We need to talk about Europe

" European Identity Debates at the Council of Europe 2013-14

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ÉCOLE NATIONALE D'ADMINISTRATION

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Council of Europe

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Preface

Europe can be proud of its history; for many centuries it has been a centre of progressive thought and ideas. There have been many periods in history when Europe has thrived politically, economically and culturally, sharing its knowledge, institutions and achievements with other parts of the world. But there have also been dark days in its history and these lie deeply within Europe's understanding of itself. The atrocities of the 20th century, unprecedented in the scale of their horror, should serve as a constant reminder and warning.

After the Second World War, Europe managed to overcome animosity and conflict between neighbours and build a space of peace and prosperity where democracy, the respect of human rights and the rule of law were able to flourish. After the fall of communism in 1989, this space was extended to central and eastern European countries.

With this expansion eastwards, Europe felt confident that it was safe from severe political conflicts and immune to military battles. But events in the territories of the former Yugoslavia and elsewhere brutally proved otherwise. Today, European unity and its capacity to respond to international conflicts is being put to the test in Ukraine, where the ongoing tensions constitute a threat to territorial integrity and our common values.

But the challenges facing Europe do not only relate to foreign policy; we are in the grip of long and deep economic and social crises. Demography offers one example: Europe's population is ageing and demographic decline is predicted. Possible solutions involving immigration are considered too risky politically and nationalistic and xenophobic rhetoric are becoming commonplace, playing on people's fears as they face globalisation and a long-lasting recession. Extremist views espousing nationalist rhetoric are finding their way into the mainstream discourse, thereby forcing European governments to adopt more national-oriented measures, based on defending their national interests. Europe is blamed as a source of the problem rather than being seen as a part of the solution. The results of recent elections to the European Parliament confirm this worrying trend.

If Europe is to find its rightful place in a globalised world, it must speak with a united voice. Currently, as the global centres of gravity shift, a lack of shared vision combined with severe economic and political problems mean that Europe is being sidelined; the emerging new economic powers are challenging the dominant role of Europe.

It is in this context that the need for a constructive debate on the concepts, implementation and desire for European identity has taken centre stage. Europe is at a crossroads and a renewed vision of what it means to be European is required. This vision should be based on far more than shared economic interests – we need to build a Europe of shared values and we need to identify a unique European conception of how to live together.

The European space is a place where diversity should be embraced. Migration and the opportunities brought about by easier cross-border mobility have contributed to the diversity of societies. At the same time, higher levels of migration within the European Union and throughout the entire continent are exacerbating people's tensions and fears in a difficult economic context. Europe's leaders ignore this at their peril. But the responses must come from the light side of European history, from our history of exchange and fairness, not from our dark history of mistrust and conflict.

Many people are increasingly disillusioned with European institutions. They question their pertinence in the new world order and the institutions themselves seem unable to speak in a clear, comprehensible manner about what their mandate is, why it matters and how they could implement it in a way which enables the European project to move forward. National governments add to the problem by blaming "Brussels" for policies which they themselves initiated and approved. The threat of a renationalisation of Europe is gaining momentum.

The Council of Europe, as an intergovernmental organisation comprising 47 European member states, has an important role to play in helping to determine a positive "voice of Europe". Our task is to rekindle a belief in Europe as a broad community of citizens sharing a common heritage, humanist values and respect for human rights, democratic institutions and the rule of law. This Europe should welcome diversity and be inclusive. European institutions, including the Council of Europe, need to rebuild public trust in their effectiveness and relevance. We need to adapt our role to Europe's shifting position in a globalised multi-polar world. Our strength lies in maintaining our convention-level standards and instruments and ensuring that the mechanisms necessary for their implementation are in place. It is vital that the Organisation continues to promote the values of democracy, human rights and the rule of law among its member states and in a wider international context.

We must bear in mind that the "European project" is a work in progress which should respond to changing circumstances in a dynamic manner. We must seek innovative measures to enhance co-operation based on the democratic values that unite us. A concerted effort by European states is necessary to overcome the underlying crises; the strength and international relevance of Europe lie in its ability to act collectively.

With this in mind, the European Identity Debates were initiated in early 2013 in order to consolidate the Council of Europe's reflection on what Europe, and being European, means today: how far can we go in its transformation and integration, what are its limits? Should Europe be limited geographically or can it be based on common values, culture or religious heritage? How can we ensure respect for diversity and inclusion of people from other cultures, faiths and traditions? What future can we expect for Europe, what are the opportunities, challenges, risks and threats? Addressing these questions of European identity will help us to better understand Europe today and shape a sustainable Europe for tomorrow.

The Council of Europe, encompassing the entire European continent, provides the ideal framework for discussing the notion of a common European identity. Indeed the core values which drive the work of the Council of Europe could be considered as unifying factors across the continent. The Organisation must continue to play an important role in spreading these values across the continent. Thus we provide the ideal forum to explore what it means to be a European in the 21st century and to look at ways to foster positive European identities.

The European Identity Debates were organised in co-operation with the French École nationale d'administration, based in Strasbourg. The dialogue has been inter-disciplinary with eminent personalities invited to Strasbourg from different walks of life – politicians, academics, writers, philosophers, historians and journalists. I would also like to commend Director Piotr Świtalski for his outstanding work in this regard.

All identities are in essence complex and multifaceted; discerning shared identities relevant to Europe's citizens, across a continent with distinct cultural, political and historical attributes, is no easy task. At the same time as exploring the characteristics and framework of such identities, it is perhaps necessary to ask whether a European identity does indeed exist.

European identity in its broadest meaning would correspond to a sense of belonging to Europe, an attachment to a set of values and principles, but also a recognition of the great diversity of cultures, religions, traditions and languages inherent to the European continent. It is this diversity which might be seen as both an asset and an obstacle to defining a common identity.

I am convinced that respect for diversity and multifaceted identities is the key to finding a response to the challenges that European societies are facing today. A common European identity should be grounded in a model of living together where differences are recognised and cherished and the various experiences across the continent serve as guidance for future actions. A clearer understanding of the key elements of a European identity and its complex role in society would foster greater mutual understanding between European states.

Such an approach would not only encourage closer co-operation among Europeans, it would also help find a united approach to address the external challenges which Europe is facing in a globalised world, thereby securing greater stability. Such joint responses would in turn help reinforce a sense of belonging.

We hope that the ideas and conclusions that have emerged from this series of European Identity Debates could serve as a catalyst for solutions regarding the future of a common European project.

This publication provides a summary of the 10 Debates on European Identity with the intention of offering a wider public some food for thought on what it means to be European today. I sincerely thank all the distinguished experts for their out-standing contributions.

Thorbjørn Jagland
Secretary General of the Council of Europe

Introduction

Identity and European affairs

"What is identity? What is European identity?" As this quote from Mr Karsten Alnæs implies, the concept of "European identity" is in question. It is also a process in which there is a series of distinct levels and different scales. This identity may be conceived as a national sense of belonging: the citizens are linked to each other within an "imagined community". In this view, the construction of a national feeling of belonging is the result of a long-term process made possible by the work of a small community of political elites. However, today, the temptation to build a new European identity on such old structures may lead to a dead end. There is a need to build European identity on renewed values and structures. How can we do it?

Thinking about European identity implies focusing on three different but related fields of study: actors, governance and policies. For many years now, these topics have been of utmost importance for l'École nationale d'administration in its expertise in European issues, and in its partnership with the Council of Europe.

In the quest for European identity, analysing the concept through the parties and actors involved in the building of Europe on different scales is a relevant point.

The first key component is "Europa". It was a myth long before it was a continent and a community of member states. Mr Karsten Alnæs reminds us of the story of this young princess from the area now known as Lebanon. She was seduced and taken prisoner by Zeus, and finally became a queen in what is now the island of Crete. "Europa" was turned into a geographic, economic and political concept in more recent history. Indeed, memories of wars and struggles led Europeans to reconsider the idea of Europe.

The second key component is the member states. As Mr Robert Salais said, "the European project has not been considered in its own right, but on the basis of each country's self-interest and potential gains". This fact is surely one of the main issues that the construction of a European identity is now facing.

The third key component is European citizens. Efforts are still needed to make citizens aware of their own decision-making abilities. A common identity is far from being achieved: even if the symbols – such as the anthem and the flag – are important for people to identify with common issues and ideas, European identity cannot only be based on abstract thoughts.

How can governance give insight into European identity? "What counts are not only concepts and strategies, but also methods of exercising authority within states", Mr Adam Daniel Rotfeld stated. What is accurate in this quote about nation states can also be relevant at the European level. However, unlike nation states which usually emerged through wars, Europe was built on mutual consent among European states. Thus, the construction of Europe has been associated with the emergence of a specific political organisation which often leads observers to describe European integration as *sui generis*. European integration has developed a unique model of "multi-level governance", based on the principle of subsidiarity, actively involving local authorities in the process of open consultations. This European governance is, in a way, one singularity of the European identity, as it is distinct from the political organisation at the national level in European countries, and elsewhere globally. This particular multi-level governance could lead people to attach themselves to a common and shared set of values, to methods specific to Europe, which could, *in fine,* foster a pan-European sense of community and belonging.

Furthermore, Europe is also identified with its "virtuous" governance based on principles such as the refusal of threats or the use of force, or the emphasis on consensus and ideas in the development and implementation of European integration. The idea that the respect for humanitarian principles and human rights is essential to the definition of European identity appears through Mr Karsten Alnæs's statement when, quoting German philosopher Jürgen Habermas, he declares that "articles of human rights […] make up the most important tenets of European identity. It is the European Convention on Human Rights and the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union that form the basis of commonality." There is no doubt that the European Union and the Council of Europe have played a decisive role in this development. Thus, European identity will be intrinsically linked to values – human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights – which European institutions such as the Council of Europe and the European Union embody.

Public policies and European identity

As Mr Martti Ahtisaari states: "The European Union is a work in progress. The tumultuous years we have experienced lately have convinced some of us of the need for more integration, in particular in our economic and financial sectors." Yet, policies that are being implemented at the European level are also fundamentally linked to the emergence of a European identity. The Council of Europe and the European Union have implemented many policies: on human rights, public liberties, transparency, economy, environment and education. All of them have contributed to the unity of Europe. Europe has already built a common core of values and public liberties, for instance, each European country has abandoned the death penalty in its legislation. In concrete terms, a common currency, free movement of goods and people, Erasmus and Leonardo scholarship programmes, progressive development of a common foreign policy – and maybe one day an integrated system of defence – can definitely be seen as major steps towards better continental integration and maybe the definition of a common identity. What defines Europe

here is its refusal of the systematic use of force and its wish to promote peace, human rights and public liberties beyond its own borders.

As to how far those essential policies lead the European people and states to live together, a question may still be asked: is it really sufficient to build a "European sense of belonging"? Would it not be also necessary to wonder about the potential necessity to involve more strongly the citizens in political decision making to strengthen their "European sense of belonging"? And, finally, could we not wonder if the weakness of the European identity is not, in part, a result of the low visibility in terms of where we really want to go when building Europe? It is therefore necessary to continue analysing the concept of European identity in order to expand our knowledge on this matter. Strasbourg, as the home to several European institutions, is the ideal place for further questioning on European identity.

François-Gilles Le Theule
Director, European Affairs
École nationale d'administration

Editor's note

The initiative to hold European Identity Debates at the Council of Europe was prompted by concern and anxiety. Europe as an idea has been losing its appeal and magnetic power. By 2013, the economic and social crisis had begun to weigh heavily on the perception of the European project. The crisis has played the role of a catalyst for anti-European sentiment. "Europe" has begun to sound like a bad word. On a political level, the rise of openly nationalistic and anti-EU political parties in many European countries gives the impression of a replay of history. "Europe" has become the scapegoat for a multitude of national failures and frustrations. At the same time, many politicians have tried to explain that the strains within the eurozone, the fiscal distress and the crises result not from too much Europe but rather from too little of it. All the while the blame game has remained clearly centred on Brussels.

The European project, once a lofty and noble idea of replacing national rivalries with peaceful integration, has begun to be perceived as delusional and irrelevant. For many, politics was supposed to revert back to the nation-state paradigm all over again. Sober observations underline that while nationalism can work in isolation, it kills itself when applied universally. Others add that a nation-state concept has clear limits of effectiveness in an age of globalisation and that European states are simply too weak individually to count as global players. But rational logic can sometimes look powerless when confronted with emotions. Even a devout European could start believing that there was something wrong with Europe.

A reflection on Europe, even if motivated by a large upsurge in Euroscepticism, need not be bad in itself. Perhaps the cold shower of popular emotions could serve as a mobilising factor. Some politicians have hoped for a cathartic effect of the crisis – Europe should integrate more deeply. These calls, however, until today, essentially remain unanswered.

The Council of Europe embodies the idea that Europe is bigger than the European Union and that the European agenda is richer than economics and politics. It intrinsically links "European-ness" with values. But on this aspect the European project has also stalled. Domestic institutions and processes are perceived with distrust. Corruption has brought down governments and discredited politicians. Intolerance and prejudice against migrants and minorities are on the rise. Something has definitely gone wrong with the European model of values.

Therefore, we, as the organisers of the debates, wanted to delve deeper than the current political aspect and examine closely the roots of the European project. We wanted to deconstruct its identity to better comprehend its elements. And to do so we needed versatile professional, cultural and geographical vantage points.

This publication contains lectures presented by eminent personalities within the framework of the series of the Council of Europe European Identity Debates. The debates were co-organised by the Council of Europe and the École Nationale d'Administration (ENA) in Strasbourg.

The debates on European identity featured 10 eminent personalities from politics, civil society and the intellectual and academic worlds. We were very fortunate to receive a positive response from our distinguished speakers: Karsten Alnæs, Yuri Andrukhovych, Viktor Erofeev, Martti Ahtisaari, David Lordkipanidze, Daniel Cohn-Bendit, Robert Salais, Tzvetan Todorov, Ana Palacio and Adam Daniel Rotfeld.

Their presentations offered a very rich perspective and sometimes stimulated heated debate.

On each occasion, the speakers addressed in an original way the complexity of issues related to European identity. The search for the roots of a European identity served as a springboard to unearth its multiple meanings and representations. The debates also served as a catalyst for political ideas and different concepts of Europe and thereby strived to open new intellectual perspectives and contribute to thinking on constructive European identities.

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To be European implies a certain community: a sense of identity and belonging which is intrinsic to the human spirit and therefore sometimes difficult to understand. Any identity, as Norwegian historian Karsten Alnaes argued in his contribution, is a concept relying as much on invention and imagination as on material factors such as a strong commitment to human rights, which he sees as the hallmark of a European identity. Consequently, the concept of European identity today suffers from a corrosion of the necessary conducive environment for commonality as well as from the rise of nationalist sentiment, the fear of newcomers to the European project, xenophobia and increasing inequality. While all these forces are interconnected and will be difficult to erase altogether, the most important condition for the dream of Europe to survive is far more basic: the prolonged absence of war on the continent. It is on this condition that European policy makers should primarily concentrate.

What role do languages play in our identity and is cultural diversity really an obstacle to a common identity? Ukrainian poet and writer, Yuri Andrukhovych, makes us aware of the fact that east-central Europe is a region where the landscape of cultures and languages is so rich and complex that the resulting heterogeneity often leads us to question its sense of commonality and belonging to an even larger European community. Contrary to such assumptions, Andrukhovych argues that cultural diversity is not necessarily a handicap and points to factors uniting east-central Europeans such as common historical experiences, social characteristics and even cultural limitations. Language invests culture with meaning and durability. Next to a call for a less simplistic and culturally richer understanding of European identity from a writer's perspective, the presentation includes an explicit critique of the western approach to cultural success and its impatience with identity processes in east-central Europe.

The relationship between Europe and Russia is a critical element for European identity and the question of whether Russia belongs or will belong to Europe is first and foremost a question of European identity itself. Russian writer and essayist, Viktor Erofeev, believes that Europe is undoubtedly less well acquainted with Russia than vice versa. The reason for this is because, for Europeans, Russia was often only an exotic savage, the "Other", while for Russians Europe has been the striven-for ideal. The Council of Europe, it is argued here, demonstrates very well where the challenges to a European-Russian rapprochement lie – the Russian soul is simply too polarised and politically immature to be at ease with a more western European institutional culture of multilateralism and compromise. While the author believes Europe and Russia "will still get married", he doubts that the contemporary Russian state and leadership are today prepared for that.

What can be done to protect and strengthen European identity in a time of crisis? Former Finnish President and Nobel Prize laureate, Martti Ahtisaari, calls on Europe's policy makers to reinvent themselves and to renew trust in Europe's potential for a bright future. The current crisis is a challenge for the European project, whose place in a more competitive world must be reassessed. Europe should identify its strengths and weaknesses before deploring its fate. Europe, Ahtisaari argues, is still strong and has a lot to offer, such as fair and open competition, private property, health care and work ethics. However, much will depend on whether Europe finds solutions to its current economic, demographic and social changes while at the same time respecting democracy and the rule of law. The Scandinavian social model, with its emphasis on education and equality, could help European decision makers to find a crisis-resistant model for the future.

The presentation of David Lordkipanidze, Director of the Georgian National Museum, coincided with the publication of articles in leading European newspapers about his role in discovering the oldest European *Homo sapiens*. Lordkipanidze gives us a perception of Europe from its geographical fringes. He reminds us that while on the periphery of Europe, Georgia has always been a symbol of a bridge between different cultures, a crossing point of nations where people also nowadays strive for interconnectedness in a modern world. Nevertheless, Georgians want to combine belonging to a European and global community with having their own national identity. Lordkipanidze argues that his field of competence, archaeology, can help nations to respect each other and further a dialogue based on a scientific understanding of how our national legacies and heritages are interconnected. Through their discoveries, and the education of young people, archaeologists can contribute to spreading European heritage and values, thus creating a notion of how to live together.

The existence of multiple European identities does not mean that there are no common values acknowledged by European citizens who constitute those identities. Politician and political writer Daniel Cohn-Bendit argues that there are two uniting elements for Europeans: democracy and human rights. These two key factors – not language, religion or culture – form the basis of a universalist European identity. This identity embraces all Europeans and does not discriminate against a single European citizen. The European Union, as a political construction and not a historical one, according to Cohn-Bendit, does not possess an innate identity but tries to create one for its

member states. The bond of European identity lies in the appreciation and protection of democracy, the rule of law, tolerance, solidarity and equality. According to Cohn-Bendit, the establishment of a strong European identity nowadays is closely linked to the political project of the European Union and is contingent on the way European politicians will deal with the ongoing economic and financial crisis.

The approach that questions the primordial role of history in forging the European identity is contested in the views of French economist Robert Salais, who argues that there is a consensus about a common European cultural identity – a consensus which has been maturing throughout the course of history. In the context of exchanges of every kind, not only when Europeans have talked and listened to each other but also in periods of rivalries, hostilities and wars in Europe, our history has been, paradoxically, the uniting factor of our identity. Although there have always been opposing dogmas and conflicts over the choices that would truly serve the cause of the identity of Europe, its reputation and its influence, this uncertainty may be even greater today, as a result of the current economic crisis. Nowadays European identity is far more problematic in the political, economic and financial spheres.

Tzvetan Todorov, philosopher and historian, points out the difficulties in defining a shared identity and opts for an identity which refers to the constitutive pluralism as a basis for unity. He highlights the benefits of plurality and diversity of traditions and ways of life which form the richness of the European culture. Accordingly, European identities should embrace tolerance, emulation, critical thinking, generalised secularism, "general will" (Rousseau) and "common sense" (Kant). Todorov draws particular attention to the significance and status of common memories as well as to the coexistence of national and regional identities. His message underlines the imperative of tolerance.

Eminent international lawyer and politician, Ana Palacio, proposes a twofold vision of the European identity that consists of external and internal dimensions. As seen from the outside, the European brand stands for a set of values comprising human rights, the rule of law, good governance and institutions and accountability, but in recent years it has also been defined by European weaknesses exposed visibly in the recent economic crisis. Within Europe, the prevailing attitude seems to project an identity which is based on a nostalgic view of the past and on a fear of what the future after the crisis holds. Yet a pro-Europe shift in the definition of personal identity is occurring. Young, educated people often consider themselves as primarily European before they identify themselves as nationals of a particular state.

Adam Daniel Rotfeld, professor of international relations and former Minister for Foreign Affairs of Poland, whose lecture concluded the series, reminds us that identities are formed out of a common memory and perception of the past. Necessarily, historical memory in Europe means first of all national memories, whereas European identity and a memory of a united Europe are still rather new phenomena. Yet, the example of Germany tells us that for national and European identities to be complementary, historical memory must be treated sensitively and protected against its misuse by politicians and institutions. Bearing this in mind, the question of how different national memories and identities can be reconciled with each other is paramount. In reconciliation processes, such as that between Poles and Germans,

nothing less than the full truth must therefore be told in order to make reconciliation and a genuine European-ness possible.

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As we can see from this short overview, the identity of Europe can be defined on many levels. There is the most subliminal philosophical dimension where Europe stands for rationality, the pursuit of truth, the supremacy of human values and universalism. But seen from this perspective Europe today is essentially synonymous with the West. Philosophy born in Europe has been embraced by the whole West.

On a lower plane, Europe as a cultural construction means the law, the state and other political institutions, technology, work ethics and capitalist business ethics. Again, however, even at this level the European identity is hardly distinguishable from the larger notion of the West.

Where Europe has a clearly recognisable face is in its present political dimension. The last 60 years have served as the incubator for a new identity of Europe – as a political project. The identity of Europe has been shaped by the integration process, its economic, political and civic dimensions. This identity is not based on a clear vision even if some would claim that it is a political federation which should form the finality of the project. But others would disagree and yet declare their support for the European identity. There is also no common vision on how far geographically this political project should extend.

The fixation of the European identity on the political project has naturally resulted in a situation in which Europe is increasingly identified with the European Union. This is definitely the case in global diplomacy. When someone mentions Europe in New York, Beijing or Nairobi, what is meant is the European Union. But even inside the geographical confines of Europe, in the post-Soviet space in particular, in public perception Europe stands for the European Union.

At the end of 2013 and the beginning of 2014, while in many European Union countries the European insignia were hardly assembling enthusiastic masses but a lot of frustrations instead, the European flag brought hundreds of thousands of people to Kyiv's Maidan. This flag symbolised freedom, prosperity, the rule of law, independent justice and a decent life. It embodied the most noble of aspirations. How can the idea of Europe generate so many different mental associations? Timothy Garton Ash rightly drew attention to a major paradox of today's Europe: we have a European country without Europeans (and probably more than just that one country to which he was referring), while in Ukraine (and probably not only there) there are Europeans without Europe.[1]

The challenge of identity emerges when we encounter the other. What matters, however, is not only how we Europeans define our identity vis-à-vis other people, but also how others have a say on the definition of our identity. We did not offer non-Europeans an opportunity to talk during the present European Identity Debates series. It would not be a surprise if they presented the most persuasive arguments in favour of Europe.

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1.   http://wyborcza.pl/1,75478,15935824,Dyktatura_Putina_to_przezytek__Uczestnicy_debaty_na.html#ixzz32uULtjuX, accessed on 27 May 2014.

Do we need a European identity at all when talking to each other within the inner circle of Europeans? Probably not so much. When among ourselves, we naturally want to remain French, German, Polish or Greek. Perhaps it is a mistake sometimes to foster the European identity as opposed to national identities. We know now that our personalities are rich enough to combine multiple identities. The European dimension is important, however, to cement the awareness of our common destiny.

Nevertheless, does it make sense in an era of globalisation? Etienne Tassin, who analysed the very different layers of the European identity, sees a clear contradiction between the philosophical dimension of the universalism and "cosmopolitan intention" professed by Europeans and the quite immigration-hostile policies implemented at political level. He calls it "performative contradiction". Indeed, this probably today constitutes the credibility limit of the European cosmopolitan vocation.[2] The European identity would make sense globally if it could easily be exported elsewhere and thus help to promote the values which constitute its essence to change the world along cosmopolitan lines. But we know now for sure that the world will not succumb to westernisation. The European model can inspire, but it will not be replicated elsewhere.

Is there, however, any danger that the European identity can slow down the nurturing of a broader, global identity? After all, the logic of most processes is global. Market logic is definitely global. Even the logic of justice is global. At what point, if at any, can regional identity start to delay the emergence of a global, truly cosmopolitan identity? It is probably too early to address this question but it may become inevitable for Europeans to answer it one day.

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As our debates in Strasbourg continued, the changing realities in Europe began to add new contexts to our deliberations. For the Council of Europe-organised debates it was quite natural to seek in them the confirmation of the thesis that values are the essence of the European identity. So what if by our own judgment they are universal and not strictly regional. Europe was first to discover them: democracy, the rule of law, human rights, tolerance, among other things.

These values are now clearly in crisis. However, the new twist to our discussion has been given by some politicians and members of the elite in certain post-Soviet space countries, who have begun to openly reject the values which they themselves have described as European. Many public figures have started to scare society into believing that the European Union would use the rapprochement process in order to impose those values on eastern European societies (to quote one quite ridiculous example, in December 2013 the then Ukrainian premier Mykola Azarov warned that in order to obtain a visa-free regime from the European Union, Ukraine would be forced to legalise same-sex marriages). The European identity was equated to decadence, moral permissiveness, a lack of decency ("eurosodomy"). Some leading politicians

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2. Tassin E. (2013), "L'Europe cosmopolitique: l'épreuve du non-européen", in Ferry J.-M. (ed.), *L'idée d'Europe,* Presses de l'Université Paris-Sorbonne, Paris.

felt tempted to suggest a development of the cultural identity of their societies not only in alienation from Europe, but even in opposition to the European identity.

Europe has begun to face a values divide. It would be a simplification to identify the divide with the borders of the European Union (including candidate states). True, it may sometimes be apparent that there is a Europe of real democracy and a Europe of managed democracy, a Europe of the rule of law and a Europe of rampant corruption and phoney justice, a Europe of free speech and assembly and a Europe of jailed journalists and bloggers. But quite often this new and most dangerous of all divides runs through each of our societies.

To some a European identity does not make sense if solidarity and empathy are not part of it. Is it true that European solidarity has become atrophied? Roger Cohen notes with sadness, and not only in the context of Ukraine, that to so many people now "anyone who believes the spread of freedom, democracy and the rule of law matters is a 'warmonger'".[3] Should Europeans really abdicate in the face of dictators, kleptocrats, homophobes and populists? Hopefully not, as long as the price Europe paid the last time it did so is still remembered.

Therefore, the European identity should be substantiated with action. Can we settle on this as the main message from our distinguished guests who addressed the Council of Europe and other institutions?

Dr Piotr Świtalski
Ambassador, Director of Policy Planning

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3. Cohen R., "Poor Angry Magnetic Europe", in *International New York Times*, 23 May 2014.

Roots of European identity: challenges and threats[1]

Karsten Alnæs
Norwegian writer and historian, author of History of Europe

The topic before us is wide in scope and deep in complexity. It is a topic replete with questions, and is very much a work in progress. We will first look at some recent attempts to define the European identity, then highlight how Europeans may have perceived themselves in the past and finally consider how this narrative relates to present European challenges.

What is identity? What is European identity? Lyudmila Nurse,[2] a British sociologist at Oxford XXI Think Tank, underlines the connection between the concept of identity and the concept of belonging. According to Nurse, belonging is key to understanding what identity is. Belonging means being a member of a community and feeling that you are a part of it; you belong to it and it belongs to you. You are accepted in a particular place or environment, be it a society, a group or a community, and you feel solidarity with the other members within it. You also feel comfortable and content with it.

Confidence is another factor that is intrinsic to the concept of identity. The presence of confidence means that you can trust, believe in and be assured by the capabilities of the community to which you belong.

The American scholar Benedict Anderson has referred to communities of this kind as "imagined".[3] They are pictures or images formed in the mind, something unreal, as it were. Nations, regions and cities can be experienced in this way.

Anderson suggests that community is "imagined" in the sense that most of its members will never meet. They will not know one another, or even hear about one another, yet, in the mind of each, there exists an image of "their communion", as Anderson calls it. Slightly restated, we could speak of a mental kinship conjured up by the imagination.

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1. Debate held on 7 March 2013.
2. Comments made at the 7th session of the European Cultural Parliament, held in Liverpool on 24-26 October 2008.
3. Benedict Anderson, Imagined Communities, New York, 2006.

Anderson defines a nation as a "fraternal entity" which is "conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship". In the case of Europe, this would imply that its identity is invented. It is a product of the mind, an abstraction. One might consider it as a way of conjuring up something fictive and devoid of concrete parameters. It is an idea seeking unity and taking on ideological aspects. As Bo Stråth, a respected Swedish historian, has observed, an identity is a concept or an idea that is used to construct community and cohesiveness, in a holistic sense, and to engender the impression of all individuals being equal in this imagined community.[4]

So do we recognise European culture in these formulations? Is Europe, as a continent, conceived as "a deep, horizontal comradeship"?[5]

There are those who claim that, unlike a nation, Europe lacks shared symbols, at least in a broad sense. Yet the European Union and the Council of Europe have created symbols that are honoured by most of the nation states. A case in point is the European flag. Introduced by the Council of Europe and subsequently adopted by the European Union, this flag has become a symbol for most of Europe. Beethoven's "Ode to Joy" is another example. Like the flag, the "Ode to Joy" is used as an "anthem" by member states of the Council of Europe and, on some occasions, by member states of the European Union. A third instance is Europe Day, May 9, the "national day" of Europe, as it were. And then there is, of course, the euro, the currency adopted by some member states, but not all. Arguably also symbolic, this single currency speaks the concrete language of commerce and is valid tender to the ends of the earth.

In spite of the economic crisis currently haunting the continent, the perception of a European identity remains vividly present. Whether the current crisis has weakened or strengthened the feeling of cohesiveness and of belonging to a European community, we will discuss later. Let us agree that a sense of European identity is there in some sort of imagined community. This sense of identity can be ascribed, in part, to the close co-operation among states in the areas of economics, agriculture, commerce, media and law. This co-ordinated, unified activity is conducted and regulated mostly within the European Union, which currently comprises 28 countries.

But even amid the ongoing process of unification, it appears unlikely that various national characteristics will be mutually assimilated. On the contrary, national sentiments are manifesting themselves more fervently today than 30 years ago and people of different nationalities are more conscious of their distinctiveness than ever before. In some countries, a strong sense of nationalism and chauvinism has returned.

