have a special role to play, by being honest: honest about the success of transformations at a certain level and the factors which made it possible. Several factors distinguish southern Europe today from eastern Europe in the 1990s.

First, in the 1990s eastern Europeans had a very negative view of their past. There were different views in Belgrade, Sofia and Warsaw on which forms change should take on, but nobody was advocating no change at all: the idea was to change a dysfunctional society into a functioning one. People had very strong positive expectations and even if they were unrealistic, they were important. This is not the case in southern Europe today.

Secondly, in central and eastern Europe people had some immediate gains such as travel, media freedom and the ability to vote. In southern Europe, the major gain of the people, if everything goes well, is that the situation will not deteriorate any further. This is not a strong mobilising factor. If people are expected to make sacrifices, they need a more positive outlook on the future.

Thirdly, the communist legacy was extremely important for adopting "shock therapy" reforms. Poland was the only country which had an organised mass movement, as communism managed to weaken the capacity of society for collective action. Organising a strike was highly problematic in countries such as Bulgaria, because trade union officials could not be trusted. Also, in 1990 there was no legitimate language with which to attack the reforms; any country with the ability to do that was a case of "closet communism", which is not the case now.

Last but not least, the accession period in the transformation of central and eastern Europe succeeded because the citizens of these countries perceived the EU as a means of controlling their own corrupt elites. Even if the EU is an elite project, it has been perceived, strangely enough, as an anti-elite power.

Part of the problem the EU is facing today is rooted in the fact that the liberal elite who controlled democracies, as they have existed in the European Union for the past 50 or 60 years, are going through some serious changes. The EU is not going to be what it used to be and when trying to reinvent it, it is important to keep in mind the political dimension, which goes beyond saving the euro. One should be critical of democracy and remember Churchill's famous quote: "Democracy is the worst form of government with the exception of all others".

But Churchill is the author of another important aphorism about the weak side of democracy: "The best argument against democracy is a five minute talk with the average voter".

Over-managed democracy and its limitations[29]

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For many years, experts studying the nature of political mechanisms in Russia have been trying to understand how the system works in spite of an inadequate separation of powers, a lack of real institutions and elections, etc. [30] It appears that Russia is not unique and that a lot of similarities can be found not only in the former Soviet Union area, but also in different parts of the world.

Responding to the Kremlin's idea of "managed democracy", they invented the term of "over-managed democracy", meaning attempts to manage beyond rational limits which can lead to results contrary to the initial intentions. Until recently, this phenomenon has been illustrated by the example of the 2004 Ukrainian presidential elections. But since December 2011, reference can also be made to mass political protests in Moscow and throughout Russia.

The term "over-managed democracy" does not imply the existence of a fully fledged democracy. Instead, it describes a kind of hybrid regime in which, among other things, the authoritarian elements generally overshadow the democratic ones. Traditionally, one would use the term "managed democracy" during a period of transition between an authoritarian regime and democracy. However, it seems that transition countries can function, more or less efficiently, as managed democracies for many years without any substantial changes. Such is the case for a number of countries.

Over-managed democracy is a political system with three features: a highly centralised state authority concentrated in the executive branch; formal institutions of democracy, including room for at least some candidates to oppose incumbent authorities in elections to powerful posts; and the systematic gutting of these institutions and their frequent functional replacement by substitutions – often either outside the constitutional framework or in violation of the spirit of the constitution – that are created by and highly dependent on central authorities. Over-managed democracy distinguishes itself from more run-of-the-mill" managed democracy" by its higher degree of centralisation, its narrower space

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29. Debate held on 8 June 2012.
30. See Nikolay Petrov, Maria Lipman and Henry E. Hale (2010), "Overmanaged democracy in Russia: governance implications of hybrid regimes", Carnegie papers, # 106, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

for genuine political competition and the central role of substitutions.[31] The aim of the following is a closer study of the characteristics of over-managed democracies, illustrated by the case of Russia.

Replacement of institutions by substitutions

The creation of a whole network of substitutions is perhaps the most prominent, interesting, yet understudied feature which distinguishes over-managed democracy from other types of hybrid regimes, including "managed democracy". Many works which identify such substitutions portray them as nothing more than window dressing, intended only as a kind of Potemkin village to deceive the international community and perhaps a regime's own population into thinking the country is more democratic than it really is.[32]

But there can also be an important sense in which the substitutions are not merely "fake" or "virtual." In particular, they frequently represent efforts by the regime to reap the benefits for state authorities that true democratic institutions provide – without the authorities subjecting themselves to the risk of losing office and the intensified need to respond to public sentiment that democratic institutions bring by their very definition. One can ask what benefits are there and just how substitutions are intended to compensate for them.[33]

Simply put, institutions are replaced by substitutions, which imitate institutions functionally, but are not independent from the government.

31. The third element is particularly important in distinguishing over-managed democracy from "delegative democracy" (see Henry E. Hale, Michael McFaul and Timothy J. Colton (2004), "Putin and the 'delegative democracy' trap: evidence from Russia's 2003–04 elections", *Post-Soviet Affairs*, Vol. 20, No. 4, October-December 2004; Guillermo O'Donnell (1994), "Delegative democracy", *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 5, No. 1, January 1994). On managed democracy and the variety of other labels used to describe the same basic idea – including "competitive authoritarianism", "electoral authoritarianism", "semi-authoritarianism" and "illiberal democracy" – see Timothy J. Colton and Michael McFaul (2003), *Popular Choice and Managed Democracy: the Russian Elections of 1999 and 2000,* Brookings Institution Press, Washington DC; Michael McFaul, Nikolai Petrov and Andrei Ryabov (2004), *Between Dictatorship and Democracy: Russian Post-Communist Political Reform,* Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Washington DC; Steven Levitsky and Lucan A. Way (2002), " The rise of competitive authoritarianism", *Journal of Democracy*, April 2002; Marina Ottaway (2003), "Promoting democracy after conflict: the difficult choices", *International Studies Perspectives*, Vol. 4, Issue 3, August 2003; Andreas Schedler (ed.) (2006), *Electoral Authoritarianism: the Dynamics of Unfree Competition*, Lynne Rienner Publishers; Fareed Zakaria (1997), "The rise of illiberal democracy", *Foreign Affairs,* November 1997. Kremlin ideologist Vladislav Surkov has branded Russia's current system a "sovereign democracy"; see Vladislav Surkov (2008), *Teksty 97-07,* Evropa, Moscow.
32. For example, Andrew Wilson (2005), *Virtual Politics: Faking Democracy in the Post-Soviet World,* Yale University Press, New Haven.
33. Sakwa refers to many such institutions as "para-constitutional" institutions that practise "para-politics", intended by the Kremlin to "enhance efficacy" but that have in fact diminished it. See Richard Sakwa (2008), "Putin's leadership: character and consequences", *Europe-Asia Studies,* Vol. 60, No. 6, pp. 879-97.

In Russia, a number of major institutions have been replaced by substitutions since 1999. The post of governor, for example, which was formerly subject to elections, is now filled by presidential appointees who are confirmed by regional parliaments and hired city managers. Instead of evaluating a governor's achievements by re-electing or replacing him or her by someone else, the central government has now developed a complex system of indicators evaluating a governor's performance. From the point of view of officials who are responsible for achieving good results in a particular region, it is easier to appoint the governor needed, rather than provide for his or her election and subject themselves to the risk of losing office. From the point of view of the overall system, however, this is controversial. The net effects on governance of replacing institutions through substitutions are at best mixed, even from the rulers' perspective. It was announced that the governor's election will be reinstated as of October 2012. However, the administration should have reinstated the governor's election when the economic crisis came, in order to allow for shared responsibility. Furthermore, federal appointees are now subject to horizontal rotation. Thus, governors do not necessarily know the region they are assigned to and are likely to be loyal to the central government rather than the region they oversee.

Additionally, the role of some institutions which continue to exist, such as political parties, was extremely weakened.

Highly centralised state and non-flexibility

Over-managed democracy is furthermore characterised by its inflexibility. The system can be likened to an assembly line, in which one needs to intervene and manage manually in order to change the end product.

Furthermore, over-managed democracies are often highly centralised, which leads to the application of one and the same solution to different regions.

Russia serves as an illustration of a large, but highly centralised state, in which one centrally developed solution is made to fit all 83 regions, which differ markedly from one another.

