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Foreword

Dear Europe-involved Reader,

This journal is the outcome of the activeness of many people who think of and care for Europe. Firstly the acknowledgement goes to the organizers of the three conferences; regional conference *"Further European Enlargement"* in Bucharest, Romania, regional conference *"Europe, Plurality of Identities"* in Rome, Italy and finalisation with international conference *"Europe in the World"* in Ljubljana, Slovenia.

This special edition of Politikon - Old, New and Future Europe - is a collection of selected esseys. Therefore the acknowledgement goes as well to the participants of the conferences who contributed their esseys on a following topics: Shape and Content of EU 27, European Union – Plurality of Identities and Euro-Centrism vs. International Thinking.

I believe that this journal will give you the insight into how young people think of Europe, how they see it and what are their hopes for its/our future. At the same time I hope it will give you, the Reader, the necessary stimulus for your involvement into development and shaping of the Europe in the future.

Nataša Žebovec
Project coordinator

Foreword

Dear Reader,

As one of the most important academic projects of IAPSS, Politikon is the only academic student journal in the world dealing with issues of Political Science that is addressing students of all nationalities and all fields of study. Its purpose is to create a framework for expressing opinions and also to encourage creativity in the field. It gives youth an opportunity to be heard and an incentive to grow within their academic and professional fields of activity.

This summer, the Editorial Board has prepared a special edition of the Journal. *The Old, New and Future Europe edition* allows students to express their thoughts about Europe, its legacy, its present and future perspectives. This edition is directly connected to a particular IAPSS event: the Old, New and Future Europe conferences, organized this spring in the locations of an *old, new and future European* country respectively: Rome- Italy; Ljubljana- Slovenia; Bucharest- Romania. This issue is a follow up of the event, and presents some of the opinions of those present about the topics discussed: *Europe, Plurality of Identities; Europe in the World; Shape and content of EU 27, Further European Enlargement*

Politikon strives to help young voices be heard and discovered. It seeks to provoke thought, nurture dialogue and facilitate exchange of ideas among youth around the world. We hope that this edition of the Journal will manage to fulfill these goals and contribute to an ongoing dialogue about what Europe has been, what it means at present and what it could become. We hope that through it the successful discussions within the three conferences will be carried on by both participants and all readers of the Journal to the better understanding of our common challenges and to a more profound engagement in shaping our world.

Anca Oprisor
IAPSS Vice Chairperson

Birthe Paul

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Eurocentrism – A Hidden, but Hot Topic

The Roots of Eurocentrism

The notion of Eurocentrism emerged in the times of European imperialism in the 16th, 17th and 18th century and is defined as a conscious as well as unconscious emphasis on Western or European culture, values and concerns standing above others. In other words, it is the mental attitude to perceive non-Europeans or today non-Westerners as less modern, less civilized, less relevant and just less than equal. This historic notion is very much connected to Edward Said, who marked the concept of Orientalism and its connection to a Eurocentric worldview. According to him, Eurocentrism lies at the heart of European culture due to the many decades of imperial expansion. It studied and subordinated other cultures to the very idea of the white Christian Europe, which were considered to be naturally subservient to a superior, advanced, developed and morally mature Europe. From this racist point of view, not only slavery, but genocides and other exploitation were justified in the past. The Third World was vicious and weak and had to be 'civilized'. The Western technological and economic superiority put them automatically in a perceived higher position.

Eurocentrism Today

Nevertheless, Eurocentrism is not only an issue of the past, but in fact, this angle of European superiority can still be observed today. Eurocentrism is involved into so much more aspects of daily life and so much more acute than we anticipate on first sight. Unfortunately, it is not an outdated concept slowly but completely disappearing in a ever closer global world nowadays, but a real hot and neglected topic. Although many people may perceive themselves to be open-minded and not racist, a eurocentric worldview is actually hard to avoid because it is hidden in a lot of public discourses, often accelerated through the mass media.

Invention of Western Tradition

The Western interpretation of world history is only one example, which mostly sheds light on the insights of philosophers such as Aristotle, Kant or Marx or stressing the discoveries of Newton and Leibnitz. Europe is presented as being central in preparing the explosion of science and technology and economic development while the achievements of Confucius,

Gandhi and the early findings of Indian, Chinese and Islamic scientists are neglected. This phenomenon became to be called 'invention of tradition', and this one-sided view is given further at today's schools and universities. Eurocentrism is not only present in the historical education, but as well in mathematics or arts. In this way, common identity is constructed by choosing and stressing particular glorious moments in history.

Clash of Civilizations: Islam vs. Christianity

Another example is the current public discussion on the 'Clash of Civilizations' , which once was initiated by Samuel Huntington. A core claim of Huntington is that Western concepts differ fundamentally from those prevalent in other civilizations. Ideas like liberalism, human rights, equality, liberty, rule of law, democracy, secularism, constitutionalism and individualism are Western principles which only find little resonance in Islamic, Japanese, Hindu, Buddhist, Orthodox or Confucian cultures, if we believe Huntington. This indeed reflects a deeply Eurocentric worldview: But are all these values really Western? And do other cultures not have their own versions of democracy? Since other cultures or groups can never fully conform to the criteria defined by Huntington, his theory tends to imply a biased judgment about 'good' and 'bad', a superiority of one 'civilized' culture above the other, as included as well in the definition from the beginning. However, the expression of a 'Clash of Civilizations' has proven to be very popular in the current public discussions on terrorism or confrontations due to the Mohammed cartoons published in a Danish newspaper. The conflict of Christian and Islamic culture sometimes appears to be unavoidable in Western newspapers due to long inherited differences between both. In presenting the problems in such a way, the issue is only considered from a European point of view. The Islamic culture is presented as not allowing freedom of speech and opinion and anyways not fulfilling at all human rights standards. The Western culture arises as being enlightened and superior in reaching a high level of human rights and freedoms which 'the others' unfortunately do not enjoy.

However, it is obvious that the entire problem cannot be solved if both sides stay within these borders of thinking. This limited viewpoint avoids dialogue and ignores possibilities to learn from each other. Instead, only international thinking could be a solution, so trying so see the same issue from different angles and using the power of empathy. Both sides should try to get rid of the self-invented images of the other side, but instead deal with the other side in an open-minded way. Value systems are always highly complex, difficult and often contradictory and cannot be described with a simple list of stereotypes. When taking this into account, a Eurocentric approach, which is a comparison of lists of characteristics of for example blacks, Arabs, Chinese and Europeans in order to make a ranking, can be successfully avoided.

Fortress Europe: Exclusion of 'The Others'

There is as well a relation between Eurocentrism and the policing of the EU external borders, which is already described as 'Fortress Europe'. Since the opening of internal borders within the European Union and the abolition of border controls, the EU external borders are more closed and secured than ever. This became known as the border paradox: The more the internal borders are disappearing, the stronger and more inspected the external ones get. The separation of European insiders and outsiders has grown far more rigid and clear and access for 3rd country nationals is mostly denied at the high-tech borders. Yet, the scenarios are becoming more and more alarming and serious. Hundreds and thousands of desperate refugees try to enter the prosperous continent, and it even begins to resemble situations of invasion. On the other hand, it has become increasingly difficult to enter the EU with the increased security at the external borders. This is why the metaphor of a 'Fortress Europe' has become popular in the discourse on EU Migration Policy. There could not be any better and more revealing picture for symbolizing Eurocentrism today. Europe appears as a closed-up community not willing get in contact with outsiders and even keeping them out with physical violence. A notion of superiority is obviously implied. The entire discourse on for example Ceuta and Melilla do not really evolve around the real interests and concerns of the refugees, but are still foremost about how to secure the external borders without too much violating human rights standards.

All in all, we can see that Eurocentrism lies at the heart of a European identity building. People always need to define an own identity by contrasting themselves to 'the others'. The other culture is only used to fabricate a positive self-image. Although this mechanism may seem very wrong, it is still understandable. It basically fosters the feeling of belonging together and solidarity. Nevertheless, this human process should be carefully watched and kept within certain borders. A healthy compromise has to be found between self-definition and openness to 'otherness'.

Conclusion

What conclusions to draw from this? As seen in these three examples, Eurocentrism is more present in our daily lives and in our heads than we may expect. It is important to keep the own perspective and forming in mind. Probably, no European can completely absolve from any unconscious Eurocentric views due to the growing up in a certain environment which of course has left its marks. Why was the whole world shocked and deeply moved by pictures from 09-11 and the attack on innocent white men like you and me, while the much bigger suffering in Africa does not trigger any comparable reactions? And why do news reports when reporting on catastrophes far away still first mention the victims of own nationality and then reporting on the

entire scope of the disaster? If everybody is well aware of these sleeping attitudes instead of totally denying any existence, then the European society is ready to overcome the most extreme outcomes and reach a satisfactory degree of international thinking. The civil society has to become more critical and conscious about the own point of view. International thinking can be learnt and acquired; we just have to start living it ourselves.

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Euro-Centrism vs. International Thinking

If European people are asked to answer the question, "Which of your different identities has the highest rank in your personal sense: the local, the national or the European?", a high percentage rate would definitely still report to the two former and only a minority would define themselves primarily as an European citizen. This is no surprise. On the one hand, one defines its identity through that origin, with which he or she has the strongest relation. On the other hand it is extremely difficult for a huge and often aloof entity like the European Union to develop a common European identity that evokes those impressions and sentiments that people combine with their familiar environment.

Thus, one of the major challenges for the European Union is more than ever to transfer the European spirit – the idea of a peaceful, prosperous and powerful Europe – to the hearts of the people in the member states. Furthermore, it has to create a trans-national awareness of the continent's main problems.

The development of a common European thinking, which is meant to overcome the harmful effects of nationalism, is claimed by the pro-European political elites all the time. But is it really enough to build up a European identity, in order to consider the major problems and challenges of the world from a European and western centred point of view? Does there not exist the jeopardy of a newly emerging variety of nationalism, a so called Euro-nationalism? A simplified reduction of the challenges to a European-centred perspective would result in an exclusion of significant dimensions of global problems and would, thus, hinder the most convenient solutions for them.

If we do not look beyond our own nose and simply focus on our own – in this case European – interests, we will fail to see problems including, for example, politico-military conflicts, poverty, development, migration, terrorism and environmental matters from more than one perspective.

It is not difficult to find examples in the current strategy of the EU of too much European-centred policy proposals and implementations. You need only look at the European Union's foreign policy and its "partnership" agreements with other regions of the world such as the Mediterranean countries ("Barcelona process" since 1995) or Latin America (negotiations about an association agreement with the MERCOSUR since 2000). In these example, you can easily get the impression that the so called "partnerships" are rather one-sided and that the EU does not take the unequal starting positions enough into consideration. It concentrates too much on its own economic objectives.

The main reason that leads to this conclusion are that the EU, as a dominant global economic player, pushes its partner countries to fast liberalisations of their economies. At a result sensitive markets are subsidised and protected (for example the agricultural sector) where the Mediterranean and Latin American countries would have good chances to produce competitive products for import to the EU area. The agreements do not provide enough appropriate instruments and aid measures which should be granted to countries and regions continuing a

development process. Furthermore, the relations cannot be well balanced as long as asymmetries between the partners are not recognised sufficiently. In addition, the partnership programmes are formally multileveled (political, economic and cultural dimensions) but, in reality, the main focus remains on economic matters.

Another example can be found in the migration policy, especially relating to the recent issue of African people trying to enter the "paradise Europe" via Italy (Lampedusa) or Spain (Ceuta, Mellila and the Canary Islands). Most of the refugees are stuck in reception camps and finally deported. If the European Union mainly concentrates itself on the construction of a fortress around its external borders and disregards the importance of considering the social and cultural dimension and of tackling the problems at their root, there will not be a long-term solution to come. Apart from not having the right to seclude our prosperous continent from other disadvantaged and/or poorly governed countries, we – for our own security and wealth - cannot ignore what is going on in neighbouring regions like in Sudan or Congo. Occurrences in those hot spots will have an increasing impact on Europe.

From my perspective, the EU's current endeavours for international development are too much self-interested. Furthermore, debates (for example the quarrels about the raise of foreign aid and about the EU's future budget last autumn) do not contribute to the solution of global problems.

The EU has already demonstrated how to accomplish successful development assistance: Certainly, up to now, the enlargement process with the concept of carrot (financial aid) and stick (pressure on reforms) can be considered as a great story of success. In this case, the EU has shown more "international thinking" than ever, because, especially with the huge enlargement of ten East and Middle European countries, it has succeeded in creating a zone of peace and democracy and relatively successful market economies in places where – twenty years ago – the Iron Curtain still existed.

In addition, the EU's compensation mechanism, the cohesion and the structural funds to support underdeveloped regions within the union, represent good examples for other political or economic integration schemes like MERCOSUR or the Andean community (Latin America).