We also have to recognise that, historically, the identity of Europe may well be associated with intolerance, persecution, political dictatorship and genocide. As already mentioned, we are working hard to advance an ideal of European identity founded on the principles of the universal rights of man. It is central to this ideal that all governments and all national assemblies accept these human rights, and practise them in daily life. Many politicians, and some philosophers, consider this commitment to be the most vital and valuable hallmark of European identity. That

4. Bo Stråth, A European identity. To the historical limits of a concept, European University Institute, Florence, Italy, European Journal of Social Theory 5(4), pages 387–401.
5. Benedict Anderson, Imagined Communities, 1983, p. 7.

is why new member states in the European Union have to implement democracy, freedom of speech and freedom of the press. All citizens are to be given the same opportunities; protection is to be extended to religious, linguistic, and cultural minorities; and discrimination is to be fought against as are corruption and organised crime. In this context, it is also expected that equal opportunities should apply to commerce, industry and economic affairs.

An important goal of this European identity is a functioning and vital democracy, with free elections and a national legislative assembly, which, in turn, is contingent upon the well-being of its citizens and the absence of war and distress.

It is evident that new members of the European Union, such as Croatia, Romania and Bulgaria, associate European identity with these ideals, which encourage a common stand against those, be they people or nations, who do not abide by the rules. A manifestation of this commitment is a common international tribunal that tries political and military criminals as well as others who violate human rights. The aftermath of the war in the Balkans is a case in point, strongly reinforcing a common European will and capability to implement human rights and democratic rule – and to counteract organised crime in every corner of Europe.

In order to define European identity it may be useful to ask how, throughout history, Europeans have perceived the typical European persona. This question is of importance because the answer to it can reveal how attitudes towards other cultures shape Europeans' perception of themselves.[6]

Let us start at the beginning, with the Greek myth about Europa.[7] The myth tells us that Europa was a princess from the area now known as Lebanon. One day, the princess was playing with some young maidens in the sunshine by the ocean. They were having a good time, laughing and chatting. Zeus, the ancient father of the gods, strolling along the shore, noticed Europa, and fell head over heels in love with her. In keeping with his powers, and perhaps his desires, Zeus transformed himself into a beautiful white bull. Kneeling down playfully, Zeus, in his new form, let the maidens stroke his neck and decorate his back with flowers. Delighted with the big animal, Europa eventually climbed onto his back, and Zeus nimbly seized the opportunity to dash into the sea, swimming westwards with the captive girl. At long last, the pair reached the island of Crete, where Europa later married a king and gave birth to three children. As for Zeus, who knows where his amorous path led him next.

The tale of Europa and the bull was much revered in the art and legend of classical antiquity. At that time, the Romans and the Athenians had begun using the term "Europa" or "Europe" as a geographic concept, encompassing an area of islands west

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6. Denis Hay, *Europe: The Emergence of an Idea*, Edinburgh University Press, 1968, pp. 86-87; Lucien Febvre, *L'Europe Genèse d'une civilisation*, Paris, 2001, pp. 78, 79-80; Jean-Baptiste Duroselle and Fréd Delouche, *L'Europe. Histoire de ses peuples* (Paris, 1993); Hans Boll-Johansen and Michael Harbsmeier, *Europas opdagelse. Historien om en idé*, Copenhagen, 1988, p. 67.

7. Norman Davies, *Europe: A History*, Oxford, 1996, p. vii. It is Ovid who in his *Metamorphosis,* Book II, tells the most famous version of the tale of Europa, depicting the interchange between the bull and the maiden as an erotic encounter of sorts. The maiden puts a bouquet of flowers before the white lips of the bull, in this way seducing him and at the same time becoming so fascinated that she climbs onto his back.

of the Greek mainland and some regions north of Greece. By contrast, the territory east of Greece was called Asia. It covered the area from Byzantium to the river Nile, including what we today call the Middle East. At the Nile, a new continent, Africa, began.

Originally, the concept of Europe may have meant "the land in the west" or "the land of the setting sun", known in the German language as *das Abendland*, "the evening land" – in contrast to Asia, which means the realm of the rising sun, or "the morning land".

The etymology of the word is, however, uncertain. The Greeks viewed their country as the centre of the earth. Greece was located neither in Europe nor in Asia, but outside these continents. Later the Romans also placed themselves at the hub of the world, right in the middle. As they saw it, Europe and Asia were areas of minor significance, beyond the pale of the empire.

The Roman Empire is, by some scholars, regarded as the primary cradle of European identity, providing a pattern of sorts for a future European unification. In October 2004, the 25 heads of state of the European Union assembled in Rome and signed a treaty to establish a consolidated constitution for Europe. It was, they said, to be adopted so "that the races of Europe might coalesce into a body of one people with one mind, one will and one government".

When, one might ask, was the last time the continent was of one mind, one will and one government? In his book *The Dream of Rome*, Boris Johnson, the mayor of London and a noted scholar, states that such unity has not existed in Europe since the fall of the Roman Empire.[8]

Over a period of 200 to 300 years, the Romans assembled an empire that would come to include the entire realm of ancient civilisation. In the east, Egypt, Greece, Asia Minor and Syria all became Roman provinces. In the west, in what now includes Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, Spain, Portugal, France, Switzerland and England, the Romans acted as "civilising agents". In the western part of the empire, the influence was so pervasive that Latin became the dominant spoken language. In Africa, it would later be displaced by Arabic, but it survives to this very day, transformed by time, in the languages of France, Italy, Spain, Portugal and Romania.

According to the American historian Robert Palmer, the entire civilised world was at that time politically united and enjoyed 200 years of internal peace – *Pax Romana*.[9] The empire had one currency, a coin embossed with the image of the emperor, which was used as a unifying symbol everywhere: from Scotland to Libya, from Portugal to Iraq. The value of this coin resided not so much in the intrinsic worth of the metal but rather in the authority and charisma of the image imprinted upon it.

The population of the empire consisted of a wide variety of ethnic groups and cultures. Bloodlines were, however, irrelevant to the Romans. They believed that everyone could be a Roman citizen if he "walked the walk and talked the talk"; so everywhere people tried to look and sound like Romans. Everyone had to speak

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8. Boris Johnson, *The Dream of Rome*, Harper Perennial; New edition, 2007.
9. Robert Palmer, *A History of the Modern World*; 11th ed. by Palmer, Joel Colton, and Lloyd Kramer (McGraw-Hill, 2013).

Latin, and most people were quite satisfied living inside the borders of the blessed empire. Boris Johnson puts it this way: "Rome was there for everyone who qualified for citizenship. It was a bit like America, in the sense that it didn't matter what your religion was, or where your parents came from, or what your colour was. All that mattered was that you were prepared to buy into the idea of Rome, to show loyalty to the imperial cult and you were in."[10]

Franz Georg Maier, a German historian, noted that "seldom has a government of the world operated for so long and in such an orderly sequence",[11] and points to the particular adeptness of the realm in organisation, administration, government and law. Never before had armies been so systematically formed and maintained over such long periods of time. Never had so many people been governed from a single centre. The Romans had a gift for managing, co-ordinating, and ruling the multiple scattered parts of one enormous system. Locally, cities and city states enjoyed a good deal of autonomy, but above them there rose a pyramid of imperial officials and provincial governors, culminating in the person of the emperor.

Roman law held that no custom is necessarily right. Romans affirmed a higher or universal law by which fair decisions may be made; a law that is understandable or acceptable to all since it arises from human nature and reason. They also held that law derives its power from being enacted by the proper authority. This law-making authority, called sovereign power, was attributed to the emperor. Law was something to be formed by an enlightened intelligence and associated with the solemn action of official power. Roman law favoured the state or the public interest, as seen by the government, rather than the interest of individuals. These principles – together with more specific ideas on property, debt, marriage, wills and so forth – would have a great impact on Europe for centuries to come.

In the Early Middle Ages, the term "Europe" occurs in some letters, works and monographs, but it was rarely used. Its meaning was vague and uncertain, and its boundaries were unidentified. In some books from this time period, Europe is understood to be an area located between the Baltic Sea and the Mediterranean. Scandinavia and Britain are often excluded.

Later, in the High Middle Ages, scholars, historians and geographers often used the word "Christendom" when they needed a common concept to refer to the countries of western Europe. The Christian Church, with its legacy of Roman law, had taken on the mantle of the Roman emperor. In the 14th century, however, this term underwent a change of meaning. For many centuries, the political leaders of Christian countries had attempted to convert pagans and Muslims to the Christian faith, often by sword, fire and war. By the end of the 10th century, they had started driving Muslims out of central and southern Europe.

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10. Ibid, pp. 103-182.

11. "Seldom has the government of the world been conducted for so long a term in an orderly sequence... it fostered the peace and prosperity of the many nations united under its sway longer and more completely than any other leading power has ever done." (Theodor Mommsen [1885, 4]), cited by Franz Georg Maier, "Megaorganisation in Antiquity: The Roman Empire", *Journal of Institutional and Theoretical Economics* (JITE) / Zeitschrift für die gesamte Staatswissenschaft, Vol. 151, No. 4, Dec. 1995, pp. 705-713.

This was a time when European culture was in flux. With its bishops, priests, monks, nuns and other religious adherents, the Christian Church succeeded in building a new society through written laws. The church came to occupy a key position in creating a law-abiding society with courts of justice, a society in which all feuds among lords and vassals were banned. In this society, it became obligatory for the authorities to take care of the weak and the poor in towns and villages throughout the realm. It was, in fact, their responsibility. Hospitals and charitable institutions were erected, and help was extended to the poor and vulnerable.

Much of the humane spirit that forms European identity today is rooted in this Christian clerical culture.[12] Many a cornerstone of this medieval society came as a result of close collaboration between church, king and nobility. This was a co-operative venture that gained impetus also through clerical reforms linked to the growth of monasticism in the early 12th century. At the same time, European kings and parliaments made it clear that their culture owed a debt to classical antiquity, that is, to Greek philosophy with its emphasis on individualism and humanism; to Roman engineering, Roman law, order and justice; and to the common love, in antiquity, for artistic expression.

The new movement, however, also fostered an ecclesiastical court, the Inquisition, under the direction of the Dominicans, established in 1233. As the name suggests, the Inquisition was an "inquiry" into people's faith. It became the official voice of the Roman Catholic Church for discovering and punishing unacceptable religious beliefs. Those who worked for the Inquisition often used torture to force confessions. The actions of this court brought about less tolerance towards Christian dissenters, Jews and Muslims.

Spain emerges as a key country in the attempt to understand the changing attitudes toward strangers and adherents of other religions. At the beginning of the 13th century, Muslims, Jews and Christians lived peacefully and harmoniously throughout Spain. During the 14th and 15th centuries, however, Jews and Muslims were harassed, later persecuted, and from time to time massacred. Finally, in 1492, they were driven from the Iberian Peninsula (present-day Spain and Portugal).

The irrational and blind hatred directed toward strangers and foreigners was generated by the new ardour and intensity of Christian dogma. Occurring at the height of the medieval papacy, this fervour sought to realise the old dream of a unified Christian world. There were also huge contradictions in this world in flux. This was the time of St Anthony and St Francis of Assisi, but also the time of the Crusades against Muslims in the Holy Land and of the relentless persecution of heresy in southern France. This was perhaps also the time when the seeds of a later European xenophobia were sown, forerunners of what would eventually result in the Holocaust.

Yet another reason for the hatred of strangers was the seemingly unstoppable expansion of the Ottoman state, which aroused fear in all Christian countries. After decades of wars, the Ottoman Empire, centred in Turkey, had come to encompass the entire area of Asia Minor minus Constantinople. About 1350, the Ottomans crossed the Dardanelles and conquered Greece. They went on to defeat the Bulgarians,

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12. My ideas on the importance of Christian culture for modern Europe were inspired by a lecture held by Eva Österberg, Professor of History, on 30 September 2006, at a seminar in Stockholm, Den globala nationalismen, Stockholm, SNS Förlag 2006, 457-493.

the Serbs and the Bosnians at Blackbird Plain on 28 June 1389. Some six decades later, in 1453, another sultan attacked Constantinople, captured the city – the most important Christian stronghold in the east and a centre for the Orthodox Church – and ended the Byzantine Empire.

After this conquest, the Ottomans took possession of an even larger part of eastern Europe, invading the region that today consists of Macedonia, Serbia, Bulgaria, Greece, Albania, Croatia, Romania and Hungary. On two separate occasions, the first time in 1529, the second and last time in 1683, the sultan's troops camped outside the walls of Vienna, threatening Austria and western Europe.

These events created a demand for western unification in order to protect Christian culture. The name "Europe", almost in disuse at this time, gained new currency, became a popular slogan and henceforth appeared with greater and greater frequency in letters, sermons and other documents. Its use demonstrates quite distinctly how important it was to mark the difference between the Muslim world and the Christian world by establishing a mental defence against the advancing troops of the Ottomans. The Christian leaders promoted the old dream of putting an end to conflicts between kings and lords, regions and countries inside Europe.

With the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople, these ideas assumed new urgency and currency. To many people, Constantinople had been the foremost Christian stronghold, a cradle of Greek and Roman civilisation, of science and art, and the guardian of a thousand-year-old tradition.

Two months after the loss of Constantinople, the Bishop of Siena expressed clearly the pain of the defeat. In a letter, he invites and encourages Christian states to organise a crusade against the Ottoman Empire. It will, he writes, be "the crusade of Europe" against the barbarians and the pagans. With the Turks having conquered Constantinople, the pagans are now in Europe. They are, he says, "in our native country, in our home, in our sphere". To the Bishop of Siena, the defeat of Constantinople seemed to be the greatest tragedy in the history of Christendom. In invading the metropolis, the Muslims had captured not only an important Christian stronghold, they were also threatening western humanistic culture in its entirety.

In Constantinople, Roman and Greek cultural heritage had been preserved and developed. It had benefited from the sympathetic disposition and goodwill of the Christian authorities. When the invaders from the east took possession of the precious and unique documents of Greek and Roman origin, the most important source material of western culture was excluded from the kind of serious study that was required for gaining a deeper understanding of that culture.[13]

The bishop emphasised that Europe was of Christian origin, with a Christian history linked to particular holy places and saints, and thus just as important as the Holy Land. In contrast to barbarian and heathen Asia, Europe represented charity, mercy, divine love, devotion, tolerance, harmony and peace.

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13. Bat Ye'or, *The Dhimmi: Jews and Christians under Islam* (Madison/Teaneck, New Jersey, 1985); Clifford. E Bosworth, "The Concept of Dhimma in Early Islam" [in:] *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire: The Functioning of a Plural Society*, ed. Benjamin Braided and B. Lewis, 2 vols, New York and London,1982, vol. 1, pp. 37-51.

The Bishop of Siena filled the concept of Europe with positive connotations, associating it with humanity, honesty, charity, community, responsibility and tenderness. In sharp contrast, the Asian spheres, in his opinion, were dominated by negative elements of cruelty, fear, intolerance and ferocity. These characteristics were strongly evident in the torture, rape and plundering that took place during the bloody conquest of Constantinople in 1453.

Of course, this dark vision of the east was far from accurate. As a matter of fact, the Ottoman Empire was in many respects more tolerant, more humane and more open than the western sphere. The Ottoman Empire opened towns and villages to thousands of Jews from Spain, France, Germany and other countries where for nearly two centuries the authorities and the citizenry had persecuted, massacred and expelled them. Inside the boundaries of the Ottoman Empire, the Orthodox Christian Church was protected by the authorities and allowed to practise its faith. In many respects, Orthodox Christians enjoyed more liberty within the Ottoman Empire than was the case in the Roman Catholic world. And Christian scholars were granted the right to continue their studies of the precious documents in the Ottoman capital, Constantinople, and to do so without the suspicious and inspecting eye of the Inquisition.

Of course, the picture was more complex than this. In some regions, Christians were discriminated against, persecuted and forced to convert to Islam. Without converting, they lost their civil rights. In many areas, non-Muslims did not have the right to own land or property, and throughout the empire they carried a heavy tax burden and frequently suffered humiliation at the hands of Muslim overlords. For centuries, Christian families in the Balkan areas were compelled to send 8 to 10 year-old sons to the Ottoman army where they were trained to become Muslim soldiers.

In some historical writings, the Ottoman Empire has been depicted as a human paradise of sorts. Although this was not literally true, neither was the rather ugly picture of the east painted by the beleaguered bishops and princes of the western world.

This political and cultural face-off has always hovered in the background of European life and culture as it evolved over the centuries.

For instance, in the 18th century, Europe was fostering an intellectual elite that followed a pattern in many ways akin to the one we see in today's world. The intellectuals had much in common and considered themselves cosmopolitans, rationalists and internationalists.[14] Communicating in French and Latin, they attended the same universities, read the same philosophers, admired the same painters and held the same views on church, government and the ideas of the Enlightenment.

The French writer Voltaire asserted that Europeans were devoted to the same rules and attitudes, and that these common attitudes were distinctly different from those held by people elsewhere in the world. The Europeans are, he said, closely related and attached to one another, so that when travelling abroad a Frenchman or an Englishman or a German might seem to be coming from the same country and cultural setting.[15]

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14. Louis–Mathieu Leangles, *Jean Chardin: Voyages de monsieur le chevalier Chardin en Perse et autres lieux de l'orient*, Paris, 2000.
15. Voltaire, *Le Siècle de Louis XIV*, Paris, 1912, Chapter two.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau went further. He maintained that the French, the Germans, the Spaniards or the English did not really exist as such; they were all European. All people in this part of the world had the same tastes, passions and customs for the simple reason that no government attempted to preserve national identity in politics and culture.[16]

Napoleon also dreamt of a unified Europe and looked upon himself as the person to fulfil that dream. His mission is of special interest in terms of European identity. When he landed in Egypt with the French army, he brought along linguists, biologists, zoologists and other scholars skilled in a variety of disciplines. The aim was to gather and safeguard information of the geography, history, language and archaeology of ancient Egypt. He was convinced that if he did not undertake this mission, all the precious knowledge of that ancient civilisation would be lost to the world. His reasoning was that the indigenous population of Egypt was unable to save its own cultural heritage, and that loss would be a world disaster.

Napoleon believed that the Egyptians had succumbed to decadence for centuries and that they were incapable of shedding light on their own treasures. This now became the obligation of a superior French civilisation. In this firm, if somewhat misguided, belief, Napoleon's scholars set about gathering all the information and knowledge they could, and published 23 extensive volumes on a wide spectrum of scholarly and scientific topics on Egypt.

During this period, the people of Europe had begun to view themselves as a young, strong, gifted and intelligent breed of men oriented to the future. In their opinion, the people of Asia were the opposite: an ageing, decadent and decrepit culture representing an earlier stage in the history of the human spirit. The influential German philosopher Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel considered Europeans to be superior to the people of Africa and Asia.[17] Many readers found this view affirmed in the historical development of the 19th century, as European states kept conquering vast territories in Asia, Africa and the Americas. The Europeans established colonies in every corner of the world and spread their material culture to the far reaches of the globe. For that reason, many Europeans gradually became convinced that their culture and their way of living were superior to that, for instance, achieved by the civilisations of Persia, Turkey, India and China.

The French philosopher Montesquieu explained the inferiority of the Africans and Asians, and the superiority of the Europeans, in his theory of climate. In his work *De l'esprit des lois,*[18] he held that geographic conditions were key to the human ability to survive, to develop technology, to invent tools and weapons, and to adapt to changing situations. Oriental and warm climates produce apathetic and submissive inhabitants, he believed; cold climates, he was sure, produced active individualists and freedom-loving people. That is why a person from the Orient would lack initiative

16. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Considérations sur le gouvernement de la Pologne*, Québec, 2002, p. 14.
17. Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, Series: Dover Philosophical Classics, Publisher: Dover Publications, 2005, and Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte*, Werke, vol. 12, Frankfurt am Main, Suhrkamp, 1970, pp. 120, 129, 194.
18. Charles de Montesquieu, *On the spirit of laws*, 1748.

and the will for independence whereas a European, by nature, would fight against all oppression. Europe is geographically divided into natural zones or land areas by valleys, rivers, mountains and islands, and is therefore difficult to unify into larger political entities. By contrast, the enormous plains of Asia and the fertile surroundings of its big rivers constitute an open invitation to despotic conquerors to form expansive empires dominated by absolutism.

Writers and philosophers of the Age of Enlightenment regarded Europe as being well on its way to becoming one cultural entity through the unifying forces of economy, language, taste, attitude and politics. This development was, however, interrupted at the beginning of the 19th century.

A new wave started with a book entitled *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit* (1784-1791) (Ideas for the philosophy of history of humankind), by the German thinker Johann Gottfried Herder. According to Herder, all true culture or civilisation must grow from native roots. It must spring from the life of the common people, not from the cosmopolitan life of the upper classes. Each people, that is each group sharing the same language and the same past, has its own attitudes, spirit or genius. Although a German, Herder did not find German culture to be in any way superior to that of other peoples, nor did he feel that was the case with either French or Russian culture. Herder held that all peoples should develop their own genius in their own way, unfolding themselves with the inevitable strength of plant-like growth and avoiding sudden change or distortion by outside influence.[19]

Herder did not believe in a common spirit of Europe, or in Europeans being similar in their attitudes and opinions, in taste or in their way of life. Rather, he stressed significant differences among peoples. Earlier, the famous fathers of the French Revolution had loudly declared that there were some common laws for everyone everywhere, be it in jurisprudence, in rights, or in rules of taste for literature, art and conduct. Herder disagreed and contended that appropriate laws were those that reflected local customs or national idiosyncrasies.

Since "internationality" was considered a French phenomenon, the nationalistic movements were anti-French, and since Napoleon was an autocrat, the nationalistic leaders were opposed to autocratic regimes. Nationalism was, however, a mixture of conservative and liberal ideas. Some nationalists insisted on the value of their own peculiar institutions, customs and folkways; others claimed more freedom for the individual against bureaucratic interference by the state.

After the Napoleonic era, however, nationalism became a state of mind in all of Europe. In western Europe, the notion of national unity already existed, but the liberation of Germany from Napoleonic rule and the ideas of Herder and his followers stimulated the ambitions of other peoples. Now they, too, dreamt of becoming unified nations.

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19. Herder imagined the world as a garden in which nations grow like flowers, blossom, and bear fruit in their utmost variety. Republics "are like plants which are grown from seed". He used the organic metaphor of a plant, the result of growth and gradual ripening. Johann Gottfried Herder, *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit*, Edition Holzinger. Taschenbuch Berliner Ausgabe, 2013.

Everywhere in Europe we find these trends – in Norway and Germany, in Italy, among Czechs and Slovaks, among Poles, Serbs, Bulgarians, and in old unified states such as Denmark, Great Britain and Spain. Everywhere in Europe, people sensed a new-born national spirit. They praised the old heroes of history, sang national anthems and worshipped the colours of their national flags. They developed a new mode of national patriotism that was often contemptuous of others who did not speak the national language or who in other ways differed from the main body of the population.

As pointed out earlier, the Europeans looked at themselves through the image they had conceived of Muslim cultures. Consequently it is important to study neighbouring Muslim nations, as well as Muslim enclaves within Europe.

Edward Said, the Palestinian-American cultural critic and political activist, has in his books and articles analysed the attitudes of the Europeans towards people in the Middle East. He has particularly emphasised the Eurocentric prejudices against Arab-Islamic peoples and their cultures. In his principal work, *Orientalism* (1978),[20] he shows, through quotes, how the most prominent western politicians consider it a sacred duty for European man to dominate, govern, lead and help the less gifted, lazy, suspicious, lying and cruel people of Turkey, Egypt, Arabia and other places in the east.

Even if Said goes too far in generalising the European attitude toward others, he nevertheless has pointed to undercurrents of racial and cultural chauvinism on our continent, which may be activated and stimulated when we encounter people from Asia and Africa. To a good many Europeans today, it is difficult to accept the idea that multicultural elements should become an inevitable ingredient of the European identity. Many refuse to include immigrants from other continents in the formulation of a European identity. On the contrary, they view immigrants as "the other", that is, as an immutably alien addition to our society.

Many people fear the newcomers will destroy core elements of European self-understanding. Developments in the Middle East and other Muslim regions attest to this view. News of the worsening conditions for Christian communities in the Middle East stokes hostile attitudes in Europe. People read of discrimination toward Christians, the burning of their churches and flagrant persecutions, which have led to the significant shrinking in the Christian populations of Turkey, Palestine, Pakistan, Iraq, Iran, Egypt and elsewhere.

The actions committed by small and extreme groups of terrorists in Europe, the United States, the Middle East and now Africa intensify this aversion to the new cultural islands in the European enclaves of self-understanding.

Coupled with the European xenophobia of old, these factors reinforce the notion of exploitative Islamic activity and conspiracy against the European way of life. It is expressed in numerous articles, movies, books, television programmes and the ever-present social media. The picture presented is that of a population devoted to violence, terror, criminal behaviour and a parasitic lifestyle. Millions of Muslims are invading Europe, taking control of the banks and the oil. European civilisation is

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20. Edward W. Said, *Orientalism*, Vintage; 1st Vintage Books edition (October 12, 1979).

being destroyed and replaced by a European-Arab hybrid culture, in which Muslim attitudes and values dominate, with European values being subordinated to these Arab-Muslim values.

Whatever the viewpoints or feelings of this kind, the Muslim presence is indubitably a factor in shaping European identity. This is reflected in the international response following the atrocities and wars in the Balkans in the 1990s. Today, the assurance of human rights within the borders of the former Yugoslavia is regarded as an international and European responsibility. Organisations such as the United Nations, NATO and the European Union are acting jointly to guarantee life and security, along with other rights, for the people of this region.

This means that, more than ever before, the articles of human rights are regarded as a set of rules to be respected without limitations, first of all in Europe, but also in other regions. As the German philosopher Jürgen Habermas has pointed out, these articles – far more than any other rules, laws and opinions – make up the most important tenets of European identity.[21] It is the European Convention on Human Rights and the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union[22] of the European Community that form the basis of commonality.

There is no doubt that the European Union and the European Council have played a decisive role in this development. The new Balkan member states are well aware of this. In preparing for membership of the European Union, as well as upon admittance to it, they are constantly reminded of the EU's requirements regarding minorities, law, corruption, freedom of the press, secure protection against arbitrary lawsuits and other rights. They have accepted – and in part have come to appreciate – the intervention in the Balkan wars of the 1990s, in the legal proceedings against war criminals and in the post-war administration. Even as the European Union has changed the Balkans, the Balkans has changed the European Union.

The human rights affirmed in the two above-mentioned European conventions constitute a binding obligation for the member states. If a country violates these rights – or does not fulfil them – it is excluded from the moral-spiritual community formed by these articles.

The articles state that each person's physical and mental integrity is to be respected. No one may be subjected to torture, to inhumane or degrading treatment or punishment, and everyone's right to personal liberty and security is guaranteed.

Article 9 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union states: "The right to marry and the right to establish a family shall be guaranteed in accordance with the national laws governing the exercise of these rights." And Article 10 declares: "Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion." This particular right also includes the freedom to change one's religion or belief, as well as the

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21. Jürgen Habermas, "Zur Legitimation durch Menschenrechte", in *Habermas, Die postnationale Konstellation*, Politische Essays, Frankfurt/M. 1998, pp. 170-191. English edition, Jürgen Habermas, "Legitimation through human rights in Jürgen Habermas", *The Postnational Constellation: Political Essays* 113-29 (Max Pensky trans. & ed., 2001).

22. Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, Official Journal of the European Communities 18.12.2000; C 364/1.

freedom – either alone or in community with others and in public or in private – to practise religion or belief in worship, teaching and observance.

These rights may well be the basis of an identity for Europe. According to Article 21 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights, the member states that subscribe to this European identity are to prohibit discrimination of any kind based on sex, race, colour, ethnic or social origin, genetic features, language, religion or belief, political or any other opinion. It will not be easy to translate these statutes into action. Just consider, for example, the animosity of the ethnic groups in the Balkans or the hatred for Jews found among immigrants from the Middle East. Or consider the quite commonly expressed dissatisfaction, in many countries, with the conduct of people from Africa and Asia who are said to be invading Europe. Or think of the prejudices against gay people in many European countries, or the lack of respect for women and elderly people so manifest in everyday life.

During the last 50 years, Europeans have tried several times to define what European identity is. The first time, in 1973, was at the Copenhagen Summit of the European Commission. The idea of European identity, designed and agreed upon at this gathering, was based on the unifying principles of the nine members of the European Community. Their relationship to and responsibility towards other countries was codified in view of the dynamics of European unification and an integrated concept of European foreign affairs. Responsibility towards the world was expressed in a hierarchical way, with the European states ranked at the top of the list and China and Latin America at the bottom.

In the 1980s, the concept of identity was designed to infuse the European Community with a new sense of confidence. This new confidence, they believed, would be accomplished by giving increased emphasis to the local and the regional, rather than to the pan-European. Stressing the small scale would reinforce a sense of nation over the large-scale European framework, where a sense of the local, the regional and the national can more easily be bypassed. It was held that the emergence of more powerful regional entities all over Europe would lend strength and credence to European cohesiveness.

It is a fact that the growth of the European Union during the last two decades of the 20th century strengthened the sense of belonging to a European entity, even for people in countries outside the EU. At the same time, people's feelings toward their own nations were growing more intense. A wave of a new nationalism swept across the continent. People increasingly celebrated national heroes and national events, using their nation's flag more visibly and expressing national pride more openly. Several identities coexisted: a European one, a national one, a regional one and a local one. You could not successfully set European identity against national identities, or national ones against local or regional ones. Europe has been a configurative element of local understanding, national understanding and continental European understanding.

Many politicians and ideologues have maintained that a sustained sense of a common European understanding for all people on our continent requires a symbolic apparatus, which would include a long and continuous common history, a dynamic common parliament, a strong common government, exemplary common heroes, a common idiom, an anthem, a flag, a common army, plus a cuisine and dress code in common.

Europe lacks most of these distinctive marks. Europe is devoid of the inherited patrimony and the collective identity that fosters attachment to a territory or to a shared ideal. The French philosopher Jacques Derrida has said that Europe must find a platform "beyond the modern tradition", because "the romantic concept of the nation ruled too long".[23]

As mentioned earlier, the commonality of a European identity may be a fiction of sorts, difficult to grasp, define and measure. It is in the nature of being an imagined community. Commensurate with this notion, it is difficult to determine whether the present economic, political and social crisis has weakened or strengthened the European glue. Is Europe falling apart? Or are the difficulties haunting the continent forging the will to stick together? In January this year, prominent writers and philosophers wrote in European newspapers that Europe is dying. The idea of Europe – the European project, the European dream – is dying. Europe as pact, symbol and vision is dying. Europe is going to crumble before our very eyes.