Dismantling foolproof mechanisms

Coming back to the analogy of an assembly line, the production mechanism does not allow you to put your hand into the engine, for your own safety and for the sake of the machine. Over-managed democracy in Russia started twelve years ago, and has since then been constructed step by step. The first fool-proof mechanism which was damaged was free and independent media, then the independence of the legislative branch from the executive branch, followed by elections which were manipulated by the centre, the appointment rather than the election of governors, and finally the independence and freedom of NGOs.

The dilemma of elections

Part of what is interesting about over-managed democracy is precisely that the ruling authorities may not actually want to give up democracy: they just always want to win all the time, whatever happens and to be confident that this will continue. Eliminating democracy's uncertainty obviously removes the very core of democracy.[34] But if it could be reduced to that, why go through the trouble of managing elections instead of eliminating contested elections altogether, as Turkmenistan has done?

In over-managed democracy the incumbent authorities try to have their democratic cake and eat it, too. The rulers of such systems aim to reap the benefits of democracy. And as they are unwilling to follow China or Turkmenistan in scrapping contested elections altogether, these regimes are forced to take public opinion into account, the demos in democracy.[35] While all regimes have an interest in at least some public support, Russian leaders appear to have paid extreme attention to it, which seems to bespeak an important feature of the political system.

Hybrid regime leaders tend to face an important dilemma: contested elections create uncertainty which can threaten the ability of authorities to stay in power, but the political competition such elections generate can have major benefits for the incumbents, including benefits which in principle can help them retain or augment their power. Contested elections legitimise state authority and supply a competitive mechanism for selecting candidates for public office and programmes for implementation. They channel social tensions and opposition sentiment in constructive rather than destructive directions. They also create a peaceful mechanism for resolving differences of opinion and interest in public policy. Finally, they generate public interest and hence engagement in the policy process, and incentivise innovation in policy making. One key feature of over-managed democracy is that incumbent authorities seek to maintain the benefits of political competition while escaping the limits it imposes on them. They do this not only in the way that has received the most scholarly attention, namely elaborate manipulation of the election-related processes, but also by combining this with a non-participation pact by which the regime implicitly takes on certain obligations before the population. The result is more accountability than one would expect in a pure authoritarian regime, but less than one would have in an actual democracy.

One way hybrid regime authorities move from their less desired "democratic" policy B toward their more desired policy X is to allow at least some opposition to compete, all the while manipulating the electoral process so as to minimise

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34. One of the most famous treatments of democracy actually defines it as "institutionalized uncertainty." See Adam Przeworski (1991), *Democracy and the Market,* Cambridge University Press, New York.
35. It is rare that a regime can completely ignore public opinion and survive for long, of course, so this is primarily a matter of degree.

the chances of a loss, as many researchers have documented in Russia and elsewhere.[36]

Trends observable in Russia since the turn of the century include:

1. Depersonalisation. Personal representation by a single deputy held accountable by direct elections to a specific territorially defined set of constituents was eliminated in the State Duma and among governors and curtailed in regional legislatures.[37]

2. Centralisation. The Kremlin[38] dramatically increased its control over how state and corporate officials use their positions and resources to influence electoral outcomes, used the law to weed out regional or small parties, and increased the power of party leaders over candidate selection.[39]

3. "Dictatorship of law." Election-related laws came typically to impose severe punishments (such as disqualification) for violations that are so imprecisely defined, so technical or so hard to avoid that almost anyone can be found in violation by authorities, representing the rule by law rather than the rule of law.[40]

4. Rising thresholds. The threshold for a party to win delegations in the State Duma and many regional legislatures rose to 7%, parties were forbidden to join forces by running as a single bloc and requirements for getting on the ballot were made stricter for parties not already in the State Duma while opportunities for protest were removed (as with the "against all" option on the ballot) or reduced (as with rules invalidating an election if turnout is below a certain level).[41]

5. Negative selection. The primary principle of state intervention in electoral contests has become less the Kremlin's positive selection of a single

36. For example, A. V. Ivanchenko and A. E. Liubarev (2006), *Rossiiskie vybory: Ot perestroiki do suverennoi demokratii*, Nezavisimyi Institut Vyborov, Moscow; M. Steven Fish (2005), *Democracy Derailed in Russia: The Failure of Open Politics,* Cambridge University Press; McFaul, Petrov and Ryabov (2004), op.cit. For overviews of world practice, see Henry E. Hale, "Can the machine come to life? Prospects for Russia's party system in 2020", in Maria Lipman and Nikolai Petrov (eds) (2011), *Russia in 2020: Scenarios for the Future,* Carnegie Endowment, Washington DC; and Andreas Schedler (2006), op.cit.
37. As of 2003, law requires at least half of at least one legislative chamber to be elected by party lists, and most regions have only one chamber.
38. We use this as shorthand to refer to central state authorities and their networks of collaborators.
39. Aleksandr Kynev (2007), "Izbiratel'naia reforma Vladimira Putina i regional'nye vybory", *Neprikosnovennyi Zapas,* Vol. 50, No. 6, 2006, as reprinted in *Polit.Ru*, 12 March 2007, available at www.polit.ru/research/2007/03/12/kynev.html; Natalia Morar (2007), "Chernaia kassa Kremlia", *Novoe Vremia* [The New Times], 10 December 2007, pp. 18-22.
40. For a good explication of the difference, see Thomas F. Remington (2010), *Politics in Russia,* sixth edition, Longman, New York.
41. The light reduction in these thresholds that Medvedev introduced during 2008-09 does not reverse the overall trend.

candidate to actively back and more the negative selection of unwelcome candidates to be disqualified, reportedly including Vladimir Ryzhkov and Garry Kasparov.

6.   Non-standard voting procedures. Election authorities have increasingly made use of non-standard voting practices thought to facilitate pressure or fraud such as allowing people to vote early or bringing mobile ballot boxes to people's homes.[42]

The dilemma of the state

State strength requires the capacity to adapt to the diverse and shifting interests that characterise any developing society.[43] This capacity, however, tends to go hand in hand with institutions that create uncertainty for individual ruling authorities in politics.[44] Institutions such as parliaments that genuinely represent diverse social interests that may be changing by their very nature are neither fully predictable nor obedient to rulers. Such institutions devise creative ways to peacefully resolve conflicts of interest, guarantee the protection of key interests, and guard against an executive's ability to make decisions that may run counter to the most important social interests and thus destabilise the state. Over-managed democracy, in part, represents an effort by state authorities to eliminate these sources of political risk for themselves while minimising the consequences in terms of state capacity.

In several systems of over-managed democracy, the general public has expressed its discontent in the current situation by taking the cause onto the streets.

In Russia, the limitations on the election system and media markets have increasingly resulted in the weakening of true democratic institutions in Russia. The parliament has become dominated by loyalists who depend more on the presidential administration than on their own nominal constituents. The genuine opposition parties reflecting diverse social interests have been marginalised and television has little incentive to give voice to diverse interests. Consequently, the government consists of Kremlin appointees rather than a coalition of different social interests. Russian authorities have come to rely heavily on lobbying as a mechanism for interest accommodation, but this is one of the most problematic elements even in democratic systems and the Russian version is much less transparent.[45] Conflicting regional interests are handled in a similar behind-the-scenes way. Without public competition and open media, there is little to keep corruption out of these consultations.

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42. Robert Coalson (2009), "Victory in Sochi", 28 April 2009, RFE/RL blog "The Power Vertical", www.rferl.org/content/blog/1617655.html, accessed 30 October 2009.
43. Samuel P. Huntington (1966), *Political Order in Changing Societies,* Yale University Press, New Haven.
44. Joel Migdal (1988), *Strong Societies and Weak States: State-Society Relations and State Capabilities in the Third World,* Princeton University Press, Princeton.
45. For example, Russia lacks a law on lobbying.

Since September 2011, there have been social and political protests taking place in Moscow and throughout Russia. The current political crisis in Russia was triggered by the 2012 presidential elections, as well as by reports of irregularities in the 2011 parliamentary elections. Figures show large discrepancies between the ballot results of election posts with and without outside observers present. In the absence of observers, the turnout was 50% higher and the election results of United Russia, the ruling party, were up to four times higher, reaching up to 100%.

