

EUROPEAN POLITICS AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 21ST CENTURY:
DO THEORIES OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS EXPLAIN CURRENT
EUROPEAN POLITICS?

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ABSTRACT

Today we witness something unprecedented in European history: sovereign states delegate a great deal of their sovereignty to international and supranational bodies – and this happens peacefully, with no wars, seemingly voluntarily. At the same time, centrifugal forces obstruct the 'unification' of Europe. Theories of international relations which are invoked to explain these processes tell us very little about why the countries of Europe want or do not want to 'get closer' to each other. What is it then, what explains best the creation of an 'ever closer union', paralleled by an increasing willingness of others to leave that same Union'? The present study asserts that it is history, and not this or that theory, that explains European politics at the threshold of the third millennium. It tells what the concept of Europe means today, what sort of a Europe is likely to emerge if the project of a larger and deeper European Union will be pursued, and finally, it tells why the European Union is bound to collapse if regulation rather than deregulation will characterize it in the years to come.

ÖZET

Günümüzde, Avrupa tarihinde önceli olmayan bir olguya tanık oluyoruz: egemen devletler egemenliklerinin önemli bir bölümünü uluslararası ve devletlerüstü kurumlara devrediyorlar, ve bu süreç savaşız, barışçıl yollardan, devletlerin kendi isteklerine bağlı olarak gerçekleşiyor. Ancak gözlemlenen bir başka olgu, bu süreç içindeki pek çok dinamiğin "birleşme"ye karşı hareket ettiği yönündedir. Bu süreçleri açıklamayı amaçlayan çeşitli Uluslararası İlişkiler teorileri, neden bazı Avrupa ülkelerinin "birleşme"yi isterken, neden bazılarının bu birleşmeden kaçındıkları sorusunu yanıtlamakta yetersiz kalmaktadır. Bu çalışma, üçüncü binyılın eşiğindeki Avrupa'ya ilişkin soruların yanıtlarının teorilerde değil, tarihte aranması gerektiğini öne sürmektedir. Bu bağlamda, "Avrupa" kavramının günümüzde ne anlama geldiği, daha geniş ve daha derin bir Avrupa Birliği'ni amaçlayan politikanın nasıl bir Avrupa doğuracağı gibi konular ele alınacaktır. Ayrıca, standartlaşmaya yönelik politikaların önümüzdeki yıllarda öncelik kazanmasının Avrupa Birliği'nin çöküşünü nasıl beraberinde getireceği açıklanacaktır.

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INTRODUCTION

Today we witness something unprecedented in European history: sovereign states delegate a great deal of their sovereignty to international and supranational bodies – and this happens peacefully, with no wars, seemingly voluntarily. The very fact that this process continues today, more than a decade after the demise of the threat which once had to be ‘balanced’, suggests, that Realist theories of international relations do not explain the so-called unification processes in Europe at the beginning of the 21st century. It is rather the ideologies of liberalism and democracy which seem to account better for current European international politics. Democratic states act peacefully towards each other, ‘democratic peace theory’ tells us, and the successes of the European Union in preserving peace and fostering prosperity are often invoked as being the hard test for this hypothesis.

However, such interpretation of current politics in Europe requires some clarification. What is peace at the beginning of the 21st century? Does it mean the absence of war between two or more nation states and their armed forces? If so, then it is true that European democracies have rarely (if at all) clashed with one another in armed conflict in the past decade or more. But does violence *within* presumably democratic nation states, or within their alliances not indicate the absence of peace and democracy? Violent separatist movements, like in Northern Ireland, Corsica or Spain; anti-Semitism and xenophobia in general, as we witness

them today in Germany, Poland, France, the Czech Republic or Hungary; regular political and sometimes military conflicts between the two NATO-members Greece and Turkey; economic warfare between the United States of America and the European Union and sometimes even among the members of the Union; the different forms of nationalism – economic, cultural, linguistic, and so forth; and finally, the different little ‘wars’, as they are waged among the European states in Brussels, Strasbourg or Luxembourg for more money transfers and less contributions – all these indicate that Europe is far from being a truly peaceful and democratic region in the classical meaning of these words.

What is it then, what does explain best the ongoing unification processes in Europe, paralleled by the centrifugal processes I enlisted above? Is there any theory of international relations which can explain post-Cold War state behavior in Europe, both to the West and to the East of the river Oder?

In the present paper I assert that theories of international relations tell us very little about why today certain countries in Europe adopt the principles of democracy and liberalism (while others don’t), why certain European countries strive after an ‘ever closer union’¹ (whereas others don’t), or why European multiculturalism is

¹ The expression "an ever closer Union" is used in the ruling of the German Constitutional Court on the Treaty of Maastricht (12 October 1993): "The Maastricht Treaty establishes an inter-governmental community (Staatenverbund) for the creation of an ever closer union among the peoples of Europe, which peoples are organized on a State level, rather than a state which is based upon the people of one state of Europe (Staatsvolk)". Ever since, the "ever closer Union" is used when it is to explain what exactly the European Union is, or, when politicians like Helmut Kohl try to "hide the fact that the European Union lacks the traditional prerequisite for statehood: the Staatsvolk, the people in the political sense of the word." See Gian Enrico Rusconi. The Difficulty in Building a European Identity. *The International Spectator*, Volume XXXIII No. 1 (January-March 1998). For the full text on the ruling see *International Legal Materials*, vol. 33, no.2, 1994. pp.395-444.

said to further trans-continental solidarity, tolerance and understanding (while it is exactly the increasing awareness of this multiculturalism that strengthens nationalism, xenophobia and racism). I will show that the European 'unification process' is a very superficial one, probably as superficial as the theories that claim to explain it.

The paper consists of two chapters and a section in which I expose my conclusions. In the first chapter I introduce to the reader some of the theories and strands of thought which attempt to explain current European international relations and the ongoing processes of unification and uniformization on the European continent. These accounts range from the rather broad interpretations of the effects of globalization on Europe to the somewhat "narrower" approach of those who see this same unification as a process by which the European Union, or, the West, 'socializes' the Eastern European countries, thus creating a new 'European society' or an 'European identity'. I will point to the weaknesses of these hypotheses and theories and explain why neither of them can give a satisfactory explanation for, let alone predict, European politics at the threshold of the third Millennium.

In the second part of the paper I elaborate on the sources of disunity in Europe by pointing at the various aspects of 'the new Europe'. I will explain why the 'unity' of Europe is a myth, rather than reality; why states and their citizens cannot give up their various identities related to the nation state in return for a 'bigger', pan-European one; why the political criteria for EU-membership, as they have been

formulated at the European Council held in 1993 in Copenhagen, are not observed by the members of the Union themselves; and finally, why history and linguistics make this most ambitious project for European unification impossible.

I conclude my paper by asserting that the European Union is bound to collapse if regulation continues to be regarded as a substitute for a strong leadership, possibly meaning a European federal government. Only deregulation and a firm leadership, or, the practice of "firm leadership, light rule" can make the European Union succeed.

CHAPTER I

Do Theories of International Relations Explain Current European Politics?

1.1. Introductory remarks

“International Relations is a unique field because it studies abstract entities known as states rather than individuals, and thus it requires its own methods of investigation for which there is no book.”²

Somewhat puzzled by this statement which I found in the syllabus of my graduate course in research methods, I asked for the opinion of another professor of research methods to comment on it. His remarks were indeed enlightening:

“International Relations is not unique because other fields, including sociology and economics, study abstract entities such as classes, ethnic groups, consumers, producers and so forth. If the ‘unit of analysis’, or the actor, is states, what is the use of relying on archives and open sources for documents? After all, such sources are written or stated by individuals and not states. We may use as a short-hand ‘Turkey did this and Greece did

² Course syllabus for the graduate course in Research Methods, given in the fall semester 2000/2001 at Bilkent University, Ankara, Turkey.

that', but this is a convenience at best, and an obfuscation at worst – obscuring that the actions of states are the outcomes of the actions of individuals in groups. To make the state "real", to reify it by claiming that it "acts", betrays either sloppiness or a mind beholden to etatism, and at the extreme, fascism; that is, to suggest that the state exists outside of and above the individuals who constitute it, is both analytically wrong and politically dangerously undemocratic in its implications."³

From Machiavelli to Morgenthau, the state (or, 'the prince', which can be considered, under the circumstances, to be almost the same) has been the only 'unit of analysis' of relations among states. However, during the past two centuries several other actors emerged on the 'international scene', from trade unions to non-governmental organizations, from national and trans-national corporations to prominent individuals. Hence, international politics became a field of the political science which offers and requires increasingly more units and levels of analysis.

Most of the theories of international relations which I introduce in this chapter disregard other actors on the international scene and 'fetishize' the state as if it would exist, be peaceful or bellicose, democratic or undemocratic, independently of the citizens which form it. This methodological deficiency of any theory of international relations has to be born in mind when reading any text (just like this one) dealing with international (meaning not exclusively inter-statal) relations.

³ Pervin, David. Email of 25 November, 2000.

1.2. Realism

Realist theories of international relations assume that nation states are always "power maximizing" and intrinsically "bad" (whereas the citizens and the state of the Idealists are intrinsically "good"). Given the world of limited resources we live in, the 'Realist state' always tries to increase its power to the disadvantage of other states. Since the underlying assumption is that all states are "functionally the same", war and conflict in the Realist paradigm are considered to be endemic.

However, after World War II, something unprecedented in European history happened: Germany, the second most militarized state of Europe during the first half of the 20th century (after France), suddenly 'decided' to allow other countries to control its natural resources, thus limiting its sovereign rights over its own industrial production. The country which suffered two humiliating defeats by the Allied forces within less than three decades did not seek 'revenge', neither did it seek a revision of the terms of the peace accords signed after WW II. One can explain this through the massive presence of foreign occupation armies in Germany, but still, the extent to which Germany suddenly became peaceful and 'silent' must have surprised many of those who embraced Realism.

From the creation of the European Community of Coal and Steel until the introduction of the Euro, more than fifty years passed during which an increasing

number of states followed Germany's example and delegated parts of their sovereign rights to some supranational, 'European' bodies. In order to calm those spirits which warned against the loss of national sovereignty to some remote "capital of Europe", the builders of the European Community, and later, of the European Union, introduced the new notion of "pooling sovereignty". States suddenly did not lose, but increase their sovereignty, as if a state could be, for instance, to 120 percent sovereign.

The military alliance of which most Western European countries became part after WW II was meant to "balance" the expansionist reflexes of the Russo-Soviet Empire. A military alliance of this sort could be backed best by the economic sticks and carrots applied by the economically strongest country of the alliance. The Marshall Plan, sponsored by the United States of America, gave the impulse for more economic co-operation between the formerly belligerent countries of Western Europe, and guaranteed that the Western European states will later co-operate in the balancing of the perceived threats posed by the Soviet Union. Such state behavior during the Cold War could therefore be explained by Realist theories of international relations. But do Realist theories account for the continuation of the European unification processes *after* 1991?

The answer is, no. Even if one accepts that today we live in a multipolar world in which the European Union struggles to be one such pole (and hence, struggles against other poles), there is little to explain why the military or economic co-

operation of European nation states should go beyond the provisions of the Treaties of Brussels (1946), Washington (1949) or Rome (1957).

The signing of the Treaties of Maastricht, Amsterdam and Nice did not improve Western Europe's position in the world. On the one hand they revived old dreams of a past Western European Union and thus will lead, sooner or later, to the division of the most successful military alliance ever (namely NATO), and on the other hand they laid down the framework for the creation of a highly centralized European Union whose rulings nobody seems to be eager to obey. The European Union is weakening the power of the national governments, the only political bodies which have the means for enforcing laws or policies. The more recent creation of the Euro and its immediate nearly-collapse does not seem to have a dramatically positive effect on the new 'European economy' either.

And still, Europe is striving after an "ever closer union". Many states which have been outside the EC/EU until now are eager to join the union of the most prosperous countries in the world⁴. They all want to adopt the entire *acquis communautaire* within only a few years (and thus take on the burdens which derive from it), and give up increasingly large parts of their sovereignty, without, however, being compelled to do so. At least in the case of most formerly communist countries it seems as if the benefits would not even be comparable with the medium-term high costs of European Union membership. Indeed, the

⁴ if one considers the GDP/capita of the top-11 EU-member countries.

economic transformation processes in Eastern Europe are often handicapped by the high stakes put forward by the Union for EU-membership.

