I. EUROPE AND ITS OTHERS

"PLURALITY IN UNITY": EUROPEAN IDENTITY AND EUROPEAN CITIZENSHIP

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In this paper, an argument is developed in favour of further integration of "Europe" and, most importantly, its increased "politicization". It is not based on any romantic or idealistic vision of a positive European cultural identity, but on an assessment of Europe's reality as already integrated economically, socially and ecologically, however lagging behind politically in terms of democratic government and citizenship. The seemingly endless discussions about Europe's identity, limit, unity, civilization, etc. are not a problem that is yet to be solved, but are, precisely, the core of what makes Europe what it is: a plurality in unity instead of a "unity in plurality", as one of the official slogans of the European Union (EU) has it. Current social, economic and environmental problems require European solutions as well as a more *active* European citizenship. However, European civil identity that is to match European societal reality, will not be a unitary and homogeneous identity, but heterogeneous and diverse, covering a plurality of perceptions, preferences and ideals – it will be *plural*, not as a first step towards unity, but in its core; and it will be *divided*, but not along national lines.

Keywords: citizenship, "civilizationalism", discursive space, European integration, identity, plurality.

"The idea of a 'return to Europe' differs profoundly from the slip of the tongue common among Western European commentators, in which the enlargement of the EU becomes the 'expansion of Europe'", Ralf Ragowski, Charles Turner (Rogowski, Turner 2006: 19).
"<…> the problem of politics is not identification, but identification *and its failure*", Ernesto Laclau, Lilian Zac (Laclau, Zac 1994: 35).
"There *was* a positive choice in the "no": the choice of the choice itself", Slavoj Žižek (Žižek 2008: 270).

Introduction

If "we"[1] are to judge by printed and televised media, citizens of many European countries have become more "euro-sceptic" and perhaps even "euro-phobic" over the last couple of years. The Dutch and French "no" to a constitutional treaty has been followed by an Irish "no", and the attempts by the French president, Nicolas Sarkozy, to compensate Czech EU presidency by a stronger financial policy show a lack of political will to "go for Europe". The recent Eastward and Southward enlargement – the Baltic states, Romania and Bulgaria, Cyprus, Malta, Slovenia – is experienced by many as a form of "expansion"; relatively recent member-states such as Poland, Czech Republic and Hungary have lost much of their initial enthusiasm, and many people in established EU member-states fear the free flow of labour force from the new member states, not to mention the dread associated with the leaky walls of "fortress Europe". The EU seems to be experienced, by many, though certainly not all, as an inevitable phenomenon that is at best convenient, but does not generate any warm sentiments: at the level of political passions, Europe is lukewarm at best[2].

Contrary to these apparent tendencies, I want to develop in this paper an argument in favour of a gradual further integration of "Europe" and, most of all, in favour of an increased "politicization". My argument is not, however, based on any romantic or idealistic vision of a positive European cultural identity, let alone a "civilizational" European mission. On the contrary, it is based on the following three considerations, two of them realistic and one idealistic, but not *per se* European: (i) an integrated Europe is an economic, social and ecological reality already and increasingly so, but it is not matched by a political structure that allows Europeans to address their common problems; (ii) there is a relatively coherent and delineated European "identity", even if its borders are unclear and even if it has to be defined in negative rather than positive terms; (iii) there is a positive ideal, call it "democratic", of self-government or self-determination that I subscribe to, and that is hampered rather than promoted by the current political state of Europe. As Žižek recently put it: "So, although the French and Dutch "no" is not sustained by a coherent and detailed alternative vision, it at least *clears the space for it…* <…> It is time for us, citizens of Europe, to become aware that we have to make a properly *political* decision about what we want. No enlightened administrator will do the job for us" (Žižek 2008: 276).

It is important to emphasize what I am *not* doing in this paper. I am *not* engaged in an attempt to offer a blueprint for a better or more democratic Europe – rather I try to articulate a few principles against which any such model or proposal should be measured. Secondly, I am *not* working towards stating a positive European identity – rather I try to point out how the discussion about identity is fundamentally misled if it seeks to articulate identity "positively". Thirdly, my aim is *not* to develop a "political philoso-

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[1] Throughout this paper, "we" means all people who positively identify with the idea of an integrated Europe (regardless of its territorial delineations and of the degree and form of unification – alliance, confederation, federation, unitary state, etc.); this "we" can thus be understood as "a European *dèmos* in the making".

[2] See Evert van der Zweerde 2008.

phy for Europe" – rather I try to develop a number of notions and ideas that, though European in terms of their historical background and no doubt "euro-centric" in some respects[3] intentionally point beyond Europe (or any other continent) to a "universal" political philosophy which can be applied, among others, to Europe. In the first section, I offer a brief outline of this political philosophy. In the next sections (2–10), I develop argumentative lines that in the concluding section (11) are brought together in a position that, hopefully, is as inspiring as it is realistic. The inspiration will contribute, I hope, to an extension and intensification of the "we" referred to in the first sentence of this introduction; the realism will, preferably, make this "we" more influential – even if I do not think that it is up to me, as a political philosopher, to seek direct political influence.

1. Political philosophy – a brief outline

Of course, the space of this section does not allow for more than a succinct and rather schematic outline of what I think could be a viable conception of political philosophy. It is based on the following principles – each of which here has the status of an assumption.

i. I assume that "politics", in the broad sense of that term, refers to many possible and actual forms of dealing with "the political", and the latter I define as "the dimension of possible conflict that is intrinsic to and therefore ineradicable in all (including discursive and symbolic) forms of social human life". "Dealing with", in this context, can mean many different things, including denying and overlooking, but it cannot mean "effectively doing away with". In this sense, the political, understood as the possibility of conflict, is *objectively* there. The notion of "politics" covers many things, from contesting social movements to political parties, from micro-politics in organizations to the macro-politics of bodies like the EU, and from a Solomon's judgment to settle a dispute among children to the constitutions of European polities. If "politics" is an umbrella term to cover the "forms of dealing with the political", the proper object of political philosophy must be "politics and the political" in their intertwinement.

