Europe –
Dream and Reality

An Alfred Herrhausen Society publication
In cooperation with IP Internationale Politik
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What Is at Stake?

Even if we Europeans can scarcely believe it, Europe remains for many a dream.

Frank-Walter Steinmeier
Europe is at a crossroads. What started as an economic and financial crisis has become a crisis of identity that has unleashed strong centrifugal forces. The success of anti-EU parties across the continent calls for the UK to leave the EU, and Swiss fears of “mass immigration” are testing the limits of solidarity within Europe. Nationalism is again on the rise. In its largest economic crisis to date, the European Union is coming to learn that expressions of solidarity and real payment obligations are very different things. Mark Twain’s realization that “the weakest of all weak things is a virtue that has not been tested” is proving to be true.¹

In the wake of criticism of the EU’s current crisis management, there has been mounting criticism of the institutional construction of the EU generally. The tradition of silent integration has come to an abrupt end as citizens face the harsh realities of EU policies. For decades, national responsibilities were delegated to the supranational level virtually unnoticed, based on what Leon Lindberg and Stuart Scheingold called “permissive consensus.” The Monnet method or the Commission’s and European Court of Justice’s policy of creating facts were characteristic of this political style.

There was no real controversial debate throughout the largest political experiment of the present, neither among the political elites nor among Europe’s citizens. The democratic involvement of citizens came only with referenda on EU treaties, which also served to teach prointegration elites a lesson.

But now that economic success does not seem to be forthcoming and citizens fear for their assets, complaints about the lack of democracy of the Brussels institutions are growing. All too readily, assumptions of opacity and a lack of public opinion are made as the same criticism of “Brussels” is repeated over and over again. European discourse is marked by a growing sense of disenchantment. It seems that the crisis years have delivered a loss of European self-confidence. The continent’s bleak outlook is compounded by demographic change.

Communication Breakdown

While this development was triggered by an economic and financial crisis, its true cause runs deeper. To this day, the EU, long ridiculed for supposedly endless rules on cucumber length and caramel imports, has not managed to communicate the success of the common project to its citizens in a strong and convincing manner. Peace and prosperity are taken for granted on a continent ravaged by centuries of war.

It is a bit like a waste collection service: hardly anyone takes notice when things run smoothly, but it is very unpleasant when they don’t. Brussels’ ongoing search for a “new narrative” for Europe seems almost helpless. The EU critics, by contrast, have nothing to prove and can therefore make lofty promises. They see the momentary instability as a historic opportunity to diverge from the path of an ever closer union and reverse the integration process.

These crisis developments are opposed to the strong utopia of the European dream, which is often defined in terms of common values. These values, which evolved over centuries, partly as lessons drawn from the continent’s historical aberrations and bloody conflicts, are
today taken for granted: protection of human dignity, rule of law, democratic participation, social and economic sustainability, cultural diversity, as well as freedom of the press and the arts.

A change of perception can help to see the European dream more clearly: Martin Schulz compares the EU to the illusionary giant Tur Tur in the story “Jim Button and Luke the Engine Driver”: “Rather than appearing smaller the further he moves away, the larger and larger he becomes until, when seen from a distance, he appears to be an enormous giant.” Indeed, we often grasp the European idea more clearly when seen through the eyes of others. For many people in the world, Europe’s cultural appeal goes well beyond that of economic power and a bundling of national politics.

In this volume, the perspectives of authors from different disciplines who look at Europe from the outside not only aim to shed a clearer light on the European project and its underlying ideas. The various perspectives are supposed to go one step further, seeking to highlight the challenges these ideas face in the shifting global order – and illuminate the conditions under which they can remain globally competitive.

**A Shifting Global Order**

Europe has played a key role in global politics for centuries. Since Aristotle, Europeans have been accustomed to seeing themselves in the center of the world map. As colonial and hegemonic powers, Germany, England, Italy, Portugal, and Spain left their mark on countries well beyond the European continent.

The global order, however, is currently shifting and economic power is (again) concentrating in countries such as China, Brazil, and India. These countries are no longer willing to play by international rules they did not help shape and which are inconsistent with their values and standards. The world has become multipolar, and various socioeconomic models and political ideologies are competing

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with one another. In this new world order, Europe – or as Jeremy Rifkin deemed it, the quiet superpower – will only be heard if it speaks with one voice. On their own, individual European countries would not play any measurable economic, political, or military role on the future global stage.

Helping to shape the fundamental change of the international system, however, seems difficult and well-nigh impossible if the EU lacks support from within. The question of how Europe should position itself as a global player can only be answered in the broader context of intra-European challenges and international expectations.

Our Responsibility to Those Dreaming of Europe

Europe’s achievements, no matter how much we take them for granted, are under pressure as other political systems and ideologies emerge. Over the past few years it has become apparent that fiscal policy tools and further political integration must follow the launch of the common euro currency. It is also often said that we Europeans need to wake up to reality to regain our competitiveness. Only this will enable us to compete on global markets against expanding economies such as China.