The development of an international identity requires among other things the depositing of one's own small-mindedness and the acceptance that all people around the world have the right to live in dignity. It is indispensable that the political, economic, social, cultural and ecological global threats and challenges are seen in a wider context because it is not true that we can't solve the problems – for sure, we could manage them and only then if we do want it.

The EU has the responsibility and commitment to promote the development of disadvantaged regions in the world, especially from those around its own boarders. It has to watch out for appropriate strategies and measures for countries that cannot become members of the community. To reach this aim, the Union's foreign policy beyond the own continent has to become more honest, effective, realistic and coherent.

Within the continent, especially with regards to Turkey, it would not only be extremely unfair but also dangerous if no clear, comprehensible and worthwhile European perspective is considered for this country, mainly because of current political considerations like tiredness of enlargement and growing euro-scepticism. The same thing is essential for countries like Ukraine, Georgia or even Belarus. There need not necessarily be a prospect for full membership because that should primarily depend on the still undecided depth of integration Europe wants to reach in the future. However, the Union's global credibility and power can only emerge if its foreign policy can be

regarded as balanced and coherent. In this respect the implementation of the constitutional treaty and the creation of a European Foreign Minister would also be crucial steps forward.

In addition to the awareness of global threats and challenges, international thinking also demands the appreciation and acceptance of cultural plurality all around the world. As the recent debate about the "Mohamed cartoons" has shown, a comparatively bagatelle is able to create significant riots and conflicts between cultures if people do not respect each other's) traditions and cultural peculiarities.
As well, in administering development aid, we must be sure not to negate other people's culture, life or economic activity. We should rather strengthen their own special economic and cultural potential and accompany them so that they may improve their living conditions. Otherwise, a sort of neo-colonialism would emerge.

From my personal perspective, the creation of a European identity is a good starting point to get an improved and broader awareness for the diverse dimensions of global threats and challenges. This might lead to a too much European centred perception. Thus, a global thinking should substitute the too much self-interested, narrow perspectives of European and national identities. We can only save face and protect ourselves, if we are permanently working on better and worthier living conditions for all people around the globe and if we, at the same time, confine ourselves for the good of all.

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Eurocentrism and International Thinking - a brief introduction

International thinking – a nice expression, widely used by political and economical leaders and easily found on all major newspapers nowadays. But has it been always like that? Globalisation is considered to be a rather new development in history. On the contrary, the term *eurocentrism* is not spread so widely in the common language (not taking into consideration the so-called *scientific community*). However, eurocentrism has been an important phenomenon during the development of Europe in the world. *Eurocentrism*, as a variant of *ethnocentrism*, describes the way of emphasising European values and culture (often also described as the *Western culture*, contrasting with the *Islamic culture* – which actually compares a geographical character with a religious one and therefore, *a priori,* leads to confusion and unfair comparisons!) [i] compared to other cultures.

The origins of Eurocentrism

At the end of the 15th century, the European worldview changed dramatically. Originating from Portugal and Spain, that were well-advanced in the exploration of overseas mercantile routes, the discovery of America by Christopher Columbus was only one – but probably the most important – of the precursors of the discovery of foreign cultures by the prosperous European mercantile cultures. The feeling of *European* or *Western* superiority was reinforced during the rising imperialistic age in the 17th and 18th century until finally it reached his peak in the 19th century. During that time, even slavery was justified by the *superiority of the white race*. According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), an estimated total of 25 to 30 million black slaves were captured and sold in the "triangular trade".[ii]

The 20th century – Eurocentrism and the development of International Thinking

With the end of the Second Industrial Revolution, technological developments in Europe, especially in Great Britain and Germany, reinforced Europe's position in the world. International thinking at that time mostly consisted on exploring the most efficient and cheap options of accessing raw materials over the world. One of the most horrible and evil effects of a eurocentric idea ended in the Holocaust and the Second World War. The Nazi propaganda that only the *Aryan race* was "pure" led to destruction, despair and death of millions of persons.

It should be mentioned though, that not all effects of eurocentrism or ethnocentrism had been that terrible; the "eurocentric" *Cartesian map* which centres on the north-western part of Europe ensures that the central areas of the map are covered by land and not by water surface. Yet, it is obvious that this map, which was introduced by Gerhard Mercator in 1568, has a serious impact on our perception of the world. Whenever we speak from "the Middle East" this is related to the layout of the world map as used by us. Therefore, other maps were developed in the 20th century. An impressive example is the so-called *Dymaxion-globe* introduced by Buckminster Fuller. [iii]

Globalisation and the 21st century: Ethnocentrism – a dying model?

With the development of new media, new means of transportations and the rapid global technical development, the world has become the famous *global village*. Although the meaning of global ("globus") and village ("villa") already originate from ancient Latin, the use of the term *global village* as known today was characterized by Marshal MacLuhan in his book *War and Peace in the Global World* in 1967. Does this mean that finally eurocentrism as well as any other forms of ethnocentrism are a dying model? Not at all.

If you believe Samuel P. Huntington, different ethnocentric attitudes are threading the world in its current post-Cold War status. Samuel P. Huntington published his famous thesis first in the academic journal "Foreign Affaires" in 1993, which was widely discussed especially after the 9/11 attacks in 1999. He had used a term already introduced by Bernard Lewis three years before: *The Clash of Civilizations*. He developed his ideas more elaborately in his book *The Clash of civilizations and the Remaking of the world order* in 1996.[iv]

His core hypothesis is that in the post-Cold War time, the "fundamental source of conflict" will be not primarily economic or ideological but cultural. The "battle lines of the future" according to him will no longer exist between different nations, but between civilisations. Hence, he defines eight civilisations and investigates their potential of conflict. Above other ethnocentric views, Huntington argues that the *Western view* on universal cultural imperatives and social norms and the consequential actions in the global political processes may inevitably lead to new conflicts. Although after the 9/11 attacks his hypothesis got strong support, his doctrine is controverted. One of the main points of discussion is the definition of his *civilisations*. Next to the differences in history, language, culture and tradition, Huntington focuses on religion. Still, he divides the Latin American civilization (which is characterised by the catholic religion and the Spanish and Portuguese language deeply) from the European. Although not directly focusing on eurocentrism with his hypothesis, the response to Huntington's publication also in Europe justifies mentioning his work in such a eurocentric context.

Challenges and strategies for tomorrow in a global world

The example of Samuel P. Huntington's hypothesis and the response raises an important issue: stereotypes and clichés of other cultures together with a lack of cultural knowledge can provoke dangerous xenophobia and reinforce ethnocentrism, leading to social exclusion for members of other "civilisations". For the future, *international thinking* will be necessary to peacefully balance the needs of different cultures. However, especially for countries in the Eastern part of Europe like Slovenia, Slovakia or the Czech Republic, *eurocentrism* is also a necessary part of political and cultural actions. Having been separated from the political Europe during a Cold War behind the Iron Curtain (as for the Czech Republic) or having been independent from the Eastern Bloc but communist-run, those countries are now, through the integration into the European Union, facing a situation where the point of gravity concerning political actions and responsibilities switches to the western parts, whereas before the end of the Cold War, those states had to focus on the East. Although in a multinational world, the importance of eurocentrism declines and will be substituted by the *multi-polar* world, the new member countries as well as prospective new candidates visibly centre their efforts on Europe as a necessary condition for a successful integration.

Think global – act local. This slogan used by IBM tries to explain one of the main challenges for the future. The World Wide Web, collaboration applications and universal networking enable worldwide fast information and communication. Improved knowledge and simplified collaboration can lead to international thinking, but it does not lead to successful implementation of this concept automatically. International relations are complex dynamic systems. Political

dialogues that focus not only on national or cultural egoism, but on lasting prosperous cultural and economical benefits, needs the international thinking as component as well as the awareness of their own and also foreign cultural heritage. Regarding the limited resources of fossil fuel and clean water, we will have to give up the image that only the highly industrialized cultures have a right to explore the resources and replace this attitude by a responsible, economical and considerable exploitation of resources. Ensuring this throughout the political process will be the major challenge of policy in between local and international thinking for the future.

[i] compare: Hippler, Jochen. Eurocentrism, 1998

[ii] United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organizations. History of Slavery, 2004. http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/ev.php-URL_ID=19127&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

[iii] http://bfi.easystorecreator.com/browse_dept_items.asp/categ_id/4/parent_ids/0/Name/Maps

[iv] Huntington, Samuel P.. The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of the World Order. Simon and Schuster,
New York, l996

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What next for the Peaceful Power? Europe and the search for an International Role.

They said it could never be done.

It would be impossible for the great powers of Europe to come together in peaceful association after centuries of conflict. The French would not trust the Germans, the Poles would never agree to a demilitarised western border and anyway, without a common language the whole experiment would be doomed to failure from the start. But half a century later the dream has become reality. It is today impossible to imagine the German army contemplating the conquest of Belgium or the French attempting to once again take the British crown. Europe has enjoyed more peace for more people for longer than at any point in the past 500 years and Fins, Maltese, Portuguese and Latvians find themselves committed to a common project of understanding and positive cross-cultural interaction.

In coming years the European Union will see further enlargements in the east and, perhaps, even into Turkey, a development that would bring yet another of the world's great empires into communion with its former imperial rivals. With the accession of the current candidate countries to the wider Union, Europe will stand as a continent of calm, a truly peaceful power stretching across borders that once ran red with the blood of war. So it is now that Europe is posed a question every bit as important as those it responded to in building the democratic community that exists today: what to do next? This short paper will suggest three areas where Europe will not only need to take an international role but will be forced to do so.

First, Europe will soon be forced to take a larger role in world policing and securing freedom for all of the people of the world. While Europe has been spectacularly successful in creating a peaceful Europe for Europeans, many regions of the globe still exist in conditions of conflict that might best be described as from the Middle Ages. Continuing conflict leads to much-reduced life expectancies for African and Asian peoples, child soldiers fight against other children for political ends they could not possibly understand and tyrannical dictators rule with the authority of life and death once only ascribed to kings. Europe must join with its democratic allies and put people on the ground who are willing to fight and, if needs be, die for the values and way of life that should be the birthright of every man, woman and child. Doing so, however, will require a change in attitude by the European Union from an outlook which works hard to secure peace among former rivals on a single continent to one that looks beyond borders to the world and fights for the rights of those for whom it legally owes nothing. The people and politicians will have to change their outlook from one in which the death of any soldier in a foreign conflict is too high a price to pay for change to one where such deaths are regrettable and horrible but, in the end, necessary to save the lives of not fellow-countrymen but fellow-human beings. Europe will not be able to sit out another Rwanda, another Somalia or another Iraq: Europe will be forced to take a larger portion of the global security burden if human rights are to be delivered to all.

Secondly, it will be essential for the EU to make it clear where it stands in the great power rivalry that many in the world see as integral to the future safety and security of the planet: the rivalry between the United States and China. Europe's current position is hard to pin down: Europe condemns dictators but lobbies hard to sell arms to the Chinese Communist Party; it endorses American values of political freedom and a democratic civil society but will not join with America to bring these values to the Middle East; the people of Europe welcome the leaders of the United States with jeers, protests and catcalls, while in Paris the Eiffel Tower will be lit red in honour of the visiting Chinese Premier. Europe must be consistent in this coming battle of ideas and, perhaps one day, of arms. It will be impossible to endorse one set of ideas while engaging in activity that subverts the very values that are being espoused.

Thirdly, Europe must find a way to engage the world as a single Europe. By this it is meant that the people and politicians of the continent must adopt processes that allow half a billion people to speak as one. The laughable situation in which the European Commission can denounce the actions of its own member states but do nothing to restrict them smacks of illegitimacy in the international world. Why does it matter, one might ask, what the European Union as an institution believes? After all, the European Union does not speak for the individual states that will continue to do whatever they please.

Europe, then, must strive to become relevant, first among its member states and citizens and then among the states of the worldwide community of nations. The European Commission (or whatever other organ the states of the Union endorse) then must be trusted to speak with the voice of Europe and trusted by the member states when doing so. Europe's voice is important but, at the present time, it has no single voice, no European opinion and, as a result, no respect from many around the world when it speaks out on matters of war and peace, life and death.

It is addressing such areas as these that Europe will find its role in the world. It is worthwhile imagining, then, the type of Europe that might emerge in the resolution of matters such as these. Three words sum up the Union this author imagines will develop: responsible, reliable and relevant.

A responsible Europe will take a much firmer and faster line on international peace and security than the pattern of its engagement thus far would suggest. A responsible Europe will not allow another Srebrenica so close to home and another Rwanda will be simply unthinkable. A responsible Europe – consistent in its approach to the world and guided by human rights and human dignity – will be the responsible power that the world turns to not only for guidance but, when it is required, intervention.

Similarly, a reliable Europe will make clear whose worldview it will endorse in the ideological battle between democracy and freedom and dictatorship and state secret police. Europe must, in the opinion of this author, endorse the freedom and liberties advocated by the US and join them in standing strong and advocating change in China. This change will not come easily or quickly but it is absolutely necessary that one sixth of humanity be freed to enjoy the rights and freedoms that Europe has worked so hard to provide its own people.