The joining of *any* sort of international organizations, other than military alliances, cannot be explained by Realism. International organizations self-evidently put limits to the sovereignty of a state. Bearing in mind that we live in an age of an increased institutionalization of international relations (not only political or military, but cultural, scientific and so forth), this is an anomaly which the Realist theories of international relations cannot explain. Hence, I conclude, there is an acute need today to find a paradigm, other than the Realist one, to explain the current European politics aimed at 'unifying' the continent's peoples under the lead of one international (however, not supranational) political decisionmaking body, such as the European Union's Commission, Council, and Parliament.

1.3. Globalization

A more usable interpretation of the current trend towards gradual European unification is given by those who see 'globalization' as an unavoidable process, (unavoidably) affecting Europe, just as it does affect any other region of the globe. Markets and 'social spaces' are growing together, the promoters of the idea say, just as the virtual space created by the rapid growth of internet connections is uniting people from all around the world into one community of netsurfers,

chatters, email correspondents, online newspaper-readers, virtual game-players and so forth. But let us wonder a little about this assumption. Empirical studies have shown that the transactions about which the 'globalizers' assume to be global are far from directly involving or affecting the entire world.

"84% of world trade is transacted between countries inhabited by approximately 28% of the world population. This OECD focus is even more evident if one looks at direct investments. Over 91% of all foreign direct investments between 1980 and 1991 went to OECD countries and the 10 most important threshold countries[...]. Communication flows indicate a similar concentration in OECD countries. A world map showing the distribution of Internet connections is particularly informative. It shows that even within the OECD world there are clear gravitational centres [...]"⁵

The collapse of the Soviet Bloc and the joining of the "Free World" by the formerly totalitarian countries did not tremendously change this picture in Europe. Hungary, for instance, a country with only ten million inhabitants but with the largest proportion of foreign direct investment among the post-totalitarian countries, absorbed "only" around 25 billion US dollars. Taken all together, the post-totalitarian states, including the states which gained independence after the demise of the Soviet Union, absorbed between 1990 and 2000 a total of FDI roughly equaling the capital inflow into one developed country per year.

More than half of Europe's states are OECD-members (today including Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic), and thus, belong to the group of states which experience very rapid capital flows among each other and which have created the

⁵ Hirst, Paul and Thompson, Grahame. Globalization in Question. The International Economy and the Possibilities of Governance. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996. and Beisheim et al. Im Zeitalter der Globalisierung? Thesen und Daten zur gesellschaftlichen und politischen Denationalisierung. Baden-Baden: Nomos, 1999. Both sources quoted in Zürn, Michael.

most developed and fastest growing net of communication infrastructure. But the assumption that these processes are global, and *therefore* affect Europe as well, is wrong. It is rather Europe, together with some remoter single countries such as the United States of America, Japan or some states of the Southeastern Pacific region, which started this process and which try to involve as many regions as possible for the satisfaction of their own economic and political interests. A closer look at the geographical situation of the OECD countries speaks for itself: 21 are located in Europe, 3 in Asia (including Turkey), 3 on the pan-American continent, and 2 in Oceania-Australia. There is no OECD member state in Africa⁶.

Also, there is little reason to believe that such (economic) 'globalization' is a novelty for Europe. Economic exchanges between the different regions and countries of Europe on the one hand, and Asian or African countries on the other hand, started early in the Middle Ages, when trade in silk, spices or other largely luxury products brought European traders as far as the Middle East or China. Even the Roman Empire of two thousand years ago stretched far into extra-European lands and traded with remoter peoples and their states. The fact that more and more scholars talk about globalization in the economic realm today is therefore linked to the perception of this phenomenon by what is commonly called 'the West'. It is *our* (Western) perception of the relative decline of the formerly colonizer European cultures, or, of the 'Western civilization' in general, and, the emergence and the rapidly growing economic strength of a few other regions of

Democratic Governance Beyond the Nation-State: The EU and Other International Institutions. European Journal of International Relations. Vol. 6, No. 2, 183-221. London-Munich, 2000. 187.

the world in particular, that makes us think that 'globalization' is a relatively new phenomenon. The 'globalization' of economic processes at the beginning of the 21st century has therefore no distinctive qualities apart from a sheer extension of scale.

'Globalization' is still far from becoming global indeed. With the sole exception of the Southeast Asian region, no other region is involved yet into this largely Euro-Atlantic process.

If the term globalization stands for the emergence of natural phenomena which cause global effects (for instance, the greenhouse effect or the pollution of the air, the waters and the soil of our planet), the term can be used, again, only with the required care. The biggest polluters today are the developed industrial nations, all of which are members of the OECD, and thus, represent only 1/6 of the world's countries and approximately the same share of the Earth's population. It is this same group of countries which, for understandable reasons, tries to find a solution to these harmful phenomena. The fact that they do it under the calling of 'global problems' which require 'global action' is obviously intended to obscure the size of their share in the responsibility of causing them.

Although increasing in their significance and relevance for the study of international relations, organized crime, terrorism, massive migration flows or

⁶ information taken from OECD in Figures 2000 Edition: Statistics on Member Countries. (The Web Edition can be found at <http://www.oecdwash.org/DATA/online.htm>). OECD Publications. Editor: Rory Clarke.

'global' illnesses are still processes which are limited to a relatively small number of states and are therefore far from producing global effects.

As a conclusion it can be said that it is not what we call today 'globalization' that furthers or explains the "ever closer union" of Europe. On the contrary, it is this European unification process, paralleled by the growing together of the remoter developed world, which makes us believe that economic globalization is indeed global. Today there is no 'global pressure' on Europe which would explain the unification of the European continent under the lead of the supranational bodies created by the Treaty on the European Union.

1.4. Democratic Peace Theory and Economic Interdependence Theory

Some scholars of international relations assert that there is a link between democracy at the domestic level and peace (or again, democracy) on the international level. They say that if a state is governed by the principles of democracy at the national level, its foreign policy must also be conducted according to the same principles. The underlying assumption is that democracies do not use violence within their borders and against each other, but solve their disagreements through peaceful methods of conflict resolution.

Bruce Russett, a democratic peace theorist, believes that in an international system comprising a "critical mass" of democratic states, "it may be possible in

part to supersede the 'Realist' principles (anarchy, the security dilemma of states) that have dominated practice to the exclusion of 'liberal' or 'idealist' ones since at least the seventeenth century"⁷. In another article (published the same year), however, the same author states plainly that "democratic states are in general as conflict- and war-prone as nondemocracies." In order to make this incongruence between his assumptions about how democratic peace works even more complicated, he adds later in that same article that, however, "democracies have rarely clashed with one another in violent conflict"⁸.

Russett explains this anomaly by resorting to a series of 'cases' (or 'facts'), processed through sophisticated quantitative methods which seem to support and 'explain' his thesis that if there are more democracies, then there is more peace, and especially, since nowadays there are more democracies than ever, there is more peace today. He concludes that the various states have most probably *chosen* to become democratic, because they realized that 'peace at home' means 'peace in the world'.

A very usable critique of the theory of democratic peace is given by Christopher Layne, who concludes, by resorting to a number of four 'cases' only, that "realism is superior to democratic peace theory as a predictor of international outcomes". "Liberal international relations theory is based on hope, not on facts", he asserts.

⁷ Russett, Bruce. Grasping the Democratic Peace: Principles for a Post-Cold War World. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993. chap. 7; and Russett, Bruce. Can a Democratic Peace Be Built? International Interactions. Vol. 18, No. 3 (Spring 1993), pp. 277-282. Quoted in Layne, Christopher. The Myth of Democratic Peace. International Security. Vol. 19, No. 2 (5-49) pp. 5

⁸ Maoz, Zeev and Russett Bruce. Normative and Structural Causes of Democratic Peace, 1946-1986. American Political Science Review. Vol. 87, No. 3, September 1993 (624-638) pp. 624.

The "zone of peace" created by democratic states such as Germany or Japan is a "peace of illusions". Layne argues that there is no evidence that would explain the mechanisms through which democracy at the state level can be 'elevated' onto the international level, if our main assumption of the state is that it always seeks to increase its security and power to the disadvantage of other states⁹.

"Similarly", Layne argues, "there is no evidence that supports the sister theory that economic interdependence leads to peace". And indeed, there are many cases in European history which prove that economic interdependence does not stop countries from waging wars against each other. Moreover, economically interdependent countries have clashed with each other in war several times in 20th century European history exactly *because* they were economically dependent of each other.

The main reason for the inapplicability of these two theories is that both democratic peace and economic interdependence cannot work in an environment in which states act 'selfishly'. As one author suggests: "nationalism is the most successful political ideology in human history". And nationalism, by definition, works against any forms of international cooperation which in their costs go beyond the benefits which such cooperation would entail to the states in question.

And still, it is the 'national interest' of the world's most powerful state to spread the myth of democratic peace in the world. More democracy in the world serves

⁹ Layne, Christopher. The Myth of Democratic Peace. International Security. Vol. 19, No. 2 (5-49) pp. 47.

the interests of the United States, it is said. "Policymakers who have embraced democratic peace theory see a crucial link between America's security and the spread of democracy, which is viewed as the antidote that will prevent future wars"¹⁰. Democratic peace theory can therefore be seen as the theory of the rich against the poor: it is the rich West, led by the United States, which has the legitimate 'right' to conceptualize democracy, and it is the poorer countries which have the 'choice' to obey and adopt this ideology and its principles, even though these principles are very often alien to their culture or history, and although their introduction may cause more harm and national schizophrenia than benefits. The Copenhagen criteria for accession to the European Union, and especially, the various legal formulations of human rights are the best examples for this.

Democratic peace theory does not explain why the countries of Europe tend to strengthen their co-operation with each other without, however, creating a federal state system similar to the one of the United States of America. Indeed, conflicts between the EU-member states become increasingly serious as the European Union moves towards an "ever closer union". To be sure, these conflicts do not result in wars in the classical meaning of the word. But, for instance, the 'political embargo' imposed on Austria after the election of Jorg Haider as governor of Carinthia, and especially, after his party's joining the Austrian coalition government, shows clearly that the critical threshold between co-operation and interference in domestic affairs has been reached within the EU.

¹⁰ Layne, Christopher. The Myth of Democratic Peace. International Security. Vol. 19, No. 2 (5-49) pp. 5.

Democracy is a concept strictly related to the nation state. There cannot be a democracy *among* states. Democracy and the rule of law can be enforced within the state through the specific means which are at the disposal of the state. Hence, as long as there is no supranational authority which has the means to enforce the rule of international law, democratic peace, or, democracy at the international level (if there is such an international democracy at all), will not work.

Finally, democracy at the state level can be at most a necessary condition for international peace. Democracy is in no way a sufficient condition for peaceful foreign policies. Other factors, such as trust, solidarity, reciprocal respect or a sense of fairness are the prerequisites for peaceful international relations. Since, however, it is not, and it cannot be, the states who "act", it is up to their leaders whether their foreign policy is conducted peacefully or not. In other words, democratic peace theory works in Europe only if the leaders of Europe's nation states want it to work. Hence, I conclude, democratic peace theory is nothing more than one of the formulations of Western wishful thinking about a peaceful future of our world.

1.5. Denationalization

In order to save theories from being dismissed as invalid because of possibly wrong assumptions, scholars of international relations resort to all sorts of linguistic acrobatics. Thus, instead of using the term 'globalization', some authors

started using the term 'denationalization', standing for the “extension of social spaces”, “an indication of the weakening link between territorial states and their corresponding national societies, that is, the contextual condition that made the national constellation possible”¹¹. Put differently, if one speaks of denationalization, he assumes the increase of international transactions, without, however, assuming the global nature of these phenomena.

The main assumption of the "denationalizers" is that more and more decisions made by decision makers in one state affect a number of citizens in another state. Therefore, they say, the emergence of international institutions is a *solution* to these sort of democratic deficits at the inter-national level. The emergence of "denationalized governance structures" helps, it is said, to bring all the actors who are affected by a decision into the decision-making system. This means, in this particular case, that the European Union emerged as an increasingly supranational body in order to *solve* this growing incongruence between the political, economic and social spaces of the nation state.

The problem with this approach is that it does not account for, or simply ignores, the emergence of a similar democratic deficit at the supranational institutional level. Supranational bodies, such as the European Commission, the European Council or the members of the European Court of Justice are neither elected through direct popular vote, nor checked by any other elected body, nor are they accountable. The so-much desired trans-European democratic space is thus

¹¹ Zuern, Michael. *Democratic Governance Beyond the Nation-State: The EU and Other International Institutions*. European Journal of International Relations, Vol. 6, No. 2, June 2000.

becoming increasingly undemocratic, and hence, the theory of denationalization unusable, if one accepts the underlying assumption that international institutions are created in order to *solve* the problem of the various democratic deficits.

