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THE WRITERS' EUROPE: AN IMAGINED COMMUNITY

Globalization as a transcultural phenomenon has been in existence for millennia, but there were certain historical phases of expansion that intensified intercontinental entanglements. Such periods of growing globalization have increased ever since the European discovery of the Americas some five-hundred years ago.¹ Colonialism is one of the longest and most problematic chapters in the chronicle of globalization. In more recent times, new thrusts of globalization occurred after the end of World War II and after 1989 when the Berlin Wall came down, a historic event that symbolized the end of the Yalta division of Europe. In a study, titled "Globalization," Roland Robertson² has rightly shown that globalization enables us to experience the universal as something particular and the particular as something universal.

Besides the phenomenon of globalization, there exists another transnational movement: continentalization.³ The European Union (EU)⁴, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)⁵, the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR),⁶ the African Union (AU)⁷ and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations

¹ J. Osterhammel, N. Peterson, *Geschichte der Globalisierung. Dimensionen, Prozesse, Epochen*, Beck, München 2003; F. Jameson, M. Miyoshi (eds.), *The Cultures of Globalization*, Duke University Press, Durham 1998; M. Albrow, *The Global Age. State and Society Beyond Modernity*, Polity Press, Cambridge 1996; U. Beck (ed.), *Politik der Globalisierung*, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt am Main 1998; A. Giddens, *Runaway World: How Globalization is Reshaping Our Lives*, Profile, London 1999; A. Giddens, *On the Edge. Living with Global Capitalism*, Vintage, London 2000.

² R. Robertson, *Globalization. Social Theory and Global Culture*, Sage, London 1992.

³ See the introduction in: P.M. Lützel, *Kontinentalisierung. Das Europa der Schriftsteller*, Aisthesis, Bielefeld 2007, p. 9–25.

⁴ W.F.V. Vanthoor, *A Chronological History of the European Union, 1946-2001*, Edward Elgar, Cheltenham 2002; D. Dinan, *Europe Recast: A History of European Union*, Palgrave, New York 2004.

⁵ M.A. Cameron, B.W. Tomlin, *The Making of NAFTA: How the Deal was Done*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca 2000.

⁶ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Union_of_South_American_Nation.

⁷ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/African_Union.

(ASEAN)⁸— an organization that might develop into the East Asian Community (EAC)⁹ – are continental organizations. They resulted from internationalization processes that occurred during the past sixty years. Without globalization, continentalisation would probably not have developed as rapidly as it did. There are two major aspects of the interrelation between globalization and continentalisation: on the one hand, the new continental unions want to protect themselves against certain tendencies in the globalization process that would undermine the foundations of their continental cultures. On the other hand, continentalisation enables a number of smaller nations to participate in political, economic and cultural interactions on a global level. In either case, the continental union plays a major role in mediating between the old nation-state and the new spheres of globalization that tend to operate outside the control of the nation state, a trend analyzed by Hardt/Negri in their book *Empire*¹⁰. The continental associations play an increasingly important role by serving as a buffer between the national and the global spheres. The European Union is the most developed among the continental organizations, although certainly not protected against fundamental crises, as the present problems of the Euro show. While the European Union has been a continental community for only half a century, the struggle for a continental association is centuries old, having started during the Thirty Years' War. Europe had already been an Imagined Community long before the European Economic Community was founded in Rome in 1957.¹¹

The discourse on Europe hardly ever sought to promote European identity as a totalizing concept that would supersede all other collective identities. On the contrary, the European identity has not simply allowed for, but has actively striven to reinforce other collective identities, including familial, religious, gender, professional, local, regional, national or, for that matter, cosmopolitan/global ones. Thus, it is possible to speak of the subsidiary structure of the collective European identity. It is an identity of ever-widening concentric circles, from the local to the regional, the national, the continental, and finally, the global level. At the same time, the relationship among these collective identities is one of dialogue, with inevitable internal frictions. When a certain identity formation, such as that of nationality, developed dogmatic, dominating, and militaristic ideologies, the discourse on Europe often served to relativize and attack such ambitions. It reminded the representatives of other collectivities that the continent shared a basic value system that was worth protecting against forces from both within and without. Out of the continental peace projects grew visions of economic, legal, and cultural cooperations.

⁸ R.C., Severino, *ASEAN*, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore 2008.

⁹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/East_Asian_Community.

¹⁰ M. Hardt, A. Negri, *Empire*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge 2000.

¹¹ P.M. Lützeler, *Die Schriftsteller und Europa. Von der Romantik bis zur Gegenwart*, Nomos, Baden-Baden 1998.