Finally, the future Europe will be relevant in international affairs, taking a larger role than it is afforded today. When a relevant Europe speaks the whole world will listen. A single voice will describe the thoughts, ideals and actions of the world's greatest conglomeration of democratic

states and know that its word is backed with the talents, resources and force of every major actor from the Russian border to the North Atlantic and the Arctic Ocean to the Mediterranean Sea.

Imagining this future role for Europe is certainly easier than achieving it will be. So many obstacles lie in the path of those committed to a Europe that will take its place as the great peaceful power of this century. There will be those who will cry that it will cost too much, that it will be 'selling out' values of non-intervention and state sovereignty and that it will require a focus on issues far from European soil. There will be opposition among scholars, sceptics, the popular press and politicians. In imagining the obstacles, however, let us not forget the obstacles to community that faced the founders of today's EU. Did not people point to traditional rivalries as insurmountable barriers to a true European community? Did not people imagine a clash of cultures between east and west Europe, between the southern states and the north? Did not scholars simply dismiss the notion of a peaceful continent established by choice as doomed to fail? And yet a united Europe emerged, overcoming these challenges and denying the critics.

If Europe is to assume the role in the world demanded of a union of its size and power, the critics will have to be confounded again. Answering the 'what's next' question is easier than achieving the change required, but both are necessary for the future of the European Union and the future of peace, democracy and freedom in every country of the world.

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The European Union a stepping stone to further integration or rather a Eurocentric fortress?

Still with the memory of the destructive national power of the Second World War, the main initiators of the European integration stirred this project with the objective of preventing further conflicts through economic integration. Closer economic ties, spilling over to more countries and more policy areas lead to the development of an ever closer union which has become a powerful actor in international affairs. This essay will explore the question to what extent the European Union can be characterized as Eurocentric regionalism, rather focused on internal integration and enforcing outside borders than on global understanding. In order to shed light on this question several policy areas will be analysed, such as the European aid and trade policy, as well as the agricultural policy as these are areas where the European Union is directly confronted with external politics and international interests.

Taking a look at the European Union's aid policy in combination with its trade policy clearly shows the tension between its moral and humanitarian commitments in the framework of global responsibilities on the one hand and strong national interests and concerns on the other hand. The EU is one of the biggest donors in the world, adding all the national contributions from its member states, but is still lagging behind the promised 1, 27 % of GNP. Moreover, when considered in relation to other figures, trade barriers remain high and create barriers for self-sustainability in developing countries. The EU is protecting its domestic market by high tariffs as well as subsidising its own production and depressing the world market price by dumping subsidized agricultural products on the world market. Not only Non-Governmental Organisations, such as Oxfam, criticised the EU trade policy, but also international organisations such as the World Trade Organisation ruled that the European Union is protecting its market in a discriminatory way. This is not in line with its commitment to liberalise trade and deconstruct trade barriers. Due to this international pressure, the European Union was forced to reform an agricultural sector that was not sustainable anymore. However, even under the reformed system, developing countries still face high entrance barriers and formerly supported sugar producers (under the Cotonou agreement of 2000) are forced out of business. Subsidies granted to European farmers are still higher than international aid donations. As Oxfam phrased it in its Make Trade Fair campaign " each European cow receives over two dollar a day in subsidies, well more than the daily income of half of the world's population" (Oxfam, 2005).

The demand for a fairer trade policy arose which would dismantle tariff barriers for developing countries and help them to develop a self-sufficient domestic industry and thus make them competitive on the world market, is constrained by internal interests. Even though there are agreements intended to support developing countries, these are often based on historical and political ties (such as the former French colonies which all benefit from the Cotonou agreement) issued for the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries (ACP). This juxtaposes the impression that aid, given by the multinational European Union, is donated out of international commitment

and thinking. It is rather a colonial legacy and former established ties that influence aid distribution, thus alluding to a rather Eurocentric point of view.

However, in the media it is presented as altruistic humanitarian aid and, thus, alludes to an international thinking which sees the world as one human community falling under a global responsibility. This image is strengthened by the European Union' commitment to the Millennium Development Goals. On the other hand, the slow change and the reform under which unequal access still persists stresses to a Eurocentric perspective. Powerful farming lobbies, influential on the European policy level, ensure that subsidies are cut to a lesser extent and over a longer time frame. As one of the core policies introduced due to the demands of French farmers, it is almost impossible to reverse the adverse development in this policy field. A complete cut of subsidies would be impossible. A step in the right direction is undertaken with the introduction of environmental standards, the specialisation on biological produced food as well as decoupled payment. But on the other hand, this gives rise to the question that what extent is it fair that European citizens are able to choose and can afford biological grown products while developing countries are not even able to produce self-sufficiently, as it is impossible for them to build up a domestic processing industry as processed products face even higher tariffs.

While the original objectives of the Common Agricultural Policy were to provide a fair standard of living and to ensure a fair price to the consumer, the CAP does not meet these objectives anymore. As self-sufficiency has always been an argument, especially after the time of the Second World War, the situation today gives rise to the question if this kind of protectionism, which could also be called Eurocentrism, is still appropriate today. From an economic and political point of view, it is understandable that the European Union designed its policies to benefit its members first of all. Before calling it Eurocentric thinking, one has to keep in mind, that the redistribution of financial resources to support special areas such as agriculture, but also to support countries that are lagging behind with the creation of the Cohesion fund, shows besides economic considerations of creating a strong Europe which competitive with other global players, also a kind of European solidarity or at least a common vision for the future. However, this integration is pursued at the expense of weaker regions. While Europe is prospering and consciously struggling towards a community spirit by launching campaigns to forge a European identity, external borders are reinforced. The negative integration of creating a gap between "we" and the "other" is used to detract from internal disagreements. One may even claim that Europe's internal diversity is one of the reasons why it is so hard to form a common European identity so that a common "other" is needed to downplay internal diversity.

One other example is Schengen agreement. While it was made possible for EU citizens to move freely within the Schengen area, the same agreement enforced the external borders and made it even harder for non-EU citizens to enter. The same can be seen in the area of trade and aid. While on the one hand aid is given to developing countries, trade barriers remain high. Yet diminishing the trade barriers instead of giving a small amount of humanitarian aid would help the developing countries more. However, this would mean one opportunity less to present the EU in a positive light in international politics and on the other hand also mean a loss of control as active aid giving can be better managed than diminished trade barriers. Thus, Europe is eager to maintain its influence

This creates a gap between Europe and the "Other", namely the developing countries, by creating a dependency and the image of the EU going towards them to help the people and countries that do not possess the means themselves. Thus, instead of developing policies in which aid giving and aid receiving countries are equal partners and designing joint policies according to their needs, the developing countries are rather presented as the helpless, the "other", where "we" have to help. By this means of negative integration, one's own identity, in

this case European identity, is strengthened by contrasting it to the "Other" (Woodward, 1996, p.124). This triggers a strong Eurocentric perspective, in which Europe is attributed with values of superiority, as it is Europe that is in the position to help the "Other". Rather than a humanistic approach of international thinking of human beings with the same needs, a distance is created between the starving far away and the prosperous union. This stands actually in contrast to the commitment to the Millennium Development Goals in which the goal number 8 stresses the need for a global partnership.

In conclusion, one could say that the European Union is not a stepping-stone to global integration, embracing more and more members. However, its internal organisation is still based on member states' interests and intergovernmental bargaining. While France is insisting on support for its farmers, Britain demands its rebate as its price for taking part in the European integration process. On a European scale, regarding the policy areas that have been integrated on European level over time and are still in the process of closer cooperation, this development was always also one of excluding the "Other". Rather than being motivated by international thinking and global responsibility, integration was characterized by personal motives and benefits for Europe itself. Taking the example of the aid sector, the EU managed to communicate a positive image as a donator, downplaying the fact, that trade barriers harm developing countries more than they benefit from EU aid.

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Euro-Centrism vs. International Thinking

The idea of a united Europe is generally believed to be something positive, especially as it represents values like democracy and tolerance. The practical construct resulting from this idea, the former European Economic Community (EEC), has been created in reaction to the moral, political and economic destruction Europe went through during the Second World War and therefore embodies the "concept of a long-lasting peace (Wallström, 2004). As the EEC has developed from a unity based on economical cooperation into the European Union (EU), a political construct with growing influence on national politics, the question arises whether it is legitimate at all (Obradovic, 1996, p.191). This lack of legitimacy is resolved, in part, by creating a European identity with the European Commission (EC) as its main persecutor (Shore, 2000, p.40). Considering the fact that even a nation, a much smaller and homogenous building than the whole of Europe, is created by nationalists and therefore is, an "imagined community" (Paasi, 1996, p.11), the question arises whether the attempt to create a European identity can be called an ideology. "Europeanism", as referred to this ideology in the following, tries to instil a European identity; therefore, it resembles nationalism as far as the building of a political construct on an ideology is concerned. It might also be an advanced form of nationalism as "nationalism is a kind of chameleon which adapts its colours to changing situations just as it likes" (Alter, 1994, p.119).

What is even more important is that this attempt to build up a form of emotional attachment for the EU confirms and even fosters the Euro-centric viewpoint in daily European politics. This paper argues that EU institutions, especially the Commission, deliberately downplay international thinking by re-invoking Euro-centrism as a tool to attain more political legitimacy in the form of public approval.

The European Union (EU), claiming to be a democratic construct, seeks legitimacy in front of the public. Consequently, it needs the public to identify with the values and traditions considered to be of a unique European kind in order to gain acceptance for the policy that is practised and conduct the practice of "reproduction of itself" (Paasi, 1996, p.41). According to the anthropologist Chris Shore, who wrote a book about EU's cultural policy, the "invention of a European tradition" was introduced by the European Commission after a disappointing turn out in the European Parliament's (EP's) election in 1984 (Shore, 2000, p.41). The poor political participation clearly reflected the missing identification of the masses with the idea of a unified European and made the missing legitimacy obvious.

The measures that are taken in order to install a European feeling in people are of a distinct character and resemble the ones used by nationalists that were trying to legitimise the evolution of nation states. As Shore states, the EC mainly makes use of strong symbols, for example a European flag, anthem and passport, which was already used by nineteenth century nation-states

in order to gain legitimacy (Shore, 2000, p.50). Apart from giving the impression of an established tradition, these symbols also convey certain values that are seen as representing the unified Europe. As stated by the EC, the European flag is "the symbol *par excellence* of European identity and European unification", with the number 12 representing Christianity, "perfection" or parts of European history, such as the Roman Empire (p.47). The choice of Beethoven's "Ode to Joy" as official European anthem is also highly significant considering the text written by Friedrich Schiller in 1785. The poem clearly conveys the classic idea of united brotherhood and a positively perceived unity between people. As Europe cannot rely on a common history as nation-states could, there is a lack of a shared "lieux de mémoire" (Hymans, 2004, p.19), common memories that are crucial in order to create a feeling of belonging together within a community. Due to this lack of common memory, culture is seen, as displayed in the choice of the anthem, as the major commonality binding European states. Even though the symbols, used in nineteenth century nation states building and in Europe, nowadays have got a different basis, their function is the same. They are invented in order to represent values and stand for the "lieu de mémoire" through which a community identifies itself.

Apart from these more psychological means of instilling identity, the European Commission also proceeds in the field of actual political actions. Starting with the Declaration on the European Identity in 1973, the Commission imposes to "promote European awareness and to undertake joint action in various cultural areas" (Shore, 2000, p.45) as formulated in the Solemn Declaration on European Union (p.44). A special emphasis is thus put on cultural policy. Jacques Delors, President of the Commission from 1985 to 1994, even states, "We have to build a powerful European culture industry that will enable us to be in control of both the medium and its content" (p.45 ff). This policy is applied in various fields, such as education, media, science and sports. "Introducing the European dimension into education," as the Commission puts it (p.56), can be seen as a very efficient as well as already successfully applied tool in influencing people's way of thinking. Already Rousseau states that, "it is education that must give souls a national formation, and direct their opinions and taste" (Paasi, 1996, p.56).

The distribution of the idea of a European Unity through mass media such as television and films, controlled by the "Office of Communications" (Shore, 2000, p.56), gives the impression of Europe as a brand being commercialised according to the rules of public relations (p.55); moreover, it makes use of the privilege that has been, up to the twentieth century, limited to nation states, namely the control over media (Paasi, 1996, p.42). The declaration of the "European Year of Education through Sports 2004," involving major sport events such as the Olympic Games in Athens under the trade mark "Europe," can also be seen in this context.

What is the actual idea that the European Commission tries to instil onto European people and in what way does this contradict international thinking? There are two main features of Europeanism that can be seen as contradicting international thinking, if not even rendering it impossible. The first one is the necessity of the "dichotomy of Self and Other" (Delanty, 1995, p.47) in the process of identification. According to Schlesinger, "[t]he establishment of similarity simultaneously causes variance" (Schlesinger, 1999, p.461), which means that in order to make people identify with something you have to provide something they can identify against to achieve "negative integration" (Alter, 1994, p.12). The European others have been, up to the fall of the Iron Curtain, the "protagonists of the ideological Cold War" (Smith, 1997, p.173). Nowadays the definition of the other is less clear, ranging from the Third World, (p.192) to the "almost European other" (Wiener & Diez, 2004, p.210) meaning immigrants and "Euro-Islam within" (p.210).