There are two strands of thought regarding this problem of legitimacy and democratic deficit at the international institutional level, particularly in relation to the European Union and its institutions. The first asserts plainly that these questions can be adjusted through thorough reforms, provided there exists the right political will. One can argue that this is currently happening in the EU after the recent summit in Nice, where reforms in the responsibilities of the various EU-bodies, and, most importantly, in the various voting systems, have been adopted. The tendency is to strengthen the prerogatives of the (elected) Parliament to the detriment of the (appointed) Commission, and, to introduce the principle of majority voting in supranational bodies such as the Commission or the Council.

The other strand of thought dismisses the chances for more democracy within Europe altogether for the simple reason that the European Union, just as any other international institution, "cannot meet the social prerequisites for democracy", among which the congruence of the social and political spaces, as described above, is the most prominent. The lack of a common language, or, the ever-stronger inclination of Europeans to engage in a sort of linguistic warfare within the European Union, is only one major obstacle to the creation of a genuine political community, or, a *demos*. Consequently, the Eurosceptics argue, there is a

183-221. pp. 183.

zero-sum relationship between nationality (or, in a broader context, national sovereignty) and supranationality.

However, theory is always ahead of reality. A German scholar, one of the promoters of the concept of 'denationalization' instead of globalization, challenges the Eurosceptics and tries to prove that, although there is no European *demos* today ("not yet"), there already exist different components of it. "The very strong claim of the sceptics that there is no *demos* beyond national borders needs differentiation. Only by deconstructing the all-embracing term *demos* can it be established what element of a *demos* is required for what component of democracy, and the validity of the sceptics' statement thus be tested"¹²

This deconstruction of the *demos* resulted, however, in the vague formulation of five attributes of the (Western) European *demos*, all of which proved, in the end, to be rather non-existent in the EU-space (in the author's words: "more empirical studies are needed on this issue"). For instance, to assume that the very existence of the EU's Regional and Structural Funds reflects a sort of *solidarity* among Western Europeans is a naive assumption about how the allocation of these funds is negotiated in Brussels. Surprisingly, the author himself admits that today there is "no sense of transnational social obligations" in Europe (of course, except in calamity situations - and therefore only with ad-hoc character). But what, if not *solidarity*, characterizes best a political community, or a *demos*? The author goes as far as to claim that it might even be possible that trans-European *solidarity* is

not a necessary attribute of a trans-European *demos* (as if it would exist), and thus not necessary to the democratization of the European Union.

If 'denationalization' means the existence of cross-border transactions involving goods, capital, services and labour force, then the term can be accepted as an alternative to 'globalization' with the emphasis on the regional, rather than the global, effects of these *economic* transactions. Then, we can say that the European unification process is the result of the 'denationalization' of the formerly national 'economic spaces'. If, however, denationalization stands for the dissolution of the national societies and their blending into a larger, international one, the term does not reflect current European realities and it must be therefore dismissed as unusable. The centralized European decision making bodies did not 'fill' the democratic deficits at the supranational level, and thus, they did not make the European Union a more democratic space. Therefore, if 'denationalization' means the creation of supranational bodies which can solve the incongruence of national sovereignties in the political and economic realm, and thus, create a more democratic decisionmaking system, the term must be considered, again, with the appropriate criticism.

1.6. The Clash of Civilizations

¹² Zuern, Michael. *Democratic Governance Beyond the Nation-State: The EU and Other International Institutions*. European Journal of International Relations, Vol. 6, No. 2, June 2000. 183-221. pp. 199.

A rather controversial explanation for, among others, both the strengthening and the enlargement of European international organizations, is given by those who believe that following the demise of the bipolar world, the 'new world order' will be a multipolar one, however, this time divided along so-called civilizational border lines. The most prominent among the embracers of this theory is Harvard professor Samuel P. Huntington, who, in his famous, but not less controversial book on *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* attempts to explain post-1991 global international politics from his own "civilizational" point of view¹³.

Huntington says that civilization is "the highest cultural grouping of people and the broadest level of cultural identity people have, short of that which distinguishes humans from other species"¹⁴. He asserts that it is this highest level of identity that matters most to people at the end of the twentieth century. Civilizations are said to 'unite' and strengthen their forces against the perceived threats coming from other such civilizations.

Huntington considers religion to be the most important component of what he calls a civilization. Religion is the basis for his identification of the nine such civilizations living on our globe. However, if there is a "Western civilization" which ends (in Europe) at the borderline between Western and Eastern Christianity, the inclusion into the European Union of Greece, and at a future date,

¹³ Huntington, Samuel P. *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996 .

¹⁴ Huntington, Samuel P. *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996. pp. 52.

of Cyprus, Romania or Bulgaria or other Western Balkan countries would not make sense. At least Bulgaria is not a “torn country” in the Huntingtonian meaning. Also, the possible future inclusion of Turkey into the Union would make even less sense¹⁵.

Huntington’s theory, that states belonging to the same civilization ‘revolve’ around the leader state of that civilization does not explain why the European Union increasingly distances herself from the United States of America: the Monetary Union, the CSFP, and most importantly, the ESDI and EDP make European politics increasingly European and less and less American. The European Union *divides* this assumed "Western civilization" rather than uniting it, while, on the other side of the Atlantic, the US seems to be more and more involved (economically, politically) in the Central and Southern American states, thus creating a "new", pan-American 'civilization'. Europe and America start having different allies, too: whereas the European Union is becoming the largest sponsor of the new Palestinian Authority, the US remains a staunch ally of Israel. The conflict between Europe and the US caused by the American decision to build the planned missile defense system, or, not to ratify the Kyoto agreement (1997) on air-pollution in spite of vehement European protests (voiced together with Japan!), are further signals for the division line which seems to emerge in the middle of this assumed "Western civilization".

¹⁵ Huntington calls Turkey a 'torn country' although it is a country with a 98% Muslim population. All the other 'torn countries', however, are 'torn' in Huntington's view because of the existence within their borders of two or more relatively large religious groups. The reasons for this inconsistency is that Huntington obviously did not know where to 'put', because this is what his theory is about, Turkey, due to its predominantly Muslim religion and its being embedded into several Western organizations at the same time.

Abraham Maslow's 'theory of the hierarchy of needs' challenges Huntington's civilizations-theory and asserts that some 'basic' identities, other than cultural or 'civilizational', loom larger when people think about themselves and their place in the world¹⁶. And indeed, economic prosperity or poverty, technological development and underdevelopment created a far more important division of our globe than any other 'civilizational' line. The OECD, whose members belong to six different Huntingtonian 'civilizations', seems to create a far more important division of the globe than any other 'civilizational' line. The rich and the poor, the North and the South will remain the dichotomies that will create identity in the future.

As a conclusion I say that Huntington's civilizations-theory does not explain the institutional growing together of Europe. It does not explain why the West, thus far being led by the US, is being increasingly divided by an imaginary line drawn through the Atlantic, nor does it account for the inclusion into "Europe" of non-Western countries such as Turkey, Greece, Cyprus and so forth. And finally, it does not explain the increasingly strong co-operation between the countries of the

¹⁶ Abraham Maslow is known for establishing the theory of a hierarchy of needs, writing that human beings are motivated by unsatisfied needs, and that certain lower needs need to be satisfied before higher needs can be satisfied. Bearing in mind that most of our fellow humans live in poverty if not misery, I conclude that our basic needs (i.e. access to food and shelter, or having a job) and the identities which derive from them (being poor or unemployed) are more important to us than our cultural needs or our 'civilizational' identity. For further readings on Abraham Maslow and his theory of a hierarchy of needs, see <http://web.utk.edu/~gwynne/maslow.HTM>

developed world, which, if we consider only the thirty members of the OECD, belong to six different 'civilizations'.¹⁷

1.7. International Socialization

After the collapse of the authoritarian systems in Europe, the Western European countries 'decided' (for the purpose of increasing the legitimacy of their shared 'beliefs and values') to 'socialize' the Eastern European countries through an already existing web of international institutions. 'Socialization' was meant to stand for the transmission of Western-type liberal democracy, human rights and the principles of market economy to the Eastern European countries. Thus, through this *uniformization* of Europe at the ideological, and later, economic level, a new European identity, a strong 'fortress Europe' was to be created.

(Western) Europe is the most highly institutionalized region of the international system. If we assume that institutions create norms, which are either the effect of, or the cause for, the emergence of common 'values and beliefs', it is plausible to assume that the extension of membership of these institutions will lead to, or is the effect of, the existence of these same common 'values and beliefs' in the state to be 'socialized'. Arguably, the question arises what came first? The institution which created norms, which in turn created common 'values and beliefs'? Or was

¹⁷ it is also worth noting that (at least) two of these countries are 'leaders' of their respective 'civilizations' – hence, their co-operation is (another) "anomaly" which Huntington could not

it the common 'values and beliefs' which created the institutions, which in turn reinforced these 'values and beliefs' through norms? For the purpose of explaining how the 'socialization' of Eastern Europe by the West could possibly work, the promoters of this idea of intra-European 'socialization' consider only the first explanation. By doing so they go as far in their arrogance as to claim that 'European socialization' does work only in one way, from West to East, as if the Eastern half of the continent would not 'socialize' the West as well – if not by other means, then through the export of organized crime, corruption, Eastern European illegal immigrants with their Eastern ("old fashioned", "communist") mentalities, in brief: with their Eastern European 'values and beliefs'.

There are two approaches to this theory of socialization, a 'rationalist institutionalist' and a 'sociological institutionalist' one. Some rationalist institutionalist theorists assume that "socialization is one of the processes by which states become alike and by which nonconformist states *adapt* to the exigencies of Realpolitik"¹⁸. States are forced "to conform to successful practices", however, not by a hegemon, but by the inherent conditions of an anarchical state system. Other rationalists assume that socialization "comes about primarily in the wake of the coercive exercise of *power*"¹⁹. Whatever the motivations of the nonconformist state for conforming are, rationalists assume that the decision 'to socialize', and the decision to 'let oneself be socialized', is a rational action of the "socializing agency" and the "secondary state", respectively.

explain.

¹⁸ Schimmelfennig, Frank. International Socialization in the New Europe: Rational Action in an Institutional Environment. *European Journal of International Relations*. Vol 6, No. 1. March 2000. (109-139) pp. 113.

This rational action, we are told, stems from the technical and anarchical environment in which the states exist.

On the opposite side, those theorists who embrace the sociological institutionalist point of view, start their theorizing from the assumption of the existence of an institutional environment (which exists just like that), in which the actions of states are governed by norms rather than by rationality. These theorists see the effectiveness of the 'socialization process' in the degree of internalization of the new 'values and beliefs' by the individuals of the secondary state.

Both approaches have flaws. For instance, if rationalist theorists assume that states act selfishly and in an instrumental way in an environment of anarchy, then there is no point in assuming that 'international socialization' is possible at all. Because, after all, such 'socialization' presupposes the internalization of other, often non-Realist and even non-rational principles of social order. A pre-set, pre-assumed Realpolitik-based state behavior is not compatible with the assumption that states can change their behavior driven by reasons other than power.

The problem with the sociological-institutionalist viewpoint is that it takes the existence of international institutions for granted, and hence, does not explain how they come into being. As a consequence, the other way round, it does not explain the mechanisms through which the geographical extension of international

¹⁹ idem, pp. 113.

organizations leads to the internalization of the new principles in the so-called secondary states.

There have been attempts to "unify" these two viewpoints due to the supposedly 'underinstitutionalized' nature of the rationalist model on the one hand, and the often 'oversocialized' nature of the sociological one. One scholar came up with the hybrid theory of "rational action in a normatively institutional environment", that is, he blended the technical and institutional environments, the rational, power-maximizing state-actor with the rule-following state-actor, and so forth. While doing so, he produced a show of linguistic acrobatics which make the two underlying approaches even more unintelligible, and seemingly (at least) nonsensical:

"I [thereby] do not claim that all state actors act selfishly and instrumentally at all times, i.e. never pursue a moral goal for its own sake, are never truly committed to the rules and norms of international society, or never internalize international norms personally. The reason for sticking to rationalist assumptions is rather pragmatic. If it is possible to show that international socialization in the new Europe can be explained on the assumption that all actors act rationally – and empirical observations show that many of them do – then, by subsumption, we may conclude that it can be explained even more easily if some actors are rule-followers."²⁰

Whether it is a rational action, or an action stemming from institutional constraints or the coercive powers of a stronger state, "international socialization" does not work. There is no evidence that proves that Eastern European states (meaning both leaders and populations) consciously accepted or "internalized" the principles of democracy and liberalism and *therefore* wish to join the European Union. Conversely, there is no way to find out whether the extension of

membership to the Eastern European countries means indeed that the internalization of the West's 'values and beliefs' will happen at all. After all, at the referenda, through which Eastern Europeans will declare their willingness to join the EU, the prospective EU-citizens will vote favorably in order to profit from the prosperity guaranteed by EU-membership, rather than driven by some, maybe completely alien, Western European 'values and beliefs'. Also, it is a naive if not an arrogant assumption that such 'socialization', if it works at all, cannot work the other way, from East to West. Therefore, I conclude, the 'theory of international socialization' cannot explain pan-European politics at the beginning of the 21st century.