Over the centuries, representatives from all layers of society and from nearly all European countries have contributed to the discourse on Europe: writers, politicians, philosophers, church leaders and scholars from all branches of the social sciences and the humanities.¹² What about the writers' discourse on Europe?¹³ At its very core it is a discourse on peace. It received its ethical energy in response to a succession of great continental wars and created imaginaries that, in terms of memory, harked back to peaceful times in the past, or that, as utopia, articulated visions of a united Europe that would cultivate attitudes or build institutions designed to prevent a recurrence of war.

The European discussion on continental identity and unity has always begun during and after the great wars between the occidental powers, when disunity and animosity among the European dynasties and nations had reached new heights. This was already the case during the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648). The Duke of Sully – formerly the right hand of the French king Henri IV—realized that the war was getting out of control, and that the powers involved risked destruction on an unprecedented scale. He drafted a plan for a new Europe that he called “The Grand Design”.¹⁴ Had it not been for the looming disaster of the continental war, Sully might never have disclosed his plan for a European association of states. He called this union the “General Council of Europe,” or the “Confederation of Princes.” Major goals of this union would be religious tolerance, a balance of power on the continent, and a common defense system against the Ottoman Empire as well as against Russia. The Ottoman Empire was already ruling Hungary and was getting ever closer to Vienna. But above and beyond the vision regarding religious tolerance and a common defense system: Sully's Great Plan meant a radical paradigm shift in the history of the Europe discourse. The idea to create a confederation with all the ruling dynasties and nations represented, meant giving up a concept of domination over the continent that had been inherited from the Romans. According to the imperial concept of Pax Romana¹⁵, there could only be one empire in charge of the continent, and that was Rome. According to the Romans their rule was supposed to dominate all over the known world of their time. Pax Romana was seen as a god given mission, as one can tell from the writings of Pliny the Elder (*Natural History* III) and Vergil (*The Aeneid* I) as well as by ever repeated declarations in the Senate and later on by the Caesars. This understanding

¹² R.H. Foerster, *Europa. Geschichte einer politischen Idee*, Nymphenburger Verlagsanstalt, München 1967; H. Gollwitzer, *Europabild und Europagedanke. Beiträge zur deutschen Geistesgeschichte des 18. und 19. Jahrhunderts*, Beck, München 1964.

¹³ P.M. Lützel, *Die Schriftsteller und Europa*, Piper, München 1992; P. Hanenberg, I.C. Gil, *Der literarische Europa-Diskurs. Festschrift für Paul Michael Lützel zum 70. Geburtstag*, Königshausen & Neumann, Würzburg 2013.

¹⁴ *Sully's Grand Design of Henry IV*, ed. D. Ogg, Sweet and Maxwell, London 1921 (drafted in 1634).

¹⁵ P. Petit, *Pax Romana*, University of California Press, Berkeley 1976.

of Pax Romana was taken over by Charlemagne when he was made the emperor of the Holy Roman Empire by Pope Leo III in the year 800. From there the idea of a dominating dynasty that claimed leadership of the continent was picked up by the emperors of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation.

Sully¹⁶ saw the political structure of Europe from a totally different point of view. His idea is not domination of one country over others but the balance of power of several nations within a European confederation. The continent should not be ruled by one monarch. Instead, the newly founded union would bring together the ruling heads of states. In this association each dynasty and each country or nation would have a say. It is this concept that in the long run was successful, although only after the continent had watched dictators like Napoleon and Hitler turning back the wheel of history by trying to bring the rest of the continent under their rule.

Some eighty years later, the French writer and philosopher Abbé de Saint-Pierre published his *Project on Perpetual Peace*¹⁷ in 1713. Saint-Pierre had lived through the War of Spanish Succession, subsequently becoming an advisor to the French delegation during the peace negotiations in Utrecht in 1713. The French House of Bourbon and the Austrian House of Habsburg were involved in a major conflict, this time over the succession to the throne in Madrid. A number of leading powers in Europe, including England, became involved in this conflict both on the continent and in North America, and after a dozen years the war had cost the lives of close to half a million people. In the end—and this had been England's goal—the balance of power had been restored on the continent, ending the dominance of France for the next two generations. Saint-Pierre wrote one of the most detailed and, in the long run, most influential treatises on European peace and unity. He discussed the suggestions Sully had made and built on them. His federation too would have consisted of a European Council or Senate, a European Secretariat, and a court of arbitration.