But who in Europe can and wants to imagine how production in the Swabian Alb region would have to be organized to be competitive with Bangladeshi wages? Anthony Giddens thus argues, “The social model has to be integrated with the achievement of economic prosperity, not just treated as dependent upon it.” At closer look, the social market economy with its balancing mechanisms and its social and ecological standards could be an advantage in global competition.

This is apparent from keen international interest in European social security systems. China is currently wrestling with social unrest owing to growing social disparity and is looking for stabiliz-

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ing structures. This includes raising standards of living for wider sections of the population and preserving the environment for future generations. But other emerging industrial societies also face the task of offering a large number of people economic and social prospects that go well beyond mere survival.

Recent developments in Ukraine have shown how attractive the EU can appear when viewed from the outside. Many among the hundreds of thousands of demonstrators on the Maidan were fighting for European values, taking huge risks as they waved the European flag to lead Ukraine toward Europe. To demonstrators in Kyiv, Europe stands for a clear, future-oriented course. Europe promises personal freedom, prosperity, political participation, more rights, and greater opportunity. At the same time, the geopolitical situation shows that the EU with its obvious soft power now also needs to assume responsibility for people who dream of Europe.

**New Perspectives on Europe**

This selection of essays aims to provide new perspectives on Europe. It is published in the context of the Alfred Herrhausen Society conference “Europe – Dream and Reality,” which will be held on May 9, 2014, in Berlin. Speakers from different continents and disciplines will discuss their perspectives on the European dream, with a particular focus on external perspectives.

The conference was organized in cooperation with the European Writers’ Conference, which will also be held in Berlin on May 8. Frank-Walter Steinmeier, Mely Kiyak, Nicol Ljubić, Tilman Spengler, and Antje Rávic Strubel as initiators of the conference will here join thirty other authors from across Europe to discuss how to live the European dream and how dreaming can help offer alternatives to the European present.

Both events are deliberately not centered on political institutions and processes, that is to say the hardware of the European unification project. Rather, they explore the cultural foundations and ideas of the European unification project – the software, as it were. The
focus is not the cool calculation of costs and benefits but rather the cultural diversity and cultural and historical roots of the European continent.

Accordingly, writers, philosophers, and artists from beyond the world of politics and business shall have their say and discuss the European social model. What remains of the European project beyond the deep economic interdependencies and common internal market, the blessings of which served to justify each further stage of integration over decades? Are 2,000 years of related history and strong cultural ties enough to go through thick and thin together? The question of whether the European dream in all its different shapes and facets can live up to the global reality must be discussed.

In the course of many projects undertaken by the Alfred Herrhausen Society in emerging and developing countries, the question of why Europe does not achieve more with its civilization model and soft power was raised more than once. Perhaps this publication can provide answers to this question.
In May 1988, a group of writers came together in West Berlin and dreamt the European dream.

They came from east and west, north and south – and even further afield. Susan Sontag flew in from the United States and Kuma Ndumbe III from Cameroon. Together they dreamt the dream of a united Europe. “We had no idea utopia was so close,” wrote one of those present later.

Back then the writers’ dream was dreamt by people in the other half of the divided city as well. Within months their dream was sweeping through Europe. It drove peaceful revolutionaries onto Wenceslas Square in Prague, to the shipyards in Gdansk, to the street outside St. Nicholas Church in Leipzig. Bit by bit the dreamers pulled down the Berlin Wall and pulled up the Iron Curtain.

That all happened a quarter-century ago. Yet today wherever I travel as foreign minister, I find those dreams are still being dreamt. And this is definitely not happening only in Europe! They are being dreamt in Africa and the Middle East, on Tahrir Square in Cairo, and on the Maidan in Kyiv.

I consider it a great privilege that as foreign minister I not only look out at the wider world, but also look back home, back at Europe, with the world’s eyes. And when I talk to the dreamers in Kyiv or Cairo, I see that for them Europe is something that inspires hope.
Even if we Europeans can scarcely believe it after these years of crisis. Europe remains for many a dream.

So what does it mean, this dream of Europe? It is the dream of a society that is both free and inclusive. That lets people live as they choose yet seeks also social justice. That sees in a diversity of lifestyles greater value than pressure to conform.

This is a model unmatched anywhere in the world. It stands neither for pure individualism and unfettered markets nor for the authoritarian state, be it religious, ideological, or pragmatic in nature. Between these two poles the European model embodies the hope of finding a healthy balance between freedom on the one hand and social cohesion on the other.

This dream of Europe has evolved over centuries. It is certainly no naive dream that fell down from the sky one starry night. It is a dream forged by centuries of nightmares – never-ending war, suffering, and conflict.

Is This the Time to Speak of Dreams?

One of the participants in that 1988 writers’ conference was the Hungarian philosopher Ágnes Heller. Over the course of her long life Europe’s nightmares seared her both body and soul. The view over the Danube in her native city of Budapest haunts her dreams to this day, for as a young Jewish girl she narrowly escaped the fate of the Jews shot on its banks by the Nazis. Like many intellectuals after the war, she dreamt the dream of communism. Yet that, too, turned out to be a nightmare – political harassment, bugged living rooms, everything she did or thought subject to all-pervasive surveillance.