The second feature that is made use of is the "invention of a European tradition" (Shore, 2000, p.41). "What makes a nation *is* the past" (Shore, 2000, p.41) can be easily transferred onto the

European scale. Europe is claimed to have a long tradition and a common history ranging from the Ancient times and is, according to Walter Hallstein, first President of the Commission of the EEC, "no creation. It is a rediscovery" (Nugent, Paterson, Wright, 2003, p.9) Moreover it is perceived as a "moral success story" (Shore, 2000, p. 57), embodying major advancements such as the Enlightenment or the scientific revolution, and denying less popular events in European history, like colonization, in a rather selective narrative. This leads to the view on Europe as a "super-nation state founded on European chauvinism" (p.50).

Taking into account these findings, one can state that the idea of establishing Europeanism is build up on a Euro-centric view of the world and therefore makes international thinking within the EU highly unlikely. This is probably due to the fact that, according to a member of the Committee for a People's Europe, which has been set up by the Commission, the aim of the European Commission was to "create some sort of supra-nationality" (Shore, 2000, p.51). According to Peter Alter one of the most renowned scholars in the field of nationalism, the "fortress Europe can look like nationalism, but in a new guise" (Alter, 1994, p.119).

Apart from the question if this effort is going to be successful and whether a European identity, which is so much more complex than a national one, can be created with nationalistic means, it is also doubtful whether nationalistic thinking can just be used as means to an ends. Is it possible to separate nationalism and thus Europeanism into the presumably positive side of identity building and the negative side, the one that consists of exclusion, racism and the feeling of being superior to others? Nationalism is seen as the most successful ideology in the world, for it is compatible to any other ideology (Alter, 1994, p.1) and easy to instil onto people as it provides a feeling of pride and self-confidence. Is it not naïve to believe that this ideology can be controlled, after what history has shown us in the twentieth century? The European Commission might underestimate the momentum of this ideology.

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Euro-Centrism vs. International Thinking

The journey of the concept of Europe has been from myth to legend to war to stability. European unity is based, essentially, on the recognition of historic and linguistic diversity, the cultural variety and the national roots that make it unique. It is this huge cultural diversity that gives Europeans their European identity. I firmly believe that we cannot understand the idea of Europe without understanding its fundamental desire for universality. Europe has been built gradually on the basis of a sincere and deep-seated acknowledgement of diversity, and it is precisely because of this that it aspires to form the basis of a larger and more universal whole. Europe has more than its fair share of past glory and regrets and possesses both great diversity and a deep cultural unity.

Europe is above all a community of values and the aim of European unification is to realise, test, develop and safeguard these values. They are rooted in common legal principles acknowledging the freedom of the individual and social responsibility. Fundamental European values are based on tolerance humanity and fraternity. The great currents of culture and art, scientific discoveries and their application for the general good and the critical analysis of accepted views and perceptions have all had the effect that we can now live and work together in peace, liberty and free from want. Europe has spread these values throughout the world. Thus Europe it is considered to be the mother of revolutions in the modern world.

Thousands of years of common history, language and geography have developed into a common sense of European identity. In the 21st century, European identity is an identity based on the values of liberty, democracy, respect for human rights and the rule of law, values tempered in the aftermath of two world wars into a project to bring peace, stability and prosperity to the continent.

The European identity is deeply rooted in our shared history. Exploring the historical roots of European identity is complicated by the fact that the idea of Europe, as we understand it today, has evolved as a process of exchange between different civilisations. Today, most people would define 'European-ness' as quite strongly associated with their nation-states, the patchwork of national diversity that almost defines Europe. This is a very important part of Europe and it is likely to remain so for a long time to come. We may differ as Europeans on the means but we all agree on the ends. Research shows that the Europeans attitudes, in some degree, are very different from those of Americans in this area. In the wider world, Europeans seem to believe more strongly than others in the virtues of a rules-based system of global governance and to the idea of social justice. Now, however, it appears that in many ways parts of the US are returning to more 'European' modes of life, including railways and urban mass transit systems, delicatessen food and niche markets for cult movies in some of the cities. And if there is, as Colin Crouch (1993) has suggested, a European model or set of models of industrial relations, this may well appeal to other regions of the world. Europe also appears 'modern' in relation to the US and many other regions of the world in the extent of its secularisation. Whatever the difficulties of measurement in this domain, it is clear that religious belief in Europe has mostly ceased to have the kind of importance for social life as a whole which it has retained elsewhere, even in

ostensibly secular states. European society and culture are viewed as possessing certain intrinsic features that give them a decided advantage over non-European societies.

In the Euro-Centric concept, Europe has always been and currently is the superior centre from which knowledge, creativity, technology, culture, and so forth flow forth to the inferior periphery, the so-called underdeveloped countries. Euro-Centrism, note Ella Shohat and Robert Stam, "is the forcing of cultural heterogeneity into a single paradigmatic perspective in which Europe is seen as the unique source of meaning, as the world's centre of gravity, as ontological 'reality' to the rest of the world's shadow". Blaut's criticism of Euro-Centrism hinges on the key word 'false'. It is not Euro-Centric for him to prefer European music to other music or European cuisine to other cuisine. Rather, it is Euro-Centric to make the claim that,

> "Europeans are more inventive, innovative, progressive, noble, courageous, and so on, than every other group of people; or that Europe as a place has more healthy, productive, stimulating environment than other places. Euro-Centric thinking attributes to the West an almost providential sense of historical destiny, manifested in its continuous advances in science, technology, industrialism, rationality and economic institutions from time immemorial".

It takes the European experience as universal and envisions the world from a single privileged point that is Europe. According to Dirlik, Euro-Centrism affirms the cultures and peoples of Europe as paragons of progress, beauty, and civilization and "institutes European subjectivity as universal". The impact of Euro-Centrism, notes Arif Dirlik, is global. The spread of capitalism, the emergence of the nation-state, the primacy of class, gender, ethnicity and religion as central categories for analysis and the notion of a common humanity or the "good life"—these characterise Euro-Centrism.

Abandoning Euro-Centric provincialism and adopting a global perspective mean that we have to re-scale the world system to make it a truly all-encompassing global system. Euro-Centric thinking attributes to the 'West' an almost providential sense of historical destiny. As J. M. Blaut observes, these ideas, of a privileged center and of teleological progress, provide a basis for viewing the rise of Europe as a global power "in terms of internal, immanent forces". One way Euro-Centrism has been analysed is as a political project that maintains the hegemony and power of capitalism. As such, Euro-Centrism is a sub-project of capitalism and is part of a strategy that is, at heart, based on the maintenance of capitalist hegemony (Amin, 1989). Amin identifies the universalistic aspect of Euro-Centrism as being crucial to the power of Euro-Centric discourse, arguing that the West's claim to universality is, in fact, the claim of a particularity that has gained hegemony. Therefore, in order to maintain the logic of its own universality, Euro- Centrism presents all other belief systems as 'particularist' and in doing so centres the impossibility that alternative belief systems could ever constitute a 'universal' template and so a discourse becomes universal to the extent that it can erase the marks of its particularity.

If we wish to understand Europe via a post-EuroCentric optic enabled by globalisation, we must first controversially concede that we can no longer study areas of the world in isolation from one another and produce knowledge about Europe that does not situate Europe within its global context. New post-Euro-Centric perspective will thus require better information about parts of the world about which we may at present know very little, a revised understanding of the relationship of the European to the non-European world and also an increased comprehension of the global economic and political changes that underwrite the cultural production.

Perhaps more controversially, I would also contend that, as a consequence of the real economic, political, and cultural challenges to Euro-Centrism issuing from non-Western areas of the world, we must re-conceptualise the nature of the modernity conceived to emanate from Europe. However, scholars critical of Euro-Centrism have shown that that the diffusion of capitalism throughout the globe has produced homogeneous, political, social and cultural effects, bringing other parts of the world into being that are just as modern as the West but differently so. A post-Euro-Centric paradigm demands that the Western scholars recognize that the European-derived categories that "we" have taken to be universal are merely expressions of a specific particularism that has proclaimed itself to be universal and at least since 1492 has possessed the global power to enforce that claim.

Dirlik comments:

> "It is not clear . . . whether globalisation is the final chapter in the history of capitalist modernity as globalised by European power, or the beginning of something else that is yet to appear with any kind of concreteness. What is clear, however, is that globalisation discourse is a response both to changing configurations in global relations—new unities as well as new fractures—and the need for a new epistemology to grasp those changes."

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Euro- centrism vs International Thinking

Today, at every corner we find the same question in different forms: should we think only of Europe or we should remember that Europe is just one part of the world? This essay is meant to discuss the meaning of euro-centrism and how it is conceived nowadays. But living in a complex and inter-connected world we also have to take into consideration all the other elements: different cultures and civilizations, different economic powers and different mentalities. This is probably the best way to understand the reality we are living in.

Euro-centrism could be defined as the practice that takes into account Europe as a continent, the European culture, traditions, and civilization – all that matters is belonging to the European identity. This is one of the most frequent elements that influenced the mentality of this continent starting with early times and going on up to now (today, the tendency of all the states in Europe is to integrate into the European Union, the common symbol that everyone understands).

This mentality of the common European is in part born because every man sees himself as part of the place where he was born; but it is also created. It is created by the history and philosophy he learned in school, by his interaction with others, by the things he watches on TV, by the things he reads in books and so on. Firstly, history usually presents the events from Europe, starting with the Greeks and Romans and onwards to the present. In all the cases there is "us" and "them": the Christians and the pagans, the barbarians, creating, thus, a stereotype. For example, we learn about the Ccrusades: there are us, the Christians, as a whole (we can say the whole Europe) and there is them, the Muslims (Arabs, Turks, etc.), but the accent is on the Christians. Only if we go deep into the essence of things we will learn about the Muslims and their culture. Also, there is little interest for the ancient non-European empires, like the Chinese empire, the Indian Empire or the Empires from South America; but everyone knows about Rome. Secondly, the first steps in science are recognised as belonging to the Europeans but few are interested to know that scholars from the Far East have come to the same conclusions years before. Like in mathematics, everyone talks about Isaac Newton and Leibniz, but the Chinese had, from ancient times, methods and systems of calculus. Thirdly, philosophy studies Aristotle, Plato, Augustine, Kant, and so on, but there is a diminished accent put on Confucian or Islamic philosophy although they are as old and as interesting as the European. Fourthly, the practice and mental representations of the world, starting from Antiquity, are all about Europe and how Europe is in the centre of the world. Before the discoveries of the Americas, Africa and of the Orient, the Europeans thought there was only their continent. After seeing that there were others in the world, they saw themselves as the centre and all the others as barbarians that needed to be civilised. Fifthly, most of the things we see or read are about Europe and its people; we can find only limited information that we can access about the other parts of the continent. So, if we want to learn more about a certain culture or a certain people we have no choice, but going to that country.

It is important, I think, to talk about diversity and self-image. As European nations, we see ourselves as better than the others and tend to discriminate. This is seen especially in these last years (after September 11, 2001, to be specific). This is not the correct attitude we should take. We should try to understand the differences that exist in the other cultures and admit that every

culture has its own malign elements. It is universally known that people tend to fear what they don't know, what they don't control. When it comes to knowing other cultures, most people see only the differences but do nothing to understand why the others are different and what is good about their culture. People usually just choose to ignore the others because they don't know anything about their culture but they could make an effort to understand them. Also, there should be less discrimination. Just because they are different it doesn't mean that they are not human or that they don't have feelings. It's just our opinion and we can tend to let ourselves be influenced by old-fashioned stereotypes, a thing that should make us think, should make us want to be better persons. For example, if one sees an Arab in the street, he first asks himself what country could he come from and if he is aggressive, rather than think about the Islamic religion and culture throughout history and what they had given to humanity.

However, we must not forget that we live at the beginning of the 21ST century and our mentality has evolved in the last hundred years (as it should have). In an age of communication and technology, in an age when everyone can contact everyone, we cannot ignore the rest of the world. Everyday we touch, eat, drink, wear and buy things that are made all over the world by people of different cultures, religions, languages and races. We cannot say that we are from Europe; we should say that we are from Earth. Yes, we are European, but we are all humans and equal and belonging to the same world. We define ourselves by relating to the rest of the world, to the different cultures, religions, languages, and races. In order to understand who we are, we should first understand the world we live in.