The sense of crisis expressed here is primarily a mental or psychological one. Since the beginning of the present millennium, there has been a growing distrust among people in Europe towards the constitutional reforms arising from the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe (2004). This treaty was a charter of rights and duties, signed by all member states and ratified by 18 of them. Voters in France and the Netherlands, however, overwhelmingly rejected it. This led to a period of reflection and an agreement to amend the existing treaties, resulting in the Treaty of Lisbon of 2007. Intended for ratification by all member states by the end of 2008, the timetable was not met. The reason is that in June 2008, Ireland held a referendum, where the new treaty was rejected by 53% of the voters. The following year, after some modification to the agreement, the Irish electorate voted in favour of ratifying the treaty. But their initial rejection caused great consternation in Brussels and rattled many politicians. "Official fury was openly and brutally expressed," maintains the Anglo-American historian Perry Anderson,[24] referring to a deputy from Germany who threatened to expel Ireland from the European Union. Leading opinion makers in Germany concluded that it was folly to submit any proposal for European unity to the will of the general populace. With regard to the process, they may well have had a point. But in Norway, this kind of reaction fed into a perception that there may be a democratic deficit in the EU, certainly a factor to consider in Norway's decision to join or not to join this Union.

In 2008, three months after the first Irish referendum, Lehman Brothers filed for bankruptcy in New York, one of a succession of fiscal events that collectively triggered the worst financial collapse since the Great Depression. The impact on Europe was quick. The recession, the shrinking output, the fiscal deficit, the plunge in exports and the growing unemployment in the following four years caused a social disaster the likes of which Europeans had not seen since the 1930s. It affected hundreds of millions of people. In this process, it has become clear that monetary unity, though admittedly creating a stable currency, has not been a cure-all for long-standing weaknesses in the continental economies.

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23. Jacques Derrida, *The Other Heading: Reflections on Today's Europe* (Studies in Continental Thought), Indiana University Press, 1992.
24. Perry Anderson, *The New Old World*, Verso 2011, p. 506.

The European crisis runs deep. Since the 1980s, the rate of economic growth in Europe has contracted, production capacity has declined, and social solidarity between the citizens has frayed. In nearly every state, full employment and the social contract of tending to the well-being of all citizens have ceased to be common priorities. In an earlier day, these societal tenets were key to restoring the European nation states. They have now been bypassed by the new governmental imperatives of controlling inflation and steering fiscal mechanisms.

A number of prominent Europeans have stated that this serious economic, political and democratic crisis will undermine the sense of European social solidarity. The consciousness of a growing gap between the wealthy and the poor will, they say, cause millions of people to lose confidence in a viable European entity. The accompanying need and distress further corrodes the sense of belonging to a fraternity of equals. People have also had to recognise that the dream of the welfare state is being frittered away or may even be lost.

Critics have pointed out that the new constitution of the European Union offers no solution to the democratic deficit of the organisation or to its lack of a moral political finality. In the words of one critic, the constitution has merely managed to "cement the existing chasm between political elites and citizens" and in a market that is no longer tamed by social rules. This has led to increased inequality, and threatens to undermine a collaborative environment.

As mentioned above, for centuries our European history has been associated with war, intolerance, persecution, political dictatorship and genocide. For the last six decades, peace and democracy have ruled in Europe, but the present situation undermines the prospects for presenting a platform to work towards a dignified life for millions of people. The cornerstones for building a European identity are shaking. These cornerstones are the idea of the universal rights of man, the political and economic power to provide equal opportunity for all citizens and the implementation of a dynamic and coherent democracy at local, regional and national levels. Their collapse would reduce the possibilities for defending freedom of speech and protecting religious, linguistic and cultural minorities. The present situation does not look especially promising for our capacity to oppose discrimination and to eradicate corruption and organised crime.

Despite these observations, it is difficult to accept the view that the economic and social crisis in Europe, and the deep disagreement between nations, will weaken or destroy the sense of a European identity. Europe is not dying; the dream is not fading. The invisible pact between people in Europe does not depend on material progress, welfare and prosperity. Nor does it depend on the creation of political unity. The identity will survive disagreements between politicians and people within Europe. It will endure even if the common currency is abandoned. The most important condition for the dream of Europe is the absence of war. The crisis today reminds us that the germ of the European idea was born because of the Second World War. Often we do not understand the values in our society until they are threatened; until work, social welfare, political freedom and tolerance are endangered, as they are in our present crisis.

When the Nazis attacked and occupied Norway in April 1940, the Norwegians were prohibited from displaying their national flag on Constitution Day. "Not until we saw the empty flagpole on May 17th did we understand what it means to be free," wrote

a Norwegian poet on that very day.[25] The country was subjugated and the people were oppressed. But the dream of a free nation and of a peaceful life, better than ever before, continued to be nurtured during the occupation in spite of oppression and adversity, or perhaps because of the absence of everything associated with the Norwegian dream. During the dark years of the occupation, the Norwegians were brought closer together; they bonded. They shared in suffering and hope, as Europeans do today, and strengthened the ties that truly hold them together.

Europeans are not destroying their vision of a brighter future, nor are they abandoning their dream of being part of a greater European community. This community, this sense of identity, this sense of belonging do not, in the final analysis, depend on the existence of the European Union, the European Council or a single currency; nor do they depend on any future political union. It is something intrinsic to the human spirit and therefore far more difficult to understand.

Friedrich Schiller, the great poet and playwright, may well have captured the spirit of this almost mystic bond when, in 1785, during a difficult period in his life, he wrote his "Ode to Joy".[26] Later set to music by Beethoven as the triumphant conclusion of his *Ninth Symphony*, the ode is today also known as the "European Anthem". In praise of joy, peace and fraternal unity, it resonates with harmony of the ages. Freely and poetically rendered, the opening lines read:

An die Freude	To Joy
Freude, schöner Götterfunken,	Joy, thou beauteous godly lightning,
Tochter aus Elysium,	Daughter of Elysium,
Wir betreten feuertrunken	Fire drunken we are ent'ring
Himmlische, dein Heiligtum.	Heavenly, thy holy home!
Deine Zauber binden wieder,	Thy enchantments bind together,
Was der Mode Schwert geteilt;	What did custom stern divide,
Bettler werden Fürstenbrüder,	Every man becomes a brother,
Wo dein sanfter Flügel weilt.	Where thy gentle wings abide.
Chor	Chorus
Seid umschlungen, Millionen!	Be embrac'd, ye millions yonder!
Diesen Kuß der ganzen Welt!	Take this kiss throughout the world!
Brüder – überm Sternenzelt	Brothers – o'er the stars unfurl'd
Muß ein lieber Vater wohnen.	Must reside a loving Father.

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25. May 17th is the Norwegian National Day, the day a national assembly in the year 1814 had carried a free constitution, and since then celebrated by putting up flags everywhere. But in 1940 the Nazis occupied the country and flying flags was forbidden, therefore the Norwegians were brought to mind how indispensable independence and freedom were.

26. Translated by William F. Wertz, Available at the Schiller Institute at http://www.schillerinstitute. org/transl/schiller_poem/ode_to_joy.pdf.

Europe: culture on the edge of the world, or who are the losers? [1]

Yuri Andrukhovych
Ukrainian novelist and poet, co-author of My Europe

I t is quite possible that there is indeed no such thing as Europe in the sense of a united entity. There are of course attempts to create Europe, in the cultural dimension in particular. But it is doubtful that such attempts have a realistic chance of success today – that is, if the term success is applicable here at all. Provided we reject the global pop trash and some specimens of must-read classics, we are about to find ourselves forced to agree that an average Irishman and an average Albanian reside in entirely different cultural spaces and neither is going to merge those spaces into a single entity. Let us go beyond this geographically remote pair of nations. A Frenchman and a German are less remote, more active on the outside in terms of culture, and have perceptibly more in common; nevertheless, their cultural spaces tend to diverge more often than converge. Moreover, even inside a common-state structure like Switzerland, cultural spaces of the French-speaking west and the German-speaking centre and east differ quite dramatically.

Immediately a question arises: is this necessarily a bad thing? To what extent does this plurality of cultural spaces and orientations marginalise Europe in its imaginary cultural confrontation with the rest of the world?

Such questions appear to be rather philosophical. Do the complexity and heterogeneity in the cultural dimension indeed lose to unity and simplicity? And what does losing mean anyway? Is this a matter of who is scoring goals and who is conceding them? On which level do cultural phenomena compete with each other? What does a reflection of such competition look like in culture: like a victory of mass culture over high culture? But how can there be a victory where there has been no war? The competitors have never even met since they are competing in entirely different divisions, indeed (if we hold on to our analogy with sports and competitions) maybe even in different sports.

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1. Debate held on 9 April 2013.

Since I have not found an answer, here is another question I wish to ask: where do this heterogeneity and cultural fragmentation of Europe come from anyway? This leads to yet another question: to what extent is Europe prone to changes and alterations? To what extent can Europe be "equalised" and homogenised?

Many years ago (21 to be exact) I had my first chance to reside in the very heart of old Europe, having added Munich, Innsbruck, Venice, Ravenna and Florence to my subsequently compiled list of intimate cities. As a consequence of my three-month-long residence amid those landscapes, an idea emerged, eventually encapsulated in one of my later essays entitled "An introduction to geography", that the European man was created by mountains and woodlands. I was thus referring to the limited nature and specific properties of each separate location and to the fact that each of those locations is related to a certain dimensionally larger composition. I suggested that this had a crucial influence upon what the perception of form in its European incarnation would turn out to be.

Does the question of how to "equalise" Europe therefore become a question of how to flatten its mountains? Or a question of how to thin out its forests? How can the surface of Europe become flat? How can it be ironed out smooth and even, and what kind of iron is to be applied for that purpose? The very geography resists this idea, that is, the idea of a "united" Europe where united is understood as unified and simplified.

However, apart from geography, we should also consider history, which has processed Europe quite comprehensively. History, not geography, divided Europe into at least three major segments: western, eastern, and east-central. As far as the situation of the latter is concerned, there are several suggestions, and here is the one I deem to be the most convincing. Between the East (Russia and the post-Soviet space) and the West (the so-called old Europe), there lies something which is regarded as the East by the West and as the West by the East. Throughout this strip of land you will find countries populated by people speaking east-central European languages and writers composing their works in the respective languages of those countries.

So if there really are losers and outsiders in the cultural processes, it is first and foremost the representatives of these countries and cultures. If we assume there were indeed wars in the dimension of culture, then the east-central Europeans were the ones who lost those wars more often than anyone else. If we examine the currents and trends of cultural products in terms of exports and imports, we can see that in east-central Europe the volume of imports is overwhelmingly larger than the volume of exports. This evokes a suspicion that maybe this position of being an outsider is in fact a position of secret leadership? However, before we examine what this leadership actually is, let us ascertain what its causes were – in other words, why have east-central Europeans turned out to be the cultural losers of the modern world?

Culture – even in its broadest understanding – has always been and continues to be centred on language. Language, language and once again language invests culture with sense and durability – even if the language becomes poorer as we are watching it; even if it is shrinking and possesses and uses fewer and fewer words. Nowadays we are witnessing this reduction of language. However, despite the increasingly important presence of the visual (pictorial) in cultural messages, the verbal still retains

its substantial meaning. Even if we press "Like" or "Repost" on our iPhones, we still confirm our dependence upon the verbal. We still wish to say; we still wish to tell.

As far as literary messages are concerned, they are attracting fewer and fewer people capable of reading and understanding works of literary fiction – but still these messages retain their long-lasting uniqueness. And it is clear why this is so; because, of all the existing means of expression, they are the closest to thinking and thought.

So I propose to focus on literature (which is both the outsider and the secret leader of the cultural space) as well as on the very special situation in which it finds itself in east-central Europe.

Does a separate east-central European literature exist? If so, where is it? Who is its embodiment in the 21st century?

These are the questions received from Berlin — not surprisingly, since Berlin preoccupies itself with everything to the east of itself more than any other metropolitan capital of the Occident.

The response is a rather simple one.

The 21st century has so far not delivered any radical change to the global literary stage – since we cannot view the eastern enlargement of the European Union as a change in such a sense. The EU has enlarged all right; what is done is done. That said, writers of central and eastern Europe have not started to write differently as a result – in some other languages, for instance.

Therefore, east-central European literature is nowadays represented by the same languages it used in the 19th century: Polish, Czech, Slovak, Hungarian, Ukrainian, Belarusian, Serbian, Slovenian and Lithuanian. The Croatian language, once regarded as inseparable from the Serbian language, officially joined this company in the 1990s. It has been suggested that there are 17 languages in total stretching from Estonia to Albania across the entire east-central European territorial area. I beg to differ a little bit – I suppose the number is 16 since the Moldovan language is, in my understanding, not a language proper but merely a somewhat Sovietised variant of Romanian.

However, in this region one can also find languages of its minorities: German, Russian, Ruthenian, Romani, remnants of Yiddish, some other quasi-languages, sub-languages, unrecognised children: Kashubian, Old Prussian, Moravian, Sorbian, the language of Karaims and the language of Azovian Greeks (Urums) and languages of other groups. Karl-Markus Gauss, an Austrian writer and researcher of what he called "dying or unknown Europeans", could have composed an even longer list.

Incidentally we can mention that at this very moment in any of these languages – whether it is one of the 16 principal ones or one of the supplementary ones – a literary masterpiece may be being written. But who will find out about it? James Joyce is a world-famous literary icon primarily owing to his lack of commercialism and unreadability. But what would have become of Joyce if he had used not English but, let us say, Albanian, as a vehicle for his creative work? How many people throughout the world would be familiar with Joyce's works under such linguistic circumstances? How many people would believe the Albanians in their assertion that their Joyce was really a literary genius?

So here it is. The authors writing in all of the above-mentioned languages of east-central Europe, as well as their works, constitute this very east-central European literature. But if so many languages are associated with this literature, and if all these languages are so diverse and different from each other, what does actually unite them? What exactly allows us to say that this phenomenon exists?

Well, first of all there is common history and common social characteristics and common fates and common experiences: the 20th-century revolutions, the dictatorial regimes, the Nazi occupation, the communist era with violence and oppression as its components, the feeling of being not an active subject but a passive object of the historic "great game of confrontation" between Russia and the West. Suffice it to remind ourselves of the simplest definition of east-central Europe as a territory "between the Germans and the Russians" or, to quote an enigmatic Polish geopolitician of the 1930s, who was writing under the pseudonym Wiktor Szyrma, as a "juncture of nations located between the German and the Russian ethnic spaces". Such a location between two imperialisms did not, of course, give birth to any optimistic prospects. "The Central European sense of fear historically vacillates between two sources of anxiety: the Germans are coming or the Russians are coming", as I wrote in an essay about the "strangest part of the world".

To the above, let us also add the permanent censorship obstructions and pressure from the forces in power coercing writers into collaboration. This is a very special east-central European feeling of subjugation and suspension.

Apart from the external factors (the occupiers and the aggressors, the Russians and the Germans) let us also mention the internal factors present in the region: mutual phobias, vendettas and various linguistic and cultural limitations: Romanian/Hungarian, Polish/Ukrainian, Czech/Hungarian, Serbian/Croatian, Hungarian/Slovak, etc. – all of them couplings of hatreds, as it were. There are quite a few striking examples of these: Poles barring Ukrainians from universities in the interwar period; Ukrainians who retaliated by destroying Polish cultural heritage after the Second World War; Romanians who blocked cultural self-identification of the Hungarian and the German minorities. Undoubtedly, the Romanians have also suffered from abuse at certain points in history. As far as the Serbian, Croatian and Bosnian context is concerned, I shudder even while keeping silent on that matter. Sometimes it seems to me that east-central Europe is a terrain on which the ethnic has always been dominant over the ethical. That is, we have a long, long history of mutual cultural destruction. Actually, this is not exactly history yet. It is still very much a part of current events: it is our today.

To this bouquet (pardon the expression), let us also add the Jewish tragedy. East-central Europe turned out to be the primary arena of the Holocaust. What was the role played in it by representatives of various east-central European nations and ethnic groups? The answer to this question is still an extremely difficult one and has been neglected far too long. However, their future fate depends to a certain degree on this very answer. Ukrainians, for instance, are still unable to put themselves on a track towards social healing, and in my opinion this is due to the fact that we have so far failed to work through the topic of our collaboration on both sides – with Hitler as well as with Stalin. This procrastinated task is constantly devouring us, and it will never leave us in peace unless we put our conscious effort into dealing with it.

All of those repressions, all of those taboos, those skeletons in the closet and stories yet untold constitute – among other things – the unique, unheard-of and so far unspent potential to be channelled into the realm of literature. In their own "unsuccessful" countries, the writers of east-central Europe have to confront and deal with phenomena which their more western colleagues travel to Somalia or Bolivia to encounter.

However, the above-mentioned symptoms of shared historical and social experience comprise only one of the preconditions of yet another common characteristic – the purely aesthetic one. This is of paramount interest to us.

A kindred awareness of language – this is what characterises writers from this "strangest part of the world".

The literatures of east-central Europe are being created in "lesser languages" which – due to their lack of global influence and owing to their marginality and functional unfitness – have been forced to develop inside themselves, to intensify, since it was impossible to "extensify". They have thus accumulated their own qualities of melancholy, irony and refinement – qualities which eluded almost everybody and which were untranslatable. Each of these languages – and hence each of the literatures created using those languages – became "a thing unto itself".

An east-central European writer (and in this part of the world this weighty word is still used much more often than author; an alternative term, more neutral and more western) actually tells his or her story not for the sake of narrating but for the sake of using a language for which the surrounding world cares so little that it requires recurrent rescue operations, that its viability needs to be reconfirmed over and over again – at least to oneself. Language is no longer merely a material or a means or an instrument. It now becomes – forgive my sudden bombastic tone – the essence of existence, fragile and ever-threatened. The more you use it and the deeper you immerse into it while using it, the more evidence there appears to the fact that it will indeed survive. And if we replace the word evidence with the word illusions, we get even closer to the truth.

East-central European literature is autistic and autarchic in its own way and thereby – in the European dimension, forget the global one – it is doomed to be exotic, incomprehensible and hence "uncommercial". If "uncommercial" is regarded as the equivalent of "unsuccessful", then we shall be able to derive an answer to the question of who really loses.

My Spanish publisher lives in Barcelona and his publishing house runs two parallel publishing programmes – in Spanish and Catalan. They say that the Catalan segment has visibly shrunk in the last several years, apparently due to commercial issues. However, the publisher himself is a Catalan intellectual and at his university he gives his lectures on world literature in Catalan only.

"Which language are we going to be publishing your work in?" This was the question he asked me a long time ago, at the very beginning of our co-operation. And I fired back: "In Spanish, of course." Fortunately, I was reserved enough not to verbalise what I thought right afterwards: "Who on earth needs translations in the Catalan language? Who needs this lesser language?" Spanish is global – it is the language not only of Spain but also of Mexico, Peru, Argentina and other fabulous lands I

had never visited plus a sizeable chunk of the United States. The prospect of the big picture utterly took my breath away.

The publisher understood me well enough and nodded in agreement – but he seemed very sad, so sad that I was suddenly ashamed. I am still ashamed for the rapid fit of imperial chauvinism I had at that moment. I then resolved never to offend any language in the world again.

I described the flashback of this episode in order to accommodate a certain analogy. Writing in one of the languages of east-central Europe is like writing in Catalan, or in Irish Gaelic, or in Welsh, or even in Rhaeto-Romance, in one of its five dialects. It is like writing in *Schwyzerditsch* – Swiss German – or in one of its dialects, Bernese German, for instance. There is nothing impossible about it – each of the above-mentioned languages is used not only to write but to publish hundreds of books. To each of those linguistic niches, Europe grants the right to exist. As a matter of fact, not only a right, it also subsidises their functioning. Thank God Europe still has funds to support them. Or even if it does not have those funds, it still pretends it does.

Writing in one of the languages of east-central Europe is like living on subsidies. The literature of east-central Europe (at least in its most distinctive manifestations) is subsidised all the way through. It is like modern opera, new music or free jazz. "What is the difference", Peter Conradin Zumthor, a prominent Swiss drummer asks me, "between a rock music concert and a concert of contemporary avant-garde?" I shrug my shoulders in ignorance. "At a rock concert", Peter says, "the audience knows the name of every performer. At a concert of contemporary avant-garde, the performers know the name of every person in the audience." We laugh, a little too loudly. "What is the difference", asks Peter again, "between punk and jazz?" I shrug my shoulders again in compliance with the unwritten rules of this game. "Punk is when they play three chords for a thousand people," says Peter, "while jazz is when they play a thousand chords for three people."

The situation is the same with the literature of east-central Europe. Its authors play in their own languages using a thousand chords and know each and every one of their readers – at least their faces, if not their names. It is the literature of low circulation and several encouraging awards, including the Nobel Prize. It is the literature of sinecures and scholarships. All of the above testifies to the fact that this is the ideal literature. It exists for the sake of its language and believes that its language exists for the sake of its literature, the literature using it as a vehicle.

And so the two of them stick together, mutually justifying their existence before various subsidising institutions, the cumulative aggregation of which we can jokingly refer to as, let us say, God.

Now I have to examine the relations of east-central European literary peripheries with their metropolitan centres. How correct would it be to examine those in the context of post-colonialism?

In my opinion, even if it is accurate, we are nonetheless dealing with another variety of post-colonialism.

The classic post-colonial literary examples (originating, say, from India, Indochina, Africa or Latin America) are being created in the global (larger) languages. Problems

of translation, comprehension and of readers' penetration into the text face incomparably fewer problems and have incomparably greater chances to be resolved. In other words, a novel originally written in English or Spanish – regardless of its quality – has a considerably higher chance of succeeding. The careers of writers under these circumstances usually follow a geographical path of moving from the colonies and settling in their respective linguistic countries. And thereafter they keep writing about Bangladesh and Kenya while residing in London; about Algeria or Dakar while living in Paris; about Macondo or Manila while abiding in Madrid; or about Mozambique while dwelling in Lisbon.

And in doing so, in no way do those migrant authors lose their own initial identity. A French-speaking Vietnamese writer continues being Vietnamese although in the reference materials he is still defined as "French-Vietnamese". The reason apparently lies in the fact that multicultural openness is a one-way street of sorts. It is characteristic of the representatives of western civilisation only. As for the so-called components of multiculturalism themselves – or otherwise, the post-colonial migrants – they do not display a particular openness to foreign things and, as befits an exotic creature, shut themselves inside their own microcosms. Not to drive passions too high with this issue, I shall give what I would refer to as mild examples of this divergence. Germans, for example, love Thai restaurants, but it is difficult in turn to imagine a Thai family from Munich happily feasting on sausages and cabbage. Some of us smoke Pakistani hashish, but it is difficult to imagine Pakistani migrants relishing schnapps and supplementing it with beer.

Multiculturalism therefore turned out to be a value only for the westerners. Probably because a westerner is like a sponge, desiring to absorb everything, each experience, each of his or her contacts with the diversity of the world. This multiculturalism is an unconscious attempt to swallow the world, to rebuild the grandeur of the empires at least on the level of one's own self.

East-central European authors, as a rule, are virtually denied this privilege of retaining their own identity despite a renunciation of their own "lesser language" or, if you wish, despite a liberation from it. Language is one of the pillars of this identity of theirs. When you switch from your "lesser" language to a "greater" one, you have to be aware of the consequences, that with such a transition you are destroying a very important part inside yourself. In other words, you are not forbidden to switch from a "lesser" language to one of the "global" ones (as Milan Kundera did, for instance), but you have to be ready to face attacks and boycotts as a result of your defection. Upon escaping from your native language, you will not necessarily remain yourself in the foreign one.

In any case, we can rule out the possibility of such a defection in another geographical direction, to our own post-colonial centre, Moscow. I cannot imagine any of us – originating from Lithuania, Latvia, Slovakia or Poland – moving to Moscow and then writing in the Russian language while retaining his or her own cultural identity.

Well, if Moscow is out, maybe Vienna? That great cultural metropolitan capital of the olden days is imprinted in our memory with much more pleasant connotations. Can the Vienna of today attract people born in its former colonies?

Let us leave this question open for the time being. The special place of Austrian literature in the canon of the 20th century is indisputable. As far as the present century is concerned, that may or may not be so. After all, the special "Austrian version" of the German language allows many east-central Europeans to view Austrian authors as fellow sufferers in terms of language reception. Maybe there is a chance to view the German Austrian language as a communication bridge? That is, as a special transitional language between the "lesser" languages and the "global" ones.

The last question from Berlin is a logical question to conclude with: what are the future prospects? Will east-central European literature still be in existence 20 years from now? There are some grounds for a dramatic finale of that kind, and I myself have been trying to find those grounds every now and then, and I keep asking myself this question even now.

If we assume in the first place that the disappearance of certain literatures is a realistic scenario, then we have to expand this question: will literature per se still remain in existence? Never mind the east-central European mini-size literatures – will Chinese literature still exist? What about the literature of India, literature in the English language, or in Spanish?

I am convinced that yes, they will. East-central European literature will remain in existence for as long as the languages of east-central Europe remain living languages. It will last a relatively long time due to the innate human laziness which reveals itself when it comes to learning foreign languages – thereby remaining as unsuccessful, unrequested, untranslatable, incomprehensible and perfect in its "closedness" as it has always been.

In other words, suffering a defeat is an extremely important mission. With your marginal inability to disappear, with your somewhat spasmodic clinging to each of the words of your own language, you seem to be giving an example to all of the cultural winners and with that you prove that if even this poor loser refuses to give up, then literature in general will definitely not disappear – whatever anyone says about its inevitable demise.

Russia looks Europe in the eye[1]

Victor Erofeev
Russian writer, author of Encyclopaedia of the Russian soul

Europe is no doubt less well acquainted with Russia than Russia is with Europe. That was patently always the case and the tradition continues. For Europe, Russians were exotic savages. The Soviet Union also differed from Europe in its savagery; it was an exotic power with global ambitions and a missionary ideology, but then the exoticism for Europeans was tinged with fear. Indeed the fear reached an all-time high at that time, since Europe already felt threatened by Russia in the days of the tsars, who were keen to bring order, as they saw it, to Europe.

For us, Europe was the least exotic continent in the world, seen as the measure of all things, an unattainable standard and a tirelessly striven-for ideal. Right up to the heyday of fascism, we in Russia suffered from Europe fever, with an inherent, sometimes maniacal passion. Now, in the 21st century, that portrait of our inner, spiritual relations with Europe has faded and become opaque. As ever, we love the comforts of the European way of life, but the boldness of philosophical, political and artistic decision making in Europe has palpably waned. A Polish minister for foreign affairs, now no longer alive, was once asked who, in his opinion, was Europe's brightest politician. He thought for some time and eventually recalled somebody from Luxembourg. His answer really seemed to confirm the European decline that was long awaited by Russians. But now Europe is paying Russia back in kind as it watches the decline of our democracy with regret.

"Russian and European souls – Can they walk together?" was the title they thought up for my presentation in Strasbourg. A title describing souls walking along together sounded abhorrent to my ears, but for a European it was somewhat romantic as it recognised that Europe had a soul.

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1. Debate held on 28 May 2013. The debate was held under the title "Russian and European souls – Can they walk together?"

It is clear that Russians have a childishly simplistic attitude towards the Council of Europe. When the Council of Europe is on our side, Russia loves it but when it is against Russia, it can go to hell! In Europe itself there are two opposing views about our membership. One was expressed by Charles de Gaulle, who drew the border of Europe at the Urals. The other is well known to our Polish friends who consider that the border of Europe runs along the Wisła and that the most eastern, poorest and hardest-drinking part of Warsaw does not fall into Europe. On the whole, though, one may believe that Europeans consider Russia to be part of Europe: like an enormous room in the European home that has not been aired for a long time, with unwashed floors, full of spiders and cockroaches. But we are not beyond hope – if we are cleaned up, if they buy us a big vacuum cleaner, we can clean up our act and become a dapper member of Europe.

The most obvious example is culture. From the middle of the 19th century we had intermingling cultures which, as banal as it sounds, complemented and enriched each other, generously and without friction. It would be superfluous here even to mention names like Tolstoy and Chekhov. But Russia's actual presence in Europe was a rather dubious matter. After all, it would be difficult to call the Canadian soul European, yet where did it come from, if not from Europe? And if we look at the Russian soul, it is opposed to its western counterpart in many respects. The Russian soul lives on in magical fairy tales, separating the home-grown heroes from the strangers, expecting miracles and not believing in hard work. Twice in the last century, in 1917 and 1991, having abandoned humane values (as if they were completely irrelevant), the Russian soul floated in society, Titanic-like in cold, catastrophic waters. Its political immaturity left it vulnerable to manipulation from various sources. If a foreigner asks what Russians think about that Europe, it is clear that they understand nothing of Russia. You might as well ask how the weather is in Russia at the moment. We are terribly fragmented, with each person living in our own spiritual climate.

Each of us has retained certain values from family, books, the television or our experience of survival. But we each have our own experience, our family traditions. We are like people holding a bag of multi-coloured marbles – each marble represents a value we have retained. One marble is democracy, another a sense of empire, a third is nationalism, a fourth is Soviet thought, a fifth is orthodoxy, a sixth is state patriotism, a seventh is liberalism and so on. Everyone has a different number of those coloured marbles. Someone has 68% democracy in his or her bag; another has 75% nationalism. We hold on to our bag of values and find it difficult to settle things among ourselves. Every time we restart negotiations – that is the essence of Russian debate today. The Russian soul is torn apart by contradictions. It has a tough time, and no one helps.

Nevertheless, there are some things that are permanent fixtures of the Russian soul. First and foremost, there is imagination. The Russian soul is full of imagination. It is a good basis for creativity, of whatever form. It is a good basis for fears, hopes and conspiracy theories. The Russian imagination draws pictures of happiness. The Russian soul wants to be happy. It is slightly naïve and somewhat similar to a child's soul. But when something stands in the way of its happiness, it can throw a major tantrum.

The Russian soul is polarised and does not like compromises. It is a mix of contrasts. It can love and hate at the same time; it can be obedient and rebellious, take power and yet prepare for revolution. A soul like this is difficult to manage. You can only feel sorry for our government.

Finally, the Russian soul looks for the meaning of life. It cannot live life without searching for meaning. This is not driven by religiosity, it is in its nature – an eternal searching for life's meaning. The Russian soul looks for the meaning of life, finds it, is enthralled, becomes disenchanted and then starts looking all over again. That is what our grandfathers did. Our fathers, we ourselves and our children are also searching for the meaning of life.

All these qualities make the Russian soul a great subject for literature. It is an interesting thing to describe. Every Russian family is a subject for a novel. We are all heroes of the novel that is called Russia.

Our common weakness is our political immaturity. Traditionally, it was the Russian intelligentsia who thought on behalf of the Russian people. People still cling to archaic concepts of public life.