It was Jean-Jacques Rousseau, the novelist and philosopher, who during the years between 1754 and 1761 rediscovered Saint-Pierre's plan.¹⁸ He supported the idea of a federal European Community and a court of arbitration. While Saint-Pierre had argued that preserving peace would serve the cause of justice, Rousseau pointed out that peace would also be in the interest of the rulers of the European states, monarchs who tended to think primarily in terms of war when reflecting on their relations with other powers. War was again raging as Rousseau began a new discussion of Saint-Pierre's project: France was now heavily involved in the Seven Year's War in Europe, that in turn was connected with the French

¹⁶ D. Heater, *Sully & his Memoirs and The Grand Design*, [in:] *The Idea of European Unity*, St. Martin's Press, New York 1992, p. 22–38.

¹⁷ Ch.I. Castel de Saint-Pierre, *An Abridged Version of the Project for Perpetual Peace*, Midea, Valletta 2008.

¹⁸ J.J. Rousseau, *A Project for Perpetual Peace*, Johnson and Davenport, London 1767.

and Indian War in North America. France and England fought to secure spheres of influence in Europe as well as dominance on the North American continent. As Winston Churchill once observed, this conflict was truly the First World War in human history, and by the time it ended, some one million people had lost their lives. Rousseau had been right in stating that peace would be in the interest of the kings, at least as far as France was concerned at that particular moment in history. Having lost the war, France was now no longer dominating the European continent, and was finished as a power in the Americas, where she lost all her colonial territories except for a handful of Caribbean islands.

Forty years later, in 1799, during the Second Coalition War against France, the young German Romantic author Novalis wrote his essay *Christendom or Europe*.¹⁹ Unlike Saint-Pierre, Novalis was not concerned with political structures. For him, the unity of Europe, and continental peace, could only be guaranteed by a revival of the Christian religion, by rediscovering the religious basis of European culture. Novalis projected the idea of cultural unity, harmony and peace onto medieval Europe. While he did not plead for a return to medieval conditions, he thought of the cultural “Golden Age” of the Middle Ages as a model for a future united Europe, centered upon a revitalized Christianity that would serve as a guarantee for perpetual peace. Novalis had written his speech on Europe in 1799, at the very beginning of Napoleon’s dictatorial rule in France.

In 1814, immediately after Napoleon’s resignation, we are back in Paris, where the philosopher Claude-Henri de Saint-Simon had just published a most remarkable plan for *The Reconstruction of the European State System*.²⁰ After nearly twenty years of Napoleonic wars, including the horrors of the disastrously failed campaign against Russia, the time was ripe for another peace plan. Saint-Simon built on the ideas of Sully and Saint-Pierre. In contrast to Novalis, he was both pragmatic and utopian at the same time: he proposed the unification of the continent under a European monarch, a European Parliament (with a House of Commons and a House of Lords), and a harmonized European legal system. Britain’s constitutional monarchy was to serve as the state model for a unified continent. Saint-Simon believed that the unification process would take place in different phases, starting with a nucleus consisting of France and England, which would later be joined by Germany. After this triad was cooperating, the remaining countries would join, one after the other. Saint-Simon, who had no illusions about the length of this unification process, thought it would take about 200 years – a good estimate, as it turned out.

¹⁹ Novalis, *Christendom or Europe*, [in:] *Philosophical Writings*, ed. M. Mahony Stoljar, State University of New York Press, Albany 1997, p. 137–152.

²⁰ C.H. de Saint-Simon and Augustin Thierry, *Von dem Wiederaufbau der europäischen Staaten-Gesellschaft*. Aus dem Französischen von F. Bernhard”, “Europäische Annalen” 1815, Vol. I/II, p. 1–14.

Thirty years later another plan for European peace was being proposed. Its author was the Romantic novelist Victor Hugo. Following the success of *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* (1831) Hugo became one of the most active participants in the discourse on Europe. In 1849 Hugo delivered a speech titled “The United States of Europe”²¹ as his presidential address to the International Peace Congress in Paris. As president of the Congress, Hugo in this speech advocated universal peace, but – as the title of his lecture (*The United States of Europe*) indicates – he was primarily interested in creating political structures that would guarantee peace in Europe. Though not a Eurocentric, Hugo argued that, for the foreseeable future, peace on the continent could well lead to peace on earth more generally. He predicted that European unity would develop, and that the European nations would one day become provinces within a *United States of Europe* – just as, over the centuries, the formerly independent principalities of Burgundy, Normandy and Brittany became regions within the state of France. Hugo also gave a detailed report on the enormous financial burdens Europe’s citizens were having to shoulder in order to support their countries’ war machines. If that money were instead invested in science, art, agriculture, industry, trade, and navigation, poverty would disappear – not only in Europe but probably all over the world. Since Victor Hugo was a fierce opponent of emperor Napoleon III he had to go into exile, first to Belgium, then to England. Later in his life, following the Franco-German war of 1870/71, he could, after twenty years in exile, come back to Paris. There he proposed the unification of France and Germany as the nucleus of a united Europe of the future.²²