In this context, it is of particular interest to study the limits of over-managed democracy. As the degree of management surpasses the limits as laid out by society, results contrary to those intended can be the consequence. Furthermore, over-managed democracies are ageing and inflexible, and find it increasingly difficult to deal with problems which increase both in numbers and complexity.

Decreasing functionality

The efficiency of the system is ever-decreasing, because there is a lack of transparent and public political competition. Thus, loyalty of politicians to the central government takes precedence over their efficiency. In a short-term horizon, the system is managing to solve the nearest problem ahead, but strategically, it is lacking in vision. The organisation is such that each public official is responsible for his or her sector, and almost no other person, except for the head of state, can oversee the systemic results.

System's mechanical character, lack of flexibility and adjustability

The system dislikes autonomous players, which makes for a lack of buffers and a high centre of gravity. Thus, any shock from the bottom goes straight to the top.

Weak feedback

In the absence of political parties which should play the role of connecting society to the authorities, and in the absence of a parliament representative of diverging points of view among the population, it is not possible for feedback from society to be relayed to the authorities. This is exacerbated by the state control over media, which does not receive the truthful information which it requires. Furthermore, regional governors who are appointed centrally have no interest in relaying negative feedback from their region to the central government.

Troubles with decision making

In systems of over-managed democracies, there is not always a clear distinction between politics and business. Generally, the elites of both sectors which enjoy close ties with the political leader yield considerable influence in politics. In the absence of formal formats which represent the interests of major fractions of the elite, consultations and negotiations occur at a bilateral level, which prolongs the decision-making process decisively. This is even more critical in times of economic and political crisis, when efficiency becomes more and more crucial.

Russia has a long history of a powerful elite, which began with the establishment of the *nomenklatura* system under Stalin. Previously, the constellation of the elite would be altered every few years, due to Stalin's infamous purges. Today, however, elites continue their influence for a longer time, which slowly decreases the efficiency of the system.

Over-managed democracies rely on a social contract, by which authorities do not interfere in aspects of private life, such as travelling abroad or acquiring property, and citizens do not interfere in state affairs such as elections, the appointment of governors, etc. The economic crisis makes it harder for authorities to respect their part of the social contract, which in return angers citizens, who take their discontent to the streets.

Furthermore, the balance between regional and central power can be decisive for the longevity of a system of over-managed democracy. In Russia, this balance has taken two extremes within the last decade. In 2000, it was too much in favour of the regions, thus making Russia a confederation of regions. Over time, more power was consolidated centrally and reached an optimum towards 2004, which considerably strengthened the system. Today, however, the balance has moved too far in the opposite direction and has given way to over-centralisation. Since 2011, there have been developments to favour the regions again.

There are several scenarios for the adaptation and modernisation of over-managed democracies.

In an optimistic scenario, a system change is initiated by the political leader, who realises that it is necessary for a smooth transfer of power. Thus, the leader strengthens and reforms institutions and triggers political liberalisation. Eventually, the system is strong and independent enough to function without the consolidated power of a dominating leader.

In a more pessimistic scenario, modernisation starts from the bottom, and the incumbent leader is replaced by a candidate who puts into place fully fledged democracy. However, due to the weak institutions and the impossibility of strengthening them quickly, the new leader becomes unpopular and regarded as incapable. In the face of mounting criticism, the new leader falls back into the same cycle as before and restores order through over-managing democracy. This is a vicious cycle as has been observed in Latin America.

Realistically speaking, it is likely that reactive modernisation will take place. In this case, modernisation is not planned by authorities, but is a consequence of fixing immediate problems. The elite comes to the realisation that in order to survive, certain institutions must be restored, and that the political leader is developing into an obstacle rather than an asset. Thus, the elite pressures the leader into undertaking the necessary reforms, or eventually replaces him. In this scenario, there is a need to share power between clans; otherwise, an agreement between them will quickly fail.

To conclude, accelerated evolution is preferable to a revolution in systems of over-managed democracy. It is desirable for the system to adapt to survive, rather than collapsing.

Europe and the democratisation of its neighbourhoods[46]

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Over the last 20 years Europe has experienced a great diversity of democratic transformations. The European Union and European institutions in general have played an important role in this process and now is an appropriate moment to reflect on the current situation and consider some of the lessons learned. We have to consider the broader European context, now dominated by the crisis of the euro and of the very core institutions of the European project. In light of these events, our reflections about democracy become more acute. The EU was a reference point for the new democracies in eastern and central Europe; it is now experiencing challenges to democracy from within.

The link between the European project and democracy is that neither of them should be taken for granted. There was a kind of post-1989 ideology: Europe was marching onwards and upwards to the globalised world of democracy, global governance, global civil society, global human rights and many other "global" concepts, and some became carried away with this idea of the irresistible triumph of liberal democracy referred to as the "end of history". We are in a situation where we must be more lucid, more modest or more realistic about our predicament.

Going back over the main features of the experiences of the last 20 years can be helpful in this respect. What we are looking at is the new map of Europe as it has taken form over the last two decades. For the first time in our modern European history, it was not shaped by great power rivalries or on the battlefields, but by processes of democratic transformation, albeit some more successful than others.

We can distinguish three main trajectories of post-1989 democratic changes in Europe. The first trajectory concerns central Europe, and one could refer to it as the consolidation of democracy. The consolidation of democracy means not only that a given state has made a transition from a dictatorship to a democracy, with new elections or other familiar trappings of democracy, but rather that all main political actors accept the constitutional framework in which democracy takes place. They accept the constitutional constraint on democratic institutions and the levers of power, which, in short, means that when an election takes place in Warsaw or in Prague, what is at stake is a choice of government, not a choice of regime. This is not the case in eastern Europe: in Ukraine, Georgia or even Serbia.

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46. Debate held on 13 December 2011.

The second trajectory concerns the Balkans, where democratic transitions were derailed by the agenda of nation state building. The process of nation-building in the Balkans, which impacted the regional environment of the whole of South-Eastern Europe, is hopefully coming to an end to allow for democratic transitions to establish themselves. Does this mean that these states are going through the same transitions simply with a time lag, with a delay? Or does it mean that the nature of the democratic process there has been deeply affected or is still being deeply affected by those agendas?

The third case is that of post-Soviet eastern Europe, where most states are hybrid regimes or, to use the current political science language, "competitive authoritarianism": they have electoral processes, but are marked by high levels of control in which the opposition, but not the incumbent, is constrained and limited by the absence of a level playing field. There are great varieties of situations in this third case but, also, great possibilities of change, as we have seen with the so-called colour revolutions from Ukraine to the Caucasus.

Having presented the three trajectories, it is interesting to understand how to account for them. A number of hypotheses exist on how to account for the diversity of democratic transition outcomes in the post-Soviet or post-communist space. In fact, the term post-communism has become irrelevant over the years, because what do Poland and Tajikistan have in common? What is the common predicament between Belarus and Slovenia? Obviously, they share a legacy of communist regimes, but since then, their trajectories have evolved so differently that simply to speak of a post-communist area has become misleading. It would be equally relevant to use the term "post-fascist" to describe Italy in the mid-1960s. Of course, every country is post-something and in a sense the whole of Europe is "post-communist", that is, overcoming the legacies of its Cold War division. And there are some who currently speculate as to whether some countries are already "post-democratic".

Post-communism may not be an entirely pertinent concept, but it is possible to discuss to what extent these three aforementioned trajectories have been affected by the different legacies of communism.

Different types of legacies of communism have existed. However, the question is: were they affected by different legacies of a pre-communist past, old imperial legacies? Clearly these countries were not affected in the same way as the Habsburg Empire, the Ottoman Empire, or the Russian Empire. If one goes further back, there is a whole school of authors with socio-economic bias. Their reference work is Barrington Moore's famous *The Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*. In this book there is one line "No bourgeoisie, no democracy", which in a nutshell sums up the proposition: there are socio-economic requirements for democratic institutions. There is, from a different perspective, the hypothesis of Ernest Gellner that a nation state, preferably homogeneous, is a prerequisite for a successful democratic transition. Or, to go deeper and deeper into the cultural substratum of the societies and the conditions in which democracy and modern individualism can develop, one can go back to Max Weber's *Protestant ethic thesis*

on the spirit of capitalism. This may no longer work for the Protestants–Catholics contrast, but we could explore whether it works one notch further afield in the east, with the contrast between the world of Orthodox Eastern Christendom and the West, or to relate it to the current debate about democracy and Islam following the Arab Spring.