Russian people understand that when someone is travelling from Moscow to Paris, London or Strasbourg, that person is "flying to Europe". The same applies to trips from Moscow to Beijing or Tokyo. They understand that one is flying to Asia. The destination is obvious, but the departure point is not. Moscow is neither Europe nor Asia, but stands alone. On the one hand, that is a good thing. Moscow is the sum of its own parts. But on the other hand, it is estranged from both East and West. Moscow is not only a world apart, but it judges others by the laws of its own world. In Russia, Europe is loved or criticised not from within but from outside. Poland has no choice. It is Europe. If it is dissatisfied with Europe, it is actually dissatisfied with itself. Our Russian attitude towards Europe is far more complex, marked by duality. The majority of educated Russians have always been ready to love Europe more than Europe is capable of loving them; we have loved Europe to the point of hero worship. But on the other hand, Europe remained terra incognita for a great many simple Russian souls. And in a final twist, Russian conservative power saw a threat to its own existence in the liberal principles of Europe and was prepared to go on the offensive.

Of course, the European soul is more responsible for its own actions than the Russian one. But we are unable to take full responsibility for actions in Russia; that possibility has long been very remote. The main difference between present-day Europe and Russia is not that same-sex marriages are recognised in Europe and not in Russia. It is that, in Europe, the state is obliged to serve the individual, whereas in Russia it is the individual that is obliged to serve, and go on serving. And yet, even if the individual serves faithfully, even grovels, one day he or she will be thrown onto the scrapheap all the same. That applies to today's sycophants too.

Russia's ruling elite believes deep down that the state must serve it, but it is equally sure that the people must serve the state and even give up their lives by serving in the army.

At this level, we have grounds for serious confrontation. Europe believes that Russia is restricting the freedom of its citizens and waging war on the opposition and sexual

minorities. Europe gives Russia lessons on how to live. It considers that its principles are superior to Russia's. This is terribly annoying for government-controlled Russia, which does not believe that Europe is better. On the contrary, it thinks that Europe has accumulated mistakes, that Europe is in decline, that the consumer society is not the best model for society and that the failure of multiculturalism in Europe is the consequence of its own impotence.

Paradoxically, when Russia criticises Europe, it no longer suggests an alternative, as it did in the days of the Soviet Union. Russia itself is moving towards a consumer society, and it is rocked by inter-ethnic conflict nearly every day, particularly in the Caucasus. It is looking for a new form of national ideology and is now trying to find one in orthodoxy. A union between the Russian government and the Orthodox Church would be very dangerous and fraught with extreme forms of nationalism, taking Russia to the brink of an Iranian-style disaster. But as things stand today, such a union is only one of the options for Russia's future.

Another possibility for the future is the resurrection of the Soviet Union. In my country, where half of the population see Stalin as a positive historical hero, a resurrection of this kind is possible. It pleases our patriots, it gives them strength and it reinforces their concept of life. As a rule, these are people with no higher education. It is important for them to have an enemy in their sights. In any case, a renaissance of the Soviet Union will not be possible without the participation of Ukraine – that country's decision on whether to join Europe or draw closer to Russia will be pivotal. The same can also be said of Georgia.

The revival of the concept of the Soviet Union is already complicating dialogue between Europe and Russia, but how far we will go back to the USSR is difficult to say, because the ideological basis for this is all but completely absent.

"God is dead" – this sentence of Nietzsche's has been taken as authoritative knowledge in Europe. But passionate immigrants full of religious dogma do not live in inertia, quite the opposite. As it grapples with human aggression, repressing its appearance, Europe is putting on its safety helmet. Safety belts, safe sex, safety razors – these are the new symbols of Europe. When all is said and done, the fate of European man must be decided by anthropology and not bureaucracy.

Long before Spengler, Dostoyevsky sought out the old stones of Europe and did not like its new-fangled aspects. Perhaps that full-bodied Rubenesque essence of Europe is what every generation seeks.

The wolves that may eat Europe up are its emaciated and denatured values; values that are becoming increasingly devoid of their primary content and essentially exist on a formal level. This decline into disorder is taking its toll, and Europe is living a haphazard existence as a result. Contemporary European writers are telling the whole world about this; they see the haphazardness as a great adventure game, a game that is replacing meaning. If we analyse the life of a European, the most important thing is missing from it – there is no meaning to life. Or rather, this is not something that people like to talk about. Conversations about the meaning of life or any other metaphysical issues prompt irritation and sarcastic smiles. Europe associates metaphysics with the teachings of the Roman Catholic church, which it sees as a vestige of history.

The European is born in the comfort of material things, valued in terms of the effort necessary to obtain them. Education follows the classical values of Europe in the same way as Latin, which formed modern languages but itself became a dead language for dead people. The consumer society has turned the European into a fashion victim. Work is turning into a race for second-rate kudos. You only have to look around the flat of an ordinary European family to understand it. It is no coincidence that the concept of "Evro-remont" – European-style home renovations – has popped up in Russia: a big white space full of the most suburban-bourgeois cosiness and homeliness desperately trying not to look suburban or bourgeois. All that effort for a show of style. Europeans are constantly occupied; they have even turned their leisure time into an occupation that leaves them no time alone with themselves. Here too, we see the disembodied wolves of Europe: people have lost the notion of self-discovery. Self-discovery of an existential kind has turned into practical tips about beauty, health and pastimes. Life has become boring but boredom goes unnoticed within this existence because life is a never-ending struggle for what is generally considered to be a decent standard of living.

The ideology of Europe has been reduced to a set of common notions. Democracy is now a part of political correctness. Liberalism has morphed into tolerance. The hierarchical pattern of culture has been discredited as a form of disrespect towards the electorate. Culture has become horizontal. Meanwhile, authority has preserved its pyramid structure but it is unseemly to talk about this. Europeans have felt the discomfort of this big white space and turned back to archaic nationalism. For safety's sake, any risks entailed by life have to be eliminated. The anti-smoking campaign is just the first step. If football brings out fans' aggression, why not emasculate football? European man is frightened of the aggression he emits. He does not want to acknowledge that it is in the nature of man, in the same way as the sexual object subsists in a woman. Europe is forfeiting what makes its human beings picturesque. Men who fret about being sexist are turning into cuddly little creatures. Humans cannot change their nature at a single stroke without looking ridiculous. Have a sex change operation and you will understand. Europe is in a stampede towards something resembling an old people's home but with better food. True enough, you can leave that home for a trip to Africa or Cuba, to enjoy something more exotic. To cap it all off, you could even pop over to Russia and breathe a sigh of relief on your way back from that unpredictable place. The world has become simple, like a business lunch menu. Europe has bolted into the bushes to hide from the bandits it might meet on the highway. With neither God nor atheism, and no clearly expressed forms of political life on the right or left of the spectrum, Europe is increasingly becoming a laughing stock for those very immigrants it has invited in out of feelings of guilt and political largesse.

Europe, like a woman, thinks that it is attractive. Everything will be fine until she loses that illusion.

But we will still get married! What is more, we will get married both for calculated gain and for love. Our souls, Russian and European, will live together as one heterosexual family. There will be shouting matches but no physical violence. Of course, it would be better for Russia to move in with Europe than for Europe to move in with Russia (as was partly the case with the Soviet Union). Well, it sounds like a joke now.

And in the meantime, you Europeans should not be surprised if Russia's statesmen do not love you: your ideals coincide with the white ribbons of the Russian opposition, but it is the victor who decides who is locked up in prison and not the vanquished. Whether it means to be or not, Europe is shaping up as a half-friend, half-foe for an indeterminate period, but this temptation of the devil will pass. We will get married!

The trouble is, so many of our political dimwits take the view that all Europe does is stir up Russophobia on the orders of the USA and quiver with hatred towards Russians. Oh yes, by the way, Europe should abolish visas. Get rid of this needless nuisance! All our gangsters are already in Europe anyway, all the prostitutes too, and normal people are being messed around.

Do you think they will listen to me?

Europe is stronger than you think, if we reinvent ourselves[1]

Martti Ahtisaari
Former President of Finland (1994-2000), 2008 Nobel Peace Prize laureate

We must not only ponder Europe's weaknesses, but also highlight the qualities that make Europe strong.

It seems to me that we Europeans have a need to re-examine our own role in the world from time to time. Where are the roots of our relative success in the world? Why is it that our continent has been the dominating force over so many centuries? Many famous historians and philosophers have dedicated much attention to these questions. The German Arthur Spengler in the 1920s was perhaps the greatest among the many pessimists. He was convinced that the western cultural sphere is an organism in decline and will ultimately perish. Arnold Toynbee, the great British historian, was only slightly less pessimistic. Perhaps he still gave us some hope – if we get our act together.

Today similar thoughts come from many sources. But before we concentrate our minds on deploring our fate, perhaps it would be better first to ask ourselves which have been the strengths that have made it possible that Europe as a political, economic and cultural region has, for so long, had such a crucial role in world affairs.

The well-known British-born Harvard professor Niall Ferguson offers his own explanation in a recent book called *Civilization*. The western world – according to him – has had some decisively important qualities. He calls them, somewhat suspiciously, six killer applications. But before we go into that let me share with you a quote from the aforementioned book. Here Ferguson quotes from an 18th-century text called *Rasellas: Prince of Abyssinia*:

> By what means are the Europeans thus powerful? Or why, since they can so easily visit Asia and Africa for trade or conquest, cannot the Asiaticks and Africans invade their coasts, plant colonies in their ports, and give laws to their natural princes? The same wind that carries them back would bring us hither.

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1. Debate held on 20 June 2013.

Niall Ferguson does not leave us with only that. He also offers an answer to the "Why?" A philosopher called Imlac replies:

> Because they are more powerful, Sir, than we, because they are wiser; knowledge will always predominate over ignorance, as man governs the other animals. But why their knowledge is more than ours, I know not what reason can be given, but the unsearchable will of the Supreme Being.

Ferguson thinks he does know. His six killer applications are his explanation to why we have been wiser or less ignorant. The economic success is based on fierce, open competition. That is the force that has spurred European economies to superior performance. The second decisive factor is science. The scientific achievements are a good explanation for many of the exploits of our culture. The third is property. By that he means private ownership, which is guaranteed in an environment of rule of law, has been a great stimulus to prosperity. The fourth is medicine. The success of western nations has been largely possible due to better health care. The fifth is consumption. It has much to do with a world view that is the opposite to the worship of frugality. Since consumption is seen not only as acceptable but even as the fulfilment of at least some aspects of human desire it has become a driver. The sixth is – quite plainly and simply – work, the key factor being work ethic.

It is, of course, an impossible task to compress Ferguson's 400 pages into less than a page of text but his points are still worth making. If these are, or rather have been, the sources of our accomplishments and our perceived strengths, where are our weaknesses today? I will start with weaknesses which are shared by most highly developed nations and which are very difficult, if not impossible, to amend.

The first is the unfavourable demographic development. Western societies, almost all of them, are ageing societies. The birth rates are low; the great achievements of medicine and economic prosperity have extended the lifespan of western nations. Those of working age are fewer and fewer. Immigration has been, to some degree, a palliative, but it is does not come without problems of its own. Policies designed to boost birth rates have been ineffectual. Countries with a long history of accepting immigrants and absorbing them into the mainstream have done better than those where there is no such tradition. These are, indeed, the main challenges to the mature European economies.

The lack of a skilled and flexible workforce is one of the reasons why manufacturing industries are – more and more – relocated to developing countries. There are several other reasons, as well, such as the increasing purchasing power in the developing parts of the world. To relocate production closer to the markets is a purely practical consideration.

In many European countries we face the problem of high unemployment, in particular among the youth and the immigrant community. As much as half the younger generation is, in some countries, without work. If this state of affairs is long lasting the consequences could be grave. This has led to unrest and to crime. Irresponsible political movements have exploited these phenomena, causing much ill will and unwillingness to find constructive solutions to the problems at hand.

Our societies are undergoing a process of change – demographic change, economic change, cultural change. The great question is, can our political culture find solutions to these problems, respecting democratic values and full observance of the rule of law? In many European countries traditional political parties have been broken up. That may be a desirable development if they are incapable of transforming themselves in lockstep with the rest of the society. On the other hand, new parties, often led by inexperienced populist leaders, add to the unpredictability of political life. That is certainly not auspicious for economic development.

The role of the political parties has changed considerably in several European countries. They no longer offer political, all-comprising, coherent doctrines but rather solutions to various problems often reflecting special interests within the party. Since being developed, coherent ideologies have lost much of their importance and the basic political principles, such as democracy and rule of law, have become even more important than before in giving a value-based foundation to political activity.

One deeply worrying development is the widening rift between the north and south. It is a fact that many of the southern members of the European Union are in extremely difficult situations. Very high unemployment, and even higher youth unemployment, coupled with destitute immigrants, cannot last for long without very severe political consequences. The recipe for improving the situation has been austerity. It seems to me that further cuts in public spending are no longer politically wise or economically helpful. The realisation of this seems to gain wider support. The International Monetary Fund has already confessed that it has been guilty of misjudgment.

I come from a country where fiscal discipline and balanced budgets have been the rule for decades. The rule, for sure, but exceptions have been accepted, if temporarily. We are, at present, well within the limits set by the euro treaty for budget deficits and public debt. That is, however, nothing to brag about. We too face the very same problems of an ageing population, relocation of manufacturing industries and increasing youth unemployment. Fortunately we have, however, been spared from violent outbursts of youth rage.

The social model we have implemented, called the Scandinavian model, has, so far, proved to be strong and crisis resistant. Not without exceptions, but exceptions are rare. The potential basic problems are, nevertheless, not too different from those in southern Europe. Perhaps we have had more luck in dealing with these challenges than our brothers in the south. We must not drop our guard by being overly confident because we have, so far, avoided the worst turns in our development.

The Scandinavian countries are not, of course, alone with their general political and social principles. Much of the same would be true in countries such as The Netherlands or Germany. It was, after all, Ludwig Erhard, the German minister of economy and later the Chancellor, who coined the expression "social market economy" or *soziale Marktswirtschaft*. It is sometimes said that an equalitarian society may be desirable as it is more just and more human, although it may not be as competitive as societies where fierce competition increases productivity and innovations. This argument does not hold water.

Some American economists have claimed that the Nordic countries cannot be as innovative as those where there is no "cuddly capitalism". They say that societies where life is safe from cradle to grave are less productive, less innovative. Figures tell a different story. Such critical indicators as, for example, patents per million of the population, show that the Nordic countries do well. In comparison with, for example, the United States, they are good competitors. Statistics from three years ago are clear. There were 48.7 patents per American, 88.3 per Swede, 60.5 per Dane and 63.9 per Finn. In other words this indicator shows that innovations are not hamstrung by the social model we have in our part of Europe. The figures indicating labour productivity are similar. The key to all this is a good mobilisation of human resources through equalitarian policies, first and foremost in education. In the Nordic countries a larger share of the population is employed although the Americans put in more working hours. Equality is productive – that may sound like heresy to those who believe in a stratified society. But if the proof of the pudding is in the eating, our fare has a good taste.

Since Europe today is, in economic terms, one largely amalgamated and unified region, the role of the European Union is central. It is, however, salutary to remember that the resources available for the execution of EU policies are no more than 1% of the GDP of the member countries. Flushing money where the problems are is therefore no more than a palliative. Here we come to the difficult part. If there is not enough money to solve the problems the usual recipe is structural reform. That is a pair of words we often hear. But not very often what is exactly meant simply by saying so.

Most of the structural reforms are, if implemented, sour grapes. Nobody wants to hear that their work input is not really worth what is paid for it since there will be others, in distant places, who do the same, equally well, for much less. They do it because they have access to the same tools we have had for centuries. Furthermore they today live in an environment, both economic and social, where there is fierce competition.

The fruits of scientific research are today low fruits. Wherever property is reasonably well protected, where major health problems are under control, where a community based on high consumption is possible and where the work ethic is high, there will be success.

In brief, the factors that Niall Ferguson sees as the explanation for the well-being of Western societies are no longer their monopoly. Globalisation is a greater equaliser. It rewards those who are flexible enough to make good use of new tools. It punishes those whose capacity to rejuvenate themselves, economically, socially and politically is insufficient. The classic theory of division of labour would have it that economic development in one country can be – and probably is – beneficial also for other countries. That creates new possibilities for mutually beneficial trade. Is this true even today?

It seems to me that the speed of change today does not allow the traditional industrialised countries much time for reinventing themselves, for adapting their productive machinery and their institutions to a new situation. The newcomers make use of new techniques, new processes and other innovations so fast that they are,

as producers, on our level in no time. Where, then, is our comparative advantage? How do we maintain our standard of living at the present level, or even improve on it, in the face of such competition?

Certain advantages on our side are not yet fully utilised. One of them is ever closer co-operation in education and scientific research. We still have the advantage of a well-educated and thoroughly trained work force, if we make good use of it. Our institutions are strong. We have the advantage of a relatively balanced political culture. For us the rule of law is more than just a lofty principle. Our societies have their problems, but being open societies, as they are, we do not try to sweep them under the carpet.

The possibilities and opportunities for co-operation granted to us through the process of economic and political integration are by no means exhausted. The European Union is a work in progress. The tumultuous years we have experienced lately have convinced some of us of the need for more integration, in particular in our economic and financial sectors. Others see their misgivings as proven. But, economic progress and social justice do not mutually exclude one another. A just society can indeed be a more productive society, but not by just extending old policies without re-examining them in the light of global competition.

Resistance to change is well ensconced. Special interests have their producers' associations, their banking unions, their agricultural lobbies as well as their trade unions. Most of them fear that their interests, as institutions, are endangered if society finds new ways for organising itself. And yet, we need new forms. The present framework was constructed for a different world, for a world where fierce global competition was unknown, for a world where the fruits of scientific research were in our possession, and only ours. For a world where we had the benefit of well-organised, law-based institutions. Now these one-sided advantages are part of history. The right question is do we make full use of our strengths, such as scientific research and broadly based education? Or the advantages of a rational division of labour? Or do we understand how to best profit from unhampered trade? We have many gaps in our systems.

The European Union has not yet been able to develop a common energy policy at a time when energy is becoming ever more a key factor in international competition. Our markets are not yet as open as we like to profess. Much could be achieved if we could agree on a transatlantic free trade regime. My point is that there are plenty of unexploited possibilities and much room for improvement in our present performance. The point is that we have to reinvent ourselves, we must boost our self-confidence.

Let me finish by quoting Niall Ferguson from the last chapter of his book. He discusses the strengths of the western societies, calling them a package:

> Yet this Western package still seems to offer human societies the best available set of economic, social and political institutions – the ones most likely to unleash the individual human creativity capable of solving the problems the twenty-first century world faces. Over the past half-millennium, no civilization has done a better job of finding and educating the geniuses that lurk in the far right-hand tail of the distribution of talent in any human society. The big question is whether or not we are still able to recognize the superiority of that package. What makes a civilization real to its inhabitants, in the end, is not

just the splendid edifices at its centre, nor even the smooth functioning of the institutions they house. At its core, a civilization is the texts that are taught in its schools, learned by its students and recollected in times of tribulation.[2]

In times of economic and political crisis it is easy to lose faith in our institutions and in our leaders. On the other hand, a crisis such as the one we are at present living with has not yet dislodged anything vital. The crisis resistance of our democratic institutions has proved itself. We share our wealth, at least some of it, with those who need a helping hand. We are prepared to reconstitute some of our institutions so that they would better meet the requirements of an ever-changing world.

Simply, we are aware of the need to be more responsible and to be more innovative. We need to be more aware of the importance of social equity. Socialism has not succeeded in granting that, although high hopes have been attached to it. Naked capitalism, as practised in too many countries these days, has not been the solution. What we need is fairness; hard work, justly rewarded and a caring society with full acknowledgement of the fact that we all have the primary responsibility for our own well-being. That is how a strong, dynamic and harmonious society should be recreated.

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2. Niall Fergusson, *Civilization: The West and the Rest*, Penguin Press 2011.

Georgia and the region's European aspirations: building the future on a vibrant past[1]

David O. Lordkipanidze
Paleoanthropologist charting the origins of the first Europeans

Searching for identity is a normal evolutionary process for human societies. The formation of a European identity is influenced by many factors, including geography, politics, culture, religion, anthropology and technology. The identification of Europe is also largely dependent on physical geography: Europe and Asia are part of a single continent – Eurasia. However, the intention here is not to discuss how identity is formed or to propose a personal definition of national or European identity.

Europe can be regarded as a family of states unified around common values and interests. Despite negative comments about the efficiency of the European Union, such value-based networks remain relevant. The goal should be to create transdisciplinary, pan-European networks at different levels. These alliances, which are well adapted to today's realities, could lay the foundations for diffusing new and progressive European values throughout the world.

The long history of Georgia and the entire Caucasus region can contribute to this process. The study of history has been used for both positive and negative ends. Perhaps a somewhat "heavy" scientific legacy in the case of Georgia was the classification of human races by Johann Friedrich Blumenbach in the late 18th century. This German scientist coined the term for a Caucasian "race" based on the physical characteristics of a diplomat he knew, the first Ottoman ambassador to England, originally from the Caucasus region. The "science of human races" was subsequently perpetuated by anatomists such as Professor William Lawrence who, again, referred to the Caucasian race (1823, Lectures to the Royal College of Surgeons in London): "The name of this variety is derived from Mount Caucasus because in its neighbourhood, and particularly towards the south, we meet with a very beautiful race of men, the Georgians". Gradually, for the English-speaking scientific world, the European and the Caucasian "races" became synonymous. Yet, for Georgians and other peoples of the region, being Caucasian carried a very different meaning.

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1. Debate held on 20 October 2013.

This is why the stories of the region's past must be explored, so they can become tools for unification instead of for division. The main goal is to ensure that our rich heritage does not remain in the archives, but that it helps move the nation towards new visions for a common future. Georgia's European aspirations are not new – the country has been a part of Europe, in its broadest sense, from prehistory to the present. Georgia is a multi-ethnic, multi-religious society whose history has been turbulent, but whose thoughts and culture have benefited from a diverse population and the traditions of many of its neighbours.

The country is distinguished by magnificent landscapes, varied and unique endemic fauna and flora, and five climate zones ranging from the humid sub-tropical climate of the Black Sea to the rural wetlands, high plateau and alpine regions, and even to the semi-desert areas of the south-east. Its rich natural resources have supported uninterrupted human habitation for thousands of years.

Within the territory of the Caucasus, several archaeological sites that are of universal importance for the history of mankind have been discovered. Archaeological research and the communication of many exceptional findings have brought our region into the spotlight of the world's scientific community. This has given local scholars the possibility to work with international institutions and to become respected members of that community. Both art and science are unique instruments for sharing values and are strong tools for diplomacy.

Using archaeological discoveries for nationalistic purposes, however, is nothing new and many countries claim to be "the first", "the cradle" or "a unique culture". This sometimes manifests itself in the form of competition, a rivalry to underline a country's importance. The story of the "earliest Europeans" is a good example. Various countries have aspired to this title after finding what they claimed to be the "earliest" discoveries of hominids, our biological ancestors. In the early 20th century, a lower jaw discovered in Mauer, near Heidelberg, Germany, was considered to be from the earliest known human in Europe until in the 1970s, a similar discovery in the French village of Tautevel became the oldest European at 450 000 years of age. Even today, tourist signs indicate that Tautevel is "the birthplace of the first European". In the early 1990s, discoveries from Ceprano in Italy and Atapuerca in Spain were dated back 800 000 years, which in turn made them the new "first Europeans".

However, instead of creating competition, the aim should be to create a win-win situation for everyone concerned. Even though in recent years Georgia has become known as the country of the "first Europeans", it would be very naïve to consider these creatures as "Europeans"! The discovery of the 1.8 million-year-old *Homo erectus giorgicus* at Dmanisi is, indeed, of immense importance for science, yet our approach has been to universalise the knowledge of human migration, rather than claim the distinction of being "first". However, the imagination of journalists was filled with new vigour for rivalry. Thus, the Dmanisi story has been featured worldwide by international media including cover stories in *Science* magazine, *National Geographic*, *The New York Times* and many others. A quote from *Libération* in 2000 following a congress in Tautevel read, "With these two fossils discovered in Dmanisi, south of the Caucasus in Georgia, the first inhabitants of Europe have become a million years older. This has been confirmed, which is not frequent in the kingdom

of palaeontology – no one contests the dates. Until now Spain and Italy vied for the honour of having been home to the oldest humans on the continent, which date back only 800 000 years." Dmanisi is a village approximately 85 kilometres south-west of Georgia's capital, Tbilisi, and lies on the ancient Silk Road linking Europe and Asia. The site is rich in medieval and Bronze Age artefacts, but it is the wealth of prehistoric finds that has put it on the scientific map. Before the Dmanisi discoveries, the prevailing view was that when humans left Africa a million years ago, they had large brains and sophisticated stone tools. But Dmanisi has changed these ideas. The discovery of Dmanisi's 1.8 million-year-old human fossils has brought the Caucasus region into sharp focus as an entirely new region for studying the evolution of the early *Homo erectus giorgicus*. Few paleoanthropological research projects have had such a powerful impact on our thinking about human evolution. These discoveries document the first movement of humans out of Africa, and demonstrate that their migration was due to neither an increased brain size, nor improved technology.

In Georgia, the Dmanisi project is playing a crucial role in the development of paleoanthropology, and of science in general through establishing close links with international scientific centres and introducing new methods and technologies to Georgian sciences. The project's structures bridge scientific interests across international borders and have formed a large, active multinational team. A field school has been founded in Dmanisi where, every year, dozens of students from the United States and Europe are trained and thus receive university credits. Hosting students from around the world can break down cultural-linguistic barriers significantly, increase scientific exchange and provide many opportunities to generate new cohorts of colleagues and friends. Progressively, this is creating an extensive network of future scientists. Today, the Dmanisi Field Museum is a rare example of how scientists can facilitate active research at a site and, at the same time, make the site and its research accessible to the wider public.

Another field of competition between countries has been "Which country is the 'Cradle of Wine'?" Georgia is again in line for this distinction, as it claims to have the earliest traces of viniculture. The Caucasus occupies a territory within the Near East zone, one of the seven global "Centres of Origin" of food plants, where scientists believe the origins of agriculture and the domestication of important grains occurred. The varieties and forms of cultivated plants that originated in the wider Caucasus region have shown that the area was indeed an ancient centre for the domestication and diversification of food plant species.

Stepping away from the competition to determine which country had the "first winemaker" and instead moving towards multidisciplinary research of the history of wine and other cultivated foods could be worthwhile. The beginning of agriculture is a key period in human history and offers another opportunity for researchers to develop high-level international interdisciplinary collaboration. This could be a chance to create another model, such as that of Dmanisi, bringing together different academic institutions and working on public outreach.

Many are familiar with the myth of the Greek Argonauts, but not everyone is aware of the historic links with Georgia in the myth of Jason and the Golden Fleece. According to the story told by ancient Greek authors, Jason and the Argonauts sailed

to Colchis in search of the Golden Fleece that hung in a sacred grove of trees, and was guarded by a dragon that never slept. Gold artefacts found in Vani in western Georgia connect the history of this land to the myth of Jason and the Golden Fleece. Archaeological discoveries provide evidence of an advanced culture in what is today western Georgia, showing that the mythical land of Colchis was indeed this region. Many of these treasures prove that Colchis was a real country, and one rich in gold.

They also attest that Georgia's culture is an indispensable part of western civilisation, as the kingdom of Colchis is one of the main pillars of Georgia's cultural identity. Most scholars consider classical Greek culture as the basis of European culture and civilisation. The Greek or "Hellenic" culture has its roots in ancient Near Eastern civilisations, which emerged after Alexander the Great's campaign. The archaeological discoveries show that pre-Christian cultural traditions in western Georgia contributed to the process of civilisation.

After the Greco-Roman period Georgia was subjected to Arab invasions. However, with the progress of the Byzantine Empire, the country established strong links with European culture. By becoming a Christian country in the 4th century and by developing its own alphabet, Georgia was able to maintain its own identity. The Byzantine cultural tradition began to take shape through a merger of this symbiotic culture with eastern Christianity, embracing countries, including Georgia. Based on Hellenistic cultural trends, new cultural centres came into being in the bosom of eastern Christianity, with their own national scripts and cultural traditions influenced by East-West civilisations. Here lies the uniqueness of Georgian material and spiritual culture: its attractiveness both to the East and to the West.

Due to its geographical location, Georgia has long been a natural crossroads for many powerful cultures. Nevertheless, the country has preserved its cultural identity, along with an unwavering interest in the western world. Now that the country is placing itself on the world map again, it is a genuine belief that European nations will become its partners on the way to the west. The aim is to develop common values while maintaining our unique cultural identity, to encourage diversity and tolerance while building bridges with other cultures.

Building academic institutions is crucial for these processes. We should use scientific disciplines to study the past and to generate new knowledge, but at the same time we must work on communication and institution building. One of the key issues today is to find opportunities to establish new institutions, especially cultural institutions, not only in the Caucasus. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, many changes have occurred, but few have taken place in our cultural institutions. In Georgia's case, creating the Georgian National Museum has been a step towards establishing a strong institution based on our own national and cultural heritage.

The Georgian National Museum was established in December 2004. Its origins, however, date back to 1852 and to the Museum of the Caucasian Department of the Russian Royal Geographic Society. The Georgian National Museum is the administrative umbrella organisation for two research institutions and for the major museums of Georgia, including the National Gallery. The Georgian National Museum presents internationally significant collections of art and dynamic, changing exhibitions that provide visitors with inspiration and knowledge of the wonderful world of culture,

arts, sciences and education. Discoveries of the oldest human existence in Eurasia are displayed alongside magnificent medieval Christian art, stunning gold and silver jewellery from the ancient land of Colchis, spectacular modern and contemporary paintings by Georgian artists and masterpieces that exemplify Oriental, Russian and western European decorative arts.

The Georgian National Museum is now envisaging the introduction of modern management policies and the establishment of a uniform administrative system. This initiative will put in place a coherent mission for the museum and will improve conservation standards for preserved collections. It will strengthen the educational programmes centred on the museum's resources and contribute to co-ordinating academic and museum activities. The Georgian National Museum is an important regional example of how to transform post-Soviet museums into modern, innovative, creative and user-friendly institutions that are well integrated into the urban and social fabric.

Most Georgians consider education to be a priority and Christian Orthodoxy to be an important part of the national identity. Museums have a great potential for participating in educational and cultural processes and developing a balance between faith and knowledge. New exhibits and public education activities seem to be the best means of developing wider European values such as diversity and tolerance in young people. Two concrete examples include:

– The Ivane Javakhishvili History Museum located in Samtskhe-Javakheti, a region of multicultural challenges for ethnic Armenians and Georgians. The new museum tells the story of the region, using the exhibits and educational programmes to develop common values and, in particular, strong feelings of tolerance in the younger generations;

– The recently opened branch of the Georgian National Museum in the Upper Caucasus region of Svaneti, in the capital city of Mestia. The museum houses precious collections of medieval icons and manuscripts. Svaneti is an island with remains of Byzantine culture and local peculiarities. The new museum has links with the local community through its collection of treasures, and tries to build trust and dialogue. Renovated exhibits and storage show respect for religious objects and are both research and educational tools. Creating a balance between science and religious beliefs is an important role for this museum.