At the time when Victor Hugo was pleading for a united Europe in 1849, the Polish writer Adam Mickiewicz²³ had already published his *Lectures on Slavic Literature* (1840ff.) in his Paris exile. The multivolume book is both a literary and cultural history. Between 1828 and 1830 Mickiewicz had travelled extensively through Europe, and in his *Lectures on Slavic Literature* he constantly compares Poland and other Slavic countries to the states of Western Europe and Italy. Mickiewicz was involved in a life-long fight for Poland’s independence and for formulating a profile of the Polish national character by referring to Polish stories, legends, and fairy tales. At the same time he saw his country in a European context, developed pan-European ideas and believed that the ideal synthesis of European culture would be a mix of French rational Enlightenment and the more poetic spirit of his home country Poland. With his demand for an independent Polish state he was in a similar situation as the Italian public intellectual

²¹ V. Hugo, *The United States of Europe*, World Peace Foundation, Boston 1914.

²² V. Hugo, *An die Mitglieder des Friedens-Kongresses in Lugano (20. September 1872)*, [in:] V. Hugo, *Thaten und Worte. Gesammelte Reden*, Auerbach, Stuttgart 1976, Bd. 3, p. 103–105. The original speech in: V. Hugo, *Oeuvres complètes. Actes et paroles*, Michel, Paris 1940, Vol. 3.

²³ D. Welsh, *Adam Mickiewicz*, Twayne, New York 1966.

Giuseppe Mazzini. Mazzini²⁴ was an Italian patriot and nationalist but at the same time a convinced and engaged Europeanist. When Mickiewicz started to publish his *Lectures on Slavic Literature*, Mazzini wrote his pamphlet *The Central Democratic Committee of Europe*. He believed that in the future Europe would become a united Republic, ideas that were similar to those of Saint-Simon and Victor Hugo. When the 1848 revolution broke out in Rome in 1848 Mazzini left his exile in London and became the head of the revolutionary government in Rome. During these months Adam Mickiewicz supported the Italian revolutionary movement in northern Italy by organizing the Polish Legion that was to fight against the Austrian occupying power. Mickiewicz and Mazzini's dreams were, to a large extent, compatible. Both wanted to drive out foreign powers from the soil of their home countries, and both believed in an pan-european peace arrangement and a fruitful cooperation of European states. Neither of them was successful in these endeavors, but both had experienced a revolution that was of a European nature, a revolution that was defeated at the moment but would be a historical precondition for the unification process in Western Europe hundred years later.

The Austrian writer Bertha von Suttner²⁵ was author of the bestselling novel *Down with Arms* (1889) and a leading supporter of international peace movements. She was a generation younger than Hugo, Mickiewicz, and Mazzini and saw herself as a student of Victor Hugo. In 1892, during the Fourth World Peace Congress in Berne (Switzerland), von Suttner proposed the establishment of a Federation of European States. The federation would make keeping the peace its first priority and that would also work to improve conditions for free trade on the continent.²⁶

A few years after the First World War, the philosophically trained public intellectual Richard von Coudenhove-Kalergi from Vienna demonstrated that he had attentively studied the ideas of Sully, Saint-Pierre, Rousseau, Saint-Simon, Victor Hugo, and Bertha von Suttner when he drafted a visionary plan for a united Europe (Pan-Europe²⁷, as he called it), with the aim of preventing another catastrophe like the one that had overtaken the continent between 1914 and 1918. Coudenhove-Kalergi founded the Pan-Europe movement with thousands of members

²⁴ M. dell Isola, G. Bourgin, *Mazzini. Promoteur de la République italienne et pionnier de la fédération européenne*, Librairie M. Rivière, Paris 1956.

²⁵ B. Hamann, B. von Suttner, *A Life for Peace, Syracuse*, Syracuse University Press, New York 1996; M.C. Hoock-Demarle, *Der Europa-Diskurs von Suttners im Umfeld des internationalen Pazifismus der Jahrhundertwende. Vom Umgang mit dem europäischen Raum zu den Erwartungen an ein ‚werdendes Europa‘*, [in:] P. Hanenberg, I.C. Gil, *Der literarische Europa-Diskurs. Festschrift für Paul Michael Lützeler zum 70. Geburtstag*, Königshausen & Neumann, Würzburg 2013, p. 75–84.

²⁶ B. von Suttner, *Memoiren*, Deutsche Verlagsanstalt, Stuttgart 1909, p. 265.