1.8. Conclusion

Today's theories of international relations do have the potential to explain current European politics. However, just as in all other fields of the social science, they do so only *after* the event and under specific circumstances, in a specific context. Theories of international relations are not too much more than bold generalizations based on certain 'cases', or, certain historical 'facts', which *seem to* confirm those very theories.

The 'fetishization' of the historical surface fact, as it is done by the discipline of international relations or political contemporary history, does not further, but

²⁰ idem, pp. 135.

obstruct, the political scientist in understanding the main object of his analysis: the relations among states. Many historians fell prey to this practice, starting from Leopold von Ranke in the last century and ending (?) with those whom the implosion of the Soviet Union in the late eighties took by surprise. The demascation of the ‘historical fact’, as it was done by E.H. Carr in his lectures on *What is History?*²¹, should have been a lesson to those who limited their research to collecting a number of ‘facts’ and support their theories by resorting to them. Unfortunately, today there is still a tendency among political scientists and scholars of international relations to disregard the useful potential of the other social sciences, such as history (cultural, intellectual, and so forth), anthropology, sociology, economics, psychology, the study of nationalism or folklore and so forth, in explaining, or maybe predicting, socio-political processes.

What is common to all the theoretical approaches which I criticized in this chapter is that their assumptions and prescriptions are, in the best case, applicable to one specific country or region and to one specific and relatively short historical period only. These theories, be it Huntington’s civilization-theory or democratic peace, globalization or political realism, are far from being universally applicable. They are contextual and reflect nothing more and nothing less than the way how the scholars who formulated them think about the geographical, historical, economic or social context in which they live themselves. One may claim, that historiography is as subjective and contextual as the discipline of international relations theory. The difference is, however, that the authors of written history do

²¹ Carr, Edward Hallett. *What is History?* London: Penguin Books, c1987.

not try to prognosticate the future, whereas theorists of international relations tend to use (and abuse) history to support their often nonsensical predictions.

CHAPTER II

European Politics at the Beginning of the 21st Century

2.1. What is Europe?

Europe is a relatively modern idea, having its roots in the early seventeenth century. It emerged following the religious conflicts of the preceding centuries and was intended to replace the concept of Christendom, a religious community now divided by a Great Schism and several Reformations.

However, 'Europe' is above all a legend and a myth. In the European history of divisions it was aimed at 'uniting' the continent's peoples and thus guarantee a long lasting pan-European peace.²² This myth of European unity, which at the

²² To be sure, 'Europe' was not meant to unite all European peoples in one state, under the lead of one sovereign. This 'unification' was rather a sort of a slogan, such as the "Proletariat of the World, Unite!" one. As such, this unification was rather nonsensical because nobody ever explained how such a unification could possibly work. Vaclav Havel talks about this sort of 'spiritual unification' (however, in a different context) in his brilliant essay on The Power of the Powerless. See: Havel,

same time became a dream, and nowadays, a project, was in the beginning an idea pursued by groups of poets, artists and other intellectuals during the Enlightenment. As early as 1751, Voltaire described 'Europe' as being "a kind of a great republic divided into several states, some monarchical, the others mixed... but all corresponding with one another. They all have the same religious foundation, even if divided into several confessions. They all have the same principle of public law and politics, unknown in other parts of the world."²³ Twenty years later Jean-Jacques Rousseau celebrated that "there are no longer Frenchmen, Germans and Spaniards, or even English, but only Europeans."²⁴ Ever since, the "sameness" of Europe and Europeans became a sort of an obsession to those who saw "otherness" as a threat to this new creation called Europe.

Right after its emergence, 'Europe' was 'threatened' by the Porte from the outside, and by other 'non-Europeans' (meaning basically non-Christians) from the inside. The peoples of Europe joined forces to expel the Ottoman hordes from Central and Southeastern Europe, just as they did some centuries earlier with the Moors and the Jews, who have been killed in pogroms, expelled, or forcefully assimilated through baptism.

It has to be said that many outcasts conformed "voluntarily" to Europe and propagated the usefulness of baptism among their brothers in belief, thus contributing to the creation of the myth of a united and Christian 'Europe'.

Vaclav et al. Keane, John ed. The Power of the Powerless: Citizens Against the State in Central-Eastern Europe. New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1985.

²³ quoted by Davies, Norman. Europe – A History. London: Pimlico, 1997, pp. 7.

²⁴ quoted by Davies, Norman. Europe – A History. London: Pimlico, 1997, pp. 7.

Heinrich Heine, for instance, who was born a Jew, converted to Lutheran Protestantism in 1825 and until his death three decades later celebrated baptism as the "entrance ticket to European culture".²⁵ Unfortunately for him, he could neither 'enter' European culture with this entry ticket during his lifetime, nor did he learn what exactly European culture was. Because, after all, European culture in Heine's times was not that European (Christian) as he believed it to be: the Muslims in the Southeast, and to a far larger degree, the Jews in the West and North of Europe, were important dwellers and builders of urban Europe, too.

Strictly linked to the creation of the cultural and religious borders of 'Europe', the concept of Europe acquired a geographical delineation as well. Whereas most of Europe's outline was already determined by the sea-coasts to its North, West and South, the Eastern border was pushed East- and Southwards as the Ottoman Empire withdrew, up to its dissolution in 1918. Early in the nineteenth century a nation state emerged in the South of the Balkan Peninsula which became known in Europe as 'the cradle of European (and hence, Christian!) civilization', through its assumed direct descent from what is called today ancient Greece. Thus, although even today there are many voices which deny "Europeanness" to most of the Balkan countries (including Greece), and very often it is these peoples themselves who, although they form largely Christian nations, regard themselves as being non-Europeans²⁶, Europe' seems to have acquired vast territories,

²⁵ Gidal, Nachum. Jews in Germany. From Roman Times to the Weimar Republic. Koeln: Koenemann, 1998, pp. 269.

²⁶ In her recently published book, Maria Todorova explains how some peoples in the Balkans relate themselves to Europe. According to her research and experience, many peoples in the Balkans do not consider themselves to be Europeans. See Todorova, Maria. Balcanii si balcanismul. Bucuresti: Humanitas, 2000, chapter one ("Balcanii").

stretching as far South and East as the Turkish Straits and the Eastern Mediterranean. Cyprus, an island which is less than one hundred sea miles from the Syrian, Lebanese or Israeli coasts (and more than 500 miles far from Greece), is considered to be today, both culturally and geographically, a part of Europe²⁷. Cyprus is 'European' (in the religious and cultural meaning) and hence eligible for EU-membership, while Morocco, a country which is much closer to mainland Europe, was denied EC/EU membership in 1986 on the grounds that it is not European (geographically, and in any other respect). To be sure, this happened notwithstanding the fact that "one could easily spin a story of how the cohabitation of Roman Catholics and Moors in Spain up to 1492, the trade ties across the Mediterranean, the years of French colonial administration, and so on, make up a common history by dint of which Morocco should be seen as a member of a human collective referred to, for example, as Europe."²⁸

Although questions such as Cyprus's, Turkey's or even Morocco's being European or not are important, the cardinal problem since the emergence of the concept of Europe as a substitute for a disintegrated Christianity has been whether Russia should be included into, or should rather be excluded from, 'Europe'. In the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth century, Russia's borders shifted westwards into what was formerly (a Western Christian) Poland-Lithuania, and later, into

²⁷ The Treaty of Rome (1957) and the Treaty of Maastricht (1992) stipulate that only (geographically) European states can join the European Communities and the European Union, respectively. However, Cyprus is an officially recognized EU-accession candidate today. For further readings on the problematic of Cyprus's future EU-accession see Axt, Heinz-Juergen. *Zypern und der "Acquis politique": Aussen- und Sicherheitspolitik in der Perspektive des EU-Beitritts einer geteilten Insel*. Suedosteuropa Mitteilungen, 39. Jahrgang, 1999/4, pp. 319-333.

²⁸ Neumann, Iver B. *European Identity, EU Expansion, and the Integration/Exclusion Nexus*. Alternatives: Social Transformation & Humane Governance. Jul-Sep 1998, Vol. 23 Issue 3, pp. 399.

Poland. Although contacts and exchanges between 'Europe', having in the meanwhile acquired the meaning of "Western-Christian Europe", and Russia started becoming more and more significant in scale, the autocratic, Orthodox and economically backward Russian Empire continued being regarded by most neighbors to its West as non-European, both culturally and geographically. Interestingly, it was exactly in this historical period that Catherine the Great announced that "Russia is a European Empire", notwithstanding Russia's stretching Eastwards as far as Alaska, through many Asian lands inhabited by a majority of non-Christian, non-Indo-European peoples. Ever since, Slavophiles and Westerners in Russia try to convince each other and the world about Russia's place on the map of the Eurasian continent, as if it were Russia herself, and not the limits of an imaginary 'Europe', which can be adjusted much easier.

Today, what seems to loom largest when defining Europe is neither a shared culture, or, a shared religion, nor is it a shared geography. European politics today suggest that it is not a shared history either. The columnist of *The Economist* recently put it in a straightforward statement: "Forget geography, forget culture. The thing called 'Europe' the ex-communist and other countries want to join [...] is about politics and economics."²⁹ 'Europe' has acquired a new meaning at the threshold of the twenty-first century and lost most of its cultural, religious and historical content: Europe means an economically prosperous 'West', while, by implication, the East of the continent is non-European and backward. Just like that.

²⁹ What is Europe? *The Economist*. 12 February 2000. pp. 13-14.

The shift in the meanings of 'Europe' has happened during the four and a half decades long European Cold War, when, by simply calling the European Communities "European" (and not, for instance, "Western European"), the countries belonging to the EC/EU acquired the monopoly in 'operationalizing' the concept of 'Europe' and establishing the standards of 'Europeanness' for the next decades, maybe centuries, to come. The common feature of any standard is, however, that it is constructed by us, humans, and therefore it can also be changed if we consider it necessary. The shifting meanings of 'Europe', from a religious-cultural community to a politico-economic organization centered in the West of the European continent stand as a proof for this. But why do we need today trans-European standards of 'Europeanness' at all?

Europe has become during the Cold War a sort of "a magic formula, a moral concept"³⁰. After forty-five years of division, during which the 'West' meant 'Europe' (*European Community*, the Council of *Europe*, the *European Community of Coal and Steel*, and so forth) and the rest was called "the Soviet Bloc", 'Europe' became a synonym for success, freedom, prosperity, democracy, peace, solidarity and the good in general. Now it is this myth of Europe's endemic goodness which is required "to create a Golden Age' while repressing the dark side of European history"³¹. Because, after all, this dark side is not so far back in contemporary European history: it is the 20th century and not any other period in

³⁰ Puntscher Riekmann, Sonja. *The Myth of European Unity*. In *Myths and Nationhood*. Hosking, Geoffrey and George Schoepflin Ed. London: Hurst and Company, 1997. 60-71. pp. 64.

³¹ Puntscher Riekmann, Sonja. *The Myth of European Unity*. In *Myths and Nationhood*. Hosking, Geoffrey and George Schoepflin Ed. London: Hurst and Company, 1997. 60-71. pp. 65

European history that one author calls emphatically "*das Zeitalter der Massenmoerder*"³².

The myth of 'Europe' is "fed" by Europeans living in both the West and the East of the European continent. The 'Wessies' use it to distance themselves from the poverty and 'barbarism' of the Easterners, while the Eastern Europeans use it to distance themselves from their fellow Easterners in their quest to get a more prominent place in their so much desired "return to Europe". As if the communist theories which created the system in which they lived would not have been born in Europe, or, if one wants to be very accurate, in Western Europe.³³

The end of the Cold War brought changes to Europe which we did not even dare dreaming about, both to the East and to the West of the river Oder. Ever since, Europe (and 'Europe') is changing at increased speed. This is also why the author of the aforementioned article in *The Economist* hurries to add that "Europe's political and economic order is by no means settled. It is shifting, and more rapidly than would have seemed likely even five years ago. So pronounced is the recent change in fact that one may even question how distinctively European this Europe will seem in, say, another five years"³⁴. The recent EU-summit in Helsinki confirms the idea that 'Europe' is nowadays becoming increasingly non-European in the traditional (religious, cultural, geographic) sense of the word. Turkey has

³² Voss, Dirk Hermann. Bilanz des 20. Jahrhunderts – Das Zeitalter der Massenmoerder. *Panuropa*. Vol 23, No. 3, 2000. pp. 5-12.