The Georgian National Museum is a horizontal network of different bodies with joint values. The network works with different international institutions, and is pleased with the co-operation with the Berlin Museum system within the framework of the first European Union twinning programme in the cultural field. The network also continues to work bilaterally, and co-operation has been developed at regional level with the help of the Goethe Institute. A network of museums has been established in the former Soviet countries, including Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan, which will broaden co-operation. It is expected that, worldwide, museums will change from brand promotion (like the Guggenheim or the Louvre) towards forming new alliances, such as those created by the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, bringing together institutions from Europe, Latin America, Asia and Africa. The Georgian National Museum should be part of this global trend.

The European Cultural Parliament's pan-European network for artists is a forum for regular debate on crucial issues for independent artists, writers, musicians, historians, philosophers, designers, architects and other cultural personalities from all European countries. The synergy between art and science also seems to provide a strong tool for developing democratic societies. Academic and artistic freedom is a key ingredient of this process.

The Caucasus must assume its place in a world without conflict. It can become a place of unification, and where different generations build common values. Today archaeology has changed its position from the colonial science it was in previous centuries to one that encourages countries to claim and study their own heritage; where peoples can discuss and independently create the vision of their nations' legacies and identity and find ways to link these with the rest of the world.

Why do we need the European Union, or, indeed, any other alliances? Without doubt, they contribute to a better world! These alliances promote respect for human rights and for the environment, along with the preservation of the cultural heritage. This can only take place, however, if we develop these values early in life. It is thus incredibly important for Georgia and the Georgian National Museum to participate in this process.

Quo vadis Europa?[1]

Daniel Cohn-Bendit
Essayist and politician, leader of 1968 student demonstrations, MEP (2009-14)

"Let his mass conscience assert itself, organise his thinking through propaganda, his leisure and recreation through appropriate measures, and he will belong to you unconditionally, he will even imagine that he is free and that all this is genuine human achievement. Anyone who does not go along with this is treated as a harmful, unusable force and is brutally neutralised. I think that the spread of such an ideology can only ever lead once more to experiments similar to fascism; more astute … but, in essence and from the human standpoint, as desperate as ever because there is no room for ideas in them […]

Yet the human idea is basically always the same: the only thing that changes is the historical situation in which the idea is realised. The idea is human freedom. The human idea is the idea of human freedom…"

Jan Patocka, *Liberté et sacrifices,* Millon, p. 46

If, in order to be heard today, the only thing left to us was the language of faith, I would once again be on the side of the "insolents" who refuse to be cowed and to give way to the arguments of authority and who untiringly "preach" faith in freedom.

If we had to resign ourselves to speaking the protean language of identity-based fanaticism, be it nationalist, sovereignist, culturalist, religious, ethnic, etc., I would be with the "fundamentalists" of "human dignity", not out of idolatry, but for the simple reason that, from now on, there will always be a witness, there will always be a person to recognise violations of his rights, to feel in revolt the violence of abuse of power.

You would be right to find my words disorientating, not to say paradoxical. But the force of paradox is to unsettle us in our sense of what is self-evident so that we take a fresh look at what, at first sight, seems to be common sense. It forces us to go out of ourselves and it stimulates reflection. It is a good tool for the exercise of decentring, raising issues about the notion of identity. Paradox challenges us. It provokes. And it is perhaps for that reason too that it is so interesting.

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1. Debate held on 18 November 2013.

Some may also think that we are going a little too far off the subject.

I believe, on the contrary, that returning to, and emphasising, a certain number of principles and fundamental values can help us to understand just how closely linked they are to our European identity. And also to what extent this forces us to rethink – without having to repudiate them, on the contrary – our specific national, cultural and linguistic identities, to project ourselves into the idea of a post-national identity as expounded by, among others, the philosophers Jürgen Habermas and Jean-Marc Ferry.

Insofar as the criteria for feeling that one belongs to the European Union – in other words, a sense of a specific European Union identity – are not similar in nature to those on which national identities are founded, their effect is not to increasingly singularise the European identity by reproducing the nationalist pattern, but rather to reveal it in its universalist dimension. It is this very radical direction which is taken by the Laeken declaration on the future of the European Union when it states that "the European Union's one boundary is democracy and human rights". Furthermore, there is nothing in the founding treaties of the European Union which allows us to base the European identity on cultural or religious criteria. We may therefore observe a recurrent misunderstanding of the principles on which the EU political project is established.

A particular illustration of this misunderstanding was provided at the time of the convention which met to draft the Charter of Fundamental Rights. But what illustrates it best is all the discussion surrounding Turkey's candidacy for EU membership. The abundance of arguments raised during the meetings of the EU-Turkey Joint Parliamentary Committee for several years demonstrates clearly all the uncertainty surrounding the notion of European identity. To be able to state categorically, as some do, that Turkey is not European, one would need to be able to assert the existence of a single European culture. Yet nothing is less obvious!

One of the best arguments for taking this debate forward is that of the philosopher Jean-Marc Ferry. In *La République crépusculaire*, he shows how European equivocation over Turkey's candidacy undermines the credibility of the official criteria for membership of the European Union, namely the Copenhagen criteria. In so doing, he introduces a highly enlightening distinction between "historical Europe" and the "EU political project". He defines historical Europe as a "geographical reality embodying a historical heritage which confers on it a cultural or civilisational identity".

As for the European Union, it is a "political construction whose identity is not a given, and that identity must be reflexive […] Its aim is to build a political Europe […] It does not seek to obscure the Christian identity or any other heritage of Europe. It has simply devised membership criteria which are not prejudged by Europe's cultural characteristics."

And as he goes on to explain, only a post-national and post-identity (in the traditional sense of identity) European identity can correspond to this idea of the EU political project, because "the project is not linked to heritage in the same way for a post-nationalist identity as for a national identity". This European identity is therefore of a new type. It implies a decentring in relation to our common heritage with

a view to its reflexive re-appropriation. The European identity therefore calls for real "reconstruction" work. Consequently, if it is considered that the idea of European identity involves an *Aufhebung* (i.e. transcending while preserving the plurality which it transcends) of national identity, no attempt to erect cultural or national identity as a barrier can be legitimate.

Excessive emphasis on a cultural, religious, national or other identity results automatically in discrimination towards all those who are not part of that specific human community. Furthermore, it exposes cultures and religions, among others, to political exploitation. Now, any political enterprise which establishes its power by giving priority to certain particularities of identity is effectively contesting the universality of human rights. We must therefore regard the particularities, and particularisms, of identity as being many basic modes of human expression, which therefore, by this mere fact, requires that they should be guaranteed by law. This is a guarantee which cannot simply be formal but must be effectively implemented. And if there is indeed an article in the treaties which would deserve to be taught systematically at all stages of the education of European citizens, that is Article 2, which says:

> "The Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. These values are common to the Member States in a society in which pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality between women and men prevail."

That is the crux of the challenge of the European identity.

We must therefore understand that the European democratic identity is fundamentally political. It is intrinsically bound up with the EU political project. Yet, by definition, the project cannot correspond to something given. The European identity is an identity under construction. It espouses the contours of a political project which corresponds to a democracy of a new type: post-national democracy, which might also be referred to as "post-national democracy of the plurality of European democracies", this "meta"-democracy being formed to some extent by retaining only the principles and structure of European democratic states.

In other words, the essential feature of the multinational community formed by the European Union is diversity, which therefore demands respect for the principle of pluralism. Accordingly, if the European identity – which is complex in essence and uncomfortable by nature – has fundamental links to the EU political project, what about the political project itself? The European malaise perhaps lies essentially at this level.

Might the European malaise not be understood as a state of oscillation between the cynicism of those who feel so disillusioned by Europe that they see it as a mere instrument of power no different from any other, and the hope of those who intuit the ideal of human achievement underlying the EU project? Viewed from this angle, the European malaise might also be interpreted as the feeling of being dispossessed of a project with which everyone could identify. The European democratic ideal has become such a cliché that it has lost its force and become, as it were, "de-realised" in the literally existentialist sense of the term.

Europe is increasingly experienced as the place of broken promises. It must be said that its democratic powerlessness is indeed a source of disappointment. It is flagrant at international level. It is obvious on an internal level, as witnessed by the examples of Haider in Austria, Berlusconi's media empire in Italy and Orban in Hungary. And it is palpable in the sense of injustice arising from, in particular, social discrimination. And yet, if Article 1 of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights is to be believed: "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights."

A crisis of confidence is inevitable in this impossible contortion to reconcile the European democratic ideal – informed by the idea of equality – with the reality of social injustice, the aberration of a Charter of Fundamental Rights covering all European citizens except for the Czechs, the Poles and the British, procedures which give certain opinions priority over others (national referenda, unanimous voting in the Council), a continent whose states engage in economic and fiscal warfare, above all making no provision for solidarity mechanisms, a carefully concocted austerity programme which exacerbates social hardship, nations unwilling to give themselves the means to act together at European level. (The EU budget – which the states of Europe, at yet another tragic gathering, saw fit to reduce – in fact corresponds to 1% of European wealth. To give you an idea, the proportion of national wealth used by the central budget of federal states is 10-20%. The latter percentage is that of the current US federal budget, which underwent a huge increase when Roosevelt set about taking his country out of the Great Depression. But in Europe, the "cultural exception" prevails. So it is decided that, in times of crisis, savings must be made on the Community budget so that individual nations can have greater freedom of action. After all, the European budget for 28 countries is barely three times less than the budget needed to run France!) The list could be very long indeed.

Through their nationalist attitudes, European leaders paint a sad picture of their own distrust towards the European project and their partners. Through their European policies on a nation-state scale, they obstruct European post-national democracy and cast doubt on its values. And to top it all, their solutions are unworkable and appear anachronistic in relation to the continental and intercontinental reality of the century's problems. What is commonly known as the crisis of legitimacy must be taken seriously because it undermines our identities from the inside.

It is democratically vital that the European project carried by the various political players should be given more public exposure, particularly from the angle of the response it provides to globalisation and the destabilisation it brings with it.

Euroscepticism is of course a source of concern, but the conservatism of European leaders is equally so. Because while some may think that individual nations can go it alone, it is nevertheless true that those who believe in Europe are thwarted by the reality of their powerlessness. Traditional "Euronationalism" is losing credibility because of the widening gap between proclaimed values and the reality of the world. Europe has ended up looking like a *raison d'etat*.

The crisis of meaning across the European continent is the outcome of the political no man's land intensively cultivated over the last few decades by a ruling class which, when it is not Eurosceptic, is Euronationalist by political tradition. The conservatism

of European politicians (on both right and left) is therefore not always ill-intentioned. But the fact is that it causes substantial damage through the feeling of powerlessness which it fosters.

It has therefore become vital to reactivate our political imagination. What the European Union needs is a dissident political culture capable of updating the idea of post-national European democracy and the corresponding European identity. Europeans need a political imagination equal to the European Utopia, that "dream of reason". The need for irreverence towards the intellectual conservatism of political circles is all the more urgent because exploitation of identity is becoming increasingly widespread and unscrupulous. And in my view it would be totally irresponsible to count on the undying loyalty of the electorate, who, disillusioned, might end up no longer believing in democracy itself.

European identity: the past waiting for a future[1]

Robert Salais
French economist, author of Le viol d'Europe :
Enquête sur la disparition d'une idée

Several attempts to unite Europe have been made over the past 200 years: a French-led Europe under Napoleon which was a legacy of the French Revolution; a universalistic Europe that Aristide Briand and others called for in the early 1930s; a German Europe under Nazi domination during the Second World War. All three attempts failed. The process of building up European institutions, in which we have been heavily involved since 1945, is the fourth attempt, our own. It has already lasted nearly 70 years, and this seems to be quite a good sign. Will it nonetheless meet the same fate, sooner or later? Many people have raised this question. The issue of European identity has always been the crux of the question. What is it that we, collectively, want Europe to be? This question still awaits an answer.

While a consensus has been reached on a common European cultural identity – a consensus which has been maturing throughout the course of history during which, paradoxically, we have talked and listened to each other in the context of exchanges of every kind, but also in times of rivalries, hostilities and wars – the issue is far more problematic in the political, economic and financial spheres. There have always been opposing dogmas, rigid assumptions as to the best solutions, conflict over the choices that would truly serve the cause and identity of Europe, its reputation and its influence; this uncertainty may even be greater today, because of the current economic crisis. And cultural identity no longer seems to be a priority, judging by the emerging fears over the free trade agreement, currently being negotiated between the United States and the European Union.

Furthermore, a recurrent question is the meaning given to the term "collectively". Is Europe a matter for a small – too small – elite group, or is it everyone's business, concerning each and every one of us, you and me as ordinary citizens? If it is the latter, how can this participation in the collective project be achieved, so that we can shape it and make it ours, if not through active democratic practice at every level, including the European level? Democracy was absent from the first three attempts to unify Europe. Is it really present in this fourth attempt?

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1. Debate held on 23 January 2014.

Universalistic path or strategic path? That is the question

Content and process, here are two unresolved issues of identity. Looking back in history, and in so far as possible at true, plural history, not the mythical grand story of continuous progress vaunted by the European institutions, is the only way to understand what is happening today and – why not – to peer into the future by the fleeting light emanating from a few fireflies. This was developed in the book, *Le viol d'Europe. Enquête sur la disparition d'une idée (The rape of Europe: The demise of an idea)*. Readers become aware that there are, and always have been, different pathways, and that the current one is not the only option. Over the long course of the history of the idea of Europe,[2] we can see that the European project is still affected by indecision between two main paths, and has never been able to choose one over the other, or to strike a reasonable compromise between the two. Elements of both paths are juxtaposed in the current process, but they are to a large extent incompatible. The first path is called "universalistic", and the second "strategic".

The universalistic pathway entails seeking the socio-institutional conditions for lasting peace and political and economic co-operation between countries in Europe. The objectives of peace and co-operation are mutual respect and shared efforts to foster the cultural, economic, political and social development of each country. This is how Kant, Rousseau, Proudhon and Briand saw it, as did some of the resistance movements during and after the Second World War. According to Italy's European federalist movement in 1944, "The ground [for European federalism] is peoples' resistance against Nazism. Thanks to resistance movements, solidarity was at last found between the free peoples of the continent […]. Such solidarity had been masked by diplomatic intrigues, the foreign policies of alliances and the balance of powers. People discovered that their common destiny was that they should enjoy together as common goods freedom, peace and progress". The writers were aware of urgency: "The people look to European solidarity, but do not know which path to follow […]. If a federal union is not set up immediately after the war, before the memory of recent sufferings is erased, that objective will once again become utopian and unrealisable. Then we will have to wait for another war […]".[3]

This path is universalistic in several senses. The system of peace, freedom, democracy and co-operation between European countries was conceived as a model for the rest of the world to follow. It is based on political liberalism, and not on the economic neoliberalism that currently prevails (for how long?). The way in which the two are confused is harmful and destructive, for the true defender of freedom is political liberalism. This will be addressed again in the context of the distinction which needs to be made between market liberalisation and freedom of exchange. The foundations of political liberalism in today's conditions are the realisation of fundamental

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2. As described in Franciszek Draus (2009), *Critique historique de l'idée européenne : Tome 1, Les précurseurs introuvables*, François-Xavier de Guibert, Paris; Jean-Luc Chabot (2005), *Aux origines intellectuelles de l'Union européenne: L'idée d'Europe unie de 1919 à 1939*, Presses Universitaires de Grenoble, Grenoble; Bernard Bruneteau (2003), *L'Europe nouvelle de Hitler. Une illusion des intellectuels de la France de Vichy*, Editions du Rocher, Paris.

3. Ernesto Rossi (s. dir.), 1945, *L'Europe de demain, Centre d'action pour la fédération européenne*, Neuchâtel, Editions de la Baconnière, pp. 68 to 87.

human, civic, political, economic and social rights; democratic practice; peace and a world order designed to promote free development of peoples in the economic, social and political spheres, each having the same rights and capacities as the others.

The universalistic path could lead to a European identity which would coexist with, and even enrich, national identities. For it would give meaning to a European identity. It would provide justification for national identities as necessary stages in a historical process, and would transcend them, for example within a federal system, but without eliminating or denying them.

Within the European process, the foundations for a universalistic path do still exist: the European Convention on Human Rights, dating from 1950, which was based on the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the fundamental rights movement which has so far tried, without great success until now, to make those rights the fulcrum of the European process. The declaration itself is regarded as unequalled, the basis for a political and economic world order that is yet to be created, following the dashed hopes of the immediate post-war period.[4] The European Charter of Fundamental Rights, adopted in 2000, is a mere shadow of this declaration; and to some extent, it seems to betray the original.

The strategic pathway entails striving for a Europe based on the search for countries' common interests. It appeared before the Common Market was set up, during the "origin" period, and was removed from the official narrative. Once the initial enthusiasm had waned, what remained was a strategic, sectoral and partisan idea of Europe, not a universal concept. For, as you may have guessed, the pursuit of the common interest has the immediate effect of causing national interests to well up. Each national elite asks itself where its own vital interests lie, which ones it could shift up to European level, and whether, through successful manoeuvring, it could place its own interests in a dominant position at European level, to the detriment of those of others. Subsequently, with very few exceptions, the European project has not been considered in its own right, but on the basis of each country's self-interest and potential gains. This has led to failures to make decisions, and to poor decisions at certain crucial junctures.

The strategic path raises the question of "power": how to recover as a "world power"? This question only mobilises a small "enlightened elite"; no popular movement could take such a European project on board. So the safer option for the elite is a depoliticised project, based on a belief in purely technical efficiency and discounting the usefulness of democratic public debate. The result is a complex and incomprehensible system – now accompanied by a punitive and authoritarian tendency – driving national citizens away from any identification with the system. The more institutions that are set up claiming to embody the European identity, the more the European identity fades away.

Unfortunately, Europe's capability in economic, industrial and innovation spheres is weakening in the long term, as a result of European leaders' conversion to neoliberalism in the late 1980s. In addition, Europe-based multinationals have been moving

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4. For more on the Universal Declaration, see the splendid book of Alain Supiot, *L'esprit de Philadelphie*, published in 2010, Flammarion, Paris.

away from Europe to other areas for investment and development. Yet only such capability in economic, industrial and innovation spheres could have restored the European world political role. Starting in the 1980s, and in the period before the economic crisis, the mean annual growth rate in the European Union (EU) stood at a meagre 2%, notwithstanding the triumphant proclamations of Jacques Delors, among others, who said that economic and monetary union would set Europe's growth free, bring fresh energy and solve the unemployment problem. In practice, the EU is not investing enough in innovation. It is stuck in a planned and long-lasting austerity phase, with reduced public spending, and, it is to be feared, in a situation of long-term decline. From the economic point of view, however, it seems that there is nothing inevitable about this.

Coming back to the universalistic project for Europe?

Maurice Allais, a politically liberal economist who won the Nobel Prize for Economics in 1988, described the expected outcome of the Maastricht Treaty in the following terms in 1992:[5] "anti-democratic institutions, an unviable and premature single currency, a free exchange system giving rise to instability and unemployment, an urgent need for new thought to be given to the building of Europe". He was quite right: we are now there. We are tied up in knots by contradictions that are stifling initiative and freedom. Brussels is preparing measures, with governments' consent, intended to draw the net even tighter. Two extreme temptations ensue which will lead to no good for Europe and for our countries: political abdication (accepting with resignation that minor adjustments are enough), or slashing through the Gordian knot and discarding Europe. Most of our fellow citizens do not wish for either course of action, which they expect would cause considerable damage and put an end to the possibility of a European identity.

My argument is that we need to find the road which, in today's conditions, would bring us back towards the universalistic pathway. How can we do this? By paying close attention to those fireflies that have shone through at various stages of European history. Surprisingly, they point to the survival today of traces of the universalistic pathway into the European process, and therefore provide support.

Five of these traces are briefly addressed below.

From market liberalisation to freedom of exchange as a basis for a new market order

Brussels and governments of the EU member states opted in the latter half of the 1980s for the liberalisation of all markets, including the financial market. Liberalisation was included in the Maastricht Treaty of 1992, but there had been forerunners in the Spaak Report of 1956, which gave rise to the Treaties of Rome. In contrast, until

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5. Arnaud Diemer (2009), "Les contributions de Maurice Allais à la question européenne : libres débats", Journée d'études, "Les contributions de Maurice Allais à la Science Economique", Maison des Sciences Economiques, Université de Paris 1, Paris, p. 5, note 6.

the 1970s the Bretton Woods agreements had ruled out free movement of capital and allowed national control to be exercised over capital flows.

To liberalise markets, all obstacles, constraints, rigidities, impediments and tariff and non-tariff barriers to the completely free movement of goods, services, workers and capital should be removed. Defining what constitutes a non-tariff barrier has no limit. Just one example is the judgment of the Court of Justice of the European Communities in the case of Schmidberger (C-112/00). This ruling was issued by the court in a case involving a transport firm, whose lorries had been stopped when a road was closed because of a demonstration by Austrian environmental associations. The demonstration had been authorised by the authorities. The company alleged a restriction of the principle of free movement of goods. The Austrian authorities' failure to ban the demonstration was regarded by the court as a measure equivalent to a quantitative restriction incompatible with the principle of free movement of goods. The court was perfectly aware of the conflict in this case with the protection of the fundamental rights of freedom of expression and freedom of assembly guaranteed by Articles 10 and 11 of the European Convention on Human Rights. But instead of giving that protection priority over the exercise of economic freedoms (free movement of goods, services, people and capital), the court treated them as counterbalancing equivalents. In practice, with few exceptions, the court is ruling more and more in favour of economic freedoms. So, fundamental rights may be counted as barriers to the single market!

The ultimate objective of such regulation is a perfect market where no state intervention is allowed, in other words the creation of what the European treaties call "an area without internal frontiers". The aim of liberalisation is thus to introduce free price-based competition, on the grounds of a belief in the efficiency of the markets to make optimum use of resources. Under formal equality, such a market organises domination by the strong and prevents the weak from protecting their economy, as any protection is deemed to be anti-competitive. The underlying model for any market is the financial market, and more specifically a market in which capital floats freely in search of immediate speculative gains. States lose their autonomy and capacity to pursue long-term policies. Governments are assessed by financial markets and speculative movements, and no longer, or only as a secondary factor, by their political community and democratic process. It is no surprise that the weakening of European standards and norms is the main purpose of the opaque negotiations in progress on the Free Trade Agreement between the United States and the European Union.

The freedom of exchange is something different. Its aim is for economic players to be able to trade freely, i.e. to reach bilateral agreement on fair terms of trade, buying and selling as much as they wish, and across borders. This conception was applied in Europeans' post-war efforts to rid themselves of their trade quotas. More widely, the intention is to ensure that trade takes place on the basis of genuine equality between the participants and, in the broader context, on that of equality of capabilities, to use Amartya Sen's words. Countries engaging in trade must have, as a product of their trade, the means and true freedoms to develop their economy independently; this is particularly necessary for the least developed countries, which suffer from over-exploitation of their resources for which they are underpaid.

The freedom of exchange justifies reasoned intervention by states to set exchange rates, to control speculative capital movements and to determine industrial and commercial policy (encompassing customs duties) in order to protect fledgling activities, innovation and the community's independence in decision making. "Reasoned" means that intervention should be justified by general motives that other countries can accept, as they themselves use them for identical purposes. This is what Europe needs in the post-crisis phase, if it wants to be able to invent a new model of development. To be effective, the freedom of exchange requires specific political conditions of support from European institutions: true equality between countries and co-operation on the basis of benefits, both mutual benefits and benefits for Europe as a whole.

Europe should take the lead in an effort to create a new world order based on this concept of exchange. This order would rely on reasoned and negotiated protection of national economies and their development, in order to improve quality standards and social, health and environmental standards. It is not a matter of going back to that protectionism which closes borders, but one of reasoned protection. One of the main reasons for the post-war liberalisation of markets was to prevent the return of cartels. It is estimated that cartels controlled 50% of world trade between the two world wars. This is now the case with trade within multinationals, understood as exchanges between their subsidiaries, real or fictitious (the famous "special-purpose entities", as defined by the OECD, via which profits are sent to tax havens). When added to trading between multinationals, the resulting figure falls not far short of that same percentage. One form of control of world trade has simply been replaced by another that is every bit as despicable.

Keynes and the search for a new world market order

In the prevailing world system which served as a basis for the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) centred on a single currency, the debtor alone is responsible for achieving a return to balance. At Bretton Woods John Maynard Keynes proposed another way of organising trade, based on a universalistic concept that Europe should now adopt. In Keynes' system, creditor and debtor countries work together to restore equilibrium to their balance of payments, using various methods: devaluation or revaluation against a supranational unit of account, the "bancor", investments in, and increased purchases from, the debtor by the creditor in order to make it structurally more competitive. Penalties are incurred by both countries if the imbalance worsens. It should also be remembered that, to Keynes' mind, this system goes hand-in-hand with controls of speculative movements of capital, if possible entailing co-operation between the countries. Keynes had learned from the crisis of the 1930s that placing the burden of a return to balance on the debtor country trapped it in a spiral of austerity and depression which spread to its neighbours and dragged everyone down (the same phenomenon you can see in Europe's present-day crisis). It is our misfortune that Keynes died in 1946, and that his ideas have been totally ignored in the history of European construction.

A "euror", designed in accordance with Keynes' institutional system, could have existed as long ago as 1958. The European Payments Union (EPU), which operated from 1950 to 1958 among the 17 countries of the Organisation for European Economic

Co-operation (OEEC), had a unit of account that could have evolved into a common currency. This solution of turning the euro into a true currency for the European economy, and not for global financial markets, is still available for renewing the EMU. It presupposes reshaping the EMU with, inter alia, stringent control of speculative capital movements, allowing freedom of movement only for productive investments, a Keynesian system of shared responsibility for balances of payments between creditor and debtor states, and a structure for steering co-operative investments between European countries with a view to restoring equilibrium to trade balances. Such a structure is steered by the Committee of the Regions which would thus take on a practical purpose.

The idea of freedom of movement of persons, instead of encouraging social dumping and extreme right-wing nationalism, would become a springboard for Europe's development. If Keynes' system prevailed over the long term in the European context, a country such as Romania would benefit from funds, genuine autonomy in its action and control over its development, ultimately giving every person true freedom of choice as to whether to stay or to leave. Everybody would have two genuine options, both offering real opportunities for his or her work, life and self-fulfilment, especially if the European social model moved towards an approach based on capabilities, as advocated by Amartya Sen. Otherwise, for most migrants, this freedom is reduced to an obligation to be mobile in response to market fluctuations and demands.

From market-based citizenship to rights regarded as generators of capability

Around the turn of the millennium some judges at the European Court of Justice expressed concern about the limitations of market-based citizenship due to the four economic freedoms. The workers' directive gives firms plenty of scope to use newly arrived workers as they see fit, thanks to the application of freedom of movement of services. Companies largely evade their obligation to apply domestic social and labour legislation to these workers. There are countless press reports on trafficking of workers and supply channels (they cannot be called recruitment channels) organised through established agencies. At the same time the Schengen agreements have transformed Europe into a fortress, depriving it of the dynamic force that immigration could bring.

Judge Poiares Maduro accurately summarised the social rights dilemma when he said, "For those who argue in favour of a model of European integration restricted to economic integration, the goal is to maximise wealth (efficiency) through free trade and market integration. Social rights may be required, but only as a form of securing a level playing field and fair competition. For those who argue in favour of a model of political integration, wealth maximisation has to be complemented by some criterion of solidarity and distributive justice in the new political community. Social rights will be a requirement independent of fair competition and arising from membership of that political community."[6]

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6. Quoted in Jeffrey Kenner (2003), *EU Employment Law. From Rome to Amsterdam and beyond*, Hart Publishing, Oxford, p. 110.

In that spirit, our European research network has made extensive efforts, appreciated by the research community but ignored by the European Commission, to redirect public policies, both national and European, towards a capability-based approach. The underlying idea is that the organisation of the economy, the market, business and labour through law and public policy needs to be underpinned by a fundamental requirement to provide each and every person, as well as living communities, with the conditions and means of exercising true freedom of choice and controlling their own destiny. As Amartya Sen says,[7] the principle of political action, which needs to be applied at every level and in a democratic deliberative context, is to enhance people's ability to have the life they aspire to, and as a result feel a sense of fulfilment.

The minimum institutional conditions in which the EU could apply such a principle of action would be, first, a clearly stated priority for fundamental rights over economic freedoms and, second, the inclusion among those fundamental rights of the right to work as specified in the Universal Declaration of 1948: "Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment" (Article 23-1), rather than that set down in the European Charter of Fundamental Rights, which recognises only that an individual has "the right to engage in work", which is a dubious formulation.

Gradually, and in all fields of life, a concept would emerge, not of growth, but of sustainable economic, social and human development, for which the benchmark would be the actual degree of freedom available to each and every person to live the life that he or she has reason to value.

Making investment decisions more democratic and oriented to a new model of development

The real issue is not a withdrawal into nationalism, but a definition of and a fight for a Europe which gives priority to the longer term, to productive investment, innovation, creative work, living democracy. Only such a Europe would be able to embark on a new kind of sustainable human and ecological development. It should be founded on co-operation (and not competition), on empowering Europeans (and not submission to a neoliberal world order), on a positive assessment of the national level of government (and not its denial). What should be produced, how and for what purposes on European territory? These have become questions of an essentially democratic nature.

We cannot shift from one model to another by waving a magic wand or formulating broad, abstract policies far removed from reality. What is needed is patient and stubborn work to inject an absolutely constant concern for sustainable human and ecological development wherever such input is meaningful. Clearly this applies to firms, in terms of their investments and also in their organisation, management, objectives and financing. But firms are not alone, for they are

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7. On the capability-based approach see Amartya Sen (1999), *Development as Freedom,* Anchor Books, New York; and, in connection with fundamental rights, Amartya Sen (2004), "Elements for a Theory of Human Rights", *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, 32, 4.

part of a real world in which they are surrounded by people and stakeholders who provide resources for them and expect purchasing power, employment, consideration, etc. in return. Moving from this actual world to a possible one requires that all its "inhabitants" be taken into consideration. This is feasible only through an extension of democratic practice to the economy, in terms of both deliberation and decision-making criteria.

The Europe of labour rights, outlined at the Congress of The Hague in 1948, early on pointed to the need for workers and their organisations to play a part in the management of companies (and the collective organisations around them). Similarly, draft European legislation in the 1970s relating to these rights saw a need to shift the balance of economic decision making, in the face of restructuring operations and the rising power of multinationals. The Europe of labour rights has numerous historical roots, works committees and employee representatives who participate in board meetings and, as in Germany, to engage in codetermination.

While workers, owners and financiers are central to the deliberation, for it is on them that subsequent achievement depends, other voices must also be given an equal hearing and taken into account, voices representing social needs: housing, living conditions, transport, work/life balance, health, culture, education and vocational training, as well as those representing the environment and sustainability of our planet.