Already twenty years before that first writers’ conference in Berlin, Ágnes Heller had been one of the signatories to a manifesto drawn up by European writers in solidarity with the activists of the 1968 Prague Spring. That only intensified the campaign against her, however, and eventually she was forced to leave Budapest for Australia and later New York, where she was appointed to Hannah Arendt’s prestigious chair at the New School.
When Ágnes Heller flew into Berlin from New York in 1988, she – like her fellow authors – had not dared to hope how soon dream would become reality.

Today, 26 years later, writers, intellectuals, academics, and artists have once again come together here in Berlin. The title of their gathering is “Europe – Dream and Reality.”

Some people might wonder whether this is the right time for Europe’s cultural, intellectual, and political elite to sing the European dream’s praises when in many parts of the continent euroskepticism is more widespread than ever. Whether this is the right time to talk of dreams, as Europe slowly recovers from its economic crisis, yet its political crisis persists. And right on our doorstep the worst diplomatic crisis since the end of the Cold War shows no signs of abating.

My answer is yes, for those very reasons this is indeed the right time. The conference is part and parcel of the work that Europe needs. Looking back in 2010 on the end of the Soviet regime and the rise of Europe, Ágnes Heller shrewdly pointed out that this success had been an unexpected blessing. Yet as with every kind of personal blessing, you had to know what to do with it. Joyous enthusiasm was an important emotion, of course, but no sensible way to deal with such a blessing. The only right response, she explained, was work.

Most Urgent Work Is on the Union’s Periphery

And of work there is no shortage. The generation growing up in today’s Europe – unlike my own and my parents’ generation – no longer equates Europe with prosperity and progress. The expectations young people have of Europe are crystal clear – and I hear just the same from pupils in a school in my Brandenburg constituency as from pupils in a school in Athens that I’ve visited as foreign minister. “Will I find a decent job after I leave school and finish training?” “Does the freedom in Europe bring me real opportunities – or must I fear cutthroat competition and unchecked immigration?” To these young people Europe must prove that the promise of freedom com-
combined with social inclusion, so powerfully attractive to the rest of the world, is something it can actually deliver.

Some people may see a contradiction between the enthusiasm the European model inspires in the wider world and the skepticism it inspires at home – a skepticism so widespread that in the upcoming European elections anti-European populists look likely to win more votes than ever before. I for my part see no such contradiction – quite the opposite, in fact. Europe is now at a crossroads. Over the past decades Europe has developed functioning mechanisms to safeguard peace – and these mechanisms are not merely loose coordination between its member states but also independent institutions and decision making by majority vote of the member states. That is something which exists nowhere else in the world. As a result, however, we now see conflicts of interest in Europe related to the very core of state sovereignty: economic and social issues, resource allocation, and financial issues.

Such a strong Europe means people also have high expectations – and rightly so! There are three things they feel are particularly crucial. They want Europe, firstly, to be democratic; secondly, to be transparent and function efficiently; and, thirdly, to concentrate on what it does best.

Europe needs to be “big on big things and smaller on smaller things.” On that we all agree. But what exactly the big issues facing Europe are is something we will need to determine after the European elections. That brings me back to the first two things people want from Europe. In a democratic and transparent union priorities cannot simply be dictated from on high. European priorities can be determined only in a European public space and by common debate. For that reason, too, conferences such as this are part of the business of working on Europe.

However, the work that needs doing most urgently at the present time is on the union’s periphery. The Ukraine conflict has confronted European diplomacy with its most severe crisis since the end of the Cold War. Russia’s attempt, seven decades after the end of World War II, to redraw Europe’s borders is a violation of both inter-
national law and the Ukrainian constitution. Politically the annexation of Crimea has opened Pandora’s box. What the consequences of this will be, also indeed for Russia as a multiethnic country, are at the moment still anyone’s guess.

At the writers’ conference in May 1988 the participants wrote an open letter to Reagan, Gorbachev, and other CSCE leaders. Do you not share the view, so their appeal, that overcoming the division of Europe must be placed on the political agenda? Right now that question is jarringly apt. Just as those attending that conference had no inkling of the imminent end of the continent’s division, so too the organizers of this 2014 conference could scarcely have imagined that what we have to fear today is a new division of Europe.

In this crisis the European Union has taken a united stand. Our response to Russia’s actions has been decisive and appropriate. And at no time have we ceased to map out how further escalation can be avoided.

With people in our neighborhood who feel Europe’s attraction we are keen to cooperate more closely – politically, economically, and on the civil society level. The dream these people dream will make headway, we hope, just as it did with us. Our neighborhood policy is geared to cooperation, not confrontation. It is not intended to create new divisions, for it is not based on the zero-sum logic of the past.

Whether the Ukraine crisis will ultimately make European diplomacy more cohesive remains to be seen. Whether the economic and monetary crisis will ultimately make for a more internally cohesive Europe also remains to be seen. These are matters we can leave our successors to mull over at the next conference twenty years from now.