More questions of great importance for the democratisation process of the regional and international environment remain. Is the regional environment conducive or not? Are the international actors involved fostering and encouraging the development of democracy, or, on the contrary, are they a hindrance? There is a great variety of literature on each of these hypotheses, but no one literary work which tackles all of them. An overlap of several hypotheses, or even all of them combined in a single publication would be of interest. Perhaps this would vindicate an argument about the central European mode of transition to democracy, different from the Balkans where questions surrounding nation state building hampered democratisation. This shows the context in which these debates have been developing or the kind of questions they pose.

These three aforementioned trajectories, the central European, the Balkan and the post-Soviet east European, lead to the related issue of the variety of challenges these regions pose to Europe and to European institutions, namely, the Council of Europe and the EU. Clearly, for central Europe, this debate concerns the challenge of inclusion of the new democracies or the "eastern enlargement" of the European Union. In the case of the Balkans, the challenge was intervention and international protectorates which were aimed at creating the conditions for democratic change. In the so-called eastern neighbourhood, there is not only the challenge of dealing with hybrid regimes, but also with the situation in which the European Union's and Russia's neighbourhood are now one and the same. This highlights the geopolitical questions surrounding the issues of democratisation.

Finally, there is a great deal of literature about how the European integration process has contributed to consolidating democracies in eastern and central Europe. It is sometimes called the transformative power of the European Union. The other interesting, albeit less discussed, side of the debate is to what extent EU engagement in the new democracies and their democratisation processes affects and transforms the European Union itself.

Indeed, one could argue that the enlargement has forced the European Union to explicitly define itself as a democratic institution. Of course, it was always there, as a sort of self-evident proposition. What were the countries of the EU, of the European Community as it was called before? They were Western democracies, as opposed to the Eastern bloc of communist regimes. Thus, democratic Western Europe was a sort of negative identity. But these European Community countries did not focus on defining their democratic identity. The gradual process of democratic self-identification started with the enlargement to Spain and Portugal, the southern enlargement; this identity later became even more explicit with the eastern enlargement. It forced the EU to define itself explicitly as a democratic institution. The Copenhagen criteria, set in 1993 for the prospective

members, played a role in this matter. There is one criterion for accession that is non-negotiable, and that is democracy. Thus, if one regards the EU from this perspective, the EU can be defined as a democratic club.

The second factor is that the EU may define itself as a democratic club, but it mainly operates through shared legal norms and through the common market. But it is the democratic dimension that is usually the most questionable, and comes down to an emphasis more on governance than on government. And the question is: to what extent has this emphasis on legal norms and the market contributed to European integration at the expense of the democratic process? This may not affect the nature of the democratic regime, but it certainly affects the quality of democracy.

The third point about the EU is that it does not have a democracy promotion doctrine. No official European Union text reads along the lines of: "what we stand for is democracy and our mission is to promote democracy in our neighbourhood and throughout the world". Certainly, this is a big contrast with the United States, where one observes a long tradition of the "City on the hill", American exceptionalism with a mission to spread democracy. One can probably remember that President Bush Sr. spoke disparagingly about the "vision thing". Under his son's presidency the vision thing became the "mission thing": we have a mission, which is sometimes carried out through more than questionable means, or produces the exact contrary to the intended result. The controversy about the Iraq war concerns the distinction between forcing a regime change on the one hand and creating a democracy on the ruins of disintegrated states on the other.

When it comes to summing up the differences between Europe and America, it is very opportune to refer to Alexis de Tocqueville. In a famous Letter on Algeria in 1837 which is of relevance to our subject, he wrote:

> Suppose, Sir, for a moment, that the Emperor of China, landing on the shores of France at the head of a powerful army made himself master of our greatest cities and our capitals, and after having destroyed or dispersed all of the public registers, before even having given himself the pain of reading them, destroyed or dispersed all administrators without acquainting them with their various attributes … He finally rids himself of all the state's officials, from the head of the government to the *garde-champêtre*, the peers, the deputies and, in general, of the entire ruling class … Do you think that this great prince, in spite of his powerful army, his fortress and his fortune, would soon find himself rather bothered in administering the conquered land? That his new subjects, bereft of all those who did or could manage political affairs, would be incapable of governing themselves? While he, coming from the opposite side of the earth, knows neither the religion, nor the language, nor the laws, nor the customs, nor the administrative procedures of the country and who took care to send away all those who could have instructed him in these matters, will be in a position to rule them? You will therefore have no difficulty in seeing, Sir, that if the regions of France that are effectively occupied by the conqueror were to obey him, the rest of the country would soon be left to an immense anarchy. You will see, Sir, that we have done in Algeria precisely what I suppose the Emperor of China would do in France.

Already Tocqueville wrote about the French in Algeria and their "civilising" mission, and a large variety of literature and many debates on the subject of imposing civilisation, progress or democracy from outside have followed since then.

The fundamental difference between the European and the American approaches is that the American one is very elaborate, equipped with institutions such as the National Endowment for Democracy, and accompanied by a discourse, as well as an entire doctrine on the promotion of democracy.

However, as Tocqueville put it, this approach and the current American argument that democratic happiness can be brought into the Mesopotamian desert or other deserving places, if necessary by force, can be bewildering and counter-productive. The European Union's approach is rather the opposite. The ultimate threat the European Union can deliver to its unruly neighbourhood is "we are not going to invade you". In the Balkans, this is a more terrifying threat today than the one of a possible invasion in the Milosevic era. The only effective European democracy promotion leverage is the leverage of accession, of engagement, of invasion of your economic and institutional space. Of course, it is an invasion of a special kind, one which has existed from the beginning of European integration. Konrad Adenauer called it "Magnet Europa". It acted as a magnet, it was attractive. It is that attraction which makes prospective candidate countries and peoples who wish to be closer to the EU take actions that they may not otherwise be likely to take.

In sum, one may argue that the EU did not contribute to the fall of the dictatorships in eastern Europe as such, but it certainly did contribute to democratic consolidation through the aforementioned integration process.

A number of institutional, legal, and constitutional changes were necessary to be compatible with the European democratic ideal and, thus, the main emphasis for the consolidation of democracy is the question of the rule of law. In other words, the big democratic changes are not just about having a free and fair election, monitored by various international bodies. Rather, they are about having alternation in power and constitutionalism, which arguably mattered more. Incidentally, constitutionalism means accepting constitutional constraints, checks and balances. Democratic transition does not necessarily equate to drawing up a new constitution immediately after the fall of the dictatorship. In fact, by looking at the countries that did best in the 1990s in the democratic transformation, one sees that they did not all immediately adopt democratic constitutions. Although Russia, Serbia, Albania and Romania immediately adopted democratic constitutions, they were not necessarily the most democratic, or the most adept at practising liberal democracy.

On the other hand, countries such as Hungary or Poland simply amended their old constitutions in the 1990s, although, of course, these were complete amendments from top to bottom. Dr Sólyom, a member of the constitutional court in Hungary in the 1990s, quipped that the constitution was so heavily amended that all that was left from the original was the sentence: "Budapest is the capital of Hungary". For 20 years, Hungarian democracy prospered under an old

constitution amended and re-amended a number of times. Hungary adopted a brand new constitution this year, which, in the eyes of most experts, and of the Hungarian opposition, is a step backwards for Hungarian democracy.

Thus, having a new, constitution, even if it is a constitution approved by the Council of Europe, does not guarantee a functioning democracy. Various countries used international advice to shape their constitutions. It is not just the constitution which matters; the process by which political culture is transformed is essential to the functioning of a new constitution.