³³ Karl Marx was born in Trier, in the German Rhineland, in 1818. Friedrich Engels was born in the Rhineland town of Barmen, which lies just east of Duesseldorf in the industrial region of the Ruhr.

³⁴ What is Europe? *The Economist*. 12 February 2000. pp. 13-14

been granted EU-membership candidate status. Similarly, Cyprus is a candidate for EU-membership since 1997. A number of so-called Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries³⁵, including Romania and Bulgaria, all having had communist governments up to 1989, are hurrying to join the European Union and other international organizations of the West. At the same time, "the Americanization of European culture is not just a paranoia of French politicians, it is indeed reality"³⁶: European culture, if there is such a culture at all, is getting increasingly non-European and increasingly American through American film, pop-music, cheap literature and hamburgers. Finally, 'globalization', at least the 'globalization' of the cyberspace created by the Internet, seems to have a serious impact upon European cultures and societies.

In the next section I will explain this shift in the meaning of 'Europe', and 'operationalize', to use an unlovely term, the concepts of Europe, Europeanness, European identity, and so forth, at the beginning of the 21st century.

³⁵ 'Eastern Europe', 'Central Europe' or 'Central-Eastern Europe' are only some of the variations on the theme of 'Europe'. For a more detailed description of these latter myths, see Wolff, Larry. Inventing Eastern Europe. Stanford: Stanford UP, 1994. and also Szucs, Jenő. Europa harom torteneti regiojarol. Budapest: Magveto, 1983. or also Seton-Watson, Hugh. *What is Europe, Where is Europe? From Mystique to Politique*. 11th Martin Wright Lecture, delivered at the Royal Institute of International Affairs (London), 23 April 1985. Encounter, 65/2 (July-August 1985), 9-17.

³⁶ Puntcher Riekman, Sonja. *The Myth of European Unity*. In Myths and Nationhood. Hosking, Geoffrey and George Schoepflin Ed. London: Hurst and Company, 1997. pp. 69.

2.2. What is 'Europe' today?

After the collapse of the Eastern European communist regimes, one can hear more and more often statements celebrating the 'West' as the winner over the 'East' of Europe: "As a result of the delegitimization of communism, the West was able to establish its liberal order as the new standard of legitimacy for all of Europe"³⁷. Or: "The new Europe is founded on the Western community's liberal values and norms of domestic and international conduct. It is covered by a web of international organizations whose activities are based on this cultural and normative foundation."³⁸ Indeed, the West, meaning in this particular case the European Union, seems to have appropriated the right to 'operationalize' the concept of Europe at the beginning of the 21st century. But it is through its political and economic might, rather than through the winner-ideologies of liberal democracy, that the European Union can impose its policies and its 'European' name with ease upon both EU-member and non-EU-member countries.

A sort of 'economic bandwagoning' characterizes Europe at the beginning of the 21st century, where the bandwagon is the European Union herself. In order to resist the pressure coming from an increasing number of non-EU countries (and, of course, in order to 'legalize' the new European 'standard' of liberal democracy),

³⁷ Schimmelfennig, Frank. *International Socialization in the New Europe: Rational Action in an Institutional Environment*. European Journal of International Relations. Vol 6, No. 1, March 2000. 109-139. pp 111.

³⁸ Schimmelfennig, Frank. *International Socialization in the New Europe: Rational Action in an Institutional Environment*. European Journal of International Relations. Vol 6, No. 1, March 2000. 109-139. pp 110.

the European Council issued at its 1993 Copenhagen Summit a decision which was to tell which countries can become members of the European Union, and hence, of 'Europe', and which can not³⁹.

The so-called "Copenhagen-criteria" for European Union membership read as follows:

- The applicant country must have achieved stability of institutions, guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for, and protection of, minorities;
- It must have a functioning market economy, as well as the capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the EU;
- It must have the ability to take on the obligations of membership, including adherence to the aims of political, economic and monetary union. It must take on board the EU body of law, known as the *acquis communautaire*.⁴⁰

These criteria are exclusively of political, economic and legal nature. Hence, the "normative foundation" of the 'new Europe' seems to eclipse any other possible foundation - cultural, historical, religious, and so forth. The Copenhagen-criteria for EU-membership do not – and, for understandable reasons, cannot – talk, for instance, about the *internalization* of the 'norms and values', the 'principles' and 'aims' of the European Union. Therefore, the legitimate question arises whether an

³⁹ For a detailed report on the decisions of the Copenhagen Council see *Tagung der Staats- und Regierungschefs der Europäischen Gemeinschaft vom 21. und 22. Juni 1993, Schlussfolgerungen des Vorsitzes*. Bulletin, No. 60, 8. Juli 1993. Berlin: Presse- und Informationsamt der Bundesregierung, 1993.

⁴⁰ 10 Questions on Hungary's accession to the European Union. Leaflet. Budapest: The Delegation of the European Commission to Hungary, 2000.

economic identity ("We are rich, the others are poor") or a political one ("We are good and just, the others are bad and unjust") can make up for the lack of a common identity at the cultural, religious, linguistic, etc, levels.

It was Robert Schuman, the founding father of the European Community of Coal and Steel, the predecessor of the European Union, who in 1963 emphatically wrote: "Before becoming a military alliance or an economic entity, Europe has to be a cultural community in the highest sense of the word."⁴¹ Well, ever since, Europe acquired a strong economic identity, and a relatively European (and today, increasingly European) military identity, but the 'cultural community in the highest sense of the word' Schuman was talking about could not ever since be materialized. Moreover, the 'pooling of sovereignty', this new term in international relations which was meant to save Realist theories from being dismissed entirely for their not being able to explain why countries give up some of their sovereignty today, does not seem to work properly either. Schuman's Europe failed, not only because it did not create an all-European cultural identity, but also because the political 'aims' of the European Union are incompatible with the preservation of national sovereignties in policies such as the ones regarding immigration, culture, taxation and so forth.

Culture does not seem to matter in the 'new Europe' at all. The reality suggests quite the opposite. The recent decision of the British, French and German governments to close down their cultural institutes in each other's countries seems

⁴¹ Schuman, Robert. Pour l'Europe. Paris, 1963. p.35.

to confirm that the 'pooling of national cultures' is not envisaged by the leading countries of Europe. The British Council will close four of its five representations in Germany in the year 2001. France will close this year 12 of her 24 Instituts Francais in Germany. The Goethe Institute plans to close down its representations in Manchester, Gothenburg, Lille and Colmar, while opening new ones in some remote, more exotic places such as Havana, Algiers, Teheran or Shanghai. Bearing in mind that the main activity of these cultural institutes is the teaching of language, it is an irony that all these closures are going to happen in the "European Year of Languages", as the year 2001 has been baptized by the European Commission⁴².

Such developments are not "bad" in itself. That is, it is not necessary for the various cultures and languages to "integrate" in order to further the creation of a political-economic human collective called 'Europe' or European Union. Indeed, "Britain and France were culturally closer [than today] in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, when they were not merely politically divergent but often actually at war."⁴³ What is rather deplorable today is that cultural links become weaker and are perceived as 'burdens' *in spite of* the "ever closer Union", thus leading to the rise of the legitimate question whether it is not exactly this trend towards an ever closer political and economic union of culturally very different states which has negative effects upon cultural co-operation in Europe? If the answer is yes, then the further opening of this sort of scissors can easily be a

⁴² Glimmende Lichten. Der Spiegel. 4/2001, 22.01.2001. pp. 50-51.

⁴³ Conquest, Robert. Reflections on a Ravaged Century. London: John Murray, 1999. pp. 257.

reason for future conflicts or even wars, in spite of the economic or military interdependence created by the European Union.

The times of a religious Europe also seem to have ended long ago. Today we see the emergence of a Europe of various religions and sects, which divide Europeans rather than uniting them. The largest church, the Roman Catholic Church, is more divided in Europe than ever before (while converting hundreds of thousands in Southeast Asia and Africa). Only a little bit more than a hundred years after the 'rebellion' of Carl Joseph von Hefele, the Catholic Bishop of Rottenburg, against the infallibility of the Vatican, another German Bishop, Franz Kamphaus, Bishop of Limburg, challenges the Pope and his 'Universal' empire. The conflict is getting out of control and the split between Kamphaus's numerous followers (among whom are several German bishops) and the Vatican is imminent⁴⁴. John Paul II did more for his church's image towards the outside world than for its own cohesion: while visiting and preaching in 123 countries during his 22 years in office, which is without doubt a record among popes, the stubbornness with which domestic 'politics' are conducted by him in matters such as abortion, birth control or divorce will most probably lead to other protests within the Catholic Church in Europe, and hence, to the loss of Catholic souls to other confessions⁴⁵. The new Europe will host a large number of converted Neo-Protestants, Buddhists or Muslims, while the 'traditional' churches of Europe, the Catholic and Protestant churches, will lose an increasing number of their adepts: the Protestant churches because they are not 'protestant' enough, and the Catholic Church because of its

⁴⁴ Mir kann nichts passieren. Der Spiegel. 3/2001, 15.01.2001. pp. 56-58.

⁴⁵ Purpurtruppe in Schwarz. Der Spiegel. 1/2001, 1.1.2001. pp. 100-102.

inability to adapt to the realities created by the rapid processes of technological development and modernization in general.

The 'shared history' of Europeans which is supposed to bring Europeans closer to each other is also only myth. In reality, the history of Europe was a history of divisions, not one of unity. The Germans seem to have forgotten that before 1871 they themselves lived in maybe more states than the rest of Europe altogether. The Italians, the French, the Spaniards or the "Belgians" live today in states in which centrifugal forces are still challenging the mythical unity created by the callings of Italy, France, Spain or Belgium.

However, the most prominent among the divisions within Europe is the division into a 'rich' and civilized West, and a 'poor' and barbaric ("post-communist") East, along what used to be called the 'Iron Curtain' (according to many, the reunification of Germany did not yet lead to the full integration of the former GDR into 'the West' – hence my assertion that the Elbe, or, the old Iron Curtain-line, and not the new "Oder-line", is the main division line in Europe). The past fifty-some years of European history did alienate peoples from the East and West of Europe so much from each other, that this division of the continent will probably last the longest, at least for the next few decades to come.

Hence, if it is neither culture, nor religion, nor history, then it seems as if today the concept of 'Europe' means not much more than what the Copenhagen criteria set forth as conditions for EU-membership. And indeed, "Europe is today a

synonym of the European Union", one author says straightforwardly.⁴⁶ And, the European Union is, above all, an economic union. Nothing more.

2.3. The standard in the new Europe: double standards

The European Union, and thus, 'Europe', is the most institutionalized region of the international system. Everything, starting from the ingredients of toothpaste and ending at the size of contraceptives, is standardized. Over twenty thousand bureaucrats with tax-free salaries meet daily in several hundred standing committees in the EU-hydrocephalus called Brussels in order to negotiate this or that regulation, to be proposed by the Commission to the Parliament. However, many of these regulations are passed by the Parliament *without* being later strictly observed and enforced by the executive authorities, which are in most of the cases the national governments. The reasons for this are legion, but one of them is particularly important: the bureaucratic style, as imposed by the decision makers in Brussels, is "unfamiliar to", and ignores "the deepest civic traditions and habits, the cultural psychology" of, the various states.⁴⁷ Whereas in Britain, for instance, an EU-regulation would be put into domestic law and be enforced unequivocally by the state authorities, this might not be always the case in, for instance, France, not to speak of Italy or Greece, and even less in the potential EU-members called Romania or Bulgaria. Hence, it is understandable, that more and more Europe-experts talk about the possibility of a "two-speed-", or, "several-speed-Europe".

⁴⁶ Puntcher Riekmann, Sonja. *The Myth of European Unity*. In Myths and Nationhood. Hosking, Geoffrey and George Schoepflin Ed. London: Hurst and Company, 1997. pp. 64.

The IGC ended by the European Council of Nice introduced the principle of majority voting instead of the practice of unanimous voting in a large number of fields and issues. Theoretically at least, from now on, those countries which do not want to participate in this or that policy or action, are exempted from it without, however, stopping other member countries from pursuing it. What this, together with the aforementioned imposition of 'alien' legal practices, is leading to, I do not hesitate to call 'the European standard of double-standards'. In this section I will point at some of these double-standards by giving relevant examples to how harmful standards in general, and double-standards in particular, can be to the creation of an "ever-closer Union".