ii. Conflict is, essentially, the conflict between "powers", i.e. actualized potentialities (latin *potentiae,* french *puissances*). In human society, these powers come in many forms: physical force, economic power ("buying power"), psychic force (indoctrination), persuasive force (including temptation), disciplinary power, rational force (the power of the better argument), etc. Political power (latin *potestas,* french *pouvoir*) is a specific type of power that organizes the other forms, sometimes by using them, sometimes by channelling them, sometimes by transforming them, sometimes by generating them, sometimes by counteracting or oppressing them, but *always* subordinating them to itself and thus always bound up with them – there is

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[3] In my view, the judgement concerning the X-centric nature of some phenomenon can never be left to X – there even is something hypocritical in attempts to articulate one's own X-centeredness: if you can articulate it, you might as well overcome it.

no such thing as *pure* political power. Political power is necessary in any society[4] in order to reduce the conflict potential of the existing forms of power, without ever being able to annihilate this potential and, in fact, introducing a *new* source of possible conflict, namely precisely between political power and other forms. Political power is generally, though not necessarily, and therefore not always, in the interest of the otherwise less powerful – political power thus can indeed be seen as an ideal in its own right (Kangaspuro 2007: 12). Seen from this angle, *democracy* is good inasmuch as it entails maximum transformation of social power (the power of the *multitude*) into political power of the *dèmos* (Wiesner 2007: 46f); political *rights and liberties* are good inasmuch as they allow for the bottom-up articulation of potentially conflicting forces and their transformation into political conflict. Consequently, liberal democracy is not a *bonum in se*, but the arguably most promising type of polity for the transformation of societal conflict into political struggle[5].

iii. Political power can be both legitimate and illegitimate, i.e. legitimacy is a quality that political power *can* have, but legitimate political power is not *sui generis*: the legitimacy of political power stems from a source other than this power itself. Major candidates are, of course, the will of the people, e.g. as expressed in elections, and law, esp. constitutional law. However, these are not "absolute" sources of legitimacy, but only within the context of a liberal-democratic *Rechtsstaat*. To this can be added, as a secondary source of legitimacy, the effective success of political power in organizing the other forms of power, such as violence and economic power: an effective monopoly on the use of violence, for example, can increase the legitimacy of political power just as its failure to exclude violence from society can reduce it. At this point, however, one must be careful not to confuse legitimacy and efficacy: as anti-terrorist policies show, it is very well possible to have efficacy without legitimacy – this is also why legitimacy is not to be confused with popular acceptance. Illegitimate political power reverts to apolitical power, i.e. it becomes mere force.

iv. The actual power structure of society, including the political power that organizes it, can never exhaust the dimension of possible conflict within society, because it is, itself, an effect of the execution or application of pre-political power, which transforms itself into political power in the very execution. As the institution of political power is, by definition, a transformation of pre-political power, this transformation itself cannot be an effect of political power, as there is no political power before the transformation takes place. This is another way of saying that political power, despite the fact that, once constituted, it becomes itself productive, is always and necessarily the organization of something pre-existing, and this some-

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[4] This is *not* an a priori exclusion of anarchism, which, to my mind, does not deny political power, but any asymmetrical distribution of it.

[5] At this point, I derive my inspiration from the idea of "agonistic democracy", elaborated by theorists like Chantal Mouffe, Iris Marion Young, and William Connolly; see, for example, *Young* 2000, p. 49f.

thing thus must be ontologically prior to it. And this is another way of stating the primacy of the social over politics. The consequence of this is that political power, irrespective of its capacity and scope, is always and necessarily *re-active*: it can repress and oppress, it can control and canalize, but it cannot encapsulate or incorporate all forms of power. There is an ontological limit to political power – even if it is not *per se* clear *where* this limit. If existing powers, i.e. at the ontic level, transgress this limit, apolitical power comes in at the other end in the form of tyranny, intrigue, etc.

v. Politics can never exhaust the political, i.e. there is always a *remainder*, a moment of "pure", arbitrary and by definition illegitimate power exercise. This is why any decision, any form of politics, any power constellation can always be contested. There is, consequently, an irreducible *gap* between a concrete constellation of political and other powers, and its acceptance as natural, divinely sanctioned or historically necessary, and this gap is bridged by *ideology* which can be defined as any self-concealing mechanism of justification (motivation/legitimization) of past, present or future action and/or state of affairs through unwarranted claims and images, concerning non-experiential entities (typical examples being the People, the Nation, the Party, Reason etc.). Ideological formations can make a "jump", e.g. in claiming that a capitalist market economy is natural or that the hegemony of liberal democracy, at least as an idea, marks the end of history, but they also can claim the opposite of social reality. Soviet ideology, for example, claimed that all Soviet citizens were engaged in the construction of a socialist society.

vi. If the possibility of conflict is intrinsic to society, if, therefore, the fundamental tension in politically organized society is that between political power and the free play of forces, each of which pre- supposes *and* restricts the other, if, consequently, the question is not *whether*, but *how* these two should be related to each other (which is the question of the capacity (Tilly 2007: 15f) – scope, impact, etc. – of political power *vis-à-vis* non-political powers, *including* those generated by political power itself, e.g. bureaucracy), and if, finally, the existing constellation of powers can never be "fixed", but is always and necessarily a matter of checking and balancing, then the primary task of political philosophers is to point out these fundamental relations and constellations, rather than to suggest either a solution of this tension or to "sublate" the existing tensions to a higher-level synthesis. There is no end to politics, because the political is ineradicable – where this disappears from sight, politics must be reinvented.

It is from these five assumptions, briefly outlined here, that I approach the "political state of Europe"[6].

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[6] I use "state" in this context not in the traditional sense of the nation-state, but in the broader sense of the juridical-political *state* – or: condition of a given polity. Étienne Balibar poses the question as follows: "…la question… sur laquelle… nous devrions continuer à réfléchir, est la suivante: *Qu'est-ce que l'État aujourd'hui en Europe ?*" and he specifies that he does not mean any kind of 'European state', but the actual constellation of state functions : "il s'agit de demander… ce que deviant tendanciellement, et comment se comporte, quelles functions remplit l'État dans *l'espace européen*" (Balibar 2001: 236).