We live in a global world, that's the truth. There are multinational corporations that have offices all around the globe; there are universities that have academic connections with other universities from other continents; everyday we hear on the news what happened that day in the world, no matter that it is a carnival in Brazil, a bombing somewhere in an Islamic country, a civil war in the middle of Africa or a car crash in France. All events are equally important and everyone hears about them. Nowadays it doesn't matter only what happens in Europe, all that happens in the world matters because everything is connected to everything and anything can influence something. It is, therefore, important to learn even the smallest thing we can about other cultures and realise the fact that we are not alone in this world. We have to admit the fact that each culture has its own characteristics and they all create the same world, and we live in it.

The European Union has within its borders different cultures, different traditions and many mentalities. But the European Union must never forget that all these cultures have to work together so that they could be strong as one. All member states define themselves as European but through this they admit the existence of all the other cultures because in an identity definition a comparison is needed. So, it is generally admitted that the world has different elements but they all work together and this is seen especially at the economic level. In trade and finances it doesn't matter much what country you are from or what religion you have, only if you have enough resources to compete. Also, in cases of natural disasters in a country, it doesn't really matter what nationality is the man or woman that comes to help; all that matters is the solidarity.

In conclusion, I think being European is a part of every person that is born on this great continent, but that no one should ignore the fact that he belongs to a wider assembly: the world. Before judging or blaming anyone, we should make an effort to understand the entire mechanism of our world. This is not complicated: we just need to open our minds and find out a few things about the cultures that surround us. This is the first step. Then all we have to do is to see everyone as our friends and do not think that they are bad or lesser persons just because someone from an old, forgotten time had a bad experience. We are all part of the same universe in the end.

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New tendencies in EU governance and the future of the EU governance model – redefinition of old concepts

The explanation of the EU governance model as inter-governmental or federal entity have been today superseded by the multilevel governance model. Multilevel governance gives a valuable account of the way the EU functions from the perspective of the organisation of its public administration institutions. However, its present organisation is the result of the pressure of tendencies that have been present informally or tacitly on subnational and global level since the 1970-1980 and that, in the case of the EU, have been turned into institutional principles of governance.

This institutionalisation is especially visible in the framework of the structural funds, whose gradual development was since the very beginning motivated by the reduction of disparities between the different member states of the Union. Yet, their economic *raison d'etre* has over time radically changed the initial governance relations within the EU. With the gradual introduction of the different principles meant to fix their administration and management, the participation of certain public actors in the EU policy-making processes has been formalised. This since the very beginning encouraged networking among public actors as much as among public and private actors.

Yet networking as such was a trend that has been specific for non-governmental actors, especially on global level, since the 1970-80 due to the advent of internationalisation. Economic stakeholders during the 1980s started to create large corporate networks in order to keep up with internationalisation, while civil society used the global arena to exercise external pressure on national governments with respect to human rights, minority rights and the environment.

The EU as a new and emerging governance entity and, at the same time, as a unique transnational space, provided a futile ground for the application of the principles of global governance. Its supranational level could be perceived as having the role of the oldest international organisations, having to keep the authorities of the member state happy while trying to consolidate the belief of their citizens it its higher goals. It was understood, then, that the economic viability of the EU can only be sustained if the cooperative power of all its actors (governmental, economic, social) is unleashed. This of course meant the role and the principles on which governmental actors and public institutions are based and are functioning need to be radically redefined. Thus, the need to make them "think globally but act locally" was recognised during the *euroforia* of the '80s when the subnational governmental actors were brought to the scene of EU public policy making. Since then the EU has been gradually expanding the range of actors that participate in the preparation, management, implementation and evaluation of its policies and can define its future.

Having a closer look at the structural funds and their development gives us the opportunity to actually see how this process of mapping or incorporation of global economic principles and the strategies to enforce them took place during the last 25 years of the development of the EU. The changes concerning their administration witnessed the gradual inclusion of increasingly more public and non-public actors in a way that became increasingly more formalised. Thus, on the

basis of the same global principles and strategies, the actors upgraded the traditional ways of policy making by creating cooperative networks on different levels and with different actors contributing in that way to an ever more diverse and dynamic governance structure of the EU. Such governance structure adopts cooperation and networking, strategies specific to global economic and civil society structures, as the underling principles in the way all its actors participate in the social structure. This is extremely important in the case of the public actors since they are now forces to act as service providers for the non-governmental actors rather than just as controllers and regulators of the public sphere.

The argument, as suggested above, becomes the key element of social participation of all the actors. Yet, the diversification of the policy-making sphere and participants provided for the emergence of a numerous networks of new actors form all three social sphere (governmental, economic and social/civil) on all the present levels of governance. The advantage of this development is the fact that now EU citizens have multiple routes of access for social participation locally, nationally and transnationally; they can choose on which level and in what way to participate according to their interests and available resources.

On the other hand, this increased networking has a few negative effects. One of them is the fact that it produces an extremely complex network of social interaction, which is difficult to grasp for many European citizens, without a certain amount of involvement of their side and which is also extremely competitive on all levels. There is a pool of ideas that need to be promoted, but their promotion and advertising become extremely difficult if you cannot define the exact parameters of your target group and if there are a dozen of other actors trying to do the same thing. This kind of social participation requires an enormous amount of energy and strength and good educational foundations first of all on individual level so that each citizen can be able to ripe the benefits of such a governance structure. In other words, such a new networking governance structure produces a strong sense of insecurity in terms of inability to be competitive and innovative enough in such a diversified environment from the point of view of the individual citizens.

On the other hand, determining the way such new governing structure is to function, that is establishing sound and non-discriminatory rules of interaction among the various actors and underlying cooperative networks, becomes almost an impossible task under the present circumstances. Yet, this is so not because of the impossibility or the unsustainability of such a governance structure, but because of the inexistence of a guiding vision of how such governance structure might look like.

The benefits of networking have been acknowledge by all the actors and all the levels only by the mere fact that the ways the different actors interact and associate themselves have been booming in the last decade. Networking has been developing too fast for most of the European citizens to be able to keep up with it. It seems to be the EU optimal governance structure, in which there will be no dominant level of governance and no dominant actors, and in which each actor shall be able to participate in the preparation and the administration of the different public policies, at the right state and at the right level, which would lead to optimal level of social commitment and benefits on the part of each individual citizen.

Yet, today's networking structures are constrained by ideologies, concepts and principles that

have been applied for centuries and have been suitable for what used to the modern nation-state.

A post-modern vision of the organisation of the public space of Europe would thus require a

radical overhaul of what democracy, legitimacy, citizenship, identity, social commitment etc. actually mean. It would require the defining democracy and legitimacy not only as direct representation. It would require a concept of citizenship, which is going to be much more flexible the one that we presently enjoy and which is not tightly bound to the remnants of the old concept of a nation-state. It would require the raising of the awareness of the European citizens on the benefits of having "fluid identity" and the education of future generations to think o themselves as multidimensional as the society they shall be living in the near future. And last but not least, it shall require constant awareness that activism is not something that some crazy people do but that each one of us is obliged to participate in the creation of a European space, no matter how little and in what way, in order to be entitled to benefit from its advantages.

Public space and its organisation is the result of the contribution of each member of a specific society, The EU as such is an innovative project that offers us the possibility redefine and ultimately to change the way public space is organised in order to create a new public space which shall be more suitable to each one of us. Yet this requires the development of our social imagination as much as our efforts to stimulate the social imagination of the upcoming generations in order to empower them to make the new public space a sustainable objective.

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Motto:

"Each is for the other the middle term through which each mediates itself; and each is for himself, and for the other, an immediate being on its own accord, which at the same time is such only through this mediation. They recognise themselves as mutually recognising one another." (Hegel 1977:112)

When at the end of the 1980s the EU launched a number of policies aimed to creating a European identity, the member states responded by incorporating into the Maastricht Treaty a clause stating that the European Union should respect the member states' respective national identities (article F, point1). This reaction, along with the introduction of principle of subsidiary and the rejection of the word "federal", revealed that many member states considered the creation of a European identity as a potential threat to their own national identities and their citizen's national loyalties (Hojelid, 2001).

Along with these pessimistic visions of the creation of European identity, there are optimists who do not conceive European identity in zero-sum terms or see incompatible with national identity (Caporaso and Risse, 2001; Weiler 1999). Some authors believe that the increasing globalization of communication and economy is weakening the national identification with issues beyond national borders (Ceruti, 1992). Other analysts conclude that EU integration actually strengths the nation state (Milward, 2000) and accentuate the importance of multiple identities within the EU.

Those who remain skeptical about the development of a European identity reject the notion that citizens can posses more than one identity simultaneously, whereas other authors have noted that

people can hold multiple identities, conceptualized as concentric circles, or feel simultaneously attached to multiple identities based on different factors of identification (Kersberg, 1997).

This context place the European Union at a crucial juncture. It not only faces challenges of enlargement and an expanding agenda but it is also simultaneously questioning its destiny. A number of authors claim that the European Union can face these challenges successfully only if it gains the support of the European population for its current and future projects. Instrumental to creating, this support appears to be the forging of some sort of commonly shared European identity. It is necessary to ask if the construction of such an overarching identity is realistic. Is it possible to establish a feeling of belonging among over 300 million citizens who speak different languages and come from different cultural backgrounds?

A significant part of difficulty comes from the resilience of well-established national identities based on national cultural and political heritages. In these circumstances any future European society will be multicultural and thus its sense of common identity will have to be built upon noncultural factors. The EU may choose to stress one particular European identity, unique and in continuous adaptation to different factors and trends.

There is in today's discourse on European identity one strand that emphasizes such a supranational identity as one to be preferred, or indeed the only one plausible. It would argue that identities are necessarily fluid and ever in need of reinscription, that "there cannot be such a thing as a European identity in the singular but only a plurality of European identities" (Neumann, 2000) that will clash and reconstruct one another in the process that is identity politics.

Each of Europe's states strands in some kind of relation to the EU, as core member, member, honorary economic member or whatever. The prospect of imposing a supranational identity on this very graded and overlapping set of political entities would entail a lot of work. One might think of situations of crisis and war that would help such an undertaking but it remains unlikely that Europe will succumb to the supranational temptation. This does not mean that the trade-off between exclusion and integration is not central to policymaking.

Unlike traditional societies, where a unified common identity prevailed, in modern European societies identities are fragmented according to class origin, gender, religion, local, national and European sense of belonging. Despite this, in the modern world we have simultaneously more than one identity and these identities are often compatible and not generate conflicts of loyalty

(King, 1993, p.6). Identity as a problem manifests itself in situations of uncertainty. As Eric Hobsbawn (1996) has stated, genuine identity problems emerge when people are prevented from having multiple, collective identities. Leaving aside the issue of language, is the European Union collective identity, which is the frame within which people see themselves as Europeans, at stake? To what extend can the parochialism of a plurality of identities coexist with the cosmopolitan nature of a 25 members European Union?

National identities have been constructed in modern Europe with the alliance between the imagery of traditions and the realities of citizenship contracts. It is well-known that "citizenship affects people's identity because it defines were they belong" (Dahrendorf, 1996, p.31). But the formation of national identities has often been promoted by corrective means or war between nations (Wallace, 1991, p.66-67). Europeans have liked to be able to say, "I am European, but I am also British and perhaps also English, and perhaps even Cornish" (Kumar, 2003). Europe-wide identities have been accompanied and often overshadowed by national and local identities, but there is a tendency of loosing their exclusiveness and are now increasingly accompanied and perhaps superseded by other forms of identity: regional, supranational and transnational.

As so, we have to think of Europe as a field of multiple, overlapping and sometimes even conflicting identities, as constructed out of both categorical similarities and relational ties, but no set of these reaches all Europeans without joining a range of non-Europeans as well. Europeans derive their similarity not from a lowest common denominator nor from rigidly enforced boundaries but from characteristics that many Europeans hold in common without any being definitive of the whole. As some children have the family characteristic eyes and others its nose, so some Europeans may share musical tastes but not politics, others may share trade union ties but resist cultural similarity. But Europe need not be simply a melting pot, le *creuset européen* in which previous cultures are combined in a single new blend (Calhoun, 2000, p.53).

With regard to identity formation, the European integration process has posed (at least) two challenges. First, it has suggested that some sense of Europeanness should be integrated into in-group identity, with the fellow member states no longer being seen as external Others, but as part of the in-group. Second, the European Union itself has grown into an, inspiring or threatening, external Other for many European countries. Anna Triandafyllidou found response to these challenges in her material. In all countries studied, the press discourse revealed a dynamic interaction between, on the one hand, national traditions and established features of national identity and, on the other hand, the necessity to deal with new challenges and changing social,

economic and political environments. Discourses of nationhood tended to re-invent, modify, transform and re-interpret formerly established national features, giving birth to new understandings of nationhood and images of the nation. In some cases, however, this had its price.