The act of changing a constitution is relatively simple, but creating a new constitutional culture is of an entirely different nature and cannot be achieved through a vote in parliament, even a unanimous one. This change can occur through a process of amendments, because that process forces the country to permanently negotiate, renegotiate, explain and bargain. Thus, an environment is created in which constitutional matters become part of the public debate, of the public space. And through that process, which does not take place overnight with a vote and may take years, all the main political actors learn to accept the idea of constitutional constraints, but also the idea that the constitution may not be perfect and can be amended. So one does not look for perfection, as that is unlikely to work; one must work with something that can be amended and it is this process of ongoing amendments that helps transform the political culture and the legal culture, the constitutional culture of the main political actors. This transformation is tremendously important. Incidentally, there are new constitutions currently being drafted in the Arab world. This essay will not concern itself with the specific merits of individual countries or constitutions, but with another important concept: whatever constitution these countries adopt, a crucial element of their constitutional transformation is the process of adoption, the possibilities for amendment and mainly the capacity of all political actors to internalise the constitutional constraints. The other big issue concerning constitution making after the Arab Spring concerns the process by which the place of religious principles (Sharia) will be defined. For both reasons, constitutionalism can be more important than the constitution.

In the central European experience the EU accession process became part of the democratic consolidation: the idea of alternation in power, the irreversibility of the democratic change and accepting the rule of law. However, this EU contribution must be qualified by saying that this process of constitutionalism works more easily with small or medium-sized states rather than with large states. It is certainly easier with Estonia or Latvia than with Turkey or Ukraine. There is also the question, much debated nowadays, of whether compliance with the EU only works until a state obtains membership and that once it has been accepted, the external leverage on constitutional or institutional processes tends to become less effective.

The second case is that of the Balkans, where the main issue in the transition to democracy is the establishment of the territorial framework of the transition. Suppose in 1989 we had asked people who were studying eastern Europe and

who were interested in the question of democracy to identify the countries with the best conditions for the transition to democracy, most would have suggested Yugoslavia. Its model of communism was already diluted, it was no longer a totalitarian system, but rather a decrepit authoritarianism. It already allowed freedom to travel. It had an embryonic civil society, at least in some parts of the country such as Slovenia or Croatia. It had opened its borders and had contacts, including economic ones, not only with its neighbours – Italy, Austria, etc. – but also with European institutions such as the Council of Europe and the European Union. Today, people would say that Croatia is carrying out the transition to democracy well also because of this legacy. But people would also have said the same thing about Yugoslavia in 1989, and everyone knows what happened.

The main reason was the absence of consensus on the territorial framework of democracy. Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan compared the transitions in Spain, in the former Yugoslavia, and in the former Soviet Union, and one of their main findings is that the first democratic elections in a transition need to be held throughout the entire country, not just in one constituent part. The first election is not only a founding moment for the democracy, but also the legitimising moment of the territorial framework of that democratic entity. If the first election after the fall of Franco in Spain had taken place in different parts of the country at different times, Spain as a state would possibly have broken apart. It was important that the first post-Franco elections were carried out throughout the entire country. This legitimised the state, and after that devolution of power to the individual regions, the process the Spanish constitution was already prepared for. Of course, this founding moment did not permanently solve the problem all by itself – as we know, the problem does linger on and will certainly continue to linger. But it has consolidated the territorial framework on which democracy can be founded or re-founded.

In the case of the former Yugoslavia or of the former Soviet Union, the process was different. In Yugoslavia, the first election did not take place throughout Yugoslavia, but first in Slovenia, then in Croatia, and then in the other republics. After the first elections took place in Slovenia and Croatia, central federal power was instantly delegitimised, and the centre of gravity shifted not only from dictatorship to democracy, but also from federal communist institutions to constitutive republic democratic institutions. It was thus a shift from federalism to the individual republics – to Slovenia, or to Croatia, or to any other republic.

In the first free elections that took place in the Soviet Union, a democratically elected Russian President – Boris Yeltsin – became the new centre of legitimate power opposed to the last Secretary General of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union – Mikhail Gorbachev. The conflict of the two legitimacies, the old communist system on the one hand and the new democratic legitimacy on the other, had a dynamic of its own in 1990-91. Everyone knows what followed this conflict: the simultaneous disintegration of communism and of the Soviet federation. If the free elections of 1990 had been held throughout the Soviet Union, perhaps things could have been different.

This is very important for the case of the Balkans, considering the legacy we are living with even today. What has basically taken place in the last 20 years is 10 years of war, followed by a decade of nation state building. Now this process is over, and the state of Kosovo[47] is the last newcomer to the European scene, though no one can be certain of how stable the regional environment will be.

This process of fragmentation and state-building is now being completed under international and Europeanised protectorates. For the first time in its history, the European Union, which was invented to relativise the notions of nation state and state sovereignty, is suddenly propelled into the role of creating new nation states and assisting the foundation of future member states. The EU involving itself in the proliferation of nation state building in the Balkans is indeed a paradoxical change.

Montenegro is a great example. It was the last and most faithful ally of Serbia when Yugoslavia fell apart. But then, Djukanović defected from Milosevic and played his own game with western support. Eventually, to reinforce his power, he opted for independence even though Milosevic had by then been overthrown. Mr Solana, then Secretary-General of the Council of the European Union, suggested the preservation of a provisional statehood called "Serbia-Montenegro". In Montenegro this residual state was called "Solania" in homage to its inventor. "Solania" was supposed to last only three years, with a referendum at the end of the process. The EU wanted to make sure that this referendum would not result in Montenegrin independence, and knowing that the vote would be split it curiously required a 55% threshold for the vote to pass. The result was 55.5%!

In Kosovo, the EU imposed an international, Europeanised protectorate in which its managers, from the outset in 1999 with Bernard Kouchner, were all Europeans. It did so with the aim of creating the conditions for democratic change. It created a protectorate to stop the war and "ethnic cleansing" because these are clearly the opposite of the conditions necessary for democracy. But how could democracy be created and run from outside by international and European administrators, even with the best of intentions and great sums of money?

The paradox of democracy by protectorate, was perhaps best illustrated by the High Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina, Paddy Ashdown, when he decided to dismiss in one day 70 Serbian members of parliament. He made this decision because these members were obstructing the policies he thought would be necessary for the democratic transition in Bosnia, but the dismissal of 70 elected MPs by a European overlord only highlighted the clash between the logic of a protectorate and the logic of democracy. In a protectorate, the EU diktats take precedence, but in a democracy, elected representatives should have primacy. But what if the elected representatives are nationalists who block the working of political institutions and consider any criticism as "EU diktats"? If, on

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47. All reference to Kosovo, whether to the territory, institutions or population, in this text shall be understood in full compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo.

the other hand, EU decisions take precedence, why have elected representatives at all? In such ways, these two logics, that of democracy and that of a protectorate, are contradictory. The solution is then to disengage from protectorates, even a Europeanised and benign one.

After major arguments, the International Independent Commission for Kosovo argued in 2000 that a protectorate was needed to stop the war and to create conditions for new institutions. But the only protectorate deemed legitimate would be one that from Day 1 worked towards its own dissolution. The EU was there only to create the conditions for the states and democratic institutions to play their own game. Otherwise, the logic would be one of neo-colonialism.

However, in Bosnia, where the three nationalist establishments were entrenched, options were very limited. The Dayton Constitution still exists, but it is no longer functional, and the necessary new constitution has never been agreed on. At the 10th anniversary of Dayton, the closest attempt to produce such a new constitution did not pass due to only one vote, and the situation remained unchanged. The Dayton Constitution was a constitution enacted only to make peace through separation. It can separate the "belligerents", but it is not a constitution to create a working democratic polity.

Moving from peace-making to creating a new integrated democratic polity was the difficult agenda of the last decade. The process of peace-making allowed the political apparatuses of three nationalist communities to establish, entrench and institutionalise themselves. They were able to secure their establishment, their party system, their business and their international financing. And when elections are held, the elite are first responsible to the international community which supported them. These are rent-seeking states. First, they are responsible to those who feed them. Secondly, they are responsible to the mafia networks, which during the war played a major role in helping states get around the embargoes. Responsibility to the citizens only comes third. This is the problem of democratic deficit, from which the only way out is to disengage the protectorate and to adopt a new a constitution. This, however, is a very difficult undertaking.

Mr Silajdžić, the leader of the Bosnians, suggested keeping the constitution and changing the main provision, in particular by abolishing the Republika Srpska and Croat Serbian Federation. Mr Dodik, the boss of Republika Srpska, advocated changing the constitution but keeping the main provision, which is the separation into two entities, the exact opposite of Mr Silajdžić's idea. This brings to mind the Romanian author Caragiale, who a century ago wrote a play called *La lettre perdue*, in which a character appears on the stage and says, "Yes, we need a constitution. Now, there are only two possibilities: either we make a brand new constitution, but of course it must be in all major points faithful to the old one, or we keep the old constitution and we amend it on all fundamental points". This is exactly (though without the humour) the present-day Bosnia; Bosnia in a stalemate.