2. Borders in and of Europe

The first topic to address in this connection is that of borders. Białystok, like Białowieża, both locations of recent conferences on Europe and its borders, is located near the border of the EU. This border is, in many respects, an *edge*: it is sharp and it can hurt physically, morally and emotionally. First of all, it is the border between two political spaces, the EU and bordering non-EU Europe (in this case, Belarus), and in this capacity it is much sharper than any border within the EU. Citizens cannot simply cross it. It is a place where the EU protects its political space against illegal immigration (it has delegated this task to the Polish government, providing the means to execute it), and it separates different political systems, one based on the idea of individual rights and freedoms, the other on the denial of these principles. Secondly, this border is an economic one as becomes clear from the extensive trade, legal and illegal, across it. It separates different economic systems, it separates the protected inner common market (including labour market) of the EU from the economic space of the heirs of the Soviet economic space, and, last but certainly not least, it separates relative wealth from relative poverty. Even if this border is not impenetrable, it is still clear-cut. *Political* borders are "cut" because they result from "cision". They are not, however, mere symbolic constructions: borders are always also made of wood, concrete, steel, floodlight etc., and they are always also physical barriers, that can stop bodies from moving from one place to another. This is different from cultural, ethnic and religious borders: the borders between cultural traditions, ethnic composition and religious affiliation are rarely clear-cut, in fact, they are very rarely "cut" – they rather cut across society in many different, overlapping and fragmented ways and they are discursive and symbolic as much, or more, as they are tangible. In some places, a Huntingtonian fault line between civilizations – between the Western-Christian and the Orthodox worlds, for example – may be almost visibly present, but even there it is not as sharp as the border between countries, which, if there is a need, can be established very exactly.

If, following Niklas Luhmann and Anthony Giddens, we conceive of society as a continuum, i.e. as a *world* society by default, we can perceive all these borders as cutting across society, creating new divisions and differences, rather than expressing existing ones (Luhmann 2000: 220; Giddens 1999: 16). This clearly applies to Europe: borders have always shifted in the course of its history, and any attempt to establish borders, that would match pre-existing objective differences is bound to fail – rather, borders organize and establish differences as such. As a result, such borders, even if we accept them as facts of life, necessarily retain an aspect of artificiality and contestability. In fact, I think, that it is difficult to find in Europe (to which this discussion limits itself) borders that could not be reasonably contested by individuals and groups, living near them. The first conclusion is that *in Europe no border is self-evidently given* (with the possible exception of sea shores). Consequently, discourses – political, scientific, philosophical, and folk – are developed to either justify or question the existence or precise location of such borders. These discourses become more important and hence forceful – potentially even aggressive – as the borders are less

obvious and, therefore, have to be actively drawn by participants. This is the case with the border of the EU. Discourse about "European identity" and about the "limits" of enlargement is so complex and discordant because neither of them is obvious and both are a matter of self-determination of a very complex "agent" – they cannot therefore serve as the foundation of real, i.e. physical borders, and yet something has to serve as such.

3. European discursive space

Any discourse occurs in a concrete situation and is developed from a position within a field. Obviously, this situation and this position themselves can become objects of deliberation and discussion, which makes the situation reflexive. There is no external, let alone Archimedean, point from which issues about society, including those that concern the borders that cut across it, can be addressed. Discourse is local and immanent by definition. This is *not* to deny that there is a dimension of generality and universality that goes beyond the situation in which discourse is developed; but it *is* to argue, and emphatically so, that this is a movement *out of* that situation – the movement of thought is one of transcending an initial immanence. In this respect, society can be present *as* an object of discourse, e.g. in social science or in politics, but it never *is* an object: it is always a subject-object that, in a disharmonious multitude of discourses and meta-discourses, speaks about itself. From a sociological perspective that means to Luhmann's words: „Eine Gesellschaft, die sich selbst beschreibt, tut dies intern, aber so, als ob es von außen wäre" (Luhmann 1997: 15). From a philosophical perspective, however, this "speaking about itself" must be understood as a form of reflexivity, i.e. the relation between "internal" and "external", is itself internal.

Discourse takes place in what I suggest to call *discursive space*. In contrast with physical space or spatial environment, discursive space is both infinite and limited in a specific manner. It is filled – with "discourse", obviously – at the very moment of its generation: even if it is empty, it is filled with meaningful silence (there is a difference between empty discursive space and absence of such space). Moreover, any "stretch" of discursive space can only be filled in one particular way. At the same time, it is infinite: any point in discursive space can be the starting point of a new stretch. By way of imperfect illustration, compare it with text balloons in comics (especially the less "mainstream" ones – I am thinking of such authors as Gotlib or Greg): they can have any size, take any shape, have layers and be filled with any content, including "emptiness", but they are always connected to some point in physical space, i.e. to one of the figures in a picture (of course, they can also "float" in the air – but in that case they are *meaningfully* not linked to a speaker).

When filled, discursive space obtains a "materiality" of its own – this is why "official talk", however shallow or void of meaning it may be (think of the *langue de bois* produced in the former Soviet bloc, but more generally think of any type of official discourse or propaganda), is never without significance: although discursive space is infinite in the sense that any filling of it can be compensated or matched,

hidden or drowned, it is limited in the sense, that its filling cannot be "undone". Therefore, even empty talk has a certain significance. It means that serious talk, at the same time and place, in the same communicative situation, has to affirm itself against it. Typically, different instances of discourse *fight* over the same discursive space, *despite* the fact that new discursive spaces can be opened infinitely. It is this *materiality* of discourse, together with its always having a "real" source as well as "real" addresses – "people" – that precludes any understanding of discourse as innocent hot air, and that excludes any conception of discourse analysis as dealing with mere symbolic constructions. These "constructions" please or hurt human beings of not only mind, but also flesh and blood, and they express their real opinions, needs, wants, ideals and anxieties. Names do hurt, albeit not in the same manner as sticks or stones, and "hate speech" (or "love talk" for that matter) is not a metaphorical expression. Consequently, discursive space is not only a place of exchange and expression, but also of contestation and struggle.

One thing that can be assessed against this background is that there is *in* Europe a multitude of often conflicting discourses *about* Europe and these discourses do not simply co-exist, let alone peacefully. Academic conferences are, of course, one part of them. One way to describe a conference is as a place where various discursive and argumentative lines touch upon each other in conflict, convergence and overlap, thus creating, at least for some time, a new discursive situation. Participating in a conference is one way of transcending one's own being-situated, obviously with a varying degree of success. If, however, we realize that, for example, scholarly journals and academic research projects often arise from conferences, it is clear that conferences are nodal points in the development of discursive and argumentative networks. They not only open up new spaces, they also organize and structure them.