²⁷ R.N. Coudenhove-Kalergi, *Pan-Europe*, Alfred A. Knopf, New York 1926. See also: A.M. Saint-Gille, *La 'Paneurope'. Un débat d'idées dans l'entre-deux-guerres*, Presses de l'Université de Paris-Sorbonne, Paris 2003; A. Ziegerhofer-Pretenthaler, *Botschafter Europas. Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi und die Paneuropa-Bewegung in den zwanziger und dreißiger Jahren*, Böhlau, Wien 2004.

from all parts of Europe. Pan Europe had the support from many writers, among them Thomas Mann, as well as from such leading politicians as Aristide Briand. It was an elite and most certainly not a grassroots movement. In terms of popular support, it lagged far behind the right-wing nationalist parties. And in spite of Coudenhove-Kalergi's great efforts on behalf of European peace and unification, the German National Socialists soon started a war in Europe that quickly turned into a new world war.

Yet after 1945, in the post war period, there were a number of writers and intellectuals who understood that the moment of European unification had arrived. They reminded the nations of the fact that the countries that had been involved in catastrophic wars had a common culture, and that this common culture, forgotten during the time of nationalism, was the precondition of a future European cooperation. The most prominent voice was that of the British author T.S. Eliot, who received the Nobel Prize in 1948. In his 1946 lecture *The Unity of European Culture*²⁸ Christianity is seen as the "spiritual" source of the continents civilization, is seen as a religion that had embraced both Judaism and Greek philosophy as well as Roman law. Different from Novalis T.S. Eliot did not plead for a revitalization of the Christian religion but for the acceptance and appreciation of a culture that had been shaped by Christianity. This unity of European culture was seen by T.S. Eliot as the precondition of European cooperation and integration in the future. German writers like Reinhold Schneider and even the former militarist Ernst Jünger expressed similar ideas during the immediate post war years.

But at the same time a young German writer living in exile in the United States saw things differently. That was Klaus Mann, the son of Thomas Mann. He realized in 1949 that the Cold War had put an end to the dream of a unified continent, and that the European intellectuals belonged to two very different camps and that the western camp showed no unity whatsoever. Klaus Mann stated in his essay "The Ordeal of the European Intellectual"²⁹ that a war of ideas was raging throughout the Continent. The intellectual elite was, in his view, being crunched between the Superpowers, were taking parts either on the side of American capitalism or Soviet Communism and had lost their ability to make independent judgements. Klaus Mann had belonged to a supporter of Coudenhove-Kalergi's vision of Pan-Europe during the 1930ies and had up until the Cold War in his publications pleaded for the unification of Europe. Now he was disillusioned and believed that in this situation of a potential war between the Superpowers,

²⁸ T.S. Eliot, *The Unity of European Culture*, as an "appendix" in: T.S. Eliot, *Notes toward the Definition of Culture*, Faber and Faber, London 1948. See also: A.D. Moody, *The Mind of Europe in T.S. Eliot*, [in:] *T.S. Eliot at the Turn of the Century*, ed. M. Thormählen, Lund University Press, Lund 1994, p. 13–32.

²⁹ K. Mann, *The Ordeal of the European Intellectuals*, Transit, Berlin 1993, p. 7–59. See also: A. Weiss, *In the Shadow of the Magic Mountain. The Erika and Klaus Mann Story*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago 2005, p. 207–240.

making Europe the battle field of an Atomic war, the only role the European intellectual could take over was that of protest, of a radical denial to follow either camp in the Cold War Scenario. At the end of his essay his ideas are expressed in the statement of a Swedish student: that the European intellectuals should all commit suicide as a dramatic gesture of protest against the Cold War division of the continent.

While Klaus Mann was expressing his unhappy feelings about the bleak outlook on Europe from a Western point of view, the Polish writer and Nobel Prize winner Czesław Miłosz did something similar on the other side of the Iron Curtain. While in exile in Paris, he published, in 1958, his book *Native Europe (Rodzinna Europa)*³⁰. What Miłosz wanted to do is to write against the clichés of Western Europeans and Americans about the so-called Eastern part of Europe during the cold war. He is worried about the fact that Western Europe is forgetting about the area behind the Iron Curtain as a realm that belongs to Europe. In 1957 the European Economic Community had been founded. That was completing a break within Europe that had been going on already for a decade on the political, military and cultural level. Miłosz refused to acknowledge this encompassing split within Europe and insisted that his country as well as the neighboring Central European states were still part of Europe, that they shared a European heritage the same way the western countries did. While he insisted on the idea of a cultural unity of Europe, he also tried to describe the very special situation and development of his home country within the context of European history. Like any other European nation Poland rightly has to insist on its difference. When he writes about his life, his experiences in Poland and in Europe during the past decades (including his life during the period of the war) he tries to make the readers understand both the specificity of life in Poland as well as what Europeans have in common. With his insistence on universal moral imperatives he sees himself as a European, with his sufferings during the war and in the situation of the Cold War he understands himself as a Pole and a Central European whose experience should be considered as vital when making plans for a European future.