2.3.1. Democracy and democratic deficits

Exactly fifty years ago, in April 1951, the leaders of six Western European countries signed in Paris the so-called Schuman-plan, which was to mean the beginning of a new Europe, with no wars and lots of democracy. Schuman's Europe was built in contrast to, or, if we were to believe Henri Spaak, *in reply to* the monster created in "the other Europe" by Stalin and the Soviet Union. Ever since, sovereign Western European states give up increasing bits of their sovereignty and "pool it" in Brussels, for peace and more democracy, it is said.

⁴⁷ Conquest, Robert. Reflections on a Ravaged Century. London: John Murray, 1999. pp. 262.

However, with the Maastricht Treaty and more recently, with the creation of a European currency called with not too much ingenuity "Euro", the European Union became herself uncontrollable. Today, the European Union is excessively centralized and overbureaucratized, which taken together are the sufficient conditions for inefficiency – although it is exactly in the name of more efficiency that such centralization is taking place. For instance, the number of quality standards for products which are sold on the European market increases annually by almost one thousand and is expected to reach by the end of the year 2001 the fabulous number of 12.500.⁴⁸ These standards have to be adopted by all the member (and future member) states, their English texts translated into the fourteen official languages of the EU (and in addition to this, into the languages of the 12 candidate countries). Then these texts are printed and distributed to the enforcing national bodies. By the time the text in question reaches the producers who have to design their products in accordance with these standards, the EU will have most probably amended the standard due to the protests coming from this or that pressure group, and, the original description of the standard will become unusable. (Un)fortunately, this is not always the case: the straight European cucumber, as it has been standardized by the cucumber-experts in Brussels will most probably stay straight, to the great disappointment of the European cucumber-lobby – because, after all, any crooked cucumber is no longer a cucumber, just as the straight bananas which are not an Afro-Caribbean product are not bananas in Europe⁴⁹.

⁴⁸ Teljes szabványosítás szükseges az EU-tagsaghoz. EU Info. Budapest: Europai Tajekoztatasi Kozpont, 1999. december. pp. 4.

Today we talk about Brussels as if it were the capital of a federal state called the European Union. But the European Union is *not* a federal state, and as of yet it is not intended to become one. And still, the Commission in Brussels accumulated so much power over the territory of the Union as if it were the government of Europe. "Indeed, 'Europe' now has or claims larger powers over its members in some fields (such as labor law) than the federal government in Washington has over the states."⁵⁰ And this happens without a popular mandate since the members of the main decision making bodies of the European Union, namely the European Council and the European Commission, are neither elected, nor checked, nor accountable.

The Maastricht Treaty, and more recently, the European Council of Nice, addressed some of these questions of accountability and legitimacy of the bodies of the European Union. Also, the trend towards uniformization (usually at the lowest common denominator level) in Europe seems to give way to a more "democratic" practice: states which do not intend to participate in this or that policy, can abstain from doing so without barring other states from pursuing it. This is made possible by the introduction of the practice of majority voting which replaces the hitherto practiced vote by consensus.

It is obvious that such changes towards qualified majority voting systems had to be introduced sooner or later in the enlargement process, if the European Union did not want to become famous for its own being undemocratic. But it is equally

⁴⁹ Steyn, Mark. United They'll Fall. National Review, 04/05/99, Vol. 51 Issue 6, p37.

⁵⁰ Conquest, Robert. Reflections on a Ravaged Century. London: John Murray, 1999. pp. 258.

true that this can easily lead to different levels of membership within the European Union, according to the standards which this or that country is willing to adopt. The negative vote of the Danes in the Euro-issue (and the likely "no"-vote of the British, should a referendum be held on the issue) showed, that some nations do not want to continue taking the path dictated by Brussels.

53.1 % of the Danes voted against the Euro, an outcome which led to frustration in most capitals of Europe⁵¹. But it is usual in the European Union that policies get a support or a rejection somewhere close to the 50%-hurdle. A British scholar grasped what many Europeans do not (want to) see: major changes of policy in the European Union are carried out "on the basis of the most meager temporary majorities, as with the French near rejection of Maastricht, or Welsh near rejection of devolution. Worse still, the referenda are repeated (as in Denmark) until the desired result is obtained – then represented as irreversible!"⁵² In other words, it is usually around half of the total of Europeans voters (and previous experience shows clearly that it is usually the "yes"-party, mobilized by the national governments, which goes to the polls), or even less, who support their respective government's adhesion to this or that European Union policy.

According to a recent poll, two thirds of the Germans want to *leave* the Euro⁵³, now that it is pulling their good old Deutsche Mark downwards – however, this will prove much more difficult. Whereas the EU created the mechanisms for not

⁵¹ The Danes Say No. National Review. October 23, 2000. pp. 16.

⁵² the author refers, of course, to the repeated Danish referenda held on the Maastricht treaty and not on the introduction of the Euro. Conquest, Robert. Reflections on a Ravaged Century. London: John Murray, 1999. pp. 259-260.

joining a policy, it did not (why not?) solve the question of how a country can retreat from a policy which it adopted earlier. Hence, it is highly possible that in the near future we will witness an Inter-Governmental Conference or a European Council dealing with the issue of how an EU-member state can withdraw its initial support for an EU- policy, and thus, step back into a 'lower-level' membership.

The tendency is without doubt, that the policymakers in Brussels try to respond to accusations of leading an increasingly undemocratic European Union by making it more democratic through adequate reforms. Bearing in mind that the European Union continues both its own "deepening" and the enlargement process, or, in other words, that the strain on European institutions will constantly increase in the near future, it is questionable whether the European Union will be able to stay what it initially intended to be: a genuine Union of European states, rather than becoming an organization of states which are not united but divided by several levels of membership.

⁵³ The Danes Say No. National Review. October 23, 2000. pp. 16.

2.3.2. Democracy, totalitarianism and the protection of human rights

"We have to insist on the fact that Fascism and Communism are not alien to Europe. We should continue to explain how these totalitarian systems are interlinked with our culture. Not only because these ideologies emerged on our continent, but also because they are products of European culture."⁵⁴

It is not by coincidence that Bronislaw Geremek warns Europeans against forgetting their recent past. The democratic heaven called 'Europe' is becoming increasingly undemocratic. But whereas institutions or voting systems can be changed or "reformed", and thus made "more democratic" (as it happened very recently in Nice), everyday attitudes of people seem to be deeply rooted and difficult to influence through the means of democracy.

Extremism in its various forms did not disappear in Europe, neither after the Second World War, nor after 1989. Today we witness a sort of a rebirth of the political extreme Right, at least in its rhetoric. "*Wetzt die langen Messer auf dem Buergersteig/ Lasst die Messer flutschen in den Judenleib*" – slogans like this are not a taboo in the Germany of the year 2000⁵⁵. The Neo-Nazi "Nationale Partei Deutschlands" (NPD), which is represented in numerous German city councils, seems to be the rather successful in co-opting the politically passive German youth. Although the 'braune Szene' of Germany counts no more than

⁵⁴ Liessmann, Konrad Paul. Der Aufgang des Abendlandes: Eine Rekonstruktion Europas. Vienna, 1994, pp. 57.

approximately 50.000 members, the membership is becoming increasingly radical while rapidly expanding. Many local councils in Germany are already dominated by the extreme right. The city council of Zittau, a small town in the former GDR, supports the 'Nationale Jugendblock' with an impressive local headquarters and even with money. The members of the 'Odins Legion' in Kittlitz-Glossen, another small town in Saxony, organize their regular meetings in a 'Jugendclub' sponsored by the city, in addition to which a substantial amount of money is donated by anonymous private donors. In the county of Saechsische Schweiz only, no less than fifty-four so-called 'Jugendclubs' hide larger neo-Nazi organizations, all backed by the NPD⁵⁶.

Sympathies for the extreme Right or Nazism are nurtured not only by some Germans, but by members of other great European nations as well. A recently published book on *Le voyage d'automne*⁵⁷, a secret travel through the Third Reich organized for a group of French intellectuals by Hitler in 1941, awakened entire France to a less attractive reality: the long forgotten, if not hidden, readiness of a large number of French writers, poets, artists and other prominent intellectuals to collaborate with Hitler re-opened the debate on how antifascist the French of today might be⁵⁸. Jean-Marie Le Pen, while getting more and more criticisms from the older public, is becoming increasingly known to the younger generations. The last elections in France, where his *Front National* received 14,9

⁵⁵ "Sharpen your long knives and scrub them on the sidewalk/ Let them champ in the chests of the Jewish folk!" Organisierte Rechtsextremismus. *Der Spiegel*. 2/2001, 8.01.2001. pp. 48.

⁵⁶ "Einfach aufregend". *Der Spiegel*. 2/2001, 8.01.2001. pp. 46-49.

⁵⁷ Dufay, Francois. *Le voyage d'automne*. Paris: Plon, 2000.

⁵⁸ Stich in die Seele der Nation. *Der Spiegel*. 1/2001, 1.01.2001. pp. 124-127.

percent of the votes, shows that the sympathy for 'law and order', as they are understood by Le Pen, is increasing⁵⁹.

The list of organized extreme Rightist or totalitarian movements could continue and it is not limited to Germany and France only. Skinheads in the Czech Republic, Slovakia or Hungary declared an organized war on Gypsies, and the state authorities are mere spectators to, if not even active supporters of, this. The authorities of Usti nad Labem in the Czech Republic built a wall around the Gypsy neighborhood of the small town, an action supported by the majority of the population⁶⁰. Marshall Antonescu has been rehabilitated and is currently celebrated in Romania as a national hero for his anti-Soviet foreign policy, although he is internationally held responsible for the killing of 410.000 Jews and other war crimes committed as Adolf Hitler's closest ally in the Balkans⁶¹. The far-Right *Partidul Romania Mare* received at the last general elections (held in 2000) almost twenty percent of the votes in Romania, and almost fifty percent in the multi-ethnic province of Transylvania, although (or maybe exactly because) its leader, Corneliu Vadim Tudor, has declared several times during the election campaign that he would dissolve the Romanian parliament as soon as he would be elected president and introduce the "dictatorship of law".

⁵⁹ In 1993 the Front National received 12.4 % of the votes in the first round of the parliamentary elections. This support increased in 1997 to 14.9 %, an indication that Jean-Marie Le Pen is increasingly popular in France (although it was the Left which took over the government in 1997). For the French election results see http://users.belgacom.net/radicalright/elections_fr.htm

⁶⁰ Czech authorities build ghetto wall, tear it down again. Roma Rights, Internet edition. http://errc.org/rr_nr4_1999/snap02.shtml. According to another source, however, the wall has been built for reasons other than racist ones. For more information on the erection of a wall in Usti nad Labem, see the Internet-site of the British Helsinki Human Rights Group at <http://www.bhhrg.org/czechrepublic/czechrepublic1999/wall.htm>

⁶¹ Totok, William: Falsche Signale aus Rumaenien. Halbjahresschrift. Internet edition, 12.04.2001. <http://home.t-online.de/home/totok/ion2b.htm>

Let us not, however, confuse the dangerous extreme-Right, the bearers of totalitarian reflexes with the less harmful "far-Right" which sometimes adopts an extreme-Rightist rhetoric or attitude. It is not the emergence of figures such as Jorg Haider or Silvio Berlusconi that threatens democracy in Europe. It is rather they who seem to, at least thus far, keep the political Right under control. However, a radicalization of their parties may become inevitable if Haider and Berlusconi lose control over their electorate. This can easily happen through personal changes in the leadership of their parties, or, through a further increase in their parties' popularity – the latter possibility would unavoidably lead to an increase in the 'self-confidence' of these parties and hence to a claim to a bigger share in the work of the national governments.

On the other extreme of the political spectrum, the extreme left in Western Europe has been smashed completely by the implosion of the communist regimes in Eastern Europe. The recent scandals provoked in Germany by Joschka Fischer's past activity in the *Rote Armee Fraktion*, a leftist-terrorist organization which horrified Germany and Western Europe in the seventies and eighties through bomb attacks and hijackings, seems to discredit the radical Leftist movements even more. Little 'pockets' of communists can still be found in Greece, northern Italy, France, and in most of the formerly communist countries of Eastern Europe. However, the radical political Left seems to lose its footing all across Europe at the beginning of the 21st century.

The paradox of European democracy is that it tolerates (and sometimes protects) extremism. The long series of treaties and agreements adopted within the framework of the European Union, and, most importantly, the Council of Europe, cannot protect the Jews, the Gypsies or other minorities from being harassed or persecuted. Most of these legal texts allow lots of space for interpretation through inexact language or clauses which stipulate that, for instance, a minority is what the Constitution of the respective country considers to be one. Therefore, the adoption of a European Constitution, scheduled for the year 2004, seems to be a solution to this problem. If this Constitution will be a legally binding document which overwrites national laws and constitutions, there is a chance to eradicate most of the political extremisms in the European Union through the means of democracy, namely by law, just as is done by the Constitution of the United States of America. If, however (and this is more likely to be the case), the European Constitution is just another pan-European, pompously announced 'treaty', signed by some, ratified by others, and enforced by only a very few, extremist and totalitarian movements or parties will become a part of our everyday life: they will sooner or later enter Europe's national parliaments or the European Parliament and threaten the increasingly constipated European democracies.