At the same time, they are only *one* type of nodal point within discursive space: discourses not only conflict with each other, very often they remain simply independent from each other or are only connected in indirect ways. And there are many such nodal points and networks. A hypothesis that follows from these considerations is that *we may already be in the process of genesis of a European discursive space*, without necessarily being aware of it (i.e., the process does not depend on our awareness of it, even though it does make a difference). This space is filled with a multitude of discourses, but it is not a unitary space that can be surveyed from a vantage point outside it. One consequence of this is that the exploration of this European discursive space necessarily involves "hermeneutics", since the meaning of discourse is never given without its context. However, the fact that discursive space is never harmonious has the further consequence that participants – those who generate discourse and those at whom it is addressed in a given context – do not have an exclusive right to determine the meaning of discourse. One and the same speech, for example, can both express the cultural heritage of a particular people and violate the rights to cultural expression of an ethnic minority, irrespective of whether it is *meant* to do so. To be sure, this is not an argument in favour of relativism: participants can and should

always broaden the horizon of understanding both their own and others' discourse, even if this understanding never becomes "perfect".

4. Reflexivity and identity

The notion of discursive space leads to the question, from which position this paper then is written? This is not an irrelevant question, if discourse *about* "Europe" *by* Europeans is a part *of* Europe. To be sure, this does not imply a "partisan" position; it rather implies a reflexive one: it means to be aware of the *practical* dimension of intellectual discussion. I cannot and ought not deny that I speak and write from the relatively comfortable and safe position of an academic, from one of the members of the "first generation" European community (Benelux and European Community of Coal and Steel). My position thus is an established European one. When asked to define my own approach, I would describe it as a reflexive realism that, in a world full of idealizing and simplifying discursive constructions, out of necessity includes deconstruction as a political ideal (this, however, is a specific and not a neutral position). The aim of deconstruction, it should be noted, is not destruction or cantankerousness, but the making available of construction elements for new constructions. To give an example: it is not destructive, but constructive to analyze the contradictions, contained in frequently heard expressions like "What kind of Europe do we want?" because they wrongly suggest that "Europe" is something like a given object of possible volitions and because it, wrongly again, suggests that there already is such a "we", while in fact this "we" would precisely have to be the outcome of a particular kind of yet-to-emerge Europe. As Claudia Wiesner rightly states, a "European identity", and the European *dèmos* that it defines, are conditions, but not *pre*-conditions of European democratization (Wiesner 2007: 35–38). There thus is an unwarranted "jump", contained in the "we" of the question itself – and this is what makes such questions ideological (see above, 1.v). However, once thus deconstructed, we can use the same question to point out that, by posing the question and trying to answer it, a particular kind of Europe is already being made, irrespective of what "we" want. In asserting, then, that European society is *not* the object of a given collective subject, one contributes – I contribute, in this case – to the coming-to-be of Europe as a subjective-objective reality. This is a *reflexive realization* of what is going on.

The critical focus on this and similar questions is, more generally, a part of an attempt to understand from a participant's perspective the reality of European – my, our reality, the reality of *this* discursive community (conference audience, author-cum-readers) as part of Europe. It does make sense to ask, for example, how far Europe extends culturally or "civilizationally"; it does make sense to relate this question to such questions as to whether Turkey, Tunisia or Ukraine should or should not at some point be accepted as members; and it does make sense to link this question to a discussion about the parameters of European identity. Just as it does make sense, obviously, what kind of immigration policy, Human Rights policy or environmental policy we, European citizens, prefer. But it is *more* relevant from a philosophi-

cal point of view to realize that "Europe" is precisely the discursive space in which these questions are being posed in the first place and in which, by trying to "find out" what this notorious "European identity" is that we allegedly "have", we identify as Europeans. In other words: it is also by disagreeing about such issues, that "we" takes shape, which implies that the identity of this "we" is not homogeneous but heterogeneous and conflict-ridden.

If identity is not a pre-given "thing" that can be "found" or discovered, but a construction that stems from processes of self-identification and other-identification (Mouffe 2005: 25–29; Laclau, Zac 1994: 31–35), i.e. something that is performative rather than empirical, then it is the joint-yet-differentiated search for such an identity which *is* the very "identity" and which generates the "*imagined* community" (Anderson 2006) that "shares" this identity. Put more radically: to ask "Who are we?" or "Which identity do we have?" is not to embark on a quest or to announce a discovery, but to establish oneself as a self-constituting subject seeking community with others. An important consequence of this discussion is that *"European" as an identity is a matter* not of empirical survey or historical analysis, but *of essentially failing self-identification*, failing in the sense that the result is never something objectively there, but something actively and inter-subjectively constituted and re-produced.

5. Identity and energy

If identity is *not* something that can be "found" (and hence every *claim* to have found it necessarily is ideological), it is, curiously, not something that can be *made* either (and hence every *proposal* to "construct" it is a badly concealed form of domination over public discourse). The question is not whether "identity" can or should be "fixed" or "fluid". The question has to do with the nature of *what* should be fixed or fluid. A possible paradigm from which this issue can be addressed, and which avoids both an essentialism that suggests a pre-existing core in every individual as well as a radical constructivism that fails to do justice to the attachment of people to "who they are", is a perception of human beings as, primarily, bundles of energy, existing for a certain stretch of time and moving and acting in a series of more or less stable situations (their stability – negentropy – partly depends on themselves). One of the characteristics of such bundles of energy is their self-organization and their attempt to preserve themselves in whatever environment they find themselves. One of these environments is society, and a part of it is discursive space: in the interaction with others, each individual must in order to survive develop a "core" which, on the one hand, generates stability, but, on the other hand, has to have a considerable degree of flexibility; the outcome is what we usually call a "self".