Be that as it may – Europe has no final destination. The dreaming will continue, and reality will always be a work in progress. To claim otherwise would be to raise false expectations.

Europe will never have just one single identity. Nor does it need any such thing. The diversity of its identities creates space to try oneself out, to generate a sense of belonging – and that is what Europe truly needs.
Europe will never speak with just one voice. Nor does it need any such thing. What it needs are mechanisms that fuse its many voices into joint action. In a vibrant and citizen-friendly Europe it is perfectly normal for people to argue with each other – just as they do on the national level.

A Permanent, Never-Ending Conversation

Nor does Europe need any new story, any narrative that is valid for all time. What it needs is lively public discourse. That is why Tilman Spengler, one of the initiators of the 2014 writers’ conference, has pointed out that “what we are really aiming for is not a conference, but an ongoing conversation between authors with something to say, a conversation that will seemingly never end.”

Such a conversation fits very well with the anniversary year 2014, when Europe remembers its catastrophes and its successes: the outbreak of World War I one hundred years ago, the beginning of World War II 75 years ago, the end of the Cold War 25 years ago, and the eastern enlargement of the EU ten years ago. Working on Europe, especially in such an anniversary year, requires us to ponder questions that lie further back and further ahead than those we tend to deal with in the normal business of politics.

Just two days before she turns 85, Ágnes Heller will be arriving in Berlin to attend the May 2014 writers’ conference. As a philosopher and historian, she contends that you can simultaneously remember, rejoice, warn, and hope. As a European politician, I would add that you not only can – indeed you must.
What Keeps Europe Together, and What Fragments It?

It is precisely now, a moment in which Europeans have the greatest doubts about the European venture, when they ought to need Europe the most.

Dominique Moïsi
France’s national identity is defined by its international identity. The way the French see themselves depends to a large extent on what others think of them. “I meddle, therefore I am” – this variation on Descartes’s famous statement contributed, at least in part, to France’s great enthusiasm for interventions in Africa and the Middle East. In this context, the world is a stage upon which the identity of the nation is defined and glorified.

Does Europe feel compelled to follow the “French model,” in spite of a host of reservations? Changes in the international environment do indeed offer Europe the opportunity to redefine itself. Yet strictly speaking, it is not merely an opportunity, but rather a burning need, if not an inescapable necessity. Profound transformations around the world have challenged Europe to understand the historical inevitability of this change and adapt to it. To meet this challenge, Europe must demonstrate humility, astuteness, and its ambition to shape the future. It must reconsider its relationship with the world based on the interplay of these three things. The success or failure of this endeavor will depend on striking the right balance between them in the years to come.

At the beginning of the 18th century, Europe still comprised 20 percent of the world’s population; today that figure has fallen to 6 percent, and tomorrow it will be smaller still. In comparison, by
1950 Africa had no more than 180 million inhabitants, but by 2050 it will doubtless be home to more than 2 billion. German Chancellor Angela Merkel, head of the largest economic power on the European continent, repeatedly emphasized in her last election campaign how “tiny” Germany is alone, without the rest of Europe: it has just 1 percent of the world population. “Together we are small, divided we are nobody.”

To be sure, demography is not everything, but it is an important and telling criterion. Europe is no longer at the center of the world and it will not be it again. A victim of its 20th-century suicide, the continent lost its monopolistic model. The torch of history was carried from Europe to Asia, along a circuitous route by way of America, which itself is not yet completely irrelevant, but also no longer what it once was.

Accepting this change in the world order and drawing the necessary consequences from it requires humility from Europe. Such humility implies first and foremost a change in how we perceive others, and thus also ourselves. We are not here to give lessons. Let us be wary of unfortunate phrasing with strong historical connotations. Europe’s mission cannot be “to civilize globalization,” as former WTO Director-General Pascal Lamy, a staunch and sincere European, recently expressed it.

**America Receding, Russia Drawing Closer**

In recent years the international environment has become infinitely more complex, uncertain, and – dare we use the word – dangerous. America is receding, Russia is drawing closer, the old “order” of the Middle East is disintegrating, Asia is reaching and stretching. And it is precisely now, a moment in which Europeans have the greatest doubts about themselves and the European venture, a time when they ought to need Europe the most, that they seem to be most attracted to populism and most tempted by isolationism.

Of all the immediate challenges coming from outside Europe, the most pressing one can be summed up in a single name: Vladimir
Putin. Will we be able to respond to this threat and curb his ambitions? Or will monuments one day adorn the squares of cities across Europe honoring the new czar with the inscription “For Vladimir Putin, from the grateful Union,” if, following Jean Monnet, he becomes a sort of second founding father of the European Union? Within Monnet’s mission and method, Putin gives the European project a renewed sense of purpose, a justification. Why Europe, you ask? Because in the eastern part of the continent there is an anachronistic power that sees the world through a definition of power that could not be more traditional.