2.3.3. Crime, corruption and the rule of law

Corruption at the state level is a discussion subject whenever an EU-envoy visits Hungary, Romania or Bulgaria, as if corruption in these countries were endemic. Whereas corruption is indeed a widespread phenomenon in Central and Eastern Europe (this is mainly due to the heritage of four and a half decades of communism), and needs not be presented here, let us wonder a little about how corruption at the highest levels affects the societies in the West of Europe.

Recently, German news agencies reported that the Christian Democratic Union received "gifts" of several million German Marks from German businesses during the past years. This money was destined to, and partly spent on, the last general elections held in Germany. First, the scandal outraged public opinion, and led to the dramatic fall of the CDU-s popularity in most of Germany. A several months long investigation followed, during which new evidence for corruption at the top level, including ex-chancellor Helmut Kohl, was presented to the public. However, after a year or so of investigations, the German public seems to get used to such maneuvers, and starts accepting the idea that politicians are corrupt. Just like that. And since talking about state corruption in Germany became "normal", the Spiegel editors recently published an article on France with the title: "*Dieses Regime ist korrupt*", this time accusing French top politicians of illegal party-sponsoring and other crimes which come under the heading of 'corruption'⁶². This

⁶² *Dieses Regime ist korrupt*. Der Spiegel, 2/2001, 8.01.2001. pp. 108-110.

would have been unthinkable in Adenauer's and De Gaulle's times. However, today it seems as if the entire political elite of France is corrupt. Recently, The Economist established 'the latest hit-list' of top-politicians who are either accused of, or investigated for, corruption in France. To the big surprise and astonishment of the reader the list includes a president, one former prime minister, three former finance ministers, two governors of the Banque de France and many others⁶³.

Although other corruption scandals like the ones in Italy, Belgium and Spain shook Europe in the past few years, the scandal of the biggest magnitude was provoked by the European Commission in Brussels, when, in 1998-1999 it was revealed that nepotism and corruption have penetrated the Commission to such a degree that the resignation of the entire Commission (composed of twenty-one appointed Commissioners) became imminent. As it turned out, "in 1995 [only], some \$10 billion had disappeared through fraud or incompetence – plus a fair percentage through 'error'" from the EU's \$ 90 billion budget⁶⁴.

Many cases of corruption or fraud in the EU will never be punished due to the extremely sophisticated EU-regulations which make a clear overview of financial matters impossible. A few years ago, newspapers reported on 'intransparent' tenders for the construction of the new headquarters of the European Commission and the European Parliament (when it does not meet in Strasbourg), a huge glass-palace to be built in Brussels. Companies owned by EU-officials had been commissioned to participate in the construction and furnishing of the building,

⁶³ Sheanigans in France. *The Economist*. November 4, 2000. pp. 41-42.

⁶⁴ Conquest, Robert. *Reflections on a Ravaged Century*. London: John Murray, 1999. pp. 262.

and, as it turned out, many of the bills were suspiciously high, sometimes up to ten times higher than could have been justified. Nobody has been, so far, punished. Another issue which still encourages both state-officials and private entrepreneurs to commit different crimes which enter under the calling of 'fraud' is the Common Agricultural Policy which costs more than half of the EU-budget. This money is paid to producers of agricultural goods as subsidies – money which simply goes and never returns (and in addition to this, it undermines free competition, and hence, efficiency, on the European market of agricultural products).

What is the relevance of all these cases of corruption or fraud for this thesis? They all support my idea that the times of a Europe in which people and their leaders respected each other, the times in which laws were obeyed and enforced in (continental) Europe, are over. Europe is becoming an increasingly 'rotten' place as far as morality and ethics are concerned. The by far too many laws, regulations, decisions and other legal documents make Europeans lose their respect for the Law and become less scrupulous about breaching it. In a sense, the 'unification' of Europe leads to a sense of distrust and disobedience among Europeans while another single market is being created: "a single market in crime".⁶⁵

⁶⁵ A Single Market in Crime. The Economist. October 16, 1999. 25-32.

2.4. Exclusion through enlargement: the integration/exclusion nexus

According to Article 0 of the Maastricht Treaty (Treaty on the European Union), every European state which so wishes may apply for membership of the Union. This, however, complicates matters because a clear (geographic) definition of Europe is not given. The future inclusion into the EU of the Visegrad countries or of the Baltic states poses no problem in this context, but are Turkey, Cyprus, Malta, Iceland or Morocco, European?

If we lived two centuries ago, the most important criterion for EU-membership would have been without doubt Christianity. Neither Turkey, nor Morocco could have applied for membership. If only Western Christian countries were allowed to join the European Union, neither these predominantly Muslim countries, nor Greece or any other Orthodox country could become a member. If having belonged to the Roman Empire is the criterion, neither the Baltic states, nor many other European and Scandinavian countries could become EU-members. And finally, "if the criterion is economic performance, even the application of the Visegrad countries and Baltic states may become unacceptable, not to mention Romania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Bosnia, the Federation of Yugoslavia, Albania, Ukraine, Belarus, and so on. In this case, data on growth, public deficits, interest rates, privatization and other fiscal matters will be much more relevant than discussions about common cultural interests or differences"⁶⁶.

⁶⁶ Puntscher Riekmann, Sonja. *The Myth of European Unity*. In *Myths and Nationhood*. Hosking, Geoffrey and George Schoepflin Ed. London: Hurst and Company, 1997. .pp. 71.

The handling of 'Europeanness' in the expansion practice of the European Union reveals at least three patterns. One is, as we have seen in the case of Morocco in 1986, clear and unequivocal. Morocco is not a European country and that was that. The history we could spin about Morocco's Europeanness based on a sort of a common Moroccan-European history does not help Morocco in becoming 'European'⁶⁷.

The second pattern is the most often encountered one: the various candidate countries are promised membership at an unknown future date, with the condition to fulfill the various criteria for membership.

The third pattern, which is at the other extreme, is about how the EU handled the "accession" of the former GDR. In this case there was no application, no referendum, not even a ratification by the European Community states. The GDR entered the EC/EU through a unique backdoor. First, the two Germanys have been 'reunified'. Then, when Eastern Germans became bearers of the same green passport as their fellow brothers in the West, they automatically became citizens of the *already existing* Federal Republic, and thus, of the European Communities as well. Finally, the formality which was to end the GDR's "accession" to the EC

⁶⁷ one should not forget, however, that such histories of a common past had been very useful, and approved by the Commission, when a new 'Mediterranean region' was to be created, including both the European Union and the Maghreb and Mashraq countries

was the 'enlargement' of the European Council and the readjustment of Germany's votes in the Council to the new realities.⁶⁸

The first and the latter pattern in the EU's enlargement practice is based on some simple assumptions – 1. Morocco is not in Europe; 2. if the largest part of the Germans are European enough to be members of the EC, than the remaining part of the Germans must be granted EC-citizenship as well, notwithstanding the fact that they had been probably by far more "communist" than some of their former allies, such as the Hungarians or the Polish. However, what interests us here is how the enlargement process might continue, and what issues will become important in this process of 'Europeanization' of other European (and non-European) countries.

Although I asserted earlier that the European Union is a rather political-economic organization, culture and religion seems to play an important role in the EU-s enlargement practice. Today it looks as if only the Visegrad-countries, Slovenia, Malta and the Baltic states will join the European Union within the foreseeable future, in spite of assurances from Brussels that Romania and Bulgaria (the only predominantly Orthodox candidate-countries on the continent), and Cyprus and Turkey have the same chances for membership, provided they fulfill the aforementioned Copenhagen criteria for EU-accession.

⁶⁸ votes in the European Council are distributed according to the size of the population of the member-countries.

Such division among the candidate countries has obvious reasons. Whereas the first group of states belongs to the Western Christian, Catholic-Protestant world, the rest of the candidate countries is either largely Orthodox or Muslim. If one assumes that the current members of the EU (and their citizens, except the Greeks) want Europe to stay a Western-Christian community – and opinion polls show that the latter four countries' accession has the lowest backing within the EU's population⁶⁹ – then one should ask the legitimate question why these countries have been included into the list of candidate countries for EU-membership at all.

The first two countries, Bulgaria and Romania have been granted EU-association status through the so-called "Europe-Agreements" (Partnership Agreements) signed in 1994. At that time, the Yugoslav wars of dissolution turned into inter-ethnic slaughter which threatened to expand beyond the borders of the old Yugoslav Socialist Federal Republic. In Romania, the coalition of Ion Iliescu's center-Left party with both the extreme Left and the extreme Right was seen as a danger to the escalation of inter-ethnic conflicts, focused mainly in the province of Transylvania. In addition to this, Romanian sympathies towards Serbia, materialized in the permanent breach of the embargo against Yugoslavia, could be much easier held under control when the EU showed a bit of 'understanding' for Romania's losses from trade with Yugoslavia (and some million ECU in grants), and eventually, promised Romania future EU-membership. Besides defusing popular unrest, this gesture was also meant to weaken Ion Iliescu's position and

⁶⁹ see [Eurobarometer](#). January, 2000.

strengthen the chances of the Democratic Convention for winning the elections to be held in 1996.

Tensions already existing due to the new independence of Macedonia - whose name raised vehement Greek objections and whose language is only slightly different from Bulgarian -, led to the more than obvious decision of EU-policy makers to grant EU-Partnership to Bulgaria, too, the country having plunged somewhat earlier into a deep economic and political crisis, and hence, being vulnerable to the expansion of the Yugoslav wars. Also, EU-partnership was an important stimulus (and a necessary condition) for Bulgaria and Romania to become members of the Central-European Free Trade Association (CEFTA), an organization which had as its ultimate goal to speed-up the EU-integration of its members.

However, once the Dayton Agreement was signed, and the accession talks with the other Eastern European candidates speeded up, Bulgaria and Romania started being treated with more sticks than carrots by the EU. Entry visa requirements, which became unnecessary towards other Eastern European countries right after 1991, have still not been lifted entirely, and attention in general towards these two countries has been considerably reduced by the EU after the end of the Yugoslav wars. The Stability Pact for Southeastern Europe, sponsored by the EU after the NATO-bombings of 1999, is focused on countries in the Western Balkans, rather than on Bulgaria and Romania. Hence, I deduce, the acceptance of the Bulgarian and Romanian candidacy by the EU was motivated by reasons of contingency, or,

in the best case of opportunism, rather than by any serious wish to see these countries become full members of the European Union. The accession talks started with these two countries in March 2000 are today in a relatively initial stage and their speed does not indicate that membership is possible or wanted in the near future

The Cypriot application was granted consideration, and accession talks started in 1997, due to Greece's pressures to do so. This happened notwithstanding the fact that from the point of view of international law Cyprus is not allowed to join any international organization without the agreement of Greece, Turkey and Great Britain. The small island with rather weird financial and fiscal policies (Cyprus is notorious for attracting European and non-European businesses evading fiscal duties at home through its low income-tax policy) is anything else but desired in the EU, although the inclusion of Cyprus would bring back home large amounts of 'escaped' capital. Also, it was hoped that the question of the divided island far in the East of the Mediterranean can be solved through EU-membership of the whole island. However, there is no indication that the EU can handle the matter without the future inclusion of Turkey into the Union.

As far as Turkey is concerned, the matters are getting somewhat more complicated. Turkey's EC/EU-partnership dates back to the times of the Cold War and therefore some reassuring steps towards the largest potential EU-member (and second largest in terms of population) had to be taken. There are, however, many other reasons for Turkey's ('promised') EU-integration as well. Firstly, Turkey is

still regarded as the most reliable military ally of Europe in the Eastern Mediterranean region. Secondly, it was hoped that the intra-EU relations with the most problematic EU member of the nineties (Greece) can be improved if Turkey (and Cyprus) becomes an EU-member. Thirdly, bearing in mind Turkey's economic potential (in spite of the actual crisis), its demographic boom and not less importantly, its strategic position in the middle of economic transit routes from North to South and from East to West, it was obvious that a Turkey kept closer to the Union, rather than left as a "prey" to others (or, to herself) benefits the EU much more than would harm it. However, Turkey's accession to the EU (in spite of the recently accepted candidacy) is not likely within the foreseeable future. No national referendum in the EU or very few national parliaments would sanction Turkey's EU-accession within at least the next one decade to come.