As we all know, both the "mix" of stability and flexibility and the amount of energy it takes to reproduce and, eventually, adapt this mix, varies strongly from one individual to the other. In addition, individuals *are* not simply "selves", but relate to themselves *as* selves, i.e. they have their own self and that of others before them as objects that they can study, love, influence etc. From this angle, "identity" can be

conceived as the shortest description of a "self". If we assume that in order to exist and interact with others people need an "identity" and if we further assume that this "identity" is neither pre-given nor ready-made, then what follows is the general hypothesis that *"identity" comes into being and is acted upon in a process of mutual self-identification*, i.e. of self-identification that can take the form of a quest for "what one really is" *and* other-identification that works as a "constitutive outside" (Mouffe 2005: 15) for one's own identity. And this process can take place under more or less free conditions: under some conditions it can end up in a celebration of difference for the sake of difference, under other conditions it can lead to the establishment of a national enemy, or even a external scapegoat such as the one yielded by the fabricated *Jewish-Masonic Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, in order to establish oneself as a "we".

6. European identity – whose job?

The question about *European* identity (the assumption behind this question being that such an identity is important for Europe in order to be as much of a selfpreserving political community as is needed in the present-day world) is, in light of the above considerations, complicated by the fact that European identity consists of a mixture of at least three elements: a number of (a) *national identities* (to be more precise: conglomerates of discourses that generate and reproduce "national identities"); (b) a rather high-brow intellectual tradition of "thinking about Europe" that works towards a *cultural European identity*; (c) EU-fostered political and social scientific projects that try to yield building blocks for the construction of a *civil European identity*. The distinction between these three elements, obviously, is analytical rather than empirical, but it helps to point to a number of problems:

1. the opposition between (a) and (b) explains much of the widespread perception of Europe as something of and for an intellectual and political elite – what Markku Kangaspuro labels a "new European nobility" (Kangaspuro 2007: 11);
2. the difference between (a), (b) and (c) serves to explain the anxiety of intellectuals that their ideas may be politicized: a case in point is the notion of *Leitkultur* elaborated by Bassam Tibi (belonging to (b)) – much to his surprise and dislike (Tibi 2002: XIIff), it was quickly "usurped" by, on the one hand, nationalist agenda's in Germany, the Netherlands and elsewhere (a) and, on the other hand, the EU (c) which tries to foster something like a European *Leitkultur* of which Don Quixote, Copernicus and Sherlock Holmes might be constitutive elements;
3. the difference between (a) and (c) reflects what seems to be one of the biggest problem of Europe today: the persistence and indeed growing presence of national discourses, national governments and national "interests" *while their socioeconomic and political importance decreases*. To my mind, this is an example of an ideology that articulates, in a compensatory manner, the opposite of social reality (see 1.v);

4. the difference between b) and a) points to a tension between a free discussion, the outcome of which could, in principle, be that there is no given European identity and a goal-oriented discussion, the aim of which is to contribute to the coming-to-be of a European identity. My preliminary conclusion with respect to this situation is that: (c) the EU should hold back in this matter, (b) intellectuals should realize that their discussion *is* a part of the identity (Europe as a *discursive tradition*) and (a) national identity discourse should be given time to wither away. My not so preliminary thesis is that *if identity becomes an object of political preferences and priorities, it becomes ideology* (a)/(c)*, while if it becomes the object of philosophical debate, it deconstructs itself (b).

7. European identity is what it is not!

Given these considerations, one may wonder what, then, could be positive sources of a European identity that does not fall prey to the afore-mentioned pitfalls (see 5). First of all, it would have to be based on a clear understanding of what identity as a discursive entity is – the question is not what is Polish identity (or any other), but what is "Polish identity" (see above 4 and 5). Secondly, it would have to be reflexive, i.e. acknowledge that the very discourse is part of the identity – it is part of what it means to be European to approach such issues as a matter of discussion (rather than, for example, indoctrination, educational programs or other state policies). Thirdly, it would have to define itself in terms of its constitutive outsides. In an attempt to do this (engaging, that is, in what is pointed at in 6.b) and referring back to a habitual list of factors, that can form the identity of a polity's "nation", viz. shared, language, religion, ethnicity, political goals and history, I suggest the following elements.

i. With its present 23 official languages and 3 working languages, plus a large number of regional languages that claim their rights, the EU does not appear in a position to claim a language-based identity, even though Europe has the shared memory of Latin as a *lingua franca*, and even though a "reduced" form of English is quickly becoming the second language of most Europeans (this shift is remarkable not only in Central and Eastern Europe, but also in, for example, France). To the extent to which the EU as a *polity* affirms itself and to the extent to which, within that setting – the *setting* of borders – economic and social, including demographic, integration takes place, English is bound to become the new *lingua franca,* especially of the "new European nobility" (Kangaspuro). But Étienne Balibar is right, I think, to claim that English will not be *"la 'langue de l'Europe'"* because, on the one hand, it is a *global lingua franca* that exceeds Europe and, on the other hand, it does not replace the existing multitude of languages (Balibar 2001: 318)[7]. MORE IMPORTANT, therefore, and relevant as a constitutive outside, is the rejected notion of mono-linguality: the point is *not* that any European should stop speaking

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[7] Referring to Umberto Eco, Balibar suggests that the language of Europe is "la traduction (ou si l'on veut la métalangue concrète faite de toutes les équivalences et de toutes tentatives pour surmonter 'l'intraduisible' entre les idiomes)…" (*loc.cit.*).

her or his native language, but that speaking only one language means to enclose oneself in an imagined polity, the "nation-state" that, in socio-economic and political terms, already is a thing of the past. To be European means to speak with other people in another language than your native one without identifying them as foreigners, but it also means to recognize that no single language can lay claim to being *the* European language. The empirical fact that English is assuming this role not only is a matter of pragmatism rather than of political domination, but also goes along with an impoverishing of that language itself (reduction of its idiomatic character, for example) that is, though in reverse direction, not incomparable with the splitting off of classical Latin from the forms of vulgar Latin that later became vernaculars. To be European thus means to give priority to communication over vernacular and it means to be bi- or multi-lingual.

ii. Religion, it seems to me, is not a viable element of a European identity either, because of the plurality and variety of religions in Europe's past and present: Christianity in its three major forms (Orthodoxy, Catholicism, Protestantism) and many sub-forms, including new evangelical movements, Judaism, Islam, and a variety of more or less religious world views such as Freemasonry, Anthroposophy, etc. MORE IMPORTANT and relevant as a constitutive outside is rejected mono-religiosity either as the idea that Europe as a whole should have a single religion (which could then only be a re-unified Christianity), or as the idea that parts of Europe should have a national religion (Poland as Roman Catholic by nature, Romania and Greece as Orthodox, etc.) (van der Zweerde 2003, 2005). To be European thus means to acknowledge and defend that no "religion" can lay claim to a public impact that goes beyond the actual size and weight of its community of faithful.