Selection and financing procedures and criteria are crucial to a reorientation of credit towards investment. In the current context of financial speculation, credit will not return to forward-looking investment, or even to the financing of the real economy, without the more democratic processes for investment decisions that we have just outlined. This is why true latitude for action must be restored to national governments, so that they can impose this kind of policy on credit for the real economy on their banks, by whatever means necessary, including public control, throughout Europe. New efficiency criteria are needed in the world of finance and banking. We shall leave aside technical details, such as the creation of development and other indicators. Maurice Allais and Marcel Boiteux were already engaged in this type of research for the public sector in France, immediately after the Second World War.

Should the European community be based on a democratic federalism?

From the very beginning, the basic problem has been that of giving priority to Europe as a political project. It is still unsolved.

The Congress of European Movements, held in The Hague in 1948, brought together several hundred participants from all European countries, including Switzerland and the countries of eastern Europe (which had not yet fallen under the hegemony of the USSR), and from all walks of life and political persuasions (with the exception of the Communists). They regarded the European idea as a way to put an end to Europe's politically disastrous periods of bloodshed and as a move towards peace, prosperity, democracy and autonomy around the world. A majority was thus in favour of a universalistic path for Europe: hence the priority given to a political Europe. That priority very soon disappeared, and two or three subsequent attempts to revive

it – the planned European Political Community of 1952, Altiero Spinelli's project in 1984 and the 2004 European Constitution – failed.

In The Hague, Europe's three constitutional traditions expressed their vision of political Europe. The French republican tradition gave priority to the election of a European assembly on the basis of universal suffrage – if not a constituent assembly, then at least a deliberative one – to be responsible for defining the political system. The federalist tradition wished to base Europe on self-government by various intermediate tiers of authority and on the subsidiarity principle (the purest current example of this model is the Federal Republic of Germany). The British tradition of national sovereignty regarded Europe as a project whereby that sovereignty was ceded to authorities at a supranational level.

It was the third model that prevailed, giving a negative connotation to the process of uniting Europe from the very outset. It was viewed and put into practice as a series of transfers of sovereignty, and not as a union bringing together, in order to amplify it, all the potential of a wide range of peoples and economies. Long before the "official" Europe, it had been decided to construct extraterritorial European institutions that were not accountable to the peoples of Europe for their policies and their outcomes. It proved necessary to set up in the 1970s a European Parliament, and later to agree to it being elected on the basis of universal suffrage, and to entrust tasks to it, but only after a highly rigid and authoritarian institutional framework had been created for the EMU and kept under firm control by the European Central Bank (ECB) and the Economic and Financial Affairs Council (ECOFIN).

Consequently, Europe lacks a genuinely federal and democratic edifice. We need to be attentive to what this entails. As understood by Brussels today, federalism is an ongoing process whereby national sovereignty in specific fields is handed over to a remote authoritarian centre that lacks political legitimacy. This thin veil cannot dissimulate growing centralisation and the removal of power as far away from us, the people, as possible. The right view is the other way.

By bringing collective decision making as close to the people as possible, by giving stakeholders the opportunity to take part in the public debate, democratic practice can be revived in Europe. For – and this is one of the lessons taught by true subsidiarity, which is based on the primacy of collective autonomy – it is more efficient, fairer and more democratic to allow collective decisions at the lowest level of the political community that possesses the requisite knowledge and capability with regard to the specific issue at stake. While this might be Europe or a member state, it might also be a region or a local authority, for instance, depending on the nature of the problem which needs to be resolved. Adequate resources and the power to investigate and make decisions should be assigned to the chosen level. The sharing of responsibilities between central government and lower tiers of government is crucial, for on this depends the making of political decisions at levels that foster public and democratic debate.

A democratic European federalism would be one possible institutional solution leading in the desired direction. This would presuppose a bicameral system, with the parliament and a chamber of countries modelled on Germany's *Bundesrat*. Any alteration of the sharing of responsibilities between Brussels and the national level

would require an absolute majority vote by that chamber. In order to generate democratic energy, the Commission would lose its prerogatives and become a merely administrative authority without political power, in the service of a European government accountable to the parliament and the chamber of countries. To this should be added an ECB accountable to the parliament; horizontal co-ordination, more between regions and other intermediate authorities than between countries; a proper principle of subsidiarity. These are preconditions, necessary but not sufficient, for a revival of democratic practice and the emergence of a common identity shared by all of us as Europeans.

In conclusion

Let us leave the final word to Daniel Serruys, who chaired the Economic and Social Committee of the League of Nations, and in that capacity said at the Congress of Europe in The Hague in 1948 that, "if we want to build a Europe through bargaining, clashes of interests, compromises that we know to be uncertain and unfair, we would be acting like those tanks which – on the D-Day landing beaches in 1944 – threw up walls of pebbles in front of themselves that halted their own progress".[8]

8. In Congress of Europe, The Hague, 1948, Verbatim report of the Economic and Social Committee, pp. 166 to 168 (Mr Serruys' speech appears only in French).

In search of Europe[1]

Tzvetan Todorov
French essayist, philosopher and historian of Bulgarian origin

T he European Union no longer inspires French people with enthusiasm. A recent IPSOS survey on "Factors that divide the French" (Le Monde, 22 January 2014) showed that only 31% of respondents have confidence in the EU, that only 45% want France to remain a member, that 70% want more power for national institutions and that 33% would like France to leave the eurozone.

Nonetheless, on reflection, the reasons to aspire to further European integration are as strong as ever. There are many fields in which such united action would be beneficial. Ecology, for example, since ecological threats know no borders; the river Rhine was no barrier to the Chernobyl radioactive cloud, nor does it stop the spread of microbes or chemical substances. Or scientific research, where the cost of projects, whether for combating disease or climate change or in communications or technology, necessitates co-operation between a number of countries. Or immigration, since people allowed to enter one country of the Schengen Area can settle in any other, the borders that now need controlling are the frontiers of Europe, not those of the individual countries. In the economic sphere, the EU with its population of nearly 500 million people has means of action far exceeding those of any of its member states, allowing it to give its inhabitants' access to the advantages of globalisation while protecting them from its disadvantages. Major multinationals are today beyond the control of individual states, and action by the EU can have more effect on them. What about security, since terrorists and criminals seem to be able to move more freely between countries than the police or the judiciary? Or energy? Since supplies can now come from a neighbouring country, is it not clear that this question must be dealt with at the European level?

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1. Debate held on 13 February 2014.

A few words about another desirable development, which would be the endowment of Europe with a military force of its own. It is true that armed conflicts between EU member states have become impossible – in this respect, the wishes of the founders of united Europe have been realised. The new generations of Europeans born after the Second World War sometimes have the impression that war is a thing of the past. However, one only needs to have kept abreast of recent historical events to realise that the conflicts of all kinds which marked human history from its origins are far from having been eliminated. Whatever the explanation for this – whether biological or sociological – the facts are incontrovertible: the aggressiveness of human beings (or groups) is not declining. If we do not want to be the passive victims of such aggressions and to renounce what we hold most dear, we have to be ready to defend ourselves and therefore we need an army.

As a matter of fact, the governments of the countries of Europe pinned all their hopes not on the gradual disappearance of war and all kinds of violence, tyranny or mass crime, nor on the protection that may be offered by law and international institutions. Since the end of the Second World War, they have chosen a more traditional means of protection, shielding themselves behind the army of another country, their faithful ally the United States. This solution offers them a twofold advantage: first, their alliance with the most powerful army in the world shelters them from all kinds of dangers; and second, they significantly reduce their military spending and can allocate their resources to other priorities. They thus have the impression that they are benefiting from a sort of free ride, since they have the advantages of a defence (security) without its disadvantages (the costs). However, are these advantages really entirely cost-free?

The problem lies in the fact that if we entrust a third party with our defence, we waive our right to disagree with the way it is ensured – they can always tell us that it is the only possible way. At the same time, it is by no means certain that public opinion in Europe approves all the forms taken by this defence. Let me cite three examples.

President Bush declared an all-out war on terrorism, and one of the methods of waging this war was to use torture when interrogating prisoners. It is well known that, in the course of history, many governments, including those of democratic countries, have closed their eyes to acts of torture when they deemed that the circumstances so required. However, the Americans' decision was novel in that this was the first time that a democratic country instituted torture not only in its practice, but also in its legislation. Nevertheless, no European government publicly expressed even the slightest reservations concerning this approach, not to mention any condemnation of it. The obvious explanation was that these governments themselves benefited from the intelligence extracted under torture. The outrage caused at world level by this recourse to torture was therefore not targeted at the US Government alone but also at its European partners.

President Obama did not close the Guantanamo Bay prison camp, as he had promised during his first election campaign in 2008. However, he drew conclusions from the indignant reactions the use of torture had provoked in other parts of the world and even in his own country. These conclusions are actually quite paradoxical. Since it is indeed shocking to torture prisoners so as to force them to reveal information, he

decided that those concerned would no longer be taken prisoner but would instead be executed. This practice was made possible by progress in drone technology, giving the capability to send missiles remotely controlled from US territory to strike individuals in Pakistan, Yemen or Somalia. This intervention technique offers many advantages: with drones there are fewer victims than are caused by the military occupation of a foreign country, they are far less costly and they involve no risk for American military personnel, since the latter do not leave the bases in their home country. This policy in fact meets with virtually no opposition in the United States, or from allied European governments. France, visibly full of admiration for the possibilities offered by drones, has moreover recently ordered a few of these aircraft. And yet there are many reasons to be outraged at this practice. First, because it is impossible to avoid cases of mistaken identity (this can be deduced from the manner in which Bin Laden was executed, by a human commando and not by a drone). Second, because all suspects are automatically declared guilty, and all those who are guilty are sentenced to death without any form of trial, while at the same time it is known that misinformation and manipulation are rife in intelligence circles. And last, because when the drone explodes it is not just the target who is killed but also other people who find themselves nearby. This practice reflects a complete disregard for law and sanctions the deployment of brute force. It brings to mind urban gang warfare in which targeted assassinations of the leaders of rival criminal gangs are common practice (except that the leaders of the terrorist movements do not yet have access to drones).

In recent years the United States has had to contend with information leaks concerning the treatments it reserves for adversaries in times of war, and also for its allies in times of peace, ranging from the commission of war crimes to cyber-spying. Surveillance contributes to national security, but it must not escape all forms of supervision and accountability. However, none of these disclosures has resulted in those responsible being held liable for their acts. At the same time, those behind the leaks have been hunted down with the utmost rigour. Two of them sought refuge in extraterritorial locations, Julian Assange in the Ecuadorian embassy in London and Edward Snowden in Moscow international airport (he has since been granted asylum in Russia). A third, soldier Bradley Manning, was arrested and imprisoned under conditions worthy of Guantanamo Bay. He has recently been tried and sentenced to 35 years in prison for espionage-related offences. His greatest crime was releasing video material showing American soldiers deliberately slaughtering civilians in Iraq. The soldiers concerned have never been bothered. Once again, there was no protest from the countries of Europe, which silently acquiesced to the persecution suffered by the whistle-blowers and even supported the measures taken against them.

To sum up, the European Union at present remains a US protectorate, and the price of its security is its independence. Although NATO, a US-European army under American command, was established to protect European territory, in accordance with its leaders' wishes, NATO troops are now sent to distant theatres of operation. On the international political scene, the 28 dwarfs of the European Union do not represent a genuine force; they do not form one of the poles of the new multi-polar world.

For these reasons it seems clear to me that Europe should become a military power. More precisely, as suggested in the book *The new world disorder*, published in 2003,

it should become a "tranquil power". In that sense Europe should set itself a number of limited tasks: defending European territory, possessing deterrent weapons, preventing any armed confrontation within European territory, intervening on an ad hoc basis in the rest of the world at the request of friendly governments or to prevent genocide. Other tasks would however be ruled out. This military force would not seek to guarantee global security or to stamp out tyranny or terrorism. Nor would it participate in any conflict between Japan and China, India and Pakistan, or Saudi Arabia and Iran. Nor would it be used to conduct so-called "humanitarian wars" – a contradictory word combination meaning interventions justified by the desire to promote democracy and human rights, but which compromise these noble ideals through the means used to attain them. War is a "means" whose force exceeds the intentions of those that instigate it and whose consequences are unpredictable, as can be seen from the very mixed results of the wars in Iraq, Afghanistan and Libya.

If there are all these good reasons for desiring a reinforcement of the common institutions, how can one explain the pessimism or the scepticism that seems to afflict the people of Europe? Without detailing the results of the studies already available on this subject, one finding is that the current financial and economic crisis plays an important role here: it is first and foremost the victims of this crisis that reject the EU. The survey already cited showed that 67% of respondents from managerial or professional backgrounds are in favour of reinforcing the EU, but they do not constitute the majority of the population. In addition, politicians in all of the countries are reluctant to make further progress in building common institutions. Their reaction brings to mind that of the mayors of small French municipalities which are encouraged to form "communities of municipalities", making it possible to merge a number of municipalities into a new local government body. These mayors cautiously prefer to retain their hold over a weak entity, rather than being relegated to a subordinate role in a strong one.

Another reason for this reluctance is probably the lack of an "identity" component in the EU project. Many people have voiced their disappointment that European politicians are happy to concern themselves with the removal of customs barriers and its consequences, or with bureaucratic rules and regulations, but have lost sight of the European project itself. The question has therefore been raised whether the EU could not be given a further political impetus by highlighting and reinforcing its cultural identity, with culture becoming the third pillar of the European construction process alongside the economy and judicial or political institutions. It is also hoped that this will confer a little more soul on the EU, a spiritual and emotional dimension that is missing elsewhere. This task is imagined to be easy since, in today's Europe, a consensus is more easily reached on the continent's great cultural monuments than on administrative regulations or economic decisions.

The underlying reasoning is understandable: a sense of common identity would strengthen the European project. To use the vocabulary of the 18th century, one might say that a political idea is more effective if it is borne not just by common interests, but also by shared passions; but passions are unleashed only if we feel that our very identities are affected. To feel a European solidarity, we also need to feel that we share a common identity. However, in that case we need to begin by clarifying the content of this identity.

In the past there has been no shortage of attempts to bring to the fore the spiritual and cultural dimensions of Europe. One need only recall the debate concerning the draft EU constitution, in particular the question whether it should include a reference to Europe's "Christian roots". However, attempts of this kind have existed for far longer. In the wake of the First World War the poet and essayist Paul Valéry suggested an interpretation of this identity that caused something of a stir. He basically said that the peoples he called "European" were those who in the course of their history had undergone three great influences, those of Rome, Jerusalem and Athens. Rome's legacy was empire, with organised state power, law and institutions and citizenship. From Jerusalem, or rather Christianity, Europeans had inherited subjective morality, conscience searching and universal justice. And, Athens had bequeathed them a taste for knowledge and rational reasoning, the ideal of harmony and the idea of man as the measure of all things. Anyone who could lay claim to this triple legacy, concluded Valéry, could rightly be deemed to be European.

This proposition was in turn much criticised and frequently supplemented and updated. However, it also raises a more fundamental objection, relevant to any attempt to define identity in substantial terms. When we try to pin down its component features, we discover that the task is harder than might have been thought. The reason for this difficulty is twofold and somewhat paradoxical: the characteristics on which we all agree are either too general or too specific. Too general in that they have a universal dimension and are not specifically European. Scientific and technical rationalism may have developed in Europe, but today it is an attribute of all humankind. The same applies to a number of standards which, although not respected everywhere, are regarded the world over as – at least – a desirable façade to be presented. These are the values of democracy, the rule of law, respect for human dignity and human rights. Too specific, on the other hand, if only because the culture of a population group is closely bound up with its language, which, as we know, helps it to form a specific world view. Each people's own collective memory plays the same role. The great works that we love to identify as constituting European culture were created within particular traditions.

A further difficulty lies in the fact that European societies have existed for so long that there has been sufficient time for them to give birth to some widely differing ideas. It could be said that each theory developed in Europe has also led to a counter-theory, as one of the characteristic features of the European tradition is in point of fact the exercise of critical thought, where all values can be subjected to scrutiny. The idea that all human beings are equal has its roots in European history, and yet the concept of slavery is by no means absent either. Religious proselytism and secularism are both part of European history, as are the revolutionary spirit and conservatism. Tolerance is European, but so are fanaticism and wars of religion. Respect for individual autonomy is a European achievement, and yet the subjection of foreign peoples to the will of the strongest, colonialism and imperialism itself, are also part of the European heritage. Liberalism belongs to the European tradition, as does communism. This characteristic of European history may be a source of pride, but it does not make it any easier to identify what is essentially European. If we retain only those elements of times gone by that suit us here in the present, we make a highly selective reading of the past and betray genuine history, replacing

it with a "right-thinking" righteous history consistent with the "politically correct" views of our era. Moreover, those calling for Europe to repent its shameful past of slavery and colonialism today outnumber those that selectively recall only its more glorious achievements.

There is not a hermetical seal between European traditions and those of other continents. From the very outset European thinkers absorbed the contributions of other civilisations: Egypt, Persia, India, China. Today, European cultural characteristics can be found very far from Europe; at the same time, non-European inventions have spread throughout our continent.

The very attempt to identify a substantive, irreducible core therefore poses problems. Does this therefore mean that we are obliged to abandon the idea of a European identity?

I do not think so. However, this identity would have to be founded on what distinguishes Europe from other major population groupings, in particular the world's most populous and largest countries: China, India, the United States, Russia or Brazil. In comparison with these other parts of the world, Europe is distinguished by the multiplicity of states existing within its territory, which in turn results in a multiplicity of cultures and languages. If it is compared with China, which is fairly similar in area, the contrast is striking: a single state on one hand and currently some 40 independent states on the other. With this in mind, the unity of European culture seems to lie in the way it manages the different regional, national, religious and cultural identities that compose it, according them a new status and taking advantage of this very plurality. Europe's spiritual identity does not require the erasure of particular cultures and local memories. It consists not in a list of proper names or a compendium of general ideas, but in the adoption of the same attitude towards diversity.

If the sole characteristic of European identity were acceptance of otherness or of diversity, it would be an extremely weak identity, since it could incorporate absolutely any foreign ingredient. It should therefore be clarified that this identity resides not in diversity itself, but in the status given to it. In this way a purely negative and relative trait is transformed into an absolute, positive quality; difference becomes identity and plurality unity. And it really is a unity, however strange this may seem: it is a way of giving what is different the same status. It is solely in this sense that the European identity can be claimed by the EU and contribute to the reinforcement of its project.

In fact, until the end of the Second World War, while benefiting from its inner plurality, Europe also suffered greatly from it. It must not be forgotten that war has been a constant throughout the continent's history, and the names of the wars may have changed but not their disastrous consequences, from the Roman Empire's struggles against the barbarian populations of the north to the global conflicts of the 20th century, via – take your pick – the Hundred Years' War, the Thirty Years' War, the Seven Years' War, and so on. It needed the trauma of the 1939-1945 war for the European Union to come into being; its starting point was a desire to eradicate war between member countries and renunciation of the use of force in cases of conflict (for the conflicts themselves have not disappeared). Thanks to acceptance of this principle, the EU member states now enjoy a previously unknown peace in their relations.

Having thus set an ultimate limit on the consequences of diversity, the countries of Europe have been able to explore different forms of coexistence to their advantage. It could be said that the minimum form of coexistence is tolerance: one does not approve of others or borrow anything from them, one merely refrains from persecuting them. Tolerance is an essential progress, the crowning achievement of the religious struggles initiated in the 16th and 17th centuries, and entails that disagreements between groups should no longer be settled by resorting to force, but solely by negotiation and persuasion. The thinkers of those times, in particular those of the Enlightenment, were the first to seek the positive effects of the pluralism embodied by Europe.

The countries or cultures cohabiting in Europe, however, did not make do with mutually tolerating each other, they engaged in stronger interactions. Montesquieu stressed the beneficial effects of coexistence; it leads to emulation and competition, with everyone trying to prove that they are as good as or better than their neighbour. A contemporary of Montesquieu, David Hume, saw another advantage here, the development of critical thought. Thanks to an observer's distance from the culture being observed, he or she does not share the same prejudices. Aided by the way others see us, or the way we see ourselves through the eyes of an imagined other (it was Montesquieu who came up with the idea of Persians' perception of the French), it becomes possible to distinguish between custom and nature, to separate arguments based on the authority of tradition from rational arguments. A comparison between particular identities teaches us to examine every doctrine with a critical eye.

Pluralism also has another consequence: it prevents one of the participants from assuming a hegemonic position and tyrannising the others. It was for this reason that Voltaire was so glad that there were 30 religions in England: none of them could have "plenitude of power" – the term used at the time of the conflicts between popes and emperors – and reign supreme. Montesquieu regarded the same principle as the basis of "moderate" (and therefore benevolent) government: so that there could be checks on power, not all powers must be concentrated in the same hands.

The principle of secularism, which has now been adopted in one form or another by virtually all the countries of Europe, makes it possible to go one step further. Not only must there be mutual tolerance between religions, but a non-religious authority, the state, is entrusted with the task of ensuring their appropriate distribution over public territory and guaranteeing that each citizen also has a personal sphere lying outside the control of both the state itself and the religious communities.

Mention must be made of the concept of "general will", as defined by Rousseau, distinguishable from a hypothetical "will of all". The latter corresponds to unanimity among all citizens within a state, a unanimity which is highly unlikely and which, if left unchecked, leads to a tyranny of the majority. The former corresponds to a "sum of differences", a point of view that takes account of disagreements but is aimed at doing what is in the general interest. Kant would take up this idea of Rousseau's in his appeal for "common sense". Pursuing his predecessor's line of thought, Kant considered that this did not involve a super-human effort: "In itself there is nothing more natural", he said "than to put ourselves in the place of any other man." The relationship between cultures, societies and states within a larger whole can be

conceptualised along the same lines. The general interest will not be clear to all, but it can be determined by reasoned, well-informed debate. At the end of the 18th century, Condorcet expressed his prudent conclusion on the possibility of reaching a consensus in the following terms: "If I examine the current state of enlightenment in Europe, I see, despite the diversity of governments, of institutions, of usages, of prejudices, the enlightened men of Europe as a whole agreeing on what is true." There will never be general agreement on everything, but agreement among "enlightened men" is possible.

In the present European construction process the question has often been raised whether, in order to attain a common identity, Europeans would be capable, to begin with, of adopting a common memory. The general will model, as distinct from that of the will of all, could be useful here, as a common memory of this kind is really possible only if it takes the form of a "general memory". A "memory of all" would require that particular memories become identical, which is an unattainable and moreover undesirable goal. Requiring each French, German or Polish person to have the same memory of the past would be as futile as asking them to give up belonging to their community. It is however possible to ask them to take others' point of view into account, to highlight similarities and differences and to situate them in a general context. This attitude is indeed fairly common, admittedly not with everyone, but among sufficiently enlightened men and women of goodwill. A European "general memory" would conversely be a "sum of differences", taking into consideration national or regional points of view. As we have seen, it is also a perspective for an education for all.

The Europeans of tomorrow will therefore not be those who share the same memory, but those who can acknowledge in the "silence of passions", to cite Diderot, that their neighbour's memory is as legitimate as their own. By confronting their version of the past and that of their one-time enemies, they will discover that their people did not always play the desirable roles of hero or victim, and they will escape the Manichean temptation to see good on one side of a border and evil on the other – the former being identified with "us", and the latter with "them" – and more generally avoid the trap of perceiving the past purely in terms of sweeping moral generalisations, such as good or evil, as if the multifaceted, complex experience of millions of people over the centuries could be reduced to this.

European identity therefore does not replace the European peoples' own national or regional identity, but is additional to it – just as the administrative and political bodies of the EU do not oust the institutions specific to each level, but govern and guide their action. National governments have lost many of their powers, but have not become superfluous for all that. It is within the nation that the major forms of social solidarity come into play. Medical assistance is made available to those without sufficient resources through the contributions paid by all. Retired people are able to receive a pension thanks to the efforts of the working population. It is also with the latter's contributions that unemployment benefits can be funded. It is thanks to national solidarity that all children in the country can receive a free education. Health care, work, pensions and education are essential components of our individual lives. Similarly, an individual can assert his or her rights only to the extent that the state guarantees them and takes action to safeguard them if necessary. No matter how

truly cosmopolitan we may feel, we are never citizens of the world, but merely of a given country. At the same time, when all the citizens of a country have the same culture they are guaranteed access to the same social space.

Pluralism, which is therefore the foundation of European identity, can also guide our future action and serve as a model for other parts of the world. Monistic temptations are never far away, and dogmatism is the easiest way of expressing political passions, whether they be for different forms of nationalism or any other hegemonic doctrine, such as neoliberalism today. The advantages of Europe are currently still only potential. They are nevertheless real, and it is possible that, one day, the European tortoise will overtake the hares racing along ahead of it, especially if it turns out that they have not taken the right direction.

Core EU challenge: democratic deficit or trust deficit?[1]

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T he Council of Europe and the European Court of Human Rights are key entities and constitute the core of the notion of European identity. The Council of Europe has for many years been a founding institution, instrumental in the "creation of Europe".

We find ourselves in the midst of a complex time for the common project of the European Union, in a Europe where many fail to see a promising future along with the crisis that has seemingly broken the "European soul". Amidst the number of particularly difficult tests facing the concept of European identity, it is impossible to ignore the power of Euroscepticism or, indeed, the dangers of retreating into nationalism and the resurgence of extremism. It seems almost misguided to even speak about a common "project" when the current generation insists that their children's future is bound to be worse than the present. The European Union is confronted by two unique challenges in its common history. First, even though European legitimacy has for years been largely based on prosperity, we remain overwhelmed by the eurozone crisis which, despite significant progress, has yet to be resolved. Second, a united Europe has lulled us into an illusion that war is no longer a possibility, at least in its classical sense. The recent events in Ukraine have, however, made us realise that significant threats still exist, with consequences that can impinge on both our security and well-being.

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1. Debate held on 11 March 2014.

Europe is in need of developing a raison d'être adapted to the emerging 21st century reality. A new centre of gravity, going beyond immediate prosperity, must be established in order to ensure our influence in an increasingly competitive global order. Even the most optimistic prognoses anticipate that, unless we Europeans become united, we will disappear from the forefront of the big global players.[2]

Overcoming these challenges will only be possible as a result of a large-scale awareness campaign, deliberately Europeanist and without naivety. "Europe not only has to be useful, but it also has to make sense".[3] Accordingly, although we tend to focus our attention exclusively on the immediate, there is an urgent need to look back and to remember where we come from and who we are, as well as to consider where we stand and in what direction we are heading. We need to determine the role Europe plays in the world nowadays and, more importantly, the kind of reality Europe will encounter following the crisis.

European identity: how are we seen and how do we see ourselves?

It is essential to begin by raising two fundamental questions: what is the perception the world has of the European Union, and how do we see ourselves as Europeans? The projection of the European Union is after all nothing but a reflection of our own identity. This identity may be approached from two points of view, exemplified by two events that are now ubiquitous in the public consciousness. One such example is Ukraine, a country on the frontiers of the EU that has come to remind us that our union is one of values. We listed those values in the Copenhagen criteria:[4] democracy, good governance, rule of law, respect for human rights and protection of minorities. Mariano Rajoy presented a condensed idea of these values during the ceremony for the Carlos V European Prize, when he spoke of "extending the paths of liberty, justice, cohesion and solidarity".[5] If there is any doubt about the effectiveness and appeal of these values, one need only look eastward to the youth at Maidan in Kyiv who, enduring brutal repression and bitter cold, kept up the resistance symbolised by the blue flag with 12 stars for weeks. This is the flag for which more than a few have given their lives. Having seen what happened in Poland and in the Baltics, the Ukrainians are aware that Europe is more than a land of economic opportunity. Europe is also a land

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2. According to the Bruegel Institute, in 20 to 30 years there will not be a single European country in the G8. "For a Euro Community," *Bruegel*, 14 February 2014. Available online at: www.bruegel.org/nc/blog/detail/article/1250-for-a-euro-community.

3. Julia Kristeva, *Crisis of the European Subject*, Other Press, New York (2000).

4. The Copenhagen European Council (1993) defined the criteria that, according to the principles laid down in the Treaty on the European Union (1992), had to be met by countries seeking accession. These criteria were: 1) political and institutional criteria (European state, according to the geopolitical concept of Europe, stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities); 2) economic criteria (a functioning market economy and the capacity to cope with competition and market forces); and 3) administrative and institutional capacity to effectively implement the acquis.

5. Speech by Mariano Rajoy at the ceremony to award the Carlos V European Prize to José Manuel Durao Barroso, Yuste (Caceres), 16 January 2014. Available online at: www.lamoncloa.gob.es/IDIOMAS/9/Presidente/Intervenciones/Discursos/20140116_Rajoy_DuraoBarroso_CharlesVaward.htm.

of hope and freedom. It is lamentable, however, to witness the European Union falling short in its actions yet again. Europe has shown itself to be inadequate and sputtering in its response, taking insufficient measures vis-à-vis an emboldened Vladimir Putin who harbours dreams of recovering the former Soviet Union's geostrategic position.

Europe, nevertheless, is also able to provide a positive and effective image to the rest of the world, as has been the case with the negotiations on Iran's nuclear programme, where a united Europe has been instrumental in laying foundations for a solution that could become a first step towards a still too distant stability in the region.

To the world we are already seen as Europeans. Indeed, when we travel we are identified as being European before being identified by our nationality. There is an appeal to this identity. There are astonishing statistics that reveal that, in countries like Russia, the population turns out to be more pro-European than the citizens of the EU themselves. A poll conducted by the Pew Research Center in 2013[6] shows that Russia is one of the countries whose public opinion is most favourable (63%) towards the EU. Meanwhile, among the European public the results are worrisome, with perceptions of the EU more positive in the UK (43%) than in France (41%), one of the pillars and founders of the union.

The European Union has failed to fulfil many of the promises that dazzled previous generations of Europeans. This is the harsh reality reinforced by the opinion of a majority of Europe's citizens. Although there is a visible minority of educated young people who could well be defined as passionately pro-European and are today the flag bearers of an optimistic European movement, nearly all Europeans feel confused, distant and even sceptical of the process of European integration. By 2008, Europe was already experiencing a "sweet decay".[7] Today, with the risk of systemic collapse fading, a new element of uncertainty has paradoxically arisen: the temptation for the average citizen to forget the tough realities of the crisis and to delude themselves into thinking that they can return to a stable environment where peace, order and prosperity reign, where they would be allowed to devote themselves to private matters free from major interference. In that world, threats are denied and decisions are delayed. Indeed, in 2010 the so-called Monti Report[8] mentioned this sense of complacency as one of the main challenges that the single market faced. The market, like many other European policies, is perceived as "yesterday's business", despite the economic crisis accentuating the need for action to strengthen these policies. A large sector of the population has been overcome by nostalgia and needs to be convinced that we are going through a global mutation, and that it is simply not realistic to expect to return to yesterday's world.