Fifteen years later the Czech writer Milan Kundera published the essay *The Tragedy of Central Europe*.³¹ It reads like the continuation of Miłosz's book, and Kundera is also a Central European writer living in his Paris exile. Kundera intentionally does not use the term "Eastern Europe" but rather "Central Europe" in order to be able to distinguish between Europe and Russia which he sees as a part of Eastern Europe. Like Miłosz he insists that the countries behind the Iron Curtain are part of Europe although forgotten as a part of the continent by the West Europeans and the Western World in general. And only that it is a part

³⁰ C. Miłosz, *Rodzinną Europą*, Instytut Literacki, Paryż 1980; in English: *Native Realm. A Search for Self-definition*, Doubleday, Garden City, NY 1968.

³¹ M. Kundera, *The Tragedy of Central Europe*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 1996, p. 217–223.

of Europe but even a condensed version of it. The term “Soviet Bloc” makes no sense from Kundera’s point of view. He sees the Russian culture as something different from the European culture (with its missing religious reform and enlightenment movements). The tragedy of Central Europe is that Russia with its different culture is dominating in that region of the continent. But part of the tragedy of the divided continent is also, that the West has given up on the Central part of the continent. The specificity of the countries of Central Europe is that they are deeply influenced by Jewish writers, artists, and scholars, i.e. by writers like Franz Kafka, Hermann Broch, and Bruno Schulz. The Central European countries are “small nations” according to Kundera, nations whose “world view is based on a deep distrust of history” since they have been changed or even abolished time and again. This part of Europe, as part of the Soviet Bloc, Kundera writes, is in danger of losing its culture. But with the disinterest of the old central European culture, Western Europe is also giving up its very own culture. Kundera’s essay that was published in 1984 in many leading journals of the Western World, was part of the Central Europe Debate that helped prepare, on the intellectual level, the emancipation from the Soviet System and lead to the velvet revolutions in Central Europe.

The year 1989 brought this dramatic historical change in Europe: the end of the Cold War and the end of the Yalta order. This shift was also prepared in 1984 by the Hungarian-Jewish writer György Konrád’s book *Antipolitics*.³² An antipolitical attitude is defined by Konrád as a position from which one thinks about political issues in terms that are foreign to politicians. Only such a non-specialist point of view, containing the possibility of thinking beyond the status quo, would be able to guarantee that new questions will be raised so as to bring about new solutions. Konrád’s proposal was that the Yalta Agreement be dissolved, and that the Europeans take their fate into their own hands. These were mere dreams in 1984. At the time, Konrád himself spoke of “My Dream of Europe.”³³ Meanwhile, of course, much of Konrád’s vision has become a reality – at least in the sense that the Russians have left eastern and central Europe, while the Americans have reduced their presence in the western part of the continent. Konrád’s understanding of “anti-politics” can be seen as a hallmark of the new peace-oriented Europe discourse among writers that began in the 1980s. During the postwar period between 1945 and 1989, i.e., under the domination of the two superpowers, all literary essays on Europe in one way or another reflected the impact of a divided world. Whether one reads Jean-Paul Sartre, or Klaus Mann, or Günter Grass, or the essays of Hans Magnus Enzensberger or Milan Kundera on the Europe of their time, it is apparent that the respective roles of the United

³² G. Konrád, *Antipolitics. An Essay*, Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, San Diego 1984.

³³ G. Konrád, *Mein Traum von Europa*, „Kursbuch“ 1985, Nr. 81, p. 175–193.

States and the (former) Soviet Union always loomed large in their ideas about future developments in Europe. Konrad was – like Miłosz and Kundera – able to think outside the box of the given reality of a divided world.