The new-born opening towards a 'European' identity was accompanied by increasing hostility towards groups of immigrants. Through contrasting with the internal threatening Other, this suggests, the nation strengthens its sense of belonging and thus can afford to open towards inspiring external Others, such as the European Union. Anna Triandafyllidou, however, concludes her analysis in an optimistic tone. At least in three of her cases (not surprisingly, the ones that also are part of the Euro-zone) she traces a new form of nationhood, developing in interaction between former national identities and some form of Europeanness. National identities develop into more flexible forms of national belonging, which allow for national traditions and feelings of 'we-ness' to intersect with a wider transnational cultural and political space which is partly included in the identity space. Because these new discourses of nationhood become more complex and the boundaries more blurred, she argues that they may in the long run render difficult the definitions of Others as people not belonging to the in-group.

Like the notion of Europe itself, two features are characteristic of the European Union: its diversity and the changeability of its borders. The EU up to the 1990s was identified as a Western Europe, defined in contrast to the Eastern Bloc. The EU identity was defined in opposition to the East communism; the openness, democracy and freedom of Western Europe were contrasted with the totalitarian system of the 'other". But, as the EU space was culturally and politically homogenous, it constituted its internal "others". The North was seen as the norm and the South as "other"-connected but deviant (Hadjimichalis,1997). With the fall of the Wall and the opening towards Eastern enlargement of the EU the main threatening "other" for Western Europe disappears. The borders between Western and Eastern Europe are redefined but not by eliminating the distinction but by moving the borders further eastwards (Neumann, 1994).

The claims that EU has an underplaying unity or that it is a fragmented entity play the either/or assumption. As Moretti suggested, complex Europe carries meaning as a welter of contradictory, yet co-existent forces. This is "a productive entity" (Renwick, 1996) in a continuous dynamic and tension between different identities. And, as the making of selves is dependent on the raw material of available identities, the EU has to negotiate its identity with the amalgam of identities within it.

Summarising, it should be remembered that authors such Smith (1999) and Østerud (1999) hypothesised that it would be extremely difficult for a European identity to emerge, given the strength of national cultural identities and the simultaneous lack of European "cultural" elements shared by all Europeans. Hence, one the one hand we find that national identities are still stronger and primarily "cultural", but on the other hand we find that "cultural" attachment to a European identity is also relevant mainly in the Eastern and Central European Countries but also in other member states.

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The Notion of Identity

According to psychologist Erik Erikson, identity means, "a system of self-definitions of the social actor". This modern sense of identity denotes not only "sameness", but also an image according to which one associates and projects oneself. Michael Wintle said that the most important feature of identity is its multiple nature. It is possible to have a single identity but it will always be made up of several separate identifications, some of which might be contradictory. Some are stronger than the others and the pattern can change over time. People are often influenced by multiple identities that apply based on circumstances such as national, racial, social and language identities.

We can say that national identity is an expression of politically oriented collective consciousness that results in the common will to act and work together and integrates people by mobilising their emotional bonds[1]. In other words, it is the national identity that welds people into one nation. Wintle agrees with such a conception in saying that "perhaps the most remarkable feature of national identity and feeling is that it can unite sometimes wildly different people into powerful alliances, without them even sharing the same ideology."[2]

National identity and European identity

Obviously, a united Europe arises from pluralism: linguistic and cultural diversity, as well as institutional diversity in which each carries a strong cultural and political tradition. The European political project cannot ignore this plurality within which various national cultures are necessarily expressed. Therefore, the European identity cannot be the sum of these various cultures but a space where they are all in relation. It can be perceived as some kind of envelope that includes senses of belonging to different nations, minorities and various ethnic groups of our continent.

How does globalisation or further integration of the European Union affect the nation-state and the sense of national identity? Both are very complex phenomenon and we can distinguish between their economic and cultural dimensions. As a result of economic factors, especially growing internationalisation of the global economy and the increasing importance of multinational companies, there is a tendency towards one world - meaning that more and more people tend to identify with large transnational entities (e.g.- the European Union). But on the other hand, this can mean that the lower middle-class and working-class are more likely to identify with traditional nationalism. According to Stuart Hall, as a result of globalisation "one can see a regression to a very defensive and highly dangerous form of national identity which is driven by a very aggressive form of racism"[3].

Decentralisation is another "product" of globalisation. Regions play a more and more important role in Europe. Their increasing role can be explained by the initiatives on the part of state, as

[1] Böckenförde E. –W (1995): *Naród. Tożsamość w swych różnych postaciach*, in: *Tożsamość w czasach zmiany. Rozmowy z Castel Gandolfo*, Kraków
[2] M. Wintle (1996): *Cultural identity in Europe*, England: Avebury
[3] S. Hall (1993): *The Local and the Global: Globalization and Ethnicity*, in King, A D (ed.) *Culture, Globalization and the World-System: Contemporary Conditions for the Representation of Identity*, Binghamton: Macmillan.

well by the regional policy of the EU. Regions offer alternative foci of identity to the national identity, which leads to either a single regional identity (Corsican, Basque, Scottish) or to a dual identity (British-Scottish, Corsican-French, Basque-Spanish). Those tendencies lead to the conclusion that the nature of nation-state and national identity has been modified over recent years. However, the question whether the nation-state will survive as the principal unit of the international political system and the principal focus of collective identity or whether it will be submerged by transnational entities or fragmented into smaller units remains uncertain. But we have to admit that European countries still remain in the world of nations even if their nature has been undergoing important changes. One can argue that national identity is the most important and the most "natural" identity of the modern man. However, the spheres in which modern man pursues his interests and build communities are not inherently linked with territorially limited boundaries of the nation-state. Hence it is conceivable that the identity of individuals, which has been rooted in their nationality, may lose its predominant role.

The question of European cultural identity is particularly important nowadays. As has already been mentioned above, it is being seen as a parallel development to the construction of a European Union - a development that could give the European project both internal and external legitimacy. There are several factors that played a decisive role in European unification. Some of them include: external threats, feelings of community that derive from Christianity, and the interests of particular states Some scholars argue that the process of western European integration, as a shift of powers from the nation-state to the EU is paralleled by the dissolution of the traditional identity construction in the form of nationalist "front lines" between European countries. With the dissolution of those fronts, a necessary condition for creating a European identity has been met. That condition will be sufficient when it would consist of the social cement, based on the belief that others are of the same community[4]. Looking for definition of European identity we cannot refer to such important notions for creation of a national identity such as a common language, religion, origin, or tradition. So the meaning of European identity refers to the notion of European cultural heritage which can be understood as the common European historical experience, which consists of Roman and Greek humanism, Christianity, the Renaissance, the Enlightenment, the industrial revolution, rationalism, romanticism and socialist doctrines. In other words, the notion of European identity can be understood as a set of certain values and ideas, which stem out of common European cultural heritage, the basis of which a "real sense" of European consciousness can be developed, is complementary to the notion of national identity. Moreover, it could define itself through national identity: a sense of belonging to Europe can be expressed by a strong sense of belonging to one nation.

Habermas assumed that national identity in contemporary Europe is formed by allegiance to the political principle of democracy and the constitutional state, which has however, to be reflected through the prism of the specific national culture and historical memory. The nation in this context should take a form of civic-nation. In other words, the idea of European citizenship would enable coexistence of many national identities and it will not demand that they will disappear. Europe as a space of citizenship adds new element to the individual's choice of identity: thinking of oneself as European. The European culture cannot ignore the diversity of national cultures, languages and territorial and no territorial identities. Thus, a European space cannot be constructed unless these identities are preserved as its constitutive elements.

[4] D. Fuchs, J. Gerhard's, E. Roller *Nationalism versus Euro centrism? The Construction of Collective Identities in Western Europe*, in: Marco Martiniello, *Migration, Citizenship and National Identities in the European Union*, Aldershot: Avebury

Conclusion:

There is no winning formula for a successful Europe. A key question is the question of European identity and the common denominator of European values. Just one look at European history could reveal problems for European unification: wars, conflicts and divisions were common. However, the basis for this unification lies in efforts to make those existing differences irrelevant. An advantage of Europe is its potential to live with others. A European spirit already lies in each distinct cultural identity as its valuable and civilization component. Unity in differences is the principle that in the best way expresses European identity.

The process of Europeanisation, much like the process of globalisation, requires - despite the integration into global economy - political, social, and cultural alignments among nations and it is a source of an identity anxiety. But if we consider European identity as a common cultural heritage of Europe, we could conclude that national identity and European identity are not contradictory notions but compatible ones. "Identity is usually multiple and potentially integrational, so there is no ostensible reason to why a European identity should not exist alongside national one, in the same way the nation already exist alongside gender, race, age and all the other aspects of identity which we have"[5] The only problem is that the consciousness of this identity has not been yet sufficiently developed.

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Plurality of Identities in Europe

Motto:
"…The community is founded upon a thin post-national identity defined by liberal values and norms of domestic and international conduct…" (Frank Schimmelfennig)

The European Union differs from the traditional states not only due to its external policies or internal institutional design, but also due to its claim to act as a single and unitary actor. Moreover, if we look within European Union, some of the member states are many times rivals for the EU as actors in the international arena. In this context, the present article is trying to analyze this difficulty of European Union to be a unitary international actor from a more recent approach to international relations, that of *identity*.

The discipline of International Relations is, recently, witnessing a surge of interest in identity and identity formation. This development has definitely been permitted and facilitated by the general uncertainty of a discipline that feels itself to have spent the 1980s barking up the wrong trees. Furthermore, since identity formation has been foremost among the common concerns of social theory for years and years, it was very easy to become one also in the theory of international relations.

Until 1980s, the positivist and empirical approaches dominated the theory of international relations. All these theories were concentrated on the states' actions. They believed that states are the only important actors in the system. Moreover, all their studies were based only on empirical

methodologies. The new theories that appeared in the 1980's tried to bring a totally different view towards the theory of international relations. They criticised the ontology, epistemology and methodology of all the previous theories. They claimed that there were some normative aspects in the international system that had to be taken into consideration. One of the most important ideas that was brought by, due to these theories, was the role of identity and the importance of its formation in the study of international relations.

As I've stated before, the 1980's brought a lot of changes in the theory of international relations. For the first time, the states and their high politics didn't play the only role in the international system. The emergence of the concept of *identity* in the study of international affairs was due to the changes that happened in the last years. A lot of national and ethnic movements appeared; changes that urged the theorists of international relations to try to analyse the causes of all these changes. Consequently, the conflict between different states transformed into the conflict between different identities. What were these identities and what was their importance were only some questions to which the theorists tried to find answers. Moreover, what was most important was to see how these identities formed and what implications could this have on their behaviour.

The theorists of international relations started to compare the man's behaviour with the state's one, and so they started to compare the formation of self-identity with the formation of national identity.

When we look to the Oxford English Dictionary we see that identity means: "the sameness of a person or thing at all times or in all circumstances, the condition or fact that a person or thing is itself and not something else" (Neumann 1999: 216). "In the philosophical sense an identity is whatever makes a thing what it is. […identity is] a property of intentional actors that generates motivational and behavioral dispositions. This means that identity is at base a subjective or unit-

level quality, rooted in an actor's self-understanding." (Wendt 2000: 224). So identity is actually a set of core values that one person develops for him/her self.

Since identity implies – and indeed literally means – selfsameness, what could we say about collective identity? Moreover, is collective identity as flexible and context changing as the individual identity? Could we apply the same characteristics and discuss in the same terms about collective identity as we do about individual identity?

These were just a few issues that some of the theorists of international relations did not take into consideration when talking about identity in international relations. Consequently, when theorizing identity in international relations we should concentrate on the collective understanding of identity and its particularities in comparison with the more cohesive individual identity. Following the same logic, when discussing about European identity and its crucial role in the integration process we should first focus on its collective and diverse character.

Indeed, at the level of collective identity, the pursuit of consistency, of a strong cultural identity, or of selfsameness is completely different from the ones of individual identity. Consequently, we cannot claim (as most of the scholars do) that European Union has, either, cultural, religious or politic unifying identity; it is rather a very complex and diverse identity.

There are a lot of theories and different approaches on the formation of European identity. Still, greatly simplifying existing theories concerning the emergence of European identity, there could be identified three main approaches, distinguished by the different possible sources of European identification they defend. These three approaches are the "cultural", "instrumental" and "civic" theories.

The "cultural" approach to European identity stresses the idea that it should emulate from the "classical" nation-building of the type seen during the 19th century, but now developing at the European level and including an attempt to construct a stronger European identity. Still, cultural diversity and structural differences are deeply rooted and, as a result, expectations of the emergence of a European identity should be regarded as rather utopian.

For the proponents of the "instrumental" theory, European identity would be consciously decided on, and are thus based on calculated individual self-interest. Consequently, the perception of the potential gains or looses that might result from the membership of a given social group may influence peoples' identification with it.

Finally, the third approach, the "civic" theory, stresses the development of identities around agreement over rules for peaceful political co-existence, shared cultural norms, and common beliefs. From this perspective, the substance of EU membership and European identity lies in a commitment to the shared values of the Union as expressed in its constituent documents or a commitment to the duties and rights of a civic society. Drawing on deliberative theories of democracy and Habermasian conceptions of communicative rationality, the emergence of a European public sphere would be crucial for the emergence of a European identity.