iii. Ethnicity can even less serve as a common denominator than religion: to identify, e.g., Europe with Indo-Germanic or Indo-European ethnicity not only implies the exclusion of the substantial numbers of immigrants in most European countries as well as the "mixed offspring", that results from their presence (and increasingly will), but also of such traditionally European ethnic groups such as the Finns or the Magyars. MORE IMPORTANT, again, and relevant as a constitutive outside, is the rejected idea of mono-ethnicity as a relevant political factor, an idea that has manifested itself in European history many times: in World War II, of course, but also in the ethnic cleansing campaigns in parts of former Yugoslavia and in the attitude towards Roma in some European countries. To be European thus means to reject the idea of ethnic purity.

iv. Political goals. The idea of a political community on the basis of shared political goals rather than religious, ethnic or linguistic factors (which, broadly speaking, was the agenda of Romantic counter-Enlightenment) has come most typically to the fore during and after the French Revolution of 1789, but is also present, for example, in the *Confoederatio Helvetica*. Interestingly, it there includes the right of religiously, ethnically and linguistically relatively homogeneous communities to retain a large degree of autonomy. While it is clear that Europeans generally share

a number of political convictions that can, roughly, be said to form the basis of the constitutional liberal democracy including Human Rights, which, in local variants, is the reality of most European countries (and, obviously, a condition for EU membership), it is also clear that a Habermasian *Verfassungspatriottismus*, which would build a European identity on the basis of these convictions, is too meagre and too rational. Moreover, Europe is still home to a broad spectrum of conceptions of political and socio-economic justice. MORE IMPORTANT, therefore, is the protest of Europeans against any monopoly on the interpretation of justice and, against forms of injustice including Human Rights violations, privileges, brute use of power, arbitrary decisions and systematic exclusion of individuals and groups, not only in those cases when they themselves are victims of it, but also when this affects others, including their political adversaries or people who are not their co-citizens. It is not accidental that the *actual* violations of Human Rights, particularly of immigrants who yet have to be qualified as illegal, but have no way of protesting against that verdict, have to be hidden from public attention. To be European thus means to have a historically informed sensitivity to injustice.

v. History is often pointed at as a factor that unites Europeans around a shared identity. In fact, the four elements just discussed can only be understood against the background of the history that Europeans share. However, it seems clear to me not only that this "shared" history must include the colonial pasts of many European countries (José Casanova)[8] and, obviously, many other black pages, but also that this history is perceived differently and, fundamentally so, from one European country to another. Out of the many possible examples I give only three: the perception by Czechs and Russians of the events of 1968, the perception by victims and perpetrators of the occupation of European countries (Poland, but also France or the Netherlands) by Nazi Germany, and the perception by Croatians, Bosnians and Serbs of the war in former Yugoslavia. It usually suffices to cast a quick glance into locally used history school books to get an idea. What Europeans thus have in common, is not a single shared history, but the presence of a multitude of often diametrically opposed narratives of their past: this profound difference of opinion is a vital part of their *Schicksalsgemeinschaft*. One problem, it seems to me, is that while this is easy to assess at the level of intellectual debate (see 6.b above), it is rejected as not only potentially, but indeed actually undermining national identity (6.a) and attempts to work towards a common perception (6.c) will invariably strike as artificial. The only real "remedy" to this problem is of course historical time itself, but it can be assisted by the attempts, within that time, by historians to write a history of Europe (e.g. Davies 1997) rather than of a multitude of Fatherlands, and it can be fostered by, for example, educational projects that compare history school books. Still, it would and *ought to* be an illusion to think that one happy day all children in all schools in all European countries would be using the same

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[8] José Casanova pointed this out in a yet unpublished paper at a conference, "Politik, Religion und Markt: die Rückkehr der Religion als Anfrage an den politisch-philosophischen Diskurs der Moderne", in Innsbruck, Austria, 5–7 June 2008.

history book. MORE IMPORTANT, therefore, and relevant as a constitutive outside, is the rejected idea of a mono-logical account of history be it national or European. To be European thus means, among others, to be aware of the fact that, for example, Frenchmen and Germans have a different perception of the Vichy regime just like Germans, Poles, Jews, and Roma have different perceptions of Oswięcim/Auschwitz.

8. A "weak" identity

What unites these five items, first of all, is something that arguably is a part of the "core" of a European identity: the acceptance of plurality *and* the non-acceptance of this plurality as a ground for discord. As Hermann Lübbe stated, "das Hauptcharakteristikum europäischer Identität, kulturelle und politische Vielfalt namentlich in engen Räumen, wird im Rahmen der einheitsstiftenden erweiterten Union noch aufdringlicher sein als bisher" (Lübbe 2001: 222). To be sure, it is always possible to undo plurality, either by forced assimilation or by some form of "homogenization", but one of the effects of the sheer size of the EU is, it seems to me, that no single ethnic or religious group will be in a position to impose such a policy (just like, at the political level, the possibility of the domination of European politics by one or a few large members – in the recent past: the axis Bonn-Paris – becomes less likely with each new member). All this leads to the "proposal" of a European slogan that does not, as is the case now, point to "Unity in Diversity"/*"Einheit in der Vielfalt"*, but to *Plurality in Unity.*

A second common dominator of these five items is their "negativity". They are more easily formulated in terms of what distinguishes them from their constitutive outside, i.e. from what they are *not*, than in terms of what they are positively. This negativity is, I think, very important, because to realize it fully is to become skeptical of attempts by European authorities to work constructively at the creation of a positive identity (6.c). The resistance that such attempts meet with – this resistance is another feature that Europeans have *in common* – is explicable not only in terms of the content of such identity, but also of the artificial nature of the very attempt.