2.5. Two sources of disunity in Europe: language and history

"The European Union looks like a nation: it has a flag, a national anthem, a common passport, even a citizenship. But it does not have the inner organs: democracy, accountability, or even any basic constitutional principles."⁷⁰ Not yet, the well informed European would say: at the European Council of Nice it has been decided that a European Constitution will be 'passed' by the European Union by the year 2004. This, of course, only if the Nice-resolutions will be by then

⁷⁰ United They'll Fall – Europe's Grand Delusion. National review, 04/05/99, Vol. 51 Issue 6, p 37.

ratified by the national parliaments⁷¹. The lacking "inner organs" of the European Union are many, and many of them have already been discussed in this paper. Here I wish to talk only about two of them, language and history, and about their implications for European unity and disunity.

What makes the 'ever closer union' "sound" rather weird is that the fifteen nations which are creating it speak no less than twelve different languages (if one does not count the languages of their respective minorities or the various dialects as well). Moreover, all these languages are, theoretically at least, official languages of the European Union. Should the Union be enlarged in the future, any official language of a new member-nation will automatically become an official language of the European Union as well. If one considers that it is the declared goal of the European Union to maintain and support the linguistic and cultural autonomy of Europe's nations and ethnic minorities, any sort of planning in Europe requires that we recognize that this cultural diversity is here to stay, and, sooner or later, to increase.

In practice, however, English and French dominate over all the other languages in the European Union. It is especially the English language which became the common language in international economics, politics or education. German, Italian and Spanish are also used in daily business, but to a much lesser degree. This can, however, change in the near future. Today there are more German speakers than speakers of any other language in Europe. Therefore, for example, it

⁷¹ Jacques Chirac, the president of France expects that the ratification might take one and a half years. See A Nizzai Szerzodes. EU-Tenyek. Budapest: Europai Tajekoztatasi Kozpont, 2001.

would make sense to declare German as a third official language of the Council of Europe⁷². Spanish or Italian are also increasingly popular among people who learn languages. Spanish has in addition to this the great advantage of being widely spoken in Latin-America.

The big 'loser' in the new Europe seems to be French. Whereas the dominant position of English as the language of business in the world cannot anymore be questioned, the emergence of German as the first foreign language spoken by most Central Europeans weakens the position of French. Also, "the growing influence of English strengthens the German position, for the French are reportedly inclined to side with the German in order to prevent the dominance of their main competitor."⁷³

What are the implications of linguistics for the 'ever closer union'? The answer is: many. The lack of a common language, or, at least of a language spoken by all Europeans besides their own mother tongues, has serious effects on the mobility of labor force or capital investment, it undercuts the efficiency of free trade, and most importantly, it costs, according to some reports, up to 40 % of the EU's budget through the (un)necessary translation of every single official EU-document into twenty-odd European languages.

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⁷² the official languages of the Council of Europe are since its creation in 1949, two: English and French.

⁷³ Fletcher, George P. Language and Federalism. in Human Nature and the New Europe. Michael T. McGuire (ed.). Boulder: Westview Press, 1993. (130-136). pp. 130.

Guest workers remain strangers after retirement in the state in which they reside for the simple reason that they do not speak the language of their environment. This, as we can observe nowadays, leads to serious social problems in net labor-importing countries like Germany, The Netherlands, Belgium, France, Italy, Britain and so forth. Hence, Europe is soon becoming a mosaic of cultural minorities living abroad.

Also, the lack of knowledge of the language of regions in need of labor force will keep potential guest workers from going there to work in the future. The region in question will continue being in need of workers, while the region in which the potential guest worker originates might encounter continued social distress arising from high rates of unemployment. If, however, there were a European *lingua franca*, labor mobility would most probably increase and thus lead to a more efficient division of labor among regions. Everybody would profit from this, including the guest-worker himself, the region to which he moves, his new employer and his native region. The lack of a common European language is therefore a handicap for Europe which causes, from the economic and social point of view, lots of problems and no advantages at all.

The philosopher Juergen Habermas suggested at the beginning of the nineties a "two level approach" to this matter: there should be, next to the native language of all Europeans, a second language which is spoken by all Europeans⁷⁴. Say, all Europeans should become at least bilingual. The obvious candidate for such a

⁷⁴ Fletcher, George P. Language and Federalism. in Human Nature and the New Europe. Michael T. McGuire (ed.). Boulder: Westview Press, 1993. (130-136). pp. 135.

European language is at present English. From South-Korea to Turkey and from France to Russia, most of the European and extra-European economic powers adopted English as the language of business and international communication in general. However, a long time will pass before we see English, or any other European language, become spoken by all Europeans as a second mother tongue (of course, if this will ever happen). Until then, the construction of Europe will be continuously disturbed by a cacophony of official languages, comparable with the one experienced by the builders of the biblical tower of Babel. The many official languages in the European Union will continue dividing Europeans as their leaders try to convince them that multilingualism and multiculturalism make Europe a more tolerant and united space. What a delusion!

The myth of a shared history does not hold the European nations together either. Those who say that the young generations are immune to WWII- or Cold-War-time conflicts among nations, are wrong. The almost five decades long Cold War left a rather sad legacy on Europe. Whereas this has its rather obvious reasons (Eastern European countries are economically backward if compared with the rest of Europe, migration towards Western Europe causes lots of social strain in Western-European societies, and so forth), it is striking that even *within* the unified Germany old ideological animosity turned today into intra-German discrimination based on geographical origin: the once-upon-a-time friendly terms 'Wessie' and 'Ossie' are today used by the young as negative stigmas on both sides of the river Elbe.

Although there is little reliable and useful research-based information about young people's attitude towards 'Europe' and 'Europeanisation'⁷⁵, recent Eurobarometer polls show that young Europeans are at least as much trapped by history as the older generations. According to one study based on both personal research and Eurobarometer polls, the Dutch youth has a strongly negative attitude towards Germans, although, when asked about the reasons for this, the interviewed could point only at the dominantly negative attitude of the older generations towards Germany and the Germans in general⁷⁶.

The many negative stereotypes about the Germans (Germans drink beer, are fat, are noisy, have huge Mercedes cars etc.) are all rooted in the dark history of the twentieth century. This is supported by the findings that, as soon as Dutch youth gets in personal contact with Germans, these stereotypes seem to disappear, giving way to more positive ones, this time based on personal experience: Germans are nice and hospitable. However, attitudes towards Germany and the Germans in general are rather hostile all across Europe. The French, the Polish, the Czech, the 'Belgians' – all those who had to suffer from Nazi occupation during the war-, cannot, or do not want to, 'forget' the past. This is true, and it is sometimes even more true, of the generations which did *not* experience the Second World War. To be sure, the past is not the only reason for this: the neighbors of Germany, especially the smaller nations or the relatively poorer

⁷⁵ Noelle-Neumann, E. Europa in der öffentlichen Meinung. In: W. Glatzer (ed.) Einstellungen und Lebensbedingungen in Europa. Bonn: Europa Union Verlag, 1993) (11-44)

⁷⁶ Du Bois-Reymond, Manuela. European Identity in the Young and Dutch Student' Images of Germany and the Germans. Comparative Education. March 1998, Vol. 34 Issue 1 (27-41).

Polish nation, do not want to be "swallowed" by Germany, the economically strongest country in Europe.

"It is quite obvious [today] that the images of neighboring countries are influenced by the specific history those countries do or do not share. That history existed long before the emergence of the European Community and affects current stereotypes of the inhabitants of the respective countries"⁷⁷. Hence, the history of the 'dark continent'⁷⁸ has to be rewritten if the European project of an ever closer union is to succeed. Only then, when collective national guilt will become an obsolete concept, replaced by the responsibility of the individual(s) who committed this or that "historical injustice", will 'Europe' work.

⁷⁷ Noelle-Neumann, E. Europa in der öffentlichen Meinung. In: W. Glatzer (ed.) Einstellungen und Lebensbedingungen in Europa. Bonn: Europa Union Verlag, 1993) (11-44) pp. 17.

⁷⁸ this expression is used by a Polish historian as the title of his book dealing with the dark side of twentieth century European history. See Mazower, Mark. Dark Continent – Europe's Twentieth Century. New York: Penguin, 1999

CONCLUSION

After such lengthy elaboration on some selected topics in current European politics, without, however, claiming that I have touched upon all the possible political, economic, historical, cultural, religious, linguistic and so forth, aspects of 'the new Europe', I can conclude the following:

- the discipline of international relations is lacking a sound historical approach to contemporary European politics inasmuch as it relies on the past realities of a 'more predictable' bipolar world in which state behavior was dictated by two competing ideologies and their sub-branches. In today's so-called multipolar world, in which state actors have a by far broader choice in their foreign policies, and hence, international political actions are much 'less predictable', a deeper knowledge of the world, and particularly, of its history, is necessary in order to understand the outcomes of political processes. Under no circumstances can any one political theory explain or predict state behavior today with accuracy.
- the fact that the study of theories (rather than the study of the processes on which these theories are relying), is dominating the practice of the discipline of international relations obscures the fact that the relations among states and societies are carried out by *humans* whose rational behavior cannot be dictated by this or that theory. Rational state behavior is therefore only as rational (and predictable) as the humans which constitute it are rational (and hence, predictable) in their choices.
- not only history (political, economic, cultural, intellectual, etc.), but the findings of other fields of the social sciences are also very helpful in exploring the relations

among states. The study of anthropology, sociology, psychology, linguistics, literature, national mythology, etc., are increasingly relevant to the study of international relations.

- although (or, maybe because) Europe is the most institutionalized region of the international system, the norms created by any European institution are impossible to enforce without punishment. This raises the question of whether the legitimacy of such institutions is based on delegation or abdication, on democratic choice or coerced agreement. The steady decline of the number of those who cast their vote at national and European elections indicates that around half of the European Union's citizens are not represented by the European Union's institutions.
- it is debatable whether such institutionalization of every walk of life without the backing of a strong supranational decision making body is more viable than the practice of the "firm leadership, light rule"-principle. In my opinion, for the reasons enumerated in this paper, it is not. Moreover, as long as increasing regulation will continue to be seen as a substitute for a firm leadership, the path chosen by the leaders of the European Union will have to end in a deadlock. Only deregulation and a firm all-European leadership (possibly meaning a European Federation) backed by the majority vote of Europe's citizens can avoid the European Union's becoming caught in the net spun by its stubborn leadership.
- there are two forces acting upon Europe today. The first is aimed at 'unifying' Europe through the uniformization of the various standards of the European nations. From consumer products to legal procedures and from the various educational systems to identities and languages, the environment in which most of

Europe's citizens live tends to become increasingly standardized as a result of these policies. The second force aims at obstructing this process, if not reversing it, by emphasizing the usefulness of the national framework in providing efficiency, development in general, and prosperity. At present, the first process is dominant, which, however, does not mean that it is irreversible. Indeed, if one looks back into the past two hundred years of European history he may find that unity and disunity were characteristic features of Europe in the various historical periods.

- the two forces behind unification and segregation seem to reinforce each other today. It is impossible to predict whether this may lead to a. the temporary "defeat" of one force by the other through peaceful means or b. to intra-European war.
- many of the political criteria of 'Europeanness', as they are formulated through the "Copenhagen-criteria" for accession to the European Union, are not observed within the European Union today.
- the bigger international institutions grow, the less efficient they become. This loss of efficiency can be reduced (but under no circumstances avoided) if only states which are comparable in size, population, standards, rather "fluid" parameters like mentalities or cultures, are involved into the enlargement process. At present, the inclusion of any number of formerly socialist countries can endanger the efficiency of the European Union as an international organization. The inclusion of Turkey in a nearer future may make it collapse.
- and finally, Europe must learn living with a new Germany - a country which has the largest population and the strongest economy in Europe, and hence claims an

increasing share in the business called European politics; a country which after several decades decided to send troops abroad; a country which considers half of Eastern Europe as its own (economic) sphere of influence, and finally, a country whose leaders seem to adopt entirely different foreign policies if compared with the practice of the past few decades.

It is obvious that such conclusions are drawn by someone who would call himself an Euroskeptic, or, someone who is skeptical about the feasibility of an "ever closer union". Skepticism, however, does not mean negation. I do not exclude altogether that the European Union, however big it will grow within the foreseeable future, will not succeed. The European Union is today far from having reached a sort of an institutional stability – it is in transition, or, to be more accurate, in transformation. Just as the human minds which direct it are in perpetual transformation. Therefore, the only thing I can assert with certitude is that it is up to the citizens of Europe whether the European Union will succeed, or, whether it will make Europe become once again a 'dark continent' in the century to come.

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