Analysing all these theories, we could easily observe their focus on unity and the cohesive understanding of European identity. Still, as I claimed before the collective identity is different from the individual one: it is not at all cohesive and does not focus on absolute selfsameness; it is rather based on diversity among its units.

Moreover, if we take into consideration the last and future Eastern enlargement the situation of cohesiveness is even more elusive. Heterogeneity within EU will strongly increase with the accession of Central and Eastern European countries. The new members will bring with them a peculiar historical, political, economic and social heritage and the problems of their region. They have a particularly low level of socioeconomic development, struggle with specific problems of transformation from the Communist society, and possess political traditions (long periods of authoritarianism, foreign domination, etc.) that distinguish them clearly from the other Western member states.

The socialist experiment in Eastern Europe exhibited three important aspects. One was an exaggeration of those characteristics that had defined Eastern Europe's past- authoritarian rule, the erasure of boundary between the state and the society, the state and the economy, the private and the public, the radial structure of a political system, and the rejection of an interest-based, pluralist, and competitive politics.

Another important characteristic was a dramatic break with the past. Especially in the early decades of socialism, there was extraordinarily rapid urbanization, expansion of the educational and health care systems, and economic growth.

The final aspect of the communist period was that related to the complex approach taken to the national question. On the one hand, socialist identity was to supplant nationalist identity; on the other hand, national differences were encouraged – most notably in the multinational states of Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, and Soviet Union with their multiple officially recognized languages; their representation at the centre and their ethno-territorial federal structures that allowed for a coincidence among nationality, administration, and geography.

To conclude, what the Soviet state socialism was designed to do was to separate the East from the West, and in many respects it managed, as the Eastern Europe is still followed by its past. Even though we are now talking about a united Europe, there are still embedded differences between the East and West that will, of course, continue its impact on further developments.

Moreover, the differences among the Member States are not only among West and East, but they are much wider and complex. The next table will reveal the complexity of differences among the member states in European Union, due to some important conflictual lines between them.

Table 1. Conflicts within European Union

Criteria	Conflicts
Size	Big *vs.* Small states
Location	Northern *vs.* Southern states
Industrialisation	Urban *vs.* Rural states
Point of entry	Founding *vs.* New member states
Independence	Atlanticists *vs.* Europeanists
Domestic government	Unitary *vs.* Decentralised/ federal states

Source: LODGE, J. 1983. **Institutions and politics of the European Community.** London: Frances Pinter.

The table reveals a very complex and dynamic net of conflicts within European Union. These conflicts among the member state are very strongly embedded in every nation's identity and cannot be undermined in the construction of a future European identity.

The eastern enlargement brought, as I've stated before, another problem into the equation: the post-communist inheritance. The new member states have a different history and past that influence their current behaviour. Even if we take into consideration all their recent economic

and political developments, at social level, the population remain still marked with the communist inheritance: low level of trust in people and institutions, low civic participation and engagement, but most importantly low level of cohesion.

Moreover, if we look forward to the 2007 accession of Romania and Bulgaria, or later Turkey and Croatia, the diversity will increase even more. Orthodox and Muslim countries will join the European family. In this context, how we could talk about a unifying European identity?

All in all, it is obvious that European Union does not have a unitary collective identity, and much more, it is impossible even in the foreseeable future to construct one. What we could only argue is that the European identity lies in its diversity and its differences among the units. We cannot talk about unitary and common identity, but we could talk about a plurality of identities in Europe that agreed on a set of basic rules and values.

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Often when we talk about Europe we are referring to something that is confusing in its nature:

> "There is Europe and there is "Europe." There is the place, the continent, the political and economic reality, and there is Europe as an idea and an ideal, as a dream, as a project, process, progress towards some visionary goal. No other continent is so obsessed with its own meaning and direction." [6]

From a geographical point of view, Europe isn't a continent at all without the (far greater) Asian part and all too often the question arises: where does Europe start and where does it end? Its northern, western and southern boarders are formed by seas and oceans, while the eastern boarder is unclearly marked by the Ural Mountains and the Caucasus, including Asian countries whose culture is incline towards the European (including Cyprus, Turkey and countries of the Caucasus).

> "This most ill-defined of continents has, after all, been open for long stretches of its history not just on one but on three sides: to the south across the Mediterranean, throughout most of what we call "ancient history" and in some ways again today; to the east, where Europe does not end but merely fades away, into Asia; and to the west, across the Atlantic, especially in our post-1945 "West."" [7]

As a space open towards all inhabited areas of the world, Europe was the place where for centuries the most different cultures met each other, mixed, and waged wars. A society characterised by peaceful co-existence and harsh conflicts was forged, where religion, culture, ethnic groups, ideology, race and mentality created differences between the peoples. Does this mean that affection and understanding are traits of the peoples of Europe? Never! Europeans do not like each other but they are never the less coupled together by constraint. The history of Europe is a history of wars and conflicts, unimaginable crimes, and human tragedy, but at the same time a history of constant cultural, scientific and economical progress.

> "In short, no continent is externally more ill-defined, internally more diverse, or historically more disorderly. Yet no continent has produced more schemes for its own orderly unification. The paradox is only apparent. The former cries out for the latter." [8]

The word "Europe" comes from the Semitic word for west, dark, and dusk; in other words "the land of the setting sun." Phoenicians and other Semitic people of the Middle East used the word ereb/erob when referring to the unknown lands in the west. The Greek took up the word and used it as a synonym for the "non-Greek" lands and other areas of the mainland north and west.

[6] Timothy Garton Ash, History of the Present, page 279
[7] same as above, page 153
[8] Timothy Garton Ash, Is Europe becoming Europe?

For the Greeks and Romans, Europe was the "foreign" and "other" towards which they established themselves as tribes/communities/peoples. Europe was the continental uncharted wilderness of the Ancient World, and even though it was inhabited from very early human history, its people did not make a significant impact on history even during the decline of the Roman Empire.

The notion of Europe was created through the relations Centre – Periphery, and West – East. The Centre symbolizes the focal point – that is the focal point for government, economy, power, knowledge, celestial spirit, noble race… – while the Periphery is remote, inferior, dependant and in envy of the Centre. In this case East and West are not just geographical terms but cultural as well. The West acquires the appearance of the well structured, clear, light and Christian, while the East embodies everything dark, mystical, Islamic and Christian-Orthodox (not to mention Buddhist and Hindu). A need arises to define the being of ones enlightened self through the existence, and especially difference, to the other, the inferior.

In the Ancient World Europe was a synonym of the Periphery for Greeks and Romans alike, which they constructed against their Mediterranean Centres. The Greek word "barbaros", used to describe every foreigner, now acquires the meaning for a crude and wild human whom only the enlightened Greeks and Romans could emancipate. After the unification of Europe under Charlemagne it becomes the Centre while the Atlantic Ocean, the Sahara, the unknown vastness of Asia and especially Islam create the Periphery. The relation West – East is added to the existing relation Centre – Periphery and strengthens it. The West becomes the enlightened Centre, the East a dark Periphery, hence the historic role of the West to illuminate the dark.

It is obvious that West and East are complex metaphors that describe and explain the mental structure of the "Old Continent" and these historically inspired ideas sometimes represent a positive, but more frequently a negative influence on the history of humankind. This European mindset will reach its culmination with the peak of Colonialism and weaken with its decline, but is in some forms present even today – especially since the "Light of the World" moved to the other side of the Atlantic during the first half of the 20th Century. It is only with the emergence of independent and self-conscious states and nations that a new approach on how to think about Europe develops. Gradually, and especially in the aftermath of great wars and uproars, the idea of European federalism is born, along with supra-state structures and peacekeeping mechanisms to support it. These ideas gained impetus during and after the Thirty-Years-War but will make an impact only after the World Wars of the 20th Century.

Referring to post-1945 Europe, Edgar Morin says that Europe and Europeans are connected through a mutual fate and that the new European conscience is the conscience about this shared destiny. [9] Only through joint efforts can the centennial dream of all Europeans for lasting peace become reality. It is therefore appropriate to say that we do not ask ourselves anymore if we want Europe, but what kind of Europe we want! Denis de Rougemont's famous sentence, "Europe's will to live means her will to unite", is confirmed by European history from 1955 onward. The European Union has transformed itself from a visionary post-World War II creation to a necessary and even indispensable force, a European answer to globalisation.

> "Enlargement is a pretty dull word as a goal for Europe. Enlargement is a means to an end; what is the end? The end is to ensure that we don't start fighting each other again, because that is what a great deal of European history has consisted of. This continent is extraordinarily diverse,

[9] Edgar Morin, Kako misliti Evropu, page 131

> extraordinarily rich in culture, in invention, but also extraordinarily disorderly." [10]

Contemporary Europe – through the European Union that by expanding re-defines itself periodically – is developing culturally and historically, and aspires towards the creation of a "European Identity." A system of interwoven values, this identity maintains as many interpretations as there are people discussing it. Walter Schwimmer, the General Secretary of the Council of Europe said in a speech before this body that "in the Council of Europe we define "Europe" as a community of shared values in a given geographical area" [11]

One can say that a huge variety of different approaches on how to think of Europe exist throughout the continent. Probably the most important European idea is would be to that such an idea does not exist and that it has to be constructed as a dialogue of all European ideas. This can be summed up in the motto of the European Union "United in Diversity". Such a Europe would be a composition that connects without unifying, creating itself through its differences. Quoting Morin: "Europe is Europe only because Europe does not exist". [12]

[10] Timothy Garton Ash, Conversations with History
[11] www.wikipedia.com
[12] Edgar Morin, Kako misliti Evropu, page 37

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"And when you appear to lose yourself completely, compare yourself to others, so that you may recognize yourself."
Goethe, *Torquato Tasso,Act V*[13]

Identity is not stagnant. Identity is a mental construct and as such it is subject to renegotiation that pivots on the changing elucidation of the proverbial ***Other*,** which in Europe corresponds with the oscillation of the external eastern border of exclusion[14]. Applied to European identity, Mayer and Palmowski emphasize that "…for the formation and articulation of identities, it is much more important to consider the nature of boundaries, the precise point at which identities are challenged and articulated."[15]

The European Union is currently revisiting the nature of its newly acquired external boundary, which resulted from the 1 May 2004 accession of ten Central and Eastern European countries to the EU. The EU eastern frontier borders on the centuries old European perceptions and understandings of the *Other* are currently solidifying in polarization to its Medieval conceptualizations. These conceptualizations emerged with the formation of a promising European political awareness which developed under Charlemagne in 800s, and which was characterized by juxtaposition of the emerging Christendom to the Byzantine and Ottoman Empires. These constructions of the *Other* were perceived as cultural, political and religious threats that needed to be abated and controlled[16]. Finally the EU came up with a Constitution for Europe which although failed the referendums is still a founding document that defines the values and principles developed from the *cultural, religious and humanistic inheritance of Europe.*

[13] Mayer and Palmowski, "European Identities and the EU – The Ties that Bind the People of Europe", JCMS 2004 Volume 42, Number 3, p. 577
[14] Delanty, G. Inventing Europe. Idea, Identity, Reality; "The Frontier and Identities of Exclusion in European History. Macmillan Press, Basingstoke and London, 1995, pp. 93-101
[15] Mayer and Palmowski, p. 578
[16] Rietbergen, P. Europe. A Cultural History. "Three Worlds Around the Inner Sea: western Christendom, eastern Christendom and Islam." Routledge, London and New York, 1998, pp. 102-119.

A look at its history of fifty years shows that the EU has left behind the Cold War and started to establish institutions in order to promote a process of step by step integration and to reunite its lost parts. It is a successful story that is faced with obvious changes in values and challenges during the preceding decades, reflecting a new mood and perception in public opinion such as the accession of former dictatorship countries, the Eastern Enlargement with new nation-specific cultural and political values; the consensus reached in the long and hard debated issue whether the Preamble should contain any reference to God or to Christian values and the Greco-Latin heritage by the Convention; the compromises within the European institutions, but also the role and the impact of the European values and identity upon the external relations of the Union, especially upon the dialogue and (inter-)mediation concerning the new neighbourhood, the Mediterranean and the Middle-East. But in the last years an intensive debate about the ***Christian-occidental-identity*** preoccupies Europe regarding the accession of Turkey.

How does the European Union cope with this situation? Is heterogeneous Europe ready to absorb an alien culture? Will Europe prefer to defend its *Christian-occidental-identity* or demonstrate a fantastic capability of being truly plural in terms of identity?

In order to answer this question I would like to firstly concentrate on what we call European values by providing a brief historical overview. Secondly, I will focus my attention on the *general EU external identity*.