After the end of the Cold War two American contributions to the Europe discourse appeared. They dealt with three divides between the United States and Europe: a cultural, a political, and an economic divide. First, the *cultural divide*: Jeremy Rifkin, who, in 2004, wrote about the *European Dream*,³⁴ has described the decline and the crisis of the American Dream. Originally, he wrote, the American Dream was a far-sighted, concrete utopia for every American citizen: the pursuit of happiness in an open and democratic society. Rifkin argued that things have changed in the U.S. during the last quarter of the 20th century and that this changed cultural climate became particularly evident during the Bush/Cheney administration. He expressed the fear that materialistic and egocentric ideas are taking over – that, as a result of the so-called Reagan revolution, a sort of Donald Trump ideology of economic ruthlessness without concern for social values has become the prevailing attitude. As Rifkin watched a large part of the middle class drift below the poverty line, he spoke of a social model according to which the wealthy get wealthier and the poor get poorer, a thesis supported by Mark Rank's study on poverty in America with the title *One Nation, Underprivileged*.³⁵ Like Rifkin, T.R. Reid in his book *The United States of Europe* claimed that there is no concern for environmental issues in the U.S. and that big business is getting its way.³⁶ In foreign policy, Rifkin continues, there is no understanding of international laws, that rampant unilateralism prevails, and that a productive U.S. cooperation with the United Nations has ceased to exist.

Rifkin believed that there is a new European Dream being created by the young Erasmus generation (called after Erasmus of Rotterdam, one of the great European cosmopolitan thinkers of the early modern period). In this connection he mentions the European university exchange program, also named for Erasmus. According to Rifkin, this generation is able to think beyond the limits of egotism and monetary values, keeping the future of the globe in mind while it champions the protection of the environment and at the same time seeks to ensure that the elderly and the poor do not fall through the social safety net. Another point, raised by T.R. Reid in *The United States of Europe*, is the death penalty: while most states in the U.S. continue to uphold the death penalty, the European Union has abolished it in all of its member states. Rifkin and Reid also point out that there is a religious divide that forms part of the general cultural divide. In the U.S.,

³⁴ J. Rifkin, *The European Dream: How Europe's Vision of the Future is Quietly Eclipsing the American Dream*, Tacher–Penguin, New York 2004.

³⁵ M. Rank, *One Nation, Underprivileged: Why American Poverty Affects Us All*, Oxford University Press, Oxford–New York 2004.

³⁶ T.R. Reid, *The United States of Europe: The New Superpower and the End of American Supremacy*, Penguin, New York 2004.

religious fundamentalism plays an important role, whereas in Europe secularism is on the rise. The European Dream, according to Rifkin and Reid, involves the defense of human rights, along with a deep interest in international peace. All this sounds familiar: the similarities between the old American and the new European Dream are obvious. According to the two authors, the American Dream has emigrated, so to speak, and has become the European Dream. The love of peace, national self-determination, the defense of human rights – all this was part of the American Dream of the past. Of course, Rifkin and Reid were simplifying matters. One should not idealize the situation in Europe. Popular enthusiasm for cosmopolitan multiculturalism tends to evaporate whenever the majority feels threatened by unemployment and the Euro crisis. Provincialism and xenophobia run parallel both in the U.S. and in Europe, to a greater extent than Rifkin and Reid were ready to admit.

As to the *political divide* between the United States and Europe: The end of the Yalta order, the fall of the Berlin Wall, the end of the Cold War, the disintegration of the Soviet Union: all this had a different significance for the U.S. than for Europe. The German philosopher Peter Sloterdijk pointed out that the end of the Cold War gave Europe a chance at a fresh start.³⁷ In his 1994 essay *If Europe wakes up* Sloterdijk observed that for a number of decades Europe was held hostage by the two superpowers. The U.S. and the Soviet Union had divided the continent into two spheres of influence the internal politics of which they in turn dictated, or at least strongly influenced. Sloterdijk claimed that after 1989 Europe once again became a subject in politics, instead of an object of foreign domination. While all this looked like a wonderful success story to Sloterdijk two decades ago, the problems of the fast expansion of the European Union into Central and Eastern or South-Eastern Europe can be watched in Hungary, Rumania, and Bulgaria today. And regarding the Euro, Europeanists now have second thoughts and are wondering whether the common currency is really gluing the member states together or whether it is ruining the whole endeavor of European unification.

And now to the *economic divide*: When we take the example of the “free market” or the “single market,” we note that Americans and Europeans have different understandings of these terms. For the Europeans, with the exception of British “Euro-skeptics”, the single market is not a value in itself, but is instead a pragmatic step in the direction of a more encompassing union of Europe on the political, legal and cultural level. The goal of the European Union is a community of states, not just a single market. This was also shown by the move toward a constitution for the European Union. Although that goal was not attained in 2005, the attempt is likely to be repeated in the future. If the European Union were nothing but a free market organization, it would quickly be subsumed, neutralized, and ultimately

³⁷ P. Sloterdijk, *Falls Europa erwacht*, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt am Main 1994.

destroyed by the more general process of globalization.³⁸ For its part, the U.S. is only interested in the free market aspect of the European integration process, since it profits from that single market. And this is the reason why the Obama administration is now suggesting a transatlantic free trade zone encompassing the U.S. and the E.U. The new U.S. government brings change into a number of political and cultural areas.