A third element that the five elements have in common, related to the negativity just alluded to, is the fact that each of them draws a line or points to a limit. If Europe's political borders are primarily meant not to keep the citizens in, but to limit and control the access of "foreigners", the lines drawn by the potentially constitutive elements of a European identity just outlined are also meant to keep something out: nationally motivated monolingualism, unwarranted claims by religious communities and organizations, ethnic purification or homogenization, monopoly on justice and a mono-logic historical narrative. This is important, it seems to me, because this makes it much easier to combine European and national identity, something that many Europeans continue to attach great value to. As surveys indicate, the vast majority of Europeans either consider themselves to have only a national identity or a national plus European identity – the two categories cover well over 80% in most countries – while minorities around 10% claim a European plus national identity and very small

numbers "only European" (Buonanno, Deakin 2004: 87). This does not necessarily pose a problem: if "national" and "European" are not perceived as mutually exclusive identities, they are compatible (Wiesner 2007: 42–46) – though not necessarily in a harmonious manner.

On the whole and for the reasons just indicated, I venture the hypothesis that *a European identity must be a weak and primarily "negative" identity, marked more by its constitutive outsides than by its "positive" elements*. Understanding this reflexively, I suggest, that to write about European identity in this manner and to discuss the borders of Europe *is to take part in the shaping of a European identity* already. It is, to return to a notion discussed above (under 4), one way of organizing one's intellectual energy around a core. The answer to the question "What does it mean to be a European?" is not primarily found in theoretical deliberations but in practices and in ways of doing – it is, to put it in Hegelian terms, more a matter of *Sittlichkeit* than of *Moralität*. A typical, much less high-brow example of this is the remarkable fact that though attempts to *build* a European identity around such things as an anthem[9], a flag and other symbols may have failed due to artificiality (Neumann 2007: 24), the European flag gains "identity potential" when it is used elsewhere, e.g. in the USA or in Russia, and the everyday use of the euro as the EU's currency has a clear, long-term effect on the "sense" of Europeans – a generation is taking shape that thinks European in terms of what they have in their pockets.

9. No civilizationalism!

From this attempt at a delineation of a "weak" European identity (under 6–8), a critique can be derived of the Huntingtonian paradigm. It can be summarized by the thesis that *Europe does not possess – or is covered by – a single civilization and that this constitutes not its weakness, but its strength*. This is not to say, that Samuel Huntington did not have a point: his conception does point to tensions, and even if they are more complex than his idea of fault lines between civilizations suggests, such fault lines can be found. However, there are at least three good reasons against a simplified application of his civilizational paradigm to Europe:

It suggests more homogeneity than is actually in place: not only is Europe as a whole a multi-ethnic, multi-religious and multi-lingual cultural space that includes, e.g., Russia, Belarus, Ukraine and Turkey, but also the predominant European polity, the EU, contains countries with a predominantly Catholic, Protestant or Orthodox religious tradition, and it will contain in the foreseeable future, at least one predominantly Muslim country (Bosnia-Herzegovina), it includes highly "secularized" as well as highly traditionally Christian countries. There is not a fault line running across Europe, but Europe is built on a plurality of "inner fault lines".

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[9] For a hilariously funny analysis of the EU anthem, the "Ode to Joy" in Ludwig van Beethoven's 9th Symphony, including the role of the *marcia Turca*, see Slavoj Žižek 2008, p. 270–274.

It puts civilization before culture, thus suggesting a level of objectivity that is not matched by the cultural process that takes place within any society, and that stems from the fact that society is as much a self-constituting subject as it is an "object". There are, of course, objective sides to every society but they derive their meaning and the possibility of their future changes from the fact that the members of that society, from average citizens to politicians, *relate to these objective sides* – culture is a general name for the way in which people relate actively to the circumstances and realities they find themselves surrounded by.

Ideas have the capacity to be *working ideas* (Мотрошилова 1991: 6), a fact which explains why intellectuals can try to develop ideas that have an impact on social reality. Huntington's idea of civilizations and of fault lines is an example of this because, rather than being an objective, empirical description of social facts, it is a discursively embedded concept which, if accepted, tends to work as a self-fulfilling prophecy. Huntington's later book, *Who are we?,* which is an attempt to delineate (*draw limits!*) American identity, leaves a little doubt as to his culture-political agenda (Huntington 2004: 8–12, and passim). A single intellectual, with respect to these formative issues, who is claiming "This is how it is!" has already changed "how it is".

10. No neutrality!

It follows from this last example, that, at least in the social sciences and the humanities, scientific research and academic discussion are never politically neutral or innocent. To do research in a seemingly neutral manner is therefore either to run away from responsibility or to engage in ideology, i.e. to make a concealed political move. To be European, for example, means to be aware of the *inner* potentialities of Europe's cultural and intellectual heritage – including totalitarianism that has seduced grand thinkers like Martin Heidegger, Jean Paul Sartre, György Lukács, Carl Schmitt and Giovanni Gentile. Without denying the specific responsibility and guilt on some parts, we can safely state that all European nations have struggled or are still struggling, with their 20th century past. If this is true, what Europeans have in common, is not only the experience of a nasty, brutish and short 20th century (Eric Hobsbawm), but also the recognized necessity to come to terms with it, to engage in *Vergangenheitsbewältigung.* Even if they have succeeded in this to varying degrees, one can argue that the readiness to come to terms with the less appealing parts of one's history without putting the blame exclusively on "the Other" is a positive part of the European heritage. The pressure on Turkey to recognize the Armenian genocide is, I believe, more important precisely in the sense of a requirement to an open, enlightened society to deal with its past, than in the sense of a recognition of a particular guilt. Within Europe, Germany has been exemplary in this respect, which appears, for example, from the stark contrast between German *Wiedergutmachung* with respect to Poland or to Jewry, and the position post-Soviet Russia takes with respect to the systematic destruction, during roughly 40 years, of the economies and civil societies of Poland or Hungary, not to mention Lithuania or Estonia. This, arguably, disqualifies Russia as a

European country on precisely this point. What is at stake, in the process of coming to terms with Europe's past is *not* the answer to the question "Who is to blame?", but the communicative process of the coming-to-terms itself, the coming-to-be of a reflexive community. This community, paradoxically, is stronger if it does *not* arrive at a single answer. The German *Historikerstreit* thus is a more significant contribution to a European discursive space when it ends undecided than if it is solved.