The only way for the EU, with all its best intentions, to assist in the creation of the rule of law, democratic institutions and to actually achieve its mission is to

disengage with the protectorate. And it discovered the hard way that the only way to do that is through European integration; which is just another form of "protectorate light". It disengaged the old protectorate and created EULEX in Kosovo, a new institution whose role is to supervise the establishment of the rule of law, for example by assisting the police and legal institutions moving towards European integration. There is still internal European supervision of that process, but in a new context, in a new guise.

The European paradox in the Balkans is the EU's engagement in nation state building as a precondition for a democratic transformation and for the rule of law. An *Etat de droit*, a *Rechtstaat*, is impossible without knowing what kind of state is being built. The main lesson from the Balkans is that the two concepts are closely connected.

The third case concerns the electoral revolutions in the peripheral eastern neighbourhood of the EU, which also happens to be the neighbourhood of Russia. The Orange Revolution in Ukraine and the Rose Revolution in Georgia showed that old oligarchic post-communist regimes can be checked by new electoral processes. Václav Havel, when asked whether he saw a similarity between these coloured revolutions and the democratic revolutions of 1989, said that they were similar to the extent that there were mass gatherings at the main square until the representatives of the old regime stepped down. It was a similarity at first sight: democracy pushed by a mobilisation process from below. However, he then said the main difference is that in 1989 the revolutions were against communist dictatorship, whereas these coloured revolutions were against post-communism. What is post-communism? It is a mixture of an authoritarian regime and mafia capitalism. In a nutshell, this is Havel's definition of those regimes lying in-between Russia and the EU.

These experiences do bring good news. They show that those who failed to set up democratic regimes in the intial phase of transition after 1989 or 1991, after the break-up of the Soviet Union, still arrive at a hybrid regime, which for them means a second chance. Democratisation is not a test that can only be passed or failed. It is a process. The good news is that when a country fails in a first attempt to transition to democracy, it may still enter an extended transitional phase and have a second chance. The bad news is that those who succeeded in the first phase – the countries of eastern central Europe, for example – are themselves suffering from so-called democratic fatigue. Democratisers can be successful and still experience populist setbacks, as happened to the Kaczyński brothers in Poland, and mainly Hungary under Viktor Orbán, undermining the achievements of liberal democracy of the last 20 years in eastern Europe. The backlash can also happen to the coloured revolutions. Look at Ukraine today: the Orange Coalition is long gone, one of its heroes was badly beaten in the elections, and the second one is in jail.

This back and forth process requires us to look at a long-term trend over the last 20 years. Democratisation does not just appear out of nowhere. Rather, it is a process of transforming semi-authoritarian regimes, or what Steven Levitsky

and Lucan Way call "competitive authoritarianism". In other words, this trend concerns authoritarian regimes that introduce elections because they feel they need democratic legitimacy. Too confident in their authority, both Milosevic and Lukashenko saddled themselves with elections but never bothered to worry about the results – until the day when they lost them. Some space for alternative parties, even very limited and in a competition that is not free and fair by any means, is still important. When a crisis occurs, those forces that have been established on the scene can play a very important role, being either mediators in the crisis or taking matters into their own hands. This trend is very interesting, not just in the light of the EU eastern neighbourhood's past experiences, but also for central asia today, and maybe for the follow-up to the Arab Spring tomorrow.

The main question of the second wave of democratisation in the post-Soviet area is what the nature of the geopolitical constraint is. This is the main difference between this region and central Europe or the Balkans. The impact of Russia on domestic Czech politics in the last 20 years has been almost nil. The impact of Russia on Balkan politics is more important, but remains limited. There is some impact on Serbia, but perhaps not so much on all other states. Russia's impact on its immediate neighbours, on the other hand, is indeed serious. This is a real geopolitical constraint, which calls into question the external European actors' options, their approach, and their hierarchy of priorities. There are also clear differences within the EU itself, in particular between its old and new members. Poland and Germany would not follow the same approach for obvious reasons. What concerns each state, in relation to Russia, thus becomes a European question. There are the issues of security, energy, democracy and of human rights. One state may rank them in this order, but the Polish or Czech states may want to reverse the order, putting democratisation first, then energy and finally security if necessary. The problem is not that the issues are not clearly identified, but that the hierarchy of priorities differs, which only renders collective action as a single European actor more difficult.

Sometimes the difficulty is aggravated by the fact that the concerned countries themselves have suffered such setbacks that it is very difficult to promote an active policy abroad. Consider Ukraine, for example. Even the Polish presidency of the EU, which clearly has an eastern partnership among its goals and which cares a great deal about the improvement of the situation in Ukraine, failed to obtain results. There are certain limits: *On ne peut pas aller plus vite que la musique!*[48] In response to the democratic regression and the setbacks of the rule of law in Ukraine today, it is possible to voice concerns, or to recommend EU vigilance or engagement, but those are limited options. There is actually a debate now within the EU on what kind of response to have – to refuse contact with Ukraine, postponing any idea of a partnership, or, on the contrary, to keep it engaged? The important thing, in both cases, is to speak clearly about freedoms and human rights.

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48. You can't dance faster than the music.

The conclusion can be put in three brief points. One is that the most effective way of measuring European democratic transition, which can apply to the European Union, to the Council of Europe, as well as to other institutions and external actors, is not the effect it has on those who successfully conducted a democratic change after 1989. This approach does no harm, but the more effective way of measuring the efficiency is to look at in-between situations, such as, for instance, in the Balkans.

Consider the post-Iliescu period in Romania. It was fashioned by the prospect of engaging in the European process around the year 2000, and Bulgaria and later in Croatia followed a similar pattern. In these cases, we have an illiberal elite discovering that the cost of not engaging in the European process is too high. The cost being too high, both economically and politically, forces them to make certain concessions to engage in a certain process and once they engage in that process, they change the ballgame and their own political identities. Or they can resist change, as happened in the Balkans.

It is not a matter of simply black or white; instead, there is a continuum of nation-alisms in the Balkans, in Serbia in particular, but also in Croatia. And what the European process does at some point, usually when the nation-state agenda is nearing completion or is completed, is that it helps the moderate nationalists to take over from the radical nationalist agenda and to make a "Euro-compatible" form of nationalism. This is basically what happened in Croatia with Sanader. Croatia had just signed its EU accession agreement; it was Sanader, an ADZ rep-resentative, a member of Tudjman's party, who opened the negotiations in 2005. Sanader, who incidentally is now sitting in jail in Austria, started the process of making Croatian nationalism Euro-compatible. A similar process is under way in Serbia. They moved from Milosevic to Kostunica, to Tadić: three faces that are more and more moderate, more and more pro-European. There can be setbacks, but full reversals seem most unlikely. We are trying to make Balkan nationalism less radical, more moderate and Euro-compatible.

What effect does all this have on the European Union? The new countries joining the EU do not necessarily do so because they are liberal democracies sharing a European project, but because they had little other choice. Since 1999, it is precisely enlargement which has accounted for the EU's greatest success: the consolidation of democracy on its periphery. But times have changed and new questions are coming to the fore. How do you help extend democracy in your neighbourhood when democracy shows symptoms of fatigue or even crisis in the heart of the EU itself? The EU approach to promoting democratic stability on the periphery of the continent is to promise gradual inclusion in the centre. Can the leverage the EU has in the democratisation of its neighbourhoods work even when the enlargement option is not on offer? What can the EU do when new member states (Hungary, Romania) suffer from democratic regression? The main question today as the EU confronts fundamental changes through the crisis of the euro remains: what happens to the democratisation project of the periphery when the very centre is in doubt?

Europe in times of change: governance, democratic empowerment and the information age[49,50]

Žiga Turk
Secretary General of the Reflection Group on the Future of Europe

There are five grand transformations which are currently disrupting Europe and the world:

A.   abundance and automation;

B.   BRIC countries – Brazil, Russia, India, China – and globalisation;

C.   climate change and energy;

D.   demography;

E.   e-everything, information, technology, computers, everything electronic.

These are indeed transformations, in the sense of disruptions; they are not developments which make the future slightly different from the past.