According to the Greek mythology Europe is named after *Europa*, the daughter of the Phoenician King. This continent has been the field where the ancient Greco-Roman culture flourished, where the European knights fought the Muslim Arab invaders and saved the continent from Islam's hegemony; where nation-states, new organisational models of social order were built, where great philosophers Plato, Aristotle, Seneca, St. Augustine, Rousseau, Locke, Hobbes and Machiavelli lived and paved the way for spiritual-values in the Enlightenment (e.g. democracy, separation of religion and state, individualism, equality of women and men etc.); where a kind of pan European understanding of the common cultural and religious heritage started to emerge; where internal war-waging ended with the creation of the first internationally relevant Human Rights Convention and the Hague War laws at the end of the 19th Century. Finally, after continuous war-waging until the first half of the 20th century we now can see Europe gone through considerable values' changes shifting from aristocracy to spiritual and then to organised mass-values.[17] So what really unites Europe is the common history and experience of mutually caused common decline on the worlds-wide power politics theatre. Therefore we

[17] Stadler,C. On identity and Values of Europe p.8f

may conclude that Europe has found the "tradition" of human rights based on the universal human dignity, because of its specific development and faith.[18]

The need for a discussion about common European values started in 1999 when the Council approved the eligibility of Turkey to fulfil the Copenhagen Criteria to access the European Union. A variety of strategies was and still is concerned within the European institutions and the Member States towards the candidature of Turkey. The basic hindering factor remains the democratic deficit in Turkey as well as the lack of common cultural, religious and humanistic inheritance with Europe. These attitudes are debated especially in Germany and France, two countries with the biggest population of Turkish Muslims in Europe. Some say that the relationship to Turkey is not marked by the same feeling of a common identity that Europeans shared even when they were at war with each other, namely the historic feeling and self-perception of a common destiny. Turkey is not a European country and has never participated in this process of Europe, it was not affected by Antiquity, Roman Law, the Reformation, the Enlightenment and thus it has no place in the European "value-cosmos" [19]

It is also appropriate to consider the construction of the *general* EU external identity as presented in Title V of the Treaty of the European Union (TEU). Article 11 of TEU states that within the remit of the CFSP, the EU shall

> "[…] safeguard the common values, fundamental interests, independence and integrity of the Union, […] strengthen the security of the Union in all ways, […] safeguard international security and […]develop and consolidate democracy and the rule of law, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms".[20]

According to the Article cited above, the EU commits itself to 'developing and consolidating democracy and the rule of law, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.' In the international community the EU is increasingly perceived as a community of these particular values[21], which negotiate and crystallize the external identity of the EU. Within this context, commencing accession negotiations with Turkey and thus introducing the prospect of a future enlargement of the EU to include Turkey – conditioned on strict compliance with the Copenhagen criteria designed to uphold democracy, rule of law and respect for human rights –

[18] Stadler,C. On identity and Values of Europe p.11f
[19] Wehler, H-U.,Die türkische Frage in FAZ, 19.12.2003
[20] Treaty of the European Union, Title V, Article 11, www.europa.int.eu
[21] Phillips, David L.: "Turkey's Dreams of Accession," Foreign Affairs, Volume 83 No. 5, Washington D.C. September/October 2004, p. 97.

upholds the previous conclusion that these developments would not pose a 'critical juncture' for the official EU external identity.

However, the ambiguity of the Article's reference to the 'common values' establishes a ground for potential purposive problematization of Turkey's future EU membership in the media, where various actors express their perception of Turkey as the *Other*. Despite Turkish transformation, it is still perceived as different, especially in reference to the "sharp differences between Turkish and European cultural views on the roles of men and women"[22]. As mentioned previously, European elites constructed European identity in opposition to the "decadent, effete, depraved, and weak societies of 'the East', dominated by the Ottoman Empire."[23] Despite the claims that Turkey embraces and has internalised modern elements of *Europeanness*[24] and despite Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan's official dedication to sustaining Ataturk's dream of constructing secularised Turkey after the European model, France's former president Valery Giscard d'Estaing clearly expressed his opposition regarding the possibility of Turkish membership in the EU. In *Le Monde* issue from 8 November 2004, he "flatly asserted that Turkey simply is not a European country, […as] it has a different culture, a different approach, and a different way of life."[25] These remarks were echoed by West Germany's former chancellor Helmut Schmidt, who publicly expressed his fears that "admission of Turkey would open the door for similarly plausible full membership of other Muslim nations in Africa and the Middle East […which could result in the EU] degenerating into nothing more than a free trade community"[26].

What if Turkey is accepted? A country that is still perceived as culturally different, a sentiment that seems to hold a great sway over the European public, would be socialized and internalized into the revised perception of the European *Self*. The EU's external identity would break the rules of the ideological frameworks of Europeanness to include an Islamic culture. In this sense, the EU will embark on constructing a post-nationalist external identity, which would assume a thin, shared political identity on the EU level, which would in turn renegotiate the 'European' cultural element of the EU. The EU has officially set a course for such post-nationalist architecture, whereby the step towards accepting Turkey as a member of the EU

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[22] Teitelbaum and Martin, "Is Turkey Ready for Europe?" Foreign Affairs, Volume 82 No. 3, Washington D.C., May/June 2003, p. 105.
[23] Teitelbaum and Martin, p. 98
[24] Coker argues that Islamist Revivalism is 'completely consistent with three major aspects of modernity: the scientific tradition, the notion that knowledge is not culture specific but universal, it constitutes a means rather than an end, which is not a "devaluation but preservation of traditional cultural values"'; Coker, Christopher, Twilight of the West, Westview Press, a member of Perseus Books, L.L.C., Oxford 1998, p. 160-164.
[25] Teitelbaum and Martin, p. 98
[26] Ibid.

would prove to push the Union forward on its path towards acquiring its expanded regional and perhaps *global identity*.

Ultimately, this discussion has resulted in an interesting conclusion pertaining to the divergence of the identities between the one that pertains to the EU and that, which symbolizes identity of territorial and cultural Europe as such. In this sense, accepting Turkey within its ranks could on one hand ultimately divorce the EU identity from the prevailing perception of the *European identity*. The convergence of the EU and European identities would not result in a symbiosis that would merge these two meanings into one common identity. On the other hand, Turkish EU membership could prove itself as a 'critical junction' that would revise the 19th-20th century meaning of Europe and reinvent a new understanding of popular European identity to embrace and internalize the current offspring of the Medieval *Other*. The perception construction triggered by the 'critical junction' would become an effort operating on two levels: the political elites would politicize the image of Turkey to become more pleasant to the general public, which would in turn embark on the process of reinventing its traditional perception of its European identity to include the *Other*. The EU could either defend its European identity by deciding to exclude Turkey from the club, or build a bridge to cross the civilizational divide. Ultimately, the EU stands before a test and a historical juncture of self-invention as it faces a challenging task in harmonizing the construction of its own external identity with its commitment to its internal identity as democracy expressiveness of the will of the people.

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Europe: Plurality of Identities

The essay is structured in two main parts. It begins with the definition of identity, continues with a historical view upon the European identity and, in the second part, it discusses the plurality of European languages, cultures, economic and political as crucial elements that define one's identity. Throughout, this essay is arguing in favor of defending the plurality of European identities.

What is Identity?
Identity is an umbrella term used throughout the social sciences for an individual's comprehension of him or herself as a discrete, separate entity. In sociology and political science, the notion of social identity is individuals' labeling of themselves as members of particular groups -- such as Nation, Social class, Subculture, Ethnicity, Gender, Employment and so forth.

How can we define the European identity?
Neither geographically nor culturally is Europe constituted as a clearly defined area or space. European identity can be determined only on the basis of its history. Historically, Europe has several roots that form what can be called the identity of the political and cultural history of Europe. The most important roots are Athens, Rome and, in a special way, Jerusalem. In as much as the culture of late antiquity entered into Eastern and Central Europe and shaped different Celtic and Germanic cultures, several different and interpenetrating cultural forms were established which would shape the coming history.

Europe, as a unifying political, economic and cultural entity, has been brought into being very much by missionary monasticism, the practice of pilgrimages and the rejection of the respective other, be it the Mongols during the 13th century, the Turks during the 15th and 16th centuries and overseas cultures during the 18th and 19th centuries.

However, there is nothing like "the" European identity or values (and neither can we speak of the Asian values, only about Chinese or Indian values). The European identity is comprised of a multitude of ethnical, national and personal identities, developed from the same historical roots, sharing some common values, but is far away from a unified European identity.

Different identities do not necessarily exclude each other but can complement each other. Therefore, local, regional and global identities can be related to each other. This holds true for political identities as well as languages, that includes dialects, regional languages, and communication in a "world language". In similar ways religious identities can be related to each other. Different identities influence each other through processes of amalgamation and exclusion. Identities are shaped in ever changing contexts and they are always a process.

From a personal perspective, we don't have an unique European identity and we shouldn't strive to reach one. We can learn and change through interaction with other cultures, without losing our personal or national values. Our aim as children of Europe is to preserve our diversity of cultures and identities as they represent our strength, our capacity to learn and transcend ourselves, to evolve, and to become better people and societies.

Language

Almost since the dawn of time, language, weapons and money have been the most powerful means of communication and socialisation created by human ingenuity. Of those three, language is the most important element of the cultural identity.

The identification of a European culture as such only began with Romanisation, thanks to the massive extension of Latin as the universal language of culture. The Holy Empire was able to reinforce this linguistic identity with the much more powerful force of religious conviction. It is this kind of fantasy, sometimes made real by the spilling of more than a little blood, that has kept us alive practically until the present.

History shows that languages are created by people but imposed by empires. Arnold Toynbee has already described the paradox that, while in the Old Testament the proliferation of languages is shown as a torment and a divine punishment against the arrogant architects of the Tower of Babel, the first gift given to the apostles at Pentecost was the gift of tongues.

The plurality of languages is today an important part of our cultural and historical richness and all efforts should be made to preserve our linguistic diversity. I remember watching on Discovery Channel the UNESCO short movies about endangered languages and realising that those people are losing not only their language but also their culture and identity and our world becomes a poorer place by losing a piece of its rich cultural tapestry.

Returning to Europe, there are two extreme scenarios possible: everyone speaks one language (a globalisation that will make us a lot poorer) or everyone speaks every language. The first scenario, which would entail the establishment of a *lingua franca*, was never politically desirable or practically possible. Nonetheless, English has by now become that which Latin was for Europe in the Middle Ages. The official Europe, in particular the European Commission, is quite taken by the second scenario: as many citizens of Europe should speak as many languages as possible, at the very least two languages in addition to their mother tongue. This aim is at the heart of the new European Action Plan for Language Learning and Linguistic Diversity.

In conclusion, from a linguistic point of view, Europe is a plurality of languages, and every effort should be made to maintain our cultural and linguistic diversity as this represents an important element of our identity.

Culture

In the knowledge-based society as Europe wants to become, the economy is to an extent based on culture and its free circulation. But more importantly, culture defines what we are: it comprises our traditions, values and our views for the future.

We can make a compelling parallel between cultural diversity and biological diversity, as regarding the evolutionary potential of our society. One such pattern that is regularly repeated in the self organizing growth and evolution of crystals, biological organisms, social organisations and consciousness in the persistent advance towards higher orders of complexity. Those systems that have the highest evolutionary potential in this regard are those that nurture a rich diversity within a coherent unifying structure. The greater the diversity, the greater the evolutionary potential of the society, as long as the unifying structure is maintained.

Arnold Toynbee found this pattern is his epic study of the growth and decline of the world's great civilisations. Civilisations in decline were consistently characterised by a "tendency towards standardisation and uniformity" in sharp contrast with the "tendency towards differentiation and diversity" of the growing civilisations. It appears a near universal truth that diversity is the foundation of development progress in complex systems, while uniformity is the foundation of stagnation and decay.

In order to protect the cultural diversity, on October 21 2005, UNESCO adopted an International Agreement on Cultural Diversity, which underlines the importance of every kind of strategy and measure adopted by governments to "protect cultural diversity". According to the agreement, the value of cultural activities, cultural services and cultural heritage lies not only in their commercial and market value. This is an important decision to bear in mind during discussions at the World Trade Organization. This may be the reason why United States government did not sign the agreement.

This agreement establishes the background and the framework for a common EU cultural policy. The goal for the European Union should be the creation of a common European cultural space in which diversity is encouraged and the production and circulation of culture – audiovisual, books, films, music, theatre and the performing arts – can best be stimulated.

Business and politics

From an economic and political perspective, things are quite different. In many businesses, companies are relentlessly merging and industries are consolidating across Europe. Billions in privatizations have returned huge swaths of the economy to the private sector. Competition has opened up national preserves such as energy and finance to outside rivals and the pressures of foreign shareholders. Increasingly powerful and multicultural corporations now help determine the direction of continental society. With national governments looking weaker, business is more and more driving policy. Considered from the economic perspective, the tendency is to form an European regional identity. However, the economy should not rule our lives. Language, culture, personal identities are far more important.

Conclusions

Economic and political actors are trying to build a regional identity on our continent. This is a movement all of us should fight against. I believe that through diversity of languages and cultures, Europe can maintain its plurality of identities. We should make every effort to protect our rich diversity of cultures, as this represents the ability of our society and ourselves to grow and progress.

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