The fact that Europeans, for more than half a century, have asked themselves and each other which have been the real causes of the tragedies that soaked Europe in blood, without finding a clear-cut answer to this question, is not a failure but, paradoxically, a success. This implies that intellectual responsibility is a matter of drawing clear lines: we, Europeans may not know who we are or what we want, but we do know very well what we are not and what we do not want.

11. Back to citizenship: instead of the conclusions

What is needed today is a political philosophy that matches European *realities* rather than fears and dreams. Neither a mere philosophy "about politics"[10], nor one that designs ideal models, but one that invokes and revives the direct link between philosophy and politics, that has been constitutive ever since Plato and Aristotle – and, not to be forgotten, Democritus. Too often is European philosophy determined either by wishful thinking about a common European *Schicksalsgemeinschaft* or by fearful thinking about the loss of political autonomy and cultural identity. Those who, like Jacques Derrida, dared to think beyond the boundaries of their national tradition, often jumped to a cosmopolitanism that does retain large parts of the European intellectual legacy, esp. of Kantian Enlightenment, but loses sight of the complex socio-economic and political reality that *is* Europe. As a result, this cosmopolitanism often ends in fruitless repetitive discussions about whether or not Kantian "eternal peace" is a real possibility or not. My suggestion is that a focus on the European polity is a way out of this dead-lock: we can make better sense of the idea of cosmopolitan citizenship, if the EU makes it a stated goal of its foreign policy, that every world inhabitant should be citizen of a polity which is based on a rule of law and that has Human Rights, included in its bill of civil rights. The number of such polities then is a different issue; one that can but must not be the focus of our concern. It is imaginable that, in the very long run, the whole world will become "Europe", just as it once was "America". In that case Immanuel Kant's rationalist dream would get close to coming true. It is more likely, however, that, for a long time to come, Europe will be one among a plurality of larger and smaller polities – among which it will be one of the larger and more powerful blocks. To be such a polity it requires *not*, I venture, the fixation of an identity or the self-satisfactory celebration of a civilization, but the drawing of borders, contestable and

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[10] Here and elsewhere, I employ a triple definition of political philosophy: philosophy of politics, philosophy of the political and philosophy, that realizes its own political nature – here I have in mind, primarily, the third meaning.

liable to future change, but clear-cut as borders in order to create the space in which, among others, discussion about European culture, civilization, identity, and politics can continue and "flourish".

What we need to be concerned about most of all is the inside of the European polity. The "political state of Europe" is a hybrid mixture of "old" nation-states and a trans-national juridical-political structure that has partly replaced them. Also, this political state of Europe is markedly less democratic than the nation-states that form it: to the extent to which the trans-national European "state" holds real political power (and it does through legislation, regulation, European Court for Human Rights etc.), its "democratic deficit" means a net loss of democratic control, even if it is "the best developed example of a democratically organized political entity on a transnational level" (Wiesner 2007: 38). If it is true that, on the one hand, many current social, economic and environmental problems require European rather than local solutions – think of labour market, drugs policies, immigration, emancipation of minorities, the financial crisis of 2008 – and the ideal of *political* power, as opposed to social and economic power, requires *more* rather than less state capacity at EU level; and on the other hand, national governments for obvious reasons tend to focus on national rather than on common European interests; then it is clear that a more *active* European citizenship is required. There is nothing new about the transition from the status of subject – which Europeans all are – to that of citizen which, formally at least, we also are. But there is something crucially new about shifting active citizenship from the national to the European level, giving rise to European public space, European civil society etc. Policies and discourse that seek to foster such developments by reference to a shared European identity forget one thing: every society is divided in itself, and contains antagonistic relations between different social, economic, cultural etc. groups. Every polity, therefore, must somehow address these antagonisms by suppressing, canalizing or transposing them to the *political* arena. Every democratic society is disharmonious by nature, if and *because* it succeeds in transforming all forms of societal antagonism into agonistic political struggle. Therefore, a European "civil identity" that is to match European societal reality, will not be a unitary and homogeneous identity that is supplementary to a national identity, the homogeneous identity of which is just as illusionary. On the contrary, such an "identity" will be heterogeneous and diverse; it will cover a plurality of perceptions, preferences, and ideals. It will be *plural*, not as a first step towards unity, but in its core, and it will be divided, but not along national lines. If they want to make a difference to the European reality that already is their socio-economic, intellectual and cultural environment, Europeans will have to transpose their political ideals to a European public sphere and European political arena that comes into existence, albeit not with immediate visibility, in and through the very process of transposing.

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VIENINGUMO PLIURALUMAS: EUROPIETIŠKASIS TAPATUMAS IR EUROPIETIŠKASIS PILIETIŠKUMAS

Evert van der Zweerde

Santrauka

Tolesnė „Europos" integracija ir svarbiausia – vis dažnesnės „politinės diskusijos" šia tema yra remiamos ir skatinamos. Vadovaujamasi ne romantine ar idealistine pozityvaus europietiškojo tapatumo vizija, bet Europos ekonominės, socialinės ir ekologinės integracijos vertinimu bei požiūriu, esą ji politiškai atsilieka demokratinio valdymo ir pilietiškumo atžvilgiais. Tariamai nesibaigiančios diskusijos Europos tapatumo, ribų, vieningumo, civilizacijos ir panašiais klausimais nėra ta problema, kuri jau turi būti išspręsta, bet iš esmės sudaro tokios Europos, kokia ji yra, pagrindą: vieningumo pliuralumas vietoj „pliuralumo vieningumo", kaip skelbia vienas iš oficialių Europos Sąjungos (ES) lozungų. Nūdienės socialinės, ekonominės ir aplinkosaugos problemos reikalauja europietiškų sprendimų ir kur kas *aktyvesnio* europietiškojo pilietiškumo. Tačiau norint, kad europietiškasis pilietinis tapatumas atitiktų europietiškąją socialinę tikrovę, jis neturi būti bendras ir homogeniškas, bet, atvirkščiai, heterogeniškas ir įvairialypis, apimantis daugelį suvokimo perspektyvų, privilegijų ir idealų. Jis turi būti *pliuralus*, bet ne kaip pirmas žingsnis vieningumo link; jis turi būti iš esmės *dalus*, tačiau ne pagal valstybių sienas.

Reikšminiai žodžiai: pilietiškumas, „civilizacionalizmas", diskursyvi erdvė, europietiškoji integracija, tapatumas, pliuralumas.