Outlining the issues

A. Abundance and automation

As suggested by Daniel H. Pink,[51] our industrial society relied on a pattern which proved useful to workers, consumers and those investing resources into production. In the past, people would work and earn a salary, and those who invested capital in the factory would make profits and manufacture products which workers would buy. This model worked throughout the Industrial Revolution and the industrial period of our development. However, today, this has changed; automation brings us to the point where robots are working and money can be made not by investing in the production of tangible goods, but by playing the financial markets. This overcapacity, this production which is getting extremely sophisticated and efficient, is leading to abundance of products, information and food in the developed world. Abundance, however, is a problem of the developed world, not of Africa and large parts of Asia.

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49. Debate held on 5 April 2011.
50. Some ideas presented relate to the work of the Reflection Group on the Future of Europe, chaired by Filipe González, former Spanish Prime Minister, with vice-chairs Vaira Vīķe-Freiberga, former President of Latvia, and Jorma Ollila, former CEO of the Nokia Corporation and now Chairman of Shell. Although the following relies on the findings of the group, it will not be a mapping of its report, but rather its interpretation, along with some further ideas of the author. The report of the group can be downloaded at: www.reflectiongroup.eu.
51. See: www.danpink.com/about.

The problem today is how to keep people occupied – what will they be employed to do? Different solutions are being sought to this problem. One of them is to try and sell a motorbike to the owner of a car. The point is not to sell them another device which will allow them to travel around the world, but rather a way of life. The CEO of Harley Davidson has himself stated that "what we sell is not a motorbike, what we sell is the ability for a 33-year-old accountant to dress in black leather, ride through small towns and have people be afraid of him".

Most of the industry in this age of abundance no longer sells a function of a device; they sell an idea or a symbol, appealing design and a positive feeling about what we purchase in addition to the function. For instance, consumers may buy plain coffee or fair trade coffee, the profits of which have been equally distributed, and which does not rely on the exploitation of women or child labour in the producing countries. Thus, consumers do not seek just a function, but also a meaning. This represents a considerable shift – from the economy of scarcity to the economy of abundance. In scarcity, producers are trying to sell function because functions are scarce, whereas in the economy of abundance producers are trying to sell meaning.

We live in the period of abundance of agricultural products, food and information. This means the end of the industrial and the information age, and the beginning of the creative economy.

B. BRIC countries and globalisation

If we consider economic history we would see that evolution of the continents in terms of their gross domestic product (GDP) varied. In year one, for example, and through to 1500, India and China contributed a substantial portion of the global GDP while Europe, not to mention the Americas, only contributed a very small portion.

By 1990, the economic map had completely changed: the United States and western Europe had grown to 85% of the global economy. However, the situation is ever-changing. It is assumed that in 2050, the distribution of global GDP will resemble the maps of 1500 and of year one, with China and India retaking the positions they once held.

The trends of GDP are fairly straightforward: the West is in decline, while China is on the rise. We have become accustomed to the image of the West as the "master" of the world, as this has been the case for the last 500 years. However, it would seem that the Cold War was the last global internal conflict of Christian civilisation and that the period of Western predominance is definitely ending: the beginning of the multipolar world is coming.

C. Climate change and energy

There are contentious debates about climate change: so-called climate sceptics assert that there was the medieval optimum when it was very warm, Greenland was green land, Labrador was wine land where wine grew and that furthermore,

today's temperatures have not reached the temperatures of the medieval optimum. Others compare the temperature of the earth today to its temperature since the beginning of civilised history. Although it cannot be said with certainty where the truth lies between these two camps, climate change is clearly observed.

A problem linked to the phenomenon of climate change is the rising price of energy, as resources are not infinite.

Half of all the oil imported by the European Union comes from only three countries: the Russian Federation, Norway and Libya, along with a few smaller suppliers. For natural gas, which is now considered to be the cleanest fossil fuel, three quarters of the supply comes from four countries: the Russian Federation, Norway, Algeria and the Netherlands. Businesses do not like to be limited to so few sources.

It is well known how to reduce CO_2 emissions; after all, mankind lived sustainably 200 years ago. However, we refuse to sacrifice the quality of life that we have obtained through the use of energy and do not want to weaken the economy for the benefit of the climate. The availability of underground energy and fossil fuels is coming to an end, and they will be replaced by above ground, mostly sun-powered, energy sources. This presents another major paradigm shift.

D. Demography

The analysis of current population pyramids and projections for 2060 shows that while there is currently still a large working population between the ages of 20 and 65, in the future, the baby boomers will be well beyond the retirement age of 70. Each year, the life expectancy of a European citizen increases by three months, which is already a serious concern for insurance companies and directors of employment policy.

As for the future, one can observe a clear trend of a declining share of EU population. In the 1950s, EU citizens represented little more than 6% of the global population. By means of enlargement, the EU now again represents between 6% and 7% of the global population and 6% and 7% of the global talent. Even if Turkey is added at some point in the future, this will not change the picture dramatically and the EU would retain the same percentage of global population and global talent. Thus, it would remain at approximately 6-7% of the global economy if we assume that the future economy will be the economy of talent.

In Europe, this spells the end of population growth and the end of a youth-dominated society. In our contemporary societies, youth play a vital part by constituting an optimistic force, investing, buying houses, starting families and more. Such activities are in decline in societies with a higher average age. Japan, for instance, has already had to experience some repercussions of this phenomenon, while in Europe it has just started.

E. E-everything

Information technology has drastically transformed the way society is organised, communicates and works together. All elements of society – families, businesses, cities, countries or international institutions such as the Council of Europe – are held together through communication. Thus, a change of communication impacts various aspects of society. Presently, we are moving from a society organised around paper towards a society organised around digital communication. One could suggest that democracy is a child of paper communication and that digital communication will lead to a different end product.

Linking the issues

On the one hand, these five transformations are historic and long-lasting and, on the other hand, they explain the latest economic crisis. Blaming greedy bankers is too simplistic; the issues underlying the crisis are these global transformations, which are, by definition, not limited to Europe, though the demographic problem might be specific to this region.

A, B, C, D and E help explain the economic crisis; in fact, the demographic problem was the first trigger. With a change in the demographic structure of society, concerns about old age are on the rise, as there are not enough young people to financially support the elderly. This leads to an increase in savings. Specifically in some BRIC economies, people save large amounts of money due to the absence of social security. This way, a lot of capital has been coming into the West from BRIC economies. However, neither Europe nor the United States have managed to invest it into the real economy. Instead of investing it in something real and tangible, such as new production facilities, it inflated the value of what already existed. This led to stock-bubbles with existing stock companies and housing bubbles with existing over-priced and over-valued houses. As energy prices started rising because of climate change, these structures started to collapse. And due to the heavy reliance on e-commerce, they did so with the speed of light.

A, B, C, D and E are global factors which are changing the world as such, even if the economic crisis is particularly significant in the West. Consequently, they are addressed by global players despite the existence of exclusively European institutions like the European Union or the Council of Europe.

Europe has reasons to be proud of its past, a fact which might also allow it to be optimistic about the future. The three historic achievements accomplished by Europe are:

– peace across the continent, first by establishing democracy and human rights in the west, then in the east following the fall of the Iron Curtain and the Berlin Wall;

– the Common Market, Schengen, the eurozone; practical instruments that we created in Europe;

– laws, the *acquis communautaire,* including the Lisbon Treaty.

Europe is not just a concept; it is also a legal and institutional structure. Nevertheless, the world of the future will not be euro-centric. How will Europe come to deal with these changing conditions? The United States have responded by electing a charismatic president who ran on a promise of change. The European Union set up the Reflection Group on the Future of Europe, tasked with identifying key issues and developments which the European Union is likely to face in the future, and to make proposals as to how these might be addressed.

In a single sentence, the summarised and simplified message of the Reflection Group would be: "Europe has a choice – reform or decline". The report produced by the Reflection Group deals with these different alternatives. It does so in a generally positive tone, as it suggests that the decline of Europe is not inevitable. Furthermore, it outlines suggestions regarding the five main drivers and challenges outlined in the first part of the presentation.

Recommendations

As regards automation and abundance, Europe is presented with two choices: either it will decide to restructure for the post-industrial society, or it will be stuck and cherish its industrial traditions.