The 2008 election in the United States coincided with the publication of the sober NIC (National Intelligence Council) report *Global Trends in 2025*. This official U.S. government document predicts the relative decline of the United States as a superpower and clarifies the necessity of multilateralism as opposed to unilateralism in light of the rising four BRIC countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China). The report emphasizes the ongoing processes of continentalization in America, Europe and Asia. Europe will – according to the NIC report – continue to find itself on an increasingly equal footing with the United States. The changes in the U.S. are producing a new dialogue between the U.S. and the E.U., a dialogue might overcome the transatlantic divisions of the Bush/Cheney years.

Some more recent contributions to the Europe discourse by writers have still to be mentioned. A case in point is the book-length 2005 essay *What is European?* by Adolf Muschg, who is currently the most prominent writer in Switzerland. In discussing the future administrative form of the European Union, Muschg is opposed to imitating the administrative forms of the United States. Instead of a strong central government, he favors a model based on the Swiss example of a genuinely federated structure. Muschg believes that further expansion of the European Union would lead to a cultural as well as political deterioration of the continent. He argues that, each time political leaders (such as Napoleon and Hitler) pursued expansion above all else, their efforts brought Europe to the brink of collapse. Furthermore, Muschg warns, the E.U. should not imitate the United States as a global player trying to police the world. The historical record demonstrates that empires tend to crumble whenever they begin to overestimate their power and to overextend their resources.

In a recent lecture from October 2012 entitled *Are We Forgetting Europe: A Counter Speech*³⁹ Muschg said that the EU should keep the cultural values in mind when making continental political and economic decisions. A rediscovery and acceptance of the best traditions of European history are, according to Muschg, a necessity in these times of deregulated markets, the Euro crisis and irresponsible debt policies. The European values of the Athenian Democracy and the Christian religion with its culture of social awareness are, from his point of view, a way to protect the continent against apocalyptic economic developments.

³⁸ A. Muschg, *Was ist europäisch?* Beck, München 2005.

³⁹ A. Muschg, *Vergessen wir Europa? Eine Gegenrede*, Wallstein, Göttingen 2013.

Two recent essays on Europe or rather the EU have to be mentioned here as well: the *Gentle Monster Brussels*⁴⁰ book from 2011 by Hans Magnus Enzensberger and the 2012 booklength essay *The European Chronicle – Citizen Anger and Europe’s Peace*⁴¹ by Austrian novelist and essayist Robert Menasse. Enzensberger is repeating his old accusations about the non-democratic decision processes in the EU, while Menasse blames the impact of the national governments on EU politics for all the problems that the union is facing. While for Enzensberger Brussels’ bureaucracy is creating a dictatorial monster state, according to Menasse all would be well in Brussels if the EU bureaucrats had it their way and would not be constantly pushed around by the heads of the national governments or their foreign ministers. According to him the impact of the national governments should be reduced to an absolute minimum or even be abolished, while more power should be given to Brussels and the European regions instead.

What seems clear is that, in these writings of novelists and thinkers, fundamental ideas about, and designs for, the institutions of a unified Europe were developed. Many of these writers were exiled authors, and their international or transatlantic experiences protected them against provincialism and nationalism. Only in the wake of the catastrophe of the Second World War, after Europe had lost her independence, did the time appear to be ripe for building a new continental association (at the time a Western European community) that would have unity, economic cooperation and peace as its goal. And at that very moment in history, the vocabulary and grammar for a new political language, for a new common discourse on European unity, economic integration and peace were available, thanks to the continued centuries-old efforts of European writers and intellectuals. Their language was adopted by the fathers of European integration – by Adenauer and de Gasperi, Schuman and Monnet, Spaack and Hallstein. It is not by chance that most of these politicians, signers of the Treaty of Rome in 1957, were students of Coudenhove-Kalergi; and the exiled writer Coudenhove-Kalergi in turn is unthinkable without the earlier Great Plans of cosmopolitan thinkers like Sully, Saint-Pierre, Rousseau, Saint-Simon, Victor Hugo, and Bertha von Suttner. In other words, their intellectual efforts surely were not in vain. An idea destined to change the course of history must have deep roots in discourses that are themselves centuries old.

⁴⁰ H.M. Enzensberger, *Sanftes Monster Brüssel oder Die Entmündigung Europas*, Suhrkamp, Berlin 2011.

⁴¹ R. Menasse, *Der Europäische Landbote. Die Wut der Bürger und der Friede Europas oder Warum die geschenkte Demokratie einer erkämpften weichen muss*, Zsolnay, Wien 2012.