Given Moscow’s blackmailing through its energy policy, Europe has no way to set limits for Putin other than to evince its status as a union. Crimea’s return to Russia’s bosom was not shocking in and of itself; rather it was the manner in which it took place. With a combination of lies, deception, and violence, Russia proved itself a worthy successor to Soviet methods and imperial Russian traditions. Appetite comes with eating. For Moscow, it must be tempting to employ the strategy that worked so well in Crimea to eastern Ukraine – or even the whole country. Didn’t the carefully mixed cocktail of genuine Russian-speaking demonstrators and authentic Russian elite troops fulfill Moscow’s expectations for improvisation and confusion among the interim authorities in Kyiv?

“Clean Energy” in a Wider Sense

Europeans must understand that their policy of targeted sanctions is hopelessly inadequate in the face of pure force, even if such a response can be considered partially successful in view of the weakness of the Russian economy. The only way to effectively stand up to Moscow in the long term is to redesign our energy policy. During the time that Putin remains in power, “clean energy” must also be understood as that which does not increase dependence on non-democratic sources of energy.

Germany, confronted with Russia’s blackmail tactics, must rethink its stance on nuclear energy, France must reconsider its
rejection of shale gas, and the whole of Europe must question its energy policy. While Europe is not alone in facing this challenge, America, with or without Putin, is no longer really America. Even while vigilantly being “all ears,” the United States tends to look at Europe from afar, torn between the temptation of withdrawal and the obligation to offset its efforts in Asia. And when we stand on the beaches of Normandy in June and look back on the heroism and glory of the past, even the sincere emotions of the remaining veterans will not be able to hide the scale of change.

For the United States, Europe is no longer the first line of defense in the world; in spite of its very real capacity to inflict damage, Russia cannot ignore the much greater power of China. In this context, Europe will have to increasingly rely upon itself. But does it have adequate capacities – or rather, will it one day have the ambition – to do so? That is the real question.

On the other side of the Mediterranean, the “lines in the sand” drawn in 1916 with the Sykes–Picot agreement will be challenged right before our eyes. From Syria to a Lebanon which may become fragile tomorrow to Iraq – an equilibrium, however artificial, has been thrown off kilter. If the Middle East crumbles, Europe will find itself on the front lines. How long can it protect itself against this descent into oblivion, which magnetically draws in a small number of its Muslim youth?

And then there’s Asia, which behaves as Europe did before World War I. In the China Sea, Chinese and Japanese warships are engaged in irresponsible naval skirmishes. Could 2014 become for Asia what 1914 was for Europe – the year that brought an end to an era of peace?

Three Pillars on Which Europe Was Built

Given these external threats, Europe must convincingly demonstrate its humility and astuteness, but most of all its ambition.

Europe is rightly proud of its model of French–German reconciliation, its capitalism with a human face. But it can no longer be a role
model when it ceases to be regarded as a significant player. In a world that will one day be referred to as postmodern, but is actually more classicistic if not (as in the Middle East) seemingly even pre-modern, Europe can no longer indulge in the wishful thinking that brands it an exclusively civil power. In view of the growing uncertainties in the international environment, soft power requires a modicum of hard power. Europe undoubtedly will continue to inspire non-Europeans and non-members of the EU alike. As much as anti-European voters will make their voices heard in the EU elections on May 25, the Ukrainian majority will most likely vote for Europe – assuming regulated elections are possible.

But one cannot preach values that one does not practice oneself. The rise of populism throws the appeal of the European model into question. Hungary under Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, for example, increasingly appears to be the dark face of Europe, the anti-model par excellence at the center of a Europe that is seeking itself, thereby running the risk of losing itself.

In other words, Europe cannot proudly “sell” its model of capitalism with a human face if it proves to be incapable of defending it both internally and externally.

In 2014 the European paradox can be summarized as follows: Never have its citizens needed a stronger Europe for their existence and protection. Yet at the same time Europe has never appeared colder, more distant, more anonymous, yes, even further from reality than it now does in the eyes of its citizens.

Nevertheless, between the internal threat of populism and the external threat posed by Putin, Europe still has every reason to stand strong and proud. More than ever before, Europe’s identity is built upon a “geography of values” rather than the “values of geography.” The view of some that the future of Europe lies in an alliance with Russia is a historical misinterpretation. To be convinced, one must only observe the flirtation between Moscow and radical right-wing parties such as the Front National in France. They both share the same enemies: freedom, the rule of law, and democratic pluralism – none other than the three pillars upon which Europe was built.
The Return of the Outside World
AN INTERVIEW WITH JANUSZ REITER

IP: Did the accession of the Central and Eastern European countries after 1989 breathe life back into the EU, and has this positive impulse now run its course?

Reiter: The last 25 years of Polish history were without question the country’s most successful, and it is no coincidence that this fell within the period in which Poland found its home in Europe – not in an abstraction, but rather in a politically organized and integrated Europe. Now I have to ask myself the question: Is this in the end simply a footnote of European history? Or is this integrated Europe a sustainable construction requiring constant minor improvements of course, but nevertheless persevering? This question must be asked, because we find ourselves in the midst of two connected crises. The internal European crisis, and it is not only financial in nature …

IP: …rather a mental crisis?