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6. Pew Research Centre, Global Attitudes Project, updated in July with polling data from the Sprint 2013 survey. Polling data available at: www.pewglobal.org/database/indicator/28/survey/all/response/Unfavorable/.

7. Felipe González warned in June 2008 that the EU was experiencing a "sweet decay". Jorge Valero, "González dice que la UE vive una 'dulce decadencia'", *La Razón*, 28 May 2009. Available online at: www.larazon.es/detalle_hemeroteca/noticias/LA_RAZON_132900/gonzalez-dice-que-la-ue-vive-una-dulce-decadencia.

8. Mario Monti, 2010, "Report on more Single Market: A new strategy for the single market. At the service of Europe's economy and society", p. 6.

It is no secret that the old continent is ageing, and that changing demography is nowadays becoming one of the most dangerous threats to Europe's future. Birth rates are declining at an alarming pace while life expectancy is simultaneously increasing (even taking into account the negative effect on life expectancy caused by the crisis). The EU population pyramid is undergoing a fundamental change, trending towards a reversal of its structure with the number of people of working age decreasing while the number of retirees continues to grow (especially those belonging to the so-called baby-boom generation). This has led to an increased burden on the working population with a disproportionate impact on social spending, both from the point of view of pensions and from the full range of related services. In December 2012, Angela Merkel highlighted the unsustainability of the European model under the "7/25/50" formula; Europe currently accounts for 7% of the world population, 25% of the global GDP and 50% of total social spending. However, by 2040 it is expected to represent 5.5% of the world's population[9] and approximately 15% of the global GDP[10] with a population that will have aged to levels that will lead to clearly unsustainable social spending.

This increasingly ageing population is becoming more and more dissatisfied, as seen in the previously mentioned figures from the Pew Research Center or, among others, Eurostat, whose latest report[11] shows that only 28% of the European public has a positive perception of the EU.

Euroscepticism is the banner hoisted by populist parties across Europe, whose members made headlines with their harsh and accusatory messages delivered at the European Parliament. These parties come from both the left (Syriza in Greece and Grillini in Italy) and the right (Marine Le Pen's National Front in France or Geert Wilders' People's Party for Freedom and Democracy in the Netherlands)[12] of the political spectrum. Their common feature is the repeated use of populist slogans and demagogy. Their arguments are based on the redistribution of powers, taking advantage of the widespread longing to return to the past, while also capitalising on the prevailing anomie and difficulties of a large portion of the citizenry. Separatist parties could also be included in this group, as shown in particular by the cases of Catalonia in Spain or Scotland in the United Kingdom. Something that should be highlighted, and which is unfortunately missing in the European debate, is that many of the changes advocated by these parties would be, in the medium term, more painful for the very citizens they are appealing to than the toughest short-term oriented

9. United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, "World Population Prospects: The 2012 Revision." Available online at: http://esa.un.org/wpp/.

10. Chateau, J., C. Rebolledo and R. Dellink, "An Economic Projection to 2050: The OECD 'ENV-Linkages' Model Baseline", *OECD Environment Working Papers*, No. 41, OECD Publishing, 15 December 2011. Available online at: www.oecd ilibrary.org/docserver/download/5kg0ndkjvfhf.pdf?expires-=1402387906&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=E8EA27AE631F1B1DEA6334E19E6BC3FD.

11. Standard Eurobarometer 80, Public opinion in the European Union, Autumn 2013. Available online at: http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb80/eb80_first_en.pdf, last accessed on 24 May 2014.

12. Following an alliance of convenience entered into in November 2013, these parties will create their own group in the EP. Available online at: www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/monkey-cage/wp/2014/02/11/the-le-pen-wilders-alliance-and-the-european-parliament-plus-ca-change-plus-cest-la-meme/, last accessed on 24 May 2014.

adjustment policies promoted by the EU. This is the fundamental disconnect: the ideas advanced by populists, unlike the positions they attack, have no future whatsoever.

Nevertheless, it would be absurd to deny the reality that underlies the malaise engulfing so many citizens or to dismiss it as unfounded. On the contrary, we must address their setbacks as a preliminary matter to allow them to regain confidence in the European Union. It will be essential to remind them of the advantages that EU membership brings, not only referring to the immediate concept of "added value", but also from a purely political standpoint. This is because widespread disenchantment is also a direct consequence of a lack of leadership, or, inadequate leadership. Citizens share the opinion that, on many occasions, both governments in their capitals and the institutions in Brussels act selfishly and short-sightedly. It is therefore crucial to recover politics in its purest sense: statecraft, the art of living in society, and prior- itising and solving the problems of everyday life, all the while keeping sight of the need for an inclusive project for the future. For Spain, this approach also implies the opportunity to regain the momentum that led to the incorporation of European citizenship in Article 9 of the 1992 Maastricht Treaty, endowing this citizenship with substance going beyond voting in municipal elections and consular protection.[13]

Governance of the European Union

Against this backdrop, governance of the EU itself is at stake. According to estim- ates produced by the European Parliament, the anti-establishment and Eurosceptic parties and other previously marginalised parties will claim a considerable number of seats. This will certainly undermine the traditional alternation of the control of the parliament between the European People's Party (EPP) and the Group of Socialists and Democrats (S&D), with the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) acting as a swing party. There is no doubt this outcome will not only distort the image of the parliament, but it will also represent a great challenge for both the EPP and the S&D, which will need to work together in order to move the European integration process forward.

In addition, these developments may allow for a positive reading of the "institutional triangle",[14] as they will oblige a more heterogeneous parliament to work constructively in pursuit of institutional balance and to hold off attempts at gaining power at the expense of the European Commission or the European Council.

One of the frequent criticisms against the European Union is the alleged existence of a "gargantuan" bureaucracy. Numerous comparisons, however, show just how unfounded such criticisms are. According to data by the European Commission, the

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13. In 1990, Spain submitted a proposal for the creation of a special framework for the general aspects of European citizenship as one of the three pillars of the Union and essential requirement for its democratic legitimacy. The content of this citizenship includes not only freedom of movement and residence, but also the right of political participation in the place of residence.

14. The notion of "institutional triangle" refers to the relationship between the European Commission, the Council of the European Union and the European Parliament, under the principle of institutional balance. The latter means that each institution acts within the powers they are granted under the treaties by virtue of the principle of division of powers.

EU has a total of 55 000 officers and other agents, including the central institutions and agencies in Brussels, Luxembourg, Strasbourg, the rest of Europe and the world.[15] By contrast, Birmingham City Council in the UK employs 60 000 people while the Central Administration of Paris employs 50 000. The EU administrative costs represent less than 6% of the total EU budget with salaries accounting for about half of that amount. Another common myth refers to the overblown budget. In reality, however, the EU budget amounts to around 1% of the combined GDP of the 28 member states. When compared with the 0.7% pledged to development aid, the figure is seen in a different light considering the historical importance of European integration.

It is imperative to confront other common criticisms such as the ones that proclaim that the EU suffers from a "democratic deficit". Indeed, it is hard to find any analysis of the European elections, or for that matter, any reference to the governance of the Union, that does not elaborate on this matter. Such arguments are an expression of the longing for a genuine European federalist project. The time for this, however, has not yet come. This proclaimed deficit is always followed by proposals advocating for the direct election of the president of the Commission, the transformation of the Council into a lower parliamentary house, or granting of real powers to European political parties. These initiatives present a more assertive parliament. Yet, while the federalist dream is haunting many EU insiders, the overwhelming majority of European citizens are calling for European institutions to focus their energy on solving practical issues. This federalist drive, though commendable in many ways, lacks viability and momentum. What needs to be understood and reflected upon is that the current situation calls for a more realistic approach.

The European Union, that "unidentified political object", as Jacques Delors labelled it,[16] is characterised by the open nature of its construction; a mixture of quantitative and qualitative leaps. It came into being through a complex process whose stages have been marked both by treaties and innovative solutions, as well as by acts of improvisation agreed upon after lengthy late-night negotiations. All stages invariably followed key turning points and defining moments in the history of the integration project. Walter Hallstein among others called this a "creatio continua", an open constitutional process without a genuine final model that above all requires large doses of political will.

In order to overcome the legitimacy crisis that undermines both the image and the efficiency of the European Union, we need to explain to the different constituencies that each phase of the European construction has given birth to a distinct institution which, in turn, has been beholden to a respective constituent actor. It was the individuals – the fathers of European integration: Monnet, Adenauer, De Gasperi or Schuman – who led the process thanks to their determination and *auctoritas*. In the years of stabilisation of the process, the political impetus of the European Union belonged to the European Commission, the guardian of treaties and the possessor of legislative initiative. Today,

15. "European Commission to trim EU staff costs", *BBC News Europe*, 1 July 2011. Available online at: www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-13978019, last accessed on 24 May 2014.

16. Statement by Jacques Delors, President of the European Commission between 1985 and 1995, on September 9, 1985 in Luxembourg. Available online at: www.cvce.eu/content/publication/2001/10/19/423d6913-b4e2-4395-9157-fe70b3ca8521/publishable_en.pdf, last accessed on 24 May 2014.

in the face of a changing world and confronted with the greatest internal crisis the European project has witnessed, the impetus comes from the European Council, composed of the heads of states and governments of the member states.

In the midst of this "return to intergovernmentalism", it is the European Council, with Germany at the helm, that is the driving force. And although Berlin, internal and external reluctance aside, rarely likes to make a show of it, its very future depends on the proper functioning of the European Union. Reluctant German leadership abruptly came into prominence when confronted with another major European challenge: the potential departure of the United Kingdom. Angela Merkel was the one who defined and vocalised the European position on her visit to the British Prime Minister in February 2014, when she argued against a "fundamental reform of the European architecture" but called for "limited and specific" amendments to the treaties.[17] These reforms should focus on promoting greater efficiency, trimming the acquis of a large amount of unnecessarily intrusive legislation and on adopting measures to promote European competitiveness. These reforms are vital for the future of the European Union and necessary as an end in themselves, even if the EU's relevance would be curbed significantly should the UK exit.

After the forthcoming elections, the European Council will have the final word on confirming the president of the Commission and, at least for the moment, the Commission must be prevented from becoming an imitation of national govern-ments. The next commission, far from setting itself up as a partisan institution, should assume an inclusive and conciliatory identity, devoted to guaranteeing the proper functioning of the European Union, and, in particular, to weeding the existing legislative hodge podge,[18] intervening only in those areas that will clearly add value to national policies. Today, what is unavoidable at all levels is the need to maximise accountability and intelligibility while, above all, encouraging higher quality involvement from national parliaments.

For a programme of genuine added value

The European Parliament has recently published a study[19] that could well represent the core of its action programme for the next term. It is a set of sectoral analyses on the "cost of non-Europe". This study strongly emphasises the need to build a genuine single market, rather than preserving the current hodge podge that is maintained by the fallacy that we have now completed a European market originating in the 1957 Treaty of Rome.

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17. "An EU plan that could work for Cameron", The New York Times, 2 March 2014. Available online at: www.nytimes.com/2014/03/03/business/international/an-eu-plan-that-could-work-for-cameron. html?smid=tw-share&_r=4, last accessed on 24 May 2014.

18. This is the case of Directive 1999/22/EC relating to the keeping of wild animals in zoos, Directive 2003/88/EC concerning certain aspects of the organisation of working time, which states when "lunch breaks" should be made, or the 1994 directive which stipulates that bananas have to be "free from malforma-tions or abnormal curvature" and that in top-grade bananas, there should be "no wiggle room".

19. "Mapping the cost of Non-Europe 2014-2019", Study by the European Added Value Unit (European Parliament), March 2014. Available online at: www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/etudes/join/2014/510983/IPOL-EAVA_ET%282014%29510983_EN.pdf.

The idea of the cost of non-Europe is not new; back in 1988 the European Commission produced a similar study. It was then limited to the single market,[20] and served as an instrumental document for the implementation of economic rights recognised by the Single European Act of 1986 and even of the Monetary Union of the Maastricht Treaty. These studies underscore a reality: the European Union is a great multiplier of the power of each member state. There are several areas – especially competition but also fields as varied as industry, health and environment – in which the sovereignty of each of the member states cannot be fully realised unless it is shared. This is a fact that we must be effective in conveying to those who are unfamiliar with the benefits that membership of the EU brings to their country, a position paradigmatically associated with the UK.[21]

The much maligned EU spending is concentrated in those areas of European competition where member states alone cannot provide sufficient solutions on their own. Sectors such as agriculture, cohesion, internal market, transport, innovation, environment and immigration are the areas where Europe concentrates its expenditure and which generate added value.

Today, the first challenge still lies in the achievement of the single market, especially in the two areas on which we should focus: the consumer-focused single market and the digital single market. The implementation of reform measures of the Economic and Monetary Union of the European Union as well as that of the financial markets would bring immediate economic benefits. Alongside these policies, the cost of non-Europe in the energy field should also be highlighted.

A single energy market stands out as a pressing new target for the European Union. The events in Ukraine have shown that Germany will play a key role in this area, including by providing interconnections of gas supply networks to ensure the security of supply in the EU, and through enhanced electrical interconnections that will provide the foundation for a common grid and support Europe's commitment to renewable energy. The energy market is essential from an economic point of view, but also from the perspective of foreign policy and security.

Both the internal and foreign policies highlight the relevance of the common commercial policy and the common negotiations of free trade alliances. In this context, the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) stands out.

Europe in the world

The area of security and defence has become an important issue. The stakes go far beyond economic quantification. Can we Europeans collectively afford to ignore the

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20. The lack of completeness of the common market involved significant cost, which was the subject of a study that the Commission entrusted to a group of experts led by Paolo Cecchini. The report was presented in March 1988 with the title "The costs of non-Europe". The Cecchini Report investigates the costs due to various non-tariff barriers in the main sectors of the European economy. Its second part calculates the benefits of the single market for member states.

21. "The economic benefits to the UK of EU membership", Euromove, December 2011. Available online at: www.euromove.org.uk/index.php?id=15296.

turmoil beyond our borders? Can we bury our heads in the sand and not face a world in which we are no longer guaranteed a privileged position? Europe is in danger of gradual marginalisation, of progressively becoming a relic of the past, particularly in geostrategic terms where this degradation is more rapid. This weakness is reflected in the obsolescence of our current European Security Strategy (ESS),[22] drafted in 2003 with a token revision in 2008. The European Council addressed this issue in December 2013, albeit unsuccessfully. We must realise that Europe faces not only a new generation of security concerns such as cyber-terrorism, but also remains vulnerable to traditional threats to security such as inter-state conflicts, the emergence of failed states and organised crime.[23] As a result, concerns about the economy will give way to concerns motivated by the European Union's strategic insecurity.

The ESS was developed in the aftermath of the Iraq war, amid heated debate over a proposed European constitution, in a hasty and reactive process hijacked by those who sought to position Europe as a counterweight to the United States. Thus, the ESS does not reflect the reality of today's world, a fact that is symbolically demonstrated in its introductory phrase: "Europe has never been so prosperous, so secure nor so free."

The ESS's three basic tenets – development assistance, soft power and effective multilateralism – remain important. But Europe's leaders must reconsider these concepts in light of today's challenges. In terms of development, Europe must move away from the idea that aid should be used to bolster trade linkages and acknowledge the importance of foreign investment. In fact, on a worldwide scale, net private capital flows to developing countries are now ten times greater than official development assistance.

The ESS's emphasis on soft power is also in urgent need of reassessment. This soft-power vision should not be allowed to obscure the security challenges that Europe faces in its immediate neighbourhood, undoubtedly in the south, but more obviously today at its eastern border with Ukraine. The presence of Russian troops in this country has made us brutally aware of classic security risks, particularly inter-state warfare that we considered obsolete in our region just yesterday, a notion that is reflected in the ESS.

This brings us to the ESS's third tenet: advancing "the development of a stronger international society, well-functioning international institutions, and a rule-based international order". In this case, the problem is reduced to a lack of commitment, with the EU choosing the convenience of informal and ad hoc groupings over the challenge of reforming institutions such as the United Nations, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, which are essential for effective multilateralism. Indeed, the EU is among the leading actors in the current trend of resorting to informal fora, which has most recently culminated in the G20. And, despite being itself an embodiment of international law, the EU indulges in soft-law approaches, whether at the COP19 climate-change conference in Warsaw in November 2013, or

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22. "A Secure Europe in a Better World: European Security Strategy", 12 December 2003. Available online at: www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/78367.pdf.

23. Conclusions of the Presidency – Thessaloniki, June 19th and 20th 2003. Available online at: www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/76279.pdf.

through its support for the Geneva Agreement on Iran's nuclear programme, which, it is now evident, represented nothing more than two aspirational declarations linked by a press release.

Europe must also consider America's role as an essential component of the geopolitical environment. Indeed, it is a partner whose nuanced reassessment of priorities in the world forces us to take a more active security role with respect to challenges in which we have so far largely disengaged. Besides the aforementioned TTIP, NATO is still relevant. They both provide a unique opportunity to shape a rule-based international order.

Finally, as we have seen recently, some European states are increasingly inclined to go it alone, as has been the case of France both in Mali and the Central African Republic, taking the initiative and bearing the greatest impact when facing some of the common threats. Such a unilateral approach makes no sense in the context of a community. It is imperative to address the need for concerted European action.

Looking into the future

The world is rapidly changing and after the crisis we cannot afford to dream of returning to the situation ex ante. We Europeans can and must support a forward-looking vision that is free of currently abundant defeatism. This vision must be critical, realistic and at the same time confident of the potential of our joint project, in recognition of the fact that Europe, when united, still has a say in the world today.

We have a say in international trade and investment, and we occasionally have a say in foreign policy. The new world is out there and confronting it squarely will strengthen our identity. This is the identity the Ukrainian protesters have been reminding us of recently. We have not forgotten the words that conclude Jean Monnet's Memoirs, "la communauté elle-même n'est qu'une étape vers les formes d'organisation du monde de demain".[24]

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24. Jean Monnet, *Memoirs*, Éditions Fayard, Paris, p. 617: "The Community represents only a stage on the way to tomorrow's organized world."

European values and the search for identities[1]

Adam Daniel Rotfeld

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Professor Bronisław Geremek in his speech addressed to the German Bundestag on 28 January 2002 explained the historical roots and foundations on which we are building the edifice of a common Europe and the values that guide European nations. He told the Bundestag: "I wish to speak about the crimes of a totalitarian system on the example of just one city – my city of Warsaw; and on the example of just one life – my own life."[2] These words are relevant today, because almost 70 years have passed since the Second World War. New generations have grown up, for which the war is distant history and whose knowledge of it comes mainly from movies, books and school textbooks. With increasing rarity they hear accounts of it from family members. That is because there are fewer and fewer people who can attest that Professor Bronisław Geremek's fate mirrored their own personal experiences.

Bronisław Geremek's speech to the Bundestag could well be dubbed "Topography of a Crime". It is an illustration of what happened in occupied Warsaw, whose people were murdered and whose houses, shrines and public buildings were razed to the ground. "I recall that misfortune and that crime of the National Socialist system," Geremek went on, "without trying to play the accountant who tallies the losses, or the judge who metes out justice. This is more of an incomplete glance at the phenomenon of enormous evil seen through the prism of one city's experiences and one life. It is also an attempt to reflect on the common memory and its genesis."[3]

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1. Debate held on 19 May 2014. The text is based on the Professor Geremek Memorial Lecture published by Centrum im. Bronisława Geremka (Warsaw 2014).
2. Excerpts of the speech were only published in Poland after Bronisław Geremek's death (the English translation and German original will be attached to the text of this lecture in the form of a booklet from the Bronisław Geremek Centre (Warsaw 2014)).
3. Ibid.

Memory

Thus, Bronisław Geremek believed that there existed something like a common European memory. Does it, in fact? Certainly, the experience of the two criminal totalitarianisms – Nazism and Stalinism – does occupy an important place in the collective memory of Europe and Europeans. Yet that memory, though shared at the level of general reflection by scholars, intellectuals and writers of the calibre of Bronisław Geremek in Poland, Sandor Marai in Hungary, Raymond Aron in France, Vasily Grossman in Russia or Thomas Mann and Günter Grass in Germany, differs significantly from what millions of Poles, Hungarians, French, Russians or Germans have conveyed to their children and grandchildren.

A separate issue, which will be revisited later, is what shapes the collective memory and new identity of contemporary Russians, Ukrainians or Belarusians.

If we reflect in line with Cicero's oft-quoted question – is history the teacher of life? (*Historia est magistra vitae?*) – the answer will be negative. Yet that question, taken from the treaty *De Oratore* (On the Orator), cited in full, conveys a somewhat different meaning. Cicero asked: "And as History, which bears witness to the passing of the ages, sheds light upon reality, gives life to recollection and guidance to human existence, and brings tidings of ancient days, whose voice, but the orator's, can entrust her to immortality?"[4] Thus, Cicero understands historical memory as something that encompasses evidence of the time and strives for the truth. It is meant to be a living memory and not just a teacher of life. Often, contemporary politicians and writers, following in the footsteps of the conservative German historian–revisionist Ernst Nolte, advocate the so-called historical policy. The term historical policy is itself somewhat unfortunate. In essence, it confuses different subject matter. That is because politics signifies the striving for the implementation of ideas (as defined by Plato and Aristotle), for the acquisition, preservation and consolidation of power (according to Machiavelli) and for participation in power or for influence on the way it is shared (according to Weber).

In other words, politics in its essence refers to the present and aims to shape the future. History, on the other hand, concerns the past. Accordingly, the term historical policy implies a selective and instrumental treatment of history. In one of her essays, Anna Wolff-Powęska notes pertinently that "all the post-communist countries seeking new identities after 1989 have invoked history […]. In the emotional building of ties reference has often been made to the collective sense of having been wronged and betrayed by foreign powers. For Czechs and Slovaks that meant the Munich Treaty, for Hungarians the Trianon Treaty and for Poles Yalta and Potsdam."[5]

The building of a national community based on common memory is understandable and natural. Problems appear when history is treated selectively and national memory is decreed by politicians and the institutions they establish, when the history

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4. Cicero, *De Oratore*, book II, chapter IX, (trans. E.W. Sutton) (1967), Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA.
5. Anna Wolff-Powęska: *Polacy Niemcy. Kultura polityczna. Kultura pamięci*. (Poles-Germans. Political culture. Culture of remembrance). Poznań – Wydawnictwo Naukowe UAM 2008, p. 99.

of a nation is restricted to glory and splendour, while shameful, ignominious or even criminal facts are omitted or denied. Asked about Germany and the Germans ("To what past should they refer, seeing how the most recent past was scarred by crime?"), Wolff-Powęska replies: "Defeat, guilt, humiliation and shame pose the gravest challenges to the democratic identity [...]. Patriotism and motherland predate the nation state. They are connected with freedom. The more mature and sovereign a nation, the greater its ability to engage in self-criticism and show self-distance."[6]

The eminent Polish intellectual and medievalist, Karol Modzelewski – author of the excellent monograph *Barbarzyńska Europa (A Europe of Barbarians)* – took a similar position.[7] In his autobiography Modzelewski writes: "Shame belongs to the category of higher feelings. Shame for the ignominious deeds of one's compatriots [...] is an unmistakable sign of national bond. In the sphere of European culture we do not believe in collective responsibility. We feel that the perpetrators of deeds we condemn should themselves answer for them. However, if we are truly bound by a sense of national community we inevitably feel shame for any ignominious deeds committed by its members and on its behalf."[8]

That ascertainment is pivotal to the understanding of many difficulties and obstacles in Poland's relations with its neighbours in the East and West. National complexes – regardless of whether they are inferiority or superiority complexes – do not facilitate dialogue, which inherently assumes such values as dignity and sensitivity of the partner. In this context, Wolff-Powęska rightly cites John Paul II, who said that "love of one's homeland endows all other nations with the same rights as those enjoyed by one's own and thus constitutes a path to the arrangement of social love" and that "Polishness, in effect, means diversity and pluralism and not narrow-mindedness or insularity."[9]

Alas, such enlightened and open attitudes to patriotism and national identity are neither common nor dominant among historians in Germany, Russia or Poland. Some nations, such as the Poles, carry within themselves and cultivate the memory of the victim. Others – for example the Germans – have a sense of guilt for the wrongs and suffering inflicted upon peoples and states they invaded and occupied (this is one of the causes of historical revisionism). Still others – like the Russians – build their national identity and derive pride from the fact that their forebears scored a great victory over the Nazi Third Reich. From the Polish point of view the end of the Second World War did mean that millions of lives were saved. Yet that victory did not bring liberation. As Sandor Marai observed, Soviet soldiers drove out the occupiers from our countries but could not give us freedom because they did not have it themselves.

The three neighbouring nations – Germany, Poland and Russia – are simultaneously nurturing different historical memories. Meanwhile, the new political reality and the new international security environment pose new challenges.

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6. Ibid., pp. 104-105.
7. Karol Modzelewski: *Barbarzyńska Europa*, Warsaw, 2004. Publication also available in French: *L'Europe des barbares. Germains et slaves face aux héritiers de Rome*, Paris: Flammarion, 2006.
8. Karol Modzelewski: *Zajeździmy kobyłę historii. Wyznania poobijanego jeźdźca* (Foundering the mare of history. Confessions of a saddle-sore rider). Warsaw, Wydawnictwo Iskry 2013, p. 48.
9. Anna Wolff-Powęska: *Polacy – Niemcy* (Poles – Germans), op. cit., p. 101.

Proponents of historical policy tend to forget that Nolte's works triggered in Germany the so-called dispute of the historians (*Historikerstreit*). It was set in motion not only by his attempt to relativise the denouncement of Nazism as a criminal system, but also, and this is still shocking today, his justification of sorts of the Final Solution (*Endlösung*) or the annihilation of the Jews by the German National Socialist regime.

The difference between "historical memory" and "historical policy" is the same as between truth and half-truth, between seeking historical truth and attempts at its instrumentalisation and exploitation for specific political goals by different groups, parties and state institutions. It is with that in mind that the authorities define obligatory standards for history textbooks, assign names to towns and streets, erect monuments and establish new museums. It would be desirable for these institutions and museums to inspire people to think and ask questions, rather than to offer simplistic and biased answers.

The dispute of the German historians highlighted the existence of differences in historical memories of the same dramatic events, the witnesses of which are still alive. This applies to divisions within a single state, and not only to different memories cultivated in different states. That is why professional historians bear the particular responsibility for leaving to future generations a true image of what happened and for effectively preventing a repetition of history on our continent.

Continuity and change

Europe got its history lesson and paid a high price for it. However, experience shows that there are no eternal solutions: no issue is settled and closed for ever.

By its very nature the historical process signifies continuity and change. This can be illustrated by the example of the process of normalisation and subsequent reconciliation between Poland and Germany. The letter of the Polish bishops sent in 1965 to German bishops, the essence of which was expressed by the words "We forgive and ask forgiveness", initially did not meet with understanding among the leaders of the German Catholic Church, or many members of the clergy and Catholics in Poland. It was an act of courage and political wisdom, far ahead of its time. Only 50 years later has it been recognised in Poland and Germany as a turning point. The same has happened with the much-photographed, heart-felt gesture of Willy Brandt, who on 7 December 1970 kneeled before the Monument to the Heroes of the Warsaw Ghetto.

The then Polish authorities ignored that act of contrition, humility and shame. There were opinions that it was a theatrical gesture, purely for show. Others insisted that "Brandt had kneeled in front of the wrong monument". And in Germany, Vice-President of the Union of Expellees Friedrich Walter claimed that "kneeling in a foreign country like that contradicts all international norms. According to western Christian custom a man only kneels before God." Much of the German public opinion considered Brandt's gesture degrading. At the time, Willy Brandt did not know how it would be received. Alas, he did not meet with understanding in his homeland. What he did get was invective, accusations that the Chancellor lacked patriotism, that he was alienated or simply that he was a traitor. Today, that natural human reaction of a man, who bore no responsibility because he had fought against the Nazis in Germany and

outside its borders, but had a moral compass and did something that could have been expected of millions of his compatriots, led to the image becoming "one of the most moving political icons of the latter half of the 20th century."[10] Some 40 years later, speaking at the Royal Castle in Warsaw, former German President Christian Wulff, whose political supporters were critical of Brandt, described that act of both contrition and courage thus: "We witnessed the creation of an image of a different German, a different Germany; a Germany that is freedom-oriented, democratic and peace-loving, a Germany that seeks understanding with its neighbours."[11] In his memoirs, Brandt confided: "Standing over the abyss of German history and under the burden of the murdered millions I did what people do when their tongue fails them."[12]

That evolution of the stance of Germany and Germans illustrates the dynamics of the phenomenon we call collective memory. At first, there is a rather prevalent need to negate the truth, contradict facts and expel them from one's memory. Courageous attitudes displayed by leaders and moral authorities encounter social resistance. But in a democratic society they gradually gain acceptance and are received by the next generation as something natural. "However, good memory does not depend on itself," observes Polish novelist Eustachy Rylski. "Without nurturing it dies, in contrast to ill repute and infamy, which feed by themselves on anything that happens along. Good memory can be discerning. Like beauty, it is inevitably gone before you notice. But ugliness persists immovable, like a rock."[13]

All nations, without exception, are entitled to their own memory. No one can impose on anyone else the alloy or amalgamation that is composed of family stories, books one has read, movies and theatre shows one has seen, school lessons, university lectures and results of historical research. However, it is reasonable to expect that scholars – professional historians and researchers – as well as writers and journalists will not intentionally conceal and distort the truth about facts and events, or bend it to fit the opportunistic requirements of current politics.

Professor Wolff-Powęska is right when she notes: "A crudely politicised historical memory does not integrate but divides; it does not educate but instigates repetition of historical mistakes […]. It does not teach responsibility for the state, or build social ties, but carries destruction and incites fear of an imaginary threat."[14] The moulding and imposing of myths or events and facts taken out of historical context and interpreted for the needs of current politics has little in common with reviving the historical image of one's national community. Rather, it serves as a Band-Aid for complexes, which only strengthens stereotypes: on the one hand that your own nation is exceptional and noble, forever on the light side of the force, and on the

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10. Adam Krzemiński: *Przyklęk pokoju* (Kneeling for peace). "Polityka", no. 49 of 4 December 2010, pp. 68-70.

11. Christian Wulff: *Dla Niemiec i Polski przyszłość leży w Europie in: Europa kontynent pojednania?* (For Germany and Poland the future lies in Europe: Europe – a continent of reconciliation?) Warsaw, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung and CSM 2012, p. 83.