When it comes to the BRIC countries and globalisation, Europe will be an active player and agent of change. The increased co-operation of the European Union with the International Monetary Fund offers a good example of this. Without this we would become what somebody jokingly called "a bunch of passive, selfish, former super-powers". Over the past year or so, we have seen that some countries are indeed continuing to act like superpowers even though today they measure just a few percentage points of the global economy while 200 years ago, they made up 20-30% of the world economy.

As for climate change, one choice is to build walls to keep out climate migrants and dams for rising sea levels. Alternatively, we can build and maintain political leadership and foster technological innovation. We used to have top-notch highly developed industries but we have not done enough over the last five to ten years to develop green technology, and others are catching up or even surpassing us.

In terms of demographic trends, we need to be family friendly and immigration friendly. We need to be smart about immigration, or we will turn into a continent of grumpy old men and women.

Finally, we should embrace digital communication the way Europe once embraced print. Long ago, civilisations in Asia had access to print and paper technology, but only Europe embraced it.

To summarise, the recurring themes include making better use of:

1. the power of the sun;
2. the institutional tools of the European Union; and
3. the hearts and minds of the people of Europe.

Making better use of the sun will not be addressed here, as there are many specialists who can tell you that the future is above-ground energy. As far as the European Union is concerned, the report makes many recommendations regarding the correct EU level for different issues and the synergies between the countries of Europe, for example by completing a fully functioning single market. To summarise: more single market, less state aid; fewer non-market obstacles in exchange for some tax co-ordination in order to reduce tax dumping from one group of countries to the other; and to better pursue social objectives.

The report calls for a Europe-wide market which goes beyond industrial products and which develops a workforce for supreme technological matters such as nano-technology and information technology. We would like to see a single European defence market and global free markets for intellectual property.

A market cannot exist without rules and, consequently, there is a need for complete rules on the market. We need to give economic leadership to the European Council. Examples include Franco-German initiatives towards more coherent economic policies across Europe, proposals to reinforce and extend the Euro Group as well as macro-economic co-ordination and measures to reform private debt and to improve financial supervision of financial institutions and governments. Reckless spending by governments, not just banks, has been the source of many of our problems.

The report suggests that the EU should run common policies, including a common energy policy with both internal and external dimensions; social security rights which would be, once and for all, readily transportable between member states; and a common immigration policy with the aim of attracting the most qualified, talented and motivated immigrants. It is not possible to have one member state pursuing one immigration policy while another member state is doing it differently, when both are in the Schengen area. A real single market and strong European investment policy would develop new technologies, major common energy infrastructures, as well as a common external position towards suppliers like Libya, the Russian Federation, etc. The energy optimum of Europe as a whole is probably better than the sum of the optimums of individual member states. Many of these ideas are not new and the usual excuse for their non-implementation is the lack of political will in Europe. This raises the question of how to create political will. The answer is very simple: political will is created on the "political market" which refers to voting and the selection of politicians, namely when the political market is in action and voters have an opportunity to push for ideas and to support policies.

There is a common European market for many things, but there could be a problem with the efficiency of European institutions, for example the speed of decision making in Brussels. It would seem that the Europe-wide political market is non-existent as almost nobody in Brussels is selected by voters based on European issues or attitudes, and top jobs are assigned by selection not vote. This inexistent European political market creates an asymmetry of reward and punishment and a moral hazard for European politicians. Making good policies

at the European level rarely brings an advantage on the national political market at national elections, whilst doing things that are bad for the common European project, but possibly popular at home, are punished by no one in Brussels and rewarded by the electorate at home. The Reflection Group noted that "if governments continue as and when it suits them to treat the EU and its institutions as alien or hostile there is little hope of creating the kind of popular identification with the EU which is needed for its success".

The final, and probably the most important element of the future, are the people. In the light of the changes outlined above, the need for routine manual work is declining. Surprisingly, routine cognitive work is also declining with, for example, economists, lawyers and paper-pushers being driven out of the job market by automation and information technology.

Non-routine, interactive and analytical work, namely that undertaken by creative people and those who are interacting with others, is on the rise. Richard Florida suggests that "in the creative knowledge economy of the future, human talent is the ultimate economic resource". When it comes to human resources there are three basic elements:

– quantity – how many there are;

– quality – how good they are; and

– empowerment – what they can do.

It is no secret that Europe does not dispose of a large quantity in terms of human resources, but it has always claimed to have quality, especially in an international comparison.

Some OECD data show that in the 1960s there was a substantial difference in the quality of human resources across the world, with Europe scoring highly. By the 1990s, the differences were almost non-existent. Korea, which was 27th in the 1960s, was number one in the 1990s, whereas the United States, which used to be number one, was down to 13th. Over the course of this development, many countries have understood the importance of investing in education.

During the period of the Lisbon Strategy, which aimed to foster investment in research and education, investment in research and education went up in China, Korea, Japan, even the US. Europe, however, is struggling to keep its investment level.

The last element is empowerment; as Bill Gates suggested, "Leaders in the 21st century will be those who empower others". For Europe, this is important, since, while it will not be leading in terms of quantity, it has historically done well and sometimes even been ahead in terms of empowerment.

Europe has adopted a culture, tradition and values which respect individuals, their freedom and democracy. These are ideals which empower, which created the scientific revolution of the Renaissance and pushed Europe beyond other civilisations. In his book *Guns, Germs and Steel,* Jared Diamond suggests why some civilisations succeed and others fail. The Eurasian civilisations – Persia,
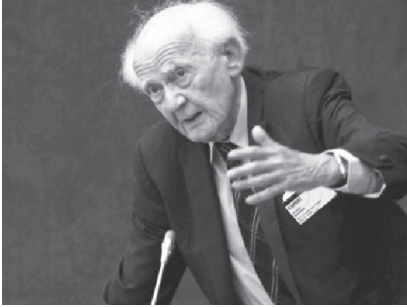
Greece, India and China – succeeded because they are located in the Fertile Crescent which had the most plants and animals available for domestication. This explains why Eurasia was better at building civilisations than, for example, Africa or America.

However, this cannot account for the differences between Europe and the Arab world, Persia, India and China. The difference could be this element of empowerment, in which Europe was a little better than the others. Today, this message is even more important than it was in the past. Never before has this much education, information, knowledge and contact between people been available to so many.

To conclude with a quote from the report: "the crisis has acted as a wake-up call for Europe to respond to the changing global order. As with all transformations, the emerging order will result in new winners and losers. If Europe does not want to be among the losers, it needs to look outwards and embark on an ambitious long-term reform programme for the next twenty years." Maybe we will not need to come down from the top, but rather, a few others will join us up there. That would be more fun and more productive.

About the authors

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Zygmunt Bauman is one of Europe's most influential sociologists. He is Emeritus Professor of Sociology, having served as Professor of Sociology and, at various times, Head of Department at Leeds from 1972 until his retirement in 1990. His experiences have made him a caustic critic of the status quo. His interests go beyond sociology and extend to political theory, philosophy, ethics, art theory, communications and cultural studies and theology. Zygmunt Bauman has addressed concepts such as social justice, public and private morality and responsibility, identity and community, security and uncertainty.

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Democracy is well-established and soundly practiced in most European countries. But despite unprecedented progress, there is growing dissatisfaction with the state of democracy and deepening mistrust of democratic institutions; a situation exacerbated by the economic crisis. Are Europe's democracies really under threat? Has the traditional model of European democracy exhausted its potential? A broad consensus is forming as to the urgent need to examine the origins of the crisis and to explore visions and strategies which could contribute to rebuilding confidence in democracy.

As Europe's guardian of democracy, human rights and the rule of law, the Council of Europe is committed to exploring the state and practice of European democracy, as well as identifying new challenges and anticipating future trends. In order to facilitate this reflection, the Council of Europe held a series of Democracy Debates with the participation of renowned specialists working in a variety of backgrounds and disciplines.

This publication presents the eight Democracy Debate lectures. Each presentation analyses a specific aspect of democracy today, placing the issues not only in their political context but also addressing the historical, technological and communication dimensions. The authors make proposals on ways to improve democratic governance and offer their predictions on how democracy in Europe may evolve. Together, the presentations contribute to improving our understanding of democracy today and to recognising the ways it could be protected and strengthened.

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