Reiter: Yes. Secondly, we have an external crisis making it painfully clear that Europe has forgotten about the outside world, a world quite different from our own. The outside world is not an exception – we are the exception. Europe has long tried to maintain its unity through abstinence in world affairs. This is no longer possible. The question then is: Must Europe’s participation in world affairs return
the continent to the familiar political model, or can Europe position itself to participate globally without losing the very essence separating it from the others?

**IP:** Where does this mental crisis manifest itself?

**Reiter:** Most clearly in the rise of anti-European parties, but also in the extremely defensive position of pro-European forces without, for all intents and purposes, any new ideas. When I hear that Brussels has launched a new committee in order to create a new narrative for Europe – that’s a nice idea, but it illustrates a dreadful helplessness. This is not a method for constructing a convincing answer to society’s apprehensions. Europe – that is, the European Union – can no longer tend to the emotions of many Europeans.

**IP:** Has this peace project been exhausted?

**Reiter:** Europe was created and conceptualized as a rejection of the deadly experiences of its past; the entire project reflects a strong distrust of European nations singularly. For this reason, the European Commission was constructed as a type of institutionalized rationality, with the clear mission of establishing sensible policies that would likely be difficult or delayed on the national level. This was long accepted, as everyone was agreed that these reasonable things needed to be accomplished. Now this consensus no longer exists.

**IP:** Why not?

**Reiter:** Many would say that the European Commission made many mistakes. This cannot explain everything, however, because the Commission also made many positive contributions. The idea to “Limit trust in nation states!” is no longer accepted. The member states no longer have a bad conscience. This is even the case in countries that had an extreme complex, such as Germany. This is somehow understandable. This division of roles is no longer acceptable. The emotional takes place on a national level, not a European one, where everything instead is bureaucratic and anemic.
IP: Then why is it so difficult to connect with Europe – but especially the EU – on an emotional level?

Reiter: Because these emotions have always been imbued with negative connections – this was our history, our past. This historical connection no longer exists, but there were external connection points. Only Europe doesn’t have anything like a consciousness of its projection to the world or an ambition to shape the external world. Instead we fear this world. The motivation we acquired from our past has run out, because we established an alternative to that history. When I’m talking with the political elite, they often say we are now trying to maintain what we’ve achieved. We must persevere in the face of the doubts of the citizenry, but also in the face of the evil outside world seeking our destruction.

IP: That Ukrainian citizens protested for months in bitter cold and at risk to life and limb in order to live with the same dignity as EU citizens is a story of unsurpassable positive emotionality. Why has it found little sympathy in public discussion?

Reiter: That anyone could experience Europe in such intense and enthusiastic terms makes most Europeans embarrassed rather than proud; they fail even to consider whether the European idea does not indeed offer something attractive.

IP: Why has Poland failed to succumb to this European exhaustion?

Reiter: Poland did not succeed at this [laughs], it has been in the European Union for just ten years. Despite all the problems, Poles have a positive connection to Europe, even if their standard of living is still below, for example, Greece. It was the Ukrainian crisis that, for the first time, raised doubts that war was in fact as impossible in our corner of the world as we had believed. In this, despite at times varying pitch, we are united on the political level: We must support Ukraine and cannot allow the country to collapse. Between the German and Polish publics, there are significant differences of opinion. And here we must ask ourselves: Are we seeing a cleavage between the political elite and the public that’s fairly normal and can be
minimized once policies have been made that can be both accepted and legitimized by the citizenry? Or is this a tension that can only grow and lead to political changes? It is not about who likes Russian President Vladimir Putin, rather it is about the unanswered and important question: Which values are the ones we truly support? What is our self-image and how do we interpret the world? These are essential questions for the future of Europe and German-Polish relations.

**IP:** Where do you see in this the greatest challenge?

**Reiter:** In our immediate vicinity it is of course the challenges faced by our southern and eastern neighbors. The developments south of the Mediterranean may hide certain dangers, but they do not have the potential to destabilize Europe to the same degree as the challenges coming from the east. These raise questions about our identity, they unleash emotions, allow memories to resurface. This is much more dangerous than any security concerns from the south. And for whom are these challenges especially difficult? The easternmost EU states, above all the Baltic states and Poland. One often forgets that the most decisive element – the historical memory influencing our current behavior – was not formed during the Cold War, but in fact goes much deeper. These memories are different in Poland, in Hungary, or in the Czech Republic – but then also in Germany and surely also in France. Germany is the center of Europe, but also the center of European politics. The fight for Europe was always a fight for Germany. Whoever had Germany on his side controlled Europe; whoever lost Germany lost Europe. This was clear to the Americans, it was clear to the Russians.

**IP:** Is it clear enough to Germany?

**Reiter:** I am not so sure about that. One thought security as a topic had lost its position of dominance. Some members of the elite even have forgotten how important America was in both the rebuilding and the creation of Europe. A bit of humility and historical recognition is necessary in order to see clearly that we will not necessarily
end up a better Europe if the US were to withdraw completely. It is certainly a somewhat naïve world view to believe that Europe must emancipate itself from America when we have a great power in our neighborhood that makes no bones about wanting to change us – and if push came to shove probably could. That neighbor is Russia. Our influence on Russia is currently almost nil, but Russia’s influence on Europe is enormous. Here I don’t mean just our dependence on Russian gas imports, which I think we could cope with relatively easily if necessary. Instead I mean Russia’s keen sense of power.