12. Ibid.

13. Eustachy Rylski: *Warunek* (Condition). Warsaw, Świat Książki, 2005, p. 246.

14. Anna Wolff-Powęska: *Historia z recyklingu* (Recycled history). "Gazeta Wyborcza" - Świąteczny Magazyn, 9-11 November 2013, p. 28.

other that it has always been maligned by "alien" and hostile forces that are the very emanation of evil.

In Europe (and not only central and eastern Europe) this is a rather common practice, the resurgence of which we witness in times of uncertainty and crisis. Suddenly it turns out that much of the public opinion in democratic states, which for years have backed the building of a common Europe – free of xenophobia, populism and extreme nationalism – is swayed by primitive demagogy amounting to slogans like "France for the French", "Finland for the Finns", "The Netherlands for the Dutch". The list of examples could be extended. Until recently, these countries were seen, in the opinion of Europeans, as icons of tolerance and openness.

Values and the law

The point is that no nation or society is immune to these phenomena. The European Union has recognised that the countering and preventing of populism and xeno-phobia constitute a moral and political obligation, and granted this the status of binding law (Article 2 and Article 7 of the Treaty on European Union and the Charter of Fundamental Rights).[15] Union law defines the space in which respect for human dignity, human rights, freedoms, democracy and the rule of law are all binding. There is no doubt that these obligations stem from remembrance of past totalitarian regimes, based on lawlessness, intimidation, terror and trampling of human dignity.

In effect, the European Union has created not only legal but also material premises for effectively eliminating the possibility of war between member states and countering armed conflicts in states associated with the Union. There is a widespread conviction that the Union is primarily a form of and structure for economic integration. After all, the economic sphere was the focus of the Coal and Steel Community, the Common Market, the European Economic Community and finally, to a large extent, of the European Union itself. In effect, many citizens of EU states feel that it is financial and economic matters that determine the status and effectiveness of the institution, whereas, in reality, the quite exceptional place of the Union in the history of Europe has not been decided by money but by the fact that for the first time in the annals of the continent states committed to respecting common values established a union.

The strength of the Union lies not so much in treaties, norms, procedures and mechanisms as in the fact that all the instruments of the institution are tailored to ensure effective implementation of obligations that concern the citizens of the Union states.[16] This means that the Union and its member states are duty-bound to respect the dignity of the human person, equality and solidarity. For the first time in history, European states created a space of freedom, security and justice for the individual and undertook protection of these values.

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15. "Treaty on European Union. Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union" (in force as at February 2013). Warsaw, Lexis Nexis, 2013.
16. Jan Barcz: *Traktat z Lizbony. Wybrane aspekty prawne działań implementacyjnych* (Lisbon Treaty. Selected legal aspects of implementation). Warsaw, 2012, pp. 329-380.

And so, the human person became a subject. This is a new concept, not only in the realm of politics and morality, but also in the sphere of law. Security of the individual has gained a status that constitutes a challenge to the position of the state as the only subject of international law. The individual has gained the right to have a say in European affairs. At the same time, the security of the state – which hitherto constituted a supreme value – increasingly finds itself in collision with the rights of the human person, in other words, rights of the citizens to have their privacy, dignity and freedom respected.

This view is convincingly corroborated by the shock and indignation in Europe caused by the disclosure by Edward Snowden – regardless of his motives – of the practices of US security agencies, which in a systematic and institutionalised way tapped the phones of citizens of other states, including the leaders of friendly countries. These actions contravened the law. They violated the dignity of individuals and their right to privacy, which in Europe may be restricted only in exceptional, justified cases, at the request of prosecutors and with court approval. Certainly, foreign security services cannot operate within the territory of other states without the consent and co-operation of constitutional organs of the countries concerned, whose citizens are suspected of terrorist or criminal activity. No power has ever been entitled to take such actions, nor can such illegal practices be tolerated today, when, as one analyst observed intelligently, "this new, subjective role of the individual in international politics is the key factor transforming international relations and their traditional paradigms. The tension between the individual and the state is probably the most crucial process undermining the existent international system."[17] The problem is broader, for it also concerns the tension between the nation and state on the one hand, and between the community and society (including the international community) on the other.[18]

Modern technologies have permanently deprived the state of the ability to control communications. This happened when the world entered the information revolution, which today not only encompasses the realm of services, but has become a production force and is governed in cyberspace by its own rules, with ever smaller influence from the state. Confronted with this new reality, democratic states encounter questions to which answers are not to be found in past experience. The key question is: how do you effectively prevent new risks and hazards in the modern world without infringing on the freedoms of the individuals and their right to live in states that respect such values as dignity, freedom, equality, justice and solidarity? The world of politics also faces new dilemmas: how do you respect the subjectivity of the individual without undermining collective security? How can you effectively fight organised terrorism as well as national and international crime while respecting the human person and its new role in the international community? These issues have long been at the core of public debate in democratic countries.[19]

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17. Piotr A. Świtalski: *Emocje, interesy, wartości. Przemiany paradygmatów polityki międzynarodowej* (Emotions, interests, values. Changing paradigms of international politics). Toruń, Adam Marszałek 2013, p. 10.

18. More in: Pierre Hassner: *Koniec pewników. Eseje o wojnie, pokoju i przemocy* (The End of Axioms. Essays on War, Peace and Violence). Warsaw, Stefan Batory Foundation and Sic! 2002, p. 39.

19. In this context one may mention an international conference in Warsaw, with the participation of eminent intellectuals, papers from which were published in *Globalization, Power and Democracy* (2000), M. F. Plattner, A. Smolar (eds.), Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore and London.

The situation is different in undemocratic states. Their governments seek full control of communications within territories under their sovereignty and in cross-border traffic. It is one of those areas where the world of free men is confronted by the anachronistic belief that whoever controls the flow of information can, in effect, control the thinking of his subjects. That is what happened in ancient Egypt, so magnificently described by the great Polish novelist Bolesław Prus,[20] who in a uniquely insightful way presented the mechanism of power and the dependence of the pharaoh on priests who controlled access to information. That is what also happened in the 20th century, when two totalitarian systems – Nazism in Germany and occupied Europe, and Stalinism in Russia and the Soviet-dominated part of the world – decided that information (along with state terror and a criminally repressive regime) was the main tool for the subjugation of nations. The North Korean regime is a rudimentary carryover of such an information policy, a kind of fossil of a criminal past on a global scale. This does not mean that the freedom of access to information in other countries is universal and not subject to any restrictions.

A peculiarly conceived "historical policy" is a form of selective approach to information management. In this context two processes of reconciliation – between Poland and Germany, and Poland and Russia – are quite illuminating.

Processes of reconciliation: two experiences

As stated above, the process of Polish-German reconciliation was made possible by all the changes that took place within Germany as a state and within the German society. As a result of their transformations, Poland and the Poles also underwent a radical, qualitative change. But in order to ensure that the change was irrevocable, it was decided to give the process institutional form. That was augmented with the relevant undertakings in all areas of social, political, cultural and spiritual activity.

Russian Premier Vladimir Putin, during his memorable visit to Gdansk on the 70th anniversary of the Second World War (1 September 2009), stated: "The historic, postwar reconciliation of France and Germany paved the way for the establishment of the European Union. On the other hand, it was the wisdom and magnanimity of the Russian and German peoples and the farsightedness of the state leaders of both countries that made it possible to take the decisive step towards building a Great Europe. The partnership of Russia and Germany became an example of meeting half way, of looking towards the future while preserving a caring attitude to memory of the past [...]. I am certain that sooner or later Russian-Polish relations will also attain a similarly advanced, truly partner-like level. This is in the interest of our nations and the whole European continent."[21]

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20. Bolesław Prus: *Faraon* (The Pharoah) (1st edition), Warsaw, 1987.
21. The text of Premier Vladimir Putin's message was published under the heading *Karty historii—powód do wzajemnych pretensji czy podstawa pojednania i partnerstwa?* (Charts of history – reason for mutual recriminations or basis for reconciliation and partnership?) by the daily "Gazeta Wyborcza" on 31 August 2009.

The frequent references to the process of reconciliation between Germany and France (or Germany and Russia) in the context of relations with Poland might lead to the misconception that Germany, along with France and Russia, have worked out a kind of model of reconciliation, a universal pattern for the rest of Europe. This is not so. The nature of relations between Germany and France on the one hand, and Russia and Poland on the other, is in each case different and unique. These relations are the result of different historical vicissitudes of our nations and states, different mentalities of the peoples inhabiting our countries and quite different interdependencies between the respective states.

The Germans, as a state and nation, have in their relations with France, *sui generis*, an inferiority complex. They do not conceal their fascination with the French civilisation, with the history and culture of France. This fascination has its roots in the past and was connected with the dominance of the French language as the means of communication of the higher social classes and diplomats, and with the impact of the French lifestyle, literature and even the exquisite French cuisine. Even though Germany outperformed France in such fields as science and technology, work output, social discipline and legal culture, the German elite and society at large felt respect and admiration for France, particularly in the sphere of culture.

The attitude of Germany to its neighbours in the East, particularly Poland, was different. The German language still contains certain negative stereotypes concerning Poles. They are exemplified by such terms as *polnische Wirtschaft*, a synonym of mismanagement, or *polnischer Reichstag*, signifying anarchy and inclination to pettifoggery and quarrels.

Attempts to gloss over the responsibility for German war crimes or even to "share" that responsibility constituted a frequent new irritant in Polish-German relations after the Second World War. An expression of this was the use by German media of phrases like "Polish death camps" in reference to Nazi concentration and annihilation camps in occupied Poland (significantly, camps located in Austria or Germany were described as *Nazi-Konzentrazionslager*, without an adjective indicating their geographic location).[22] As a consequence, new generations of Germans could acquire the mistaken conviction that during the Second World War there truly did exist "Polish" death camps. These are not the only examples of ignoring the sensitivity of Polish public opinion.

Fortunately, this did not become a substantial obstacle on the path towards Polish-German reconciliation. With time, any doubts as to the guilt and responsibility of Germany for the crimes perpetrated by the Nazi regime disappeared. The facts in this respect were unequivocal. The Third Reich had lost the war and the victorious powers imposed on Germany a process of denazification of public life. Responsible political forces in Germany collaborated to overcome the Nazi past, bring the criminals to justice and establish good relations with all the neighbours in the East and West. As a result of the political process based on these premises and due to the actions of many social institutions, Poland today has better relations with Germany than ever

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22. For more on the subject, see: Adam Daniel Rotfeld: *Suche nach der Identität. Über Polens Umgang mit der Geschichte.* "Spiegel" 2009, no. 23.

before. Poland's support for the reunification of Germany and Germany's support for the accession of Poland to the Euro-Atlantic security structures – NATO and the European Union – marked a turning point in these relations.

There was a completely different point of departure for building a new type of good-neighbourly relations between Poland and Russia. Also, there are different criteria for evaluating mutual relations. The Soviet Union did not lose the war. On the contrary, it was one of the great victorious powers, though it had suffered the greatest losses in the war with the Nazi Third Reich. For millions of Russians that victory was inseparably connected with the person of Joseph Stalin, who on the one hand was a dictator responsible for countless crimes committed before the war, during its course and immediately after it ended, and on the other personified and symbolised the greatest Russian military triumph. Also, it was the Russians, as well as numerous members of other nationalities inhabiting the Soviet Union, who were the main victims of the mass-scale Stalinist crimes (though they also targeted the citizens of many other states).

In other words, the Russian people have a deep conviction that they were victims rather than perpetrators. Therefore, it is incomprehensible to present-day Russians why the nations of central and eastern Europe do not feel grateful even though millions of Soviet soldiers had sacrificed their lives for their liberation.[23] Moreover, there is no analogy between the attitude of Germans to Hitler and the NSDAP, and of Russians to Stalin and the Bolshevik party. From the psychological point of view, these situations are incomparable.

No Russian leader before or after the disintegration of the Soviet Union has had the courage to tell his people what Vasily Grossman wrote as early as 1960 in his great novel *Life and Fate*. Without mincing words, he exposed the criminal nature of the two totalitarianisms, Nazism and Stalinism. Grossman wrote: "The first half of the 20th century [...] will go down in history as the time when – in accordance with philosophies of race and society – whole sections of the European population were exterminated. Understandably, the present day remains discreetly silent about this."[24] The Russian writer then posed the question: "Does human nature undergo a true change in the cauldron of totalitarian violence? Does man lose his innate yearning for freedom? The fates of both man and the totalitarian state depend on the answer to this question. If human nature does change, then the eternal and worldwide triumph of the dictatorial state is assured; if his yearning for freedom remains constant, then the totalitarian state is doomed."[25]

Those were prophetic words. The striving for dignity and freedom of the individual indeed became the primary reason for the fall of the two criminal totalitarian regimes.

It is noteworthy that the dialogue initiated between Poles and Russians about difficult matters made it easier for the leadership of present-day Russia to critically assess the crimes committed by the Stalinist regime not only against Poles, but also against the

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23. This was pointed out to me by the Head of the Federal State Archives Agency, Andrei Artizov, during the Polish-Russian Media Forum in Kaliningrad (15 November 2013).
24. Translation of excerpts into English based on Vasily Grossman, *Life and Fate* (trans. Robert Chandler) (2006), NYRB Classics, New York.
25. Ibid.

people of their own state. After all, Poles have long known who was responsible for the murders – in the Katyn Forest, Starobelsk, Ostashkov and other camps – of almost 22 000 Polish officers interned in the USSR. The crime took place from 3 April to 19 May 1940, after the Red Army's invasion of Poland on 17 September 1939, co-ordinated with Nazi Germany. It was then that Stalin set in motion the whole propaganda machine of covering up evidence of the crime, forging documents, chicanery and denials. The "Katyn lie" became one of the main obstacles to building a new type of relations between Poland and Russia. The term extends to many other crimes, which still poison mutual relations (for example, the Augustów Roundup). They still await an official Russian explanation and an unequivocal political and moral denouncement.

The works of the Polish-Russian Group on Difficult Matters, revived in 2008, have not focused on facts and descriptions of events since the facts and dates were determined years ago. The group's new experience and achievements consisted of the fact that it managed to present the Polish and Russian points of view and assessments of the facts and to set out in a joint publication differences in the perception and historical memory of the two nations.[26] The Polish and Russian experts presented surprisingly convergent views on the most difficult and sensitive issues (for example, the Katyn crime, the genesis of the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact, the Red Army's invasion of Poland on 17 September 1939 and the annexation of the Eastern Borderlands). It proved much more difficult for the truth, brought to light after 70 years, to reach millions of Russians. The postulates and opinions of the scholars only served as inspiration and basis for top-level decisions by the presidents and prime ministers of Russia and Poland.

Andrzej Wajda's feature film *Katyn* had a powerful impact on the attitudes of Russians: broadcast by Channel 1 of Russian television, it ensured that the truth about the Katyn crime reached millions of people. Immediately after the Smolensk air crash (10 April 2010) many other moves and decisions were made, indicating a radical change in the way the truth was to be presented about the Stalinist regime of crime and lawlessness.

Regrettably the Smolensk disaster cast a shadow on those awakened hopes.

At the initiative of the co-chairs of the Group on Difficult Matters, the Polish-Russian dialogue and quest for understanding was given institutional character. Two centres were established in Warsaw and Moscow to stimulate contacts between scholars and intellectuals, youth exchanges, and translations of literary masterpieces of the other country. On 17 August 2012 the Patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church paid the first ever visit to Poland. The Chairman of the Conference of the Polish Episcopate, Archbishop Józef Michalik, and Patriarch Kirill I signed at the Royal Castle in Warsaw a joint message to the peoples of Poland and Russia, exhorting them to "forgive wrongs, injustices and any evil mutually perpetrated". The authors of the message noted that "forgiving does not mean forgetting. For remembrance constitutes a crucial part of our identity […]. However, to forgive means to renounce

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26. *Białe Plamy—Czarne Plamy. Sprawy trudne w relacjach polsko-rosyjskich (1918-2008)* (Black spots, white spots. Difficult matters in Polish-Russian relations. 1918-2008). Adam D. Rotfeld and Anatoly V. Torkunov (ed.). Warsaw—PISM 2010.

revenge and hatred, to participate in building accord and brotherhood between men, between our peoples and countries, which constitutes the foundation of a peaceful future."[27]

The matter was raised again during a recent conversation with the Patriarch in Kaliningrad. On 16 November 2013, referring to the document of August 2012, he stated the following: "The path that led to that event was not easy. There were many problems of a political and psychological nature. Yet we pursued our goal with full awareness of the responsibility and full awareness that there was no other way. Regardless of the difficulties we encounter, nothing should be allowed to hinder our progress. We are two nations that, by the will of God, live side by side."

Unfortunately, the annexation of Crimea and Russia's role in preventing the implementation of the right of Ukraine to make a sovereign and free choice about its own future undermined the fundamental principles of the post-Cold War system in Europe. The crisis and conflict developments between Russia and western democracies over the future of Ukraine demonstrate the urgent necessity to redefine the set of rules shaping the security system in and for Europe. There is no need now to create a new institution but to do something much more difficult. Namely, the democratic community of the European Union and the transatlantic security institutions, including the Council of Europe, have to change their way of thinking about the post-Soviet system and their approach towards Russia and eastern Europe.

The new challenge and new task is to define the proper answer to the question: what has to be done to restore the respect for the set of common European values?

The problem is, however, that Europe is facing its most serious crisis of values since the fall of communism, as noted by Piotr Świtalski in his recent publication *Europe and the Spectre of Post-Growth Society*.[28] One of the very basic new values is the total elimination of force as an instrument of foreign policy and especially of coercive diplomacy. In other words, the only acceptable way to resolve the conflicts of interest is to enter into dialogue and negotiation.

The key difference between dialogue and international negotiations is the fact that dialogues concern thoughts, ideas and values while negotiations pursue a balance of interests.

Truth is not, and cannot be, subject to negotiations. Moreover, truth never hinders understanding or inflames mutual relations; on the contrary – it purges them of falsehoods, hypocrisy and harmful stereotypes. The process of reconciliation will not be durable and effective if the full truth is not told, without reticence or deception.

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27. Joint Message to the peoples of Poland and Russia by the Chairman of the Conference of the Episcopate of Poland, Archbishop Józef Michalik, Metropolitan of Przemyśl, and the Head of the Russian Orthodox Church, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia Kirill I. Warsaw, 17 August 2012.

28. Świtalski P. (2014), *Europe and the Spectre of Post-Growth Society*, Council of Europe Publishing, Strasbourg, p. 5.

Final remarks

On 31 October 1958, in his inaugural lecture at Oxford University, Isaiah Berlin cited a statement made a hundred years before, in which Heinrich Heine warned the French against underestimating the power of ideas: "Philosophical concepts nurtured in the stillness of a professor's study could destroy a civilization". He compared Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* to a sword used to decapitate European deism and described Rousseau's works as a blood-stained weapon which, in the hands of Robespierre, had destroyed the old regime. He further prophesied that the romantic faith of Fichte and Schelling would one day be turned, with terrible effect, by their fanatical German followers, against the liberal culture of the West.[29]

Isaiah Berlin dismissed that argument somewhat ironically, observing that: "The facts have not wholly belied this prediction; but if professors can truly wield this fatal power, may it not be that only other professors, or, at least, other thinkers (and not governments or Congressional committees) can alone disarm them?"[30]

These reflections on values and historical memory lead us to several conclusions. First, it seems valid to conclude that people's views and convictions are as important as the way in which they behave and act.[31] Second, values, ideologies and moral or ethical principles are of considerable importance in politics. Third, we live in times when the division between politics in the domestic and foreign spheres is being eroded; there is mutual penetration of the two. What counts are not only concepts and strategies but also methods of exercising authority within states.

Moreover, and this is my fourth remark, the significance of foreign policy is diminishing; it is gradually losing its role as function of internal policy and becoming its instrument and tool. Finally, values vital to human dignity and freedom are of key importance in the politics of democratic states. Under present circumstances this requires especially that we reassess our way of thinking about foreign policy and change our approach to the formulation of goals and the definition of means which may be used to attain them.

But, as Kipling used to say, that is another story.

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29. Isaiah Berlin: *Cztery eseje o wolności* (Four Essays on Liberty). Poznań—Zysk i Ska 2000, p. 184.
30. Ibid.
31. See John Lewis Gaddis, *On Moral Equivalency and Cold War History*, in "Ethics and International Affairs", 1996, vol. 10, pp. 147-148.

About the authors
(*in alphabetical order*)

Karsten Alnæs

Karsten Alnæs is a Norwegian author, historian and journalist. His bibliography includes 16 novels, three children's books, a collection of novellas and a number of non-fiction works.

Alnæs was twice elected president of the Norwegian Authors' Association (1985-1987 and 1999-2001), and has long been an active member of PEN International. He serves as representative for the Scandinavian countries on the European Cultural Parliament and is a frequent lecturer throughout the world.

He was awarded the Norwegian Historical Society's Sverre Steen Prize for the series *The History of Norway* (5 volumes, 1996-2000), which topped Norway's bestseller list for non-fiction and served as a basis for a television series featuring Alnæs himself. His series *The History of Europe* (4 volumes, 2003-2006) has been translated into several languages. Among his other honours, he is a recipient of the Brage Prize (1992), the Dobloug Prize (1998) and the honorary Brage Prize (2003) for the cultural impact of his literary work.

Martti Ahtisaari

Martti Ahtisaari is the former President of Finland, Nobel Peace Laureate and expert in international peace mediation and diplomacy.

Ahtisaari founded and chairs the Crisis Management Initiative, a non-governmental organisation committed to helping the international community practise more effective preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and post-conflict state building.

In 1999, as President of Finland, he negotiated with Slobodan Milošević to end the fighting in Kosovo. He also facilitated the peace process between the Government of Indonesia and the Free Aceh Movement ending the 30-year conflict and he helped to advance the Northern Ireland peace process. In 2005, he was appointed Special Envoy of the Secretary-General of the United Nations for the future status process for Kosovo.

Yuri Andrukhovych

Yuri Andrukhovych is a Ukrainian novelist, essayist and poet. He is known for his active participation in the Orange Revolution. In 1985, together with Viktor Neborak and Oleksandr Irvaniets, he founded the literary performance group "BuBaBu" (Burlesque Bluster Buffoonery).

He is a postmodernist author and one of the leading Ukrainian prose writers. His novels *Recreations* (1992), *Moscoviada* (1993), *Perverzion* (1996), *12 Rings* (2003) and *Mystery* (2007) have had a significant impact on readers in Ukraine. Together with a Polish author Andrzej Stasiuk he published *My Europe* (2000 and 2001). While he writes in Ukrainian, his works have been translated and published in a number of countries in Europe and North America.

He has received several international literary awards: Blahovist (1993), the Helen Shcherban-Lapika Foundation award (1996), the Novel of the Year Prize from the literary journal *Suchasnist* (1997), and the Lesia & Petro Kovalev Award (1998), the Herder Prize (2001), the Erich-Maria Remarque Peace Prize (2005), Leipzig Book Fair Prize for European Understanding (2006) and the 'Angelus' Central European Literary Award (2006).

Daniel Cohn-Bendit

Daniel Cohn-Bendit is a European politician and political writer. He has just completed his fourth and final term as a member of the European Parliament where he alternated between representing Germany and France between 1994 and 2014.

In the 2009 European Elections, Cohn-Bendit secured a remarkable 16.28% of the vote in France with his newly formed Europe Écologie (Ecological Europe) and was appointed co-president of the European Greens-European Free Alliance in the European Parliament.

He became a key figure in the student protests of 1968 in France, and later also in Germany. He earned the nickname "Dany le Rouge" ("Danny the Red") due to his hair colour and political orientation.

Cohn-Bendit holds an honorary doctorate degree from the Catholic University Tilburg, The Netherlands (1997), and the "Révélation politique" (an honorary degree for socio-political achievements, awarded by Trombinoscope) (1998).

Victor Erofeev

Victor Erofeev is a Russian author, journalist and literary critic. He has been one of the most prominent figures in Russian literature in the period of transition from Soviet to post-Soviet times.

Having spent part of his childhood in Paris, he was familiar with literature banned in the Soviet Union at the time. However, due to censorship, he was not able to publish until the *glasnost* policy of the 1980s.

In his writing, Erofeev addresses taboo topics of Soviet literature. In 1990, he published his first novel *Russkaia Krasavitsa* (Russian Beauty), and two essays entitled *Pominki po sovyetskoi literature* (An epitaph of Soviet literature) and *Russkie tsvety zla* (Russia's *Fleurs du mal*). In 1999 he published *Entsiklopediia russkoi dushi* (Encyclopaedia of the Russian soul).

He was the editor of the first Russian edition of Nabokov's work as well as several other Russian literature anthologies. In the past decade he published an autobiography *Khoroshii Stalin (The Good Stalin)* and a collection of stories *De Profundis.* He continues to write in Moscow today and he frequently contributes to *The New Yorker* and other periodical publications.

David O. Lordkipanidze

Professor David Lordkipanidze is a Georgian anthropologist and archaeologist whose work following the discovery of ancient hominid remains in Dmanisi, Georgia has been highly influential.

Currently he is head of the Georgian National Museum which was founded in 2004.

Lordkipanidze holds memberships in the US National Academy of Sciences, the German Archaeological Institute, the World Academy of Art and Science, the Georgian Academy of Science, the European Academy of Sciences and Arts, and the Academy of Europe. He was a visiting professor at Harvard University in 2002 and currently serves as a professor of the European Union programme Erasmus Mundus. He is also a guest speaker and the scholar-in-residence in a number of universities and institutions worldwide.

Lordkipanidze has authored over 120 articles published in scientific journals including *Nature*, *Science*, *Proceedings of National Academy of Sciences of USA* and *Journal of Human Evolution* among others.

Ana Palacio

Ana Palacio is a Spanish lawyer and politician. She is a former member of the European Parliament (1994-2002) and the first woman to serve as Foreign Affairs Minister of Spain, in the government of Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar (2002-04).

Ana Palacio is a member of the *Consejo de Estado del Reino de España* (Council of State) – the supreme consultative body to the Spanish Government on legislation and regulation. She is a member of the Advisory Group for Foreign Policy and Security established by Herman Van Rompuy (2013). In 2014 Ana Palacio was appointed EU Coordinator for the Rhine-Alpine Corridor of the Trans-European Transport Network.

In 2004, the Wall Street Journal considered her to be among the 75 top world opinion leaders. Between 2010 and 2014, she was a member of the committee that selects judges and advocates general of the Court of Justice and the General Court of the European Union.

She also sits on the boards of various think tanks and public institutions including the European Council on Foreign Relations, the Aspen Institute Italia, the Atlantic Council and the Institute for Strategic Dialogue.

Adam Daniel Rotfeld

Adam Daniel Rotfeld is a former Minister for Foreign Affairs of Poland. He is a Professor of International Relations at the University of Warsaw.

As a researcher, he has dealt with the theory and practice of international security and human rights, conflict resolution, arms control and disarmament. He has published more than 20 monographs and 450 articles and studies.

Between 1990 and 2002 he was the director of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI).

The CSCE Ministerial Council appointed him to draw up the political settlement of the conflict in Transdniestrian region of Moldova (approved by the conflicting parties and the CSCE Council in 1993).

He was appointed member of the UN Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters (ABDM) from 2006 to 2011 (he chaired the ABDM in 2008) and the NATO Group of Experts (Wise Men Group) on the new Strategic Concept of Alliance in 2009 and 2010. He is Co-chair of the Polish-Russian Group on Difficult Matters and Commissioner of the Euro-Atlantic Security Initiative Commission, as well as a member of several other national and international boards, committees and scientific councils.

Robert Salais

Robert Salais is a French economist and scholar, one of the founders of the economics of convention, a new field of institutional economics. His research covers economics and history.

In 1997, he co-founded the CNRS Research Centre *"Institutions et Dynamiques Historiques de l'Economie" (Institutions and Historical Dynamics of the Economy)* (IDHE) at the École Normale Supérieure de Cachan. He is now associate senior researcher at this laboratory, as well as at the French-German Interdisciplinary Research Centre "Centre Marc Bloch" in Berlin.

Over the past 10 years he has co-ordinated a number of European Research Programmes. These programmes focus on the capability approach developed by Amartya Sen, Nobel Prize winner in economics, especially on what its implementation in Europe would mean.

Among his books, in addition to *Le viol d'Europe* (PUF, 2013), he has published: *L'invention du chômage* (PUF, 1986, reedited in 1999); *Les mondes de production* (Editions de l'EHESS, 1993); *Institutions et conventions* (Editions de l'EHESS, 1998); *Europe and the politics of capabilities* (Cambridge University Press, 2004); *Transforming European Employment Policies* (Edward Elgar Publishing, 2012); *Democracy and Capabilities for Voice* (Peter Lang-PIA, 2012).

Tzvetan Todorov

Tzvetan Todorov is a French essayist, philosopher and historian of Bulgarian origin.

He worked at the Centre national de la recherche scientifique in Paris between 1968 and 2005. He has published more than 30 books in French, which have been translated in as many languages.

In his work he has addressed historical and social issues, including the subject of the encounter of different cultures (e.g. *On Human Diversity*, 1989; *The Fear of Barbarians*, 2008), as well as issues in moral and political philosophy as he wrote about the confrontation of 20th-century political regimes, totalitarianism and democracy (*Hope and Memory*, 2000; *The Inner Enemies of Democracy*, 2013).

Todorov has lectured in many universities around the world, including, in the United States, Yale, New York University, University of California at Berkeley, Columbia and Harvard. In 2008, he was awarded the Prince of the Asturias Prize in Social Sciences.

* * *

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Peaceful, prosperous, democratic and respectful of people's rights, building Europe is an ongoing challenge. For many years it seemed that Europeans lived on a continent of shared values and a common destiny. No one paid attention to the alarm bells warning of growing divisions across the continent, which have become more insistent since the economic and social crisis. Europe and its values, previously taken for granted, are now being contested. These clouds are casting a shadow across Europe's future, and old demons, long dormant, have started to raise their voices again.

With a deepening values divide there is an urgent need for public debate and a reconsideration of how Europeans can strengthen the European project. Is a "Europe united in diversity" still feasible? Can a consensus be forged on a set of values pertaining to a common European identity? What should be done to preserve European unity?

The Council of Europe, with its membership covering Europe from Vladivostok to Lisbon and from Reykjavik to Ankara, and its mission to promote democracy, human rights and the rule of law, provides an excellent framework for discussing the current state of thinking and dynamics behind the concept of European identity.

For these reasons, the Council of Europe, together with the École nationale d'administration in Strasbourg, held a series of European Identity Debates featuring eminent personalities from a variety of backgrounds including politics, civil society, academia and the humanities.

This publication presents the 10 European Identity Debates lectures. The authors identify major issues and challenges and provide an original analysis of different aspects of European identity within their fields of expertise. The authors formulate proposals on how to better understand the multifaceted nature of Europe, what it means today to be European, and what should be done in terms of ideas and strategies to keep Europe dynamic and to build a sustainable future.

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