**IP: Or should we say, its leadership’s keen sense.**

**Reiter:** And Russia has clearly recognized that the European Union doesn’t have enough self-reliance, not enough self-confidence. Russia presents an offer that meets with surprisingly little interest in its sphere of influence. This Russian model, with its so-called traditional values and its authoritarian society, finds no resonance in its neighborhood. But surprisingly, in the West, where we have a high standard of living and liberal democracy, we find people who believe this model – whose only strength, apparently, is to impress – should not be written off entirely. This is frightening, but I do not see this as an historical verdict, rather as something requiring our intellectual and political answer. Paradoxically, President Putin can help the west better understand its weakness and address it. The west is slow but not decadent, contrary to what Moscow believes. So there lies an opportunity in this crisis. We only have to accept that nothing is self-evident anymore. And I fear that if we cannot impress ourselves as Europe, we will never be able to impress anyone else either.

*The interview was conducted by Sylke Tempel.*
The recent Ukrainian revolution generally known as Euromaidan was the first and probably last popular uprising carried out under the flag of the European Union. For many Westerners, especially those increasingly skeptical of the EU, the mere fact that thousands of young Ukrainians took to the streets to defend an association agreement not promising any immediate gains may seem strange.

Timothy Snyder, in his *New York Review of Books* blog, asked acerbically, “Would anyone anywhere in the world be willing to take a truncheon in the head for the sake of a trade agreement with the United States?” He definitely knew the answer: it was not the agreement per se that mobilized the protesters but their hope for a “normal life in a normal country” which the agreement had symbolized and encapsulated.

**Stuck in a Gray Zone**

In November 2013, after their government in Kyiv rejected the agreement and stole this hope for a “normal life,” Ukrainians felt the deception sharply – not merely this single incident, but the sum of their entire lives: the (lack of) development of their country, stuck for 22 years in a gray zone between post-Soviet autocracies to
the east and increasingly democratized and prosperous neighbors to the west.

Initially after the Communist system collapsed, there was a large group of states trapped in this middle. The region encompassed virtually the entire Balkan peninsula and every western (non-Asian) republic of the former Soviet Union. Here we found neither a civil society strong enough to remove the ancien regime from power and complete radical institutional reforms – as in Central Europe and the Baltics – nor a regime capable of retaining all power and continuing business as usual under a different name – as in Central Asia.

One may have celebrated Samuel Huntington’s shrewdness: all the successful transitions occurred in the realm of western Christianity, all hybrid regimes emerged in the realm of Orthodoxy, and no real changes occurred in the post-Soviet Muslim world, with one type of dictatorship simply mutating into another.

A much simpler explanation, however, stems from the fact that all successful transitions occurred in countries historically belonging to either the German or Habsburg empires – neither one exemplary in terms of democracy, but profoundly different in terms of limitation of power and rule of law from the absolutist and despotic Russian and Ottoman empires to which all other postcommunist nations historically belonged.

The Instability of Hybrid Regimes

Hybrid regimes are intrinsically unstable, so it is little wonder that most of them either drifted eventually toward consolidated democracy – as the Balkan states did, with strong Western backing – or, more typically and predictably, slid toward consolidated authoritarianism – as in all remaining post-Soviet states, with the exception of the ambiguous cases of Ukraine and Moldova.

Their ambiguity stems from two interconnected factors: both countries had been the most westernized parts of the Soviet empire (Moldova historically belonged to Romania, whereas Ukraine was a part of Poland and Austria-Hungary), and both inherited a signifi-
cant identity split facilitating “pluralism by default,” even in the absence of effectively functioning democratic institutions.

All identities are connected to and determined by certain values. Both Ukraine and Moldova are thus divided primarily into Soviet and non-Soviet (or anti-Soviet) camps. This is neither an ethnic, nor a linguistic, nor a regional divide, but above all an ideological, value-driven one (despite reasonable correlations between language, ethnicity, regional identity, educational level, and age markers and value-based attitudes and orientations).

Wanted: A Truly European Development

The primary test for Ukrainians came on December 1, 1991, when 90 percent of them supported national independence in a national referendum, but only one third supported anticommunist candidates in the presidential election, with two thirds supporting the former communist leader.

Such a result was a clear sign that only a minority wanted to see their independent Ukraine breaking radically with its Communist and colonial past, thereby opting for truly European development in the footsteps of its Central European and Baltic neighbors. Two thirds supported the new Ukraine as a mere continuation of the old one – a postcommunist reincarnation of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, with all its practices, cadres, and institutions.

It took more than ten years for the non-Soviet minority to grow significantly in both number and strength and challenge the deeply entrenched oligarchic system, evolved from an odd symbiosis between the postcommunist nomenklatura and the criminal underworld.

The 2004 Orange Revolution is often dismissed as a mere revolt of millionaires against billionaires. Despite its overly simplistic, even caricaturistic tone, the metaphor aptly reflects the bourgeois, anti-feudal essence of the revolution, with its primary goal of ridding the country of its obsolete oligarchic system and its main driving force in the new middle class, small and middle-size business owners, stu-
dents, professionals, and creatives – all the entrepreneurs whose values of self-realization clashed with the conformist, homo sovieticus “survival values” promoted and exploited by the oligarchic regime.

A Revolution Against Feudalism

The 2004 revolution may have failed, but the pro-Western, value-based drift of Ukrainian society did not cease. Rather, it was galvanized by the profoundly anti-Western, antimodern, quasi feudal policies of the Yanukovych government.

Shelving the association agreement with the EU put an effective end to Ukrainians’ hopes for a better future, whereas government overtures to the Russia-led customs union signaled a dreadful option of being locked forever in a well-known imperial space of lawlessness, backwardness, rampant corruption, and great-power paranoid chauvinism.

The Euromaidan, in a way, was inevitable. Whatever the experts may say about Ukraine’s divide and arguably pro-Russian (or, rather, pan-Slavic and residual Sovietophile) orientation of a significant part of the population, it is clear that the pro-Western, non-Soviet, civic-minded part of society would never be accommodated in a political and economic system created and promoted by Vladimir Putin. In fact, it is the former who are more likely to be accommodating – as the experiences of Sovietophile minorities in the Baltics clearly confirm.

Beside the soft power of the EU, there are two more factors determining Ukraine’s westward drift. First is the low attractiveness of the Russian authoritarian model for all non-Soviet, civic-minded, and democratically oriented Ukrainians (and Russians as well – both in Ukraine and elsewhere).

Second is the existential threat that all nationally-minded Ukrainians have always felt from the Russian side, due to the inability of the Russian state and Russian society at-large to recognize unequivocally Ukraine’s separateness and sovereignty. With this threat now
materializing in a trifecta of unprecedented political and economic pressure, rabid anti-Ukrainian propaganda, and even military invasion, the dreamed-of “return to Europe” becomes for many Ukrainians synonymous with national independence and even personal survival.

A Majority – Not Just a Plurality – For Europe

For the first time in Ukraine’s history a clear majority (rather than previous pluralities) of respondents supported Ukraine’s eventual membership in the EU (52 percent by the end of March, up from 45-47 percent in January), whereas only 27 percent expressed their support for Ukraine’s membership in the Russia-led customs union (down from 36 percent in January).

Even more striking are changes in Ukrainian attitudes toward NATO. Back in November 2013, less than 20 percent of respondents supported Ukraine’s tentative membership in the organization. Today support has almost doubled to 34 percent, whereas anti-NATO sentiment declined from 65 percent to 40 percent.1

It would be wrong to conclude, however, that Ukrainian expectations run too high or bear a purely mercantilist view of the European Union. In a September 2013 nationwide survey, Ukrainian respondents did not select individual well-being or welfare as the main positive (and probably most praised) consequence of Ukraine’s association with the EU.

Rather, they chose “freedom of movement in the European Union for Ukrainian citizens” (70 percent of respondents), “protection of human rights and freedoms,” (57 percent) and the “fight against corruption” (49 percent). The purely materialist “standard of living of citizens” appeared only fourth on the list at 48 percent, a credible sign that the plurality if not majority of Ukrainians considers the EU a supplier of fishing rods rather than fish.2

Indirectly, this observation may be supported by an earlier opinion poll revealing a significant difference between the percentage of people who supported Ukraine’s integration with the EU (45 percent) and those who stated that they would personally benefit from it (37 percent).³

The difference most likely means that many Ukrainians consider association with the EU in terms of strategic national interest rather than immediate personal benefit. The same remarkable gap between civic and mercantilist attitudes (corresponding with self expression versus survival values) can be discerned in another opinion poll where respondents were asked to select their top three choices from a list of topical issues of importance for the country and for them personally.

The list of personal concerns was topped predictably by “control over price growth” (58 percent), “unemployment” (51 percent), and “social protection for the poor” (40 percent). On the national list, however, after the first-ranking issue of “unemployment” (55 percent), “low industrial production” was listed second (44 percent, in comparison to just 23 percent on the personal list), and “corruption of state bodies” was third (42 percent, compared to 25 percent).⁴

A Clear Values Choice

The very notion of Europeanness has, for many Ukrainians, a definite if not decisive value dimension. When asked the question, “What would you need most to feel European?” Ukrainians predictably chose “a certain level of material well-being” (59 percent) from the list of prepared answers. But the next top answers were “feeling

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protected by law” (41 percent) and “respecting values of democracy and human rights” (32 percent).

The “possibility to travel in Europe without visas” came fourth (24 percent), followed by the “possibility to elect authorities in free and fair elections” (15 percent) and “feeling like a free person” (15 percent). Only eight percent claim that nothing is needed because Ukrainians are already Europeans, and ten percent contend that there is no need for Ukrainians to feel European.5

These notions may shed a light on the reasons why Ukrainians feel much less “European” than Belarusians, who never aspired to acquire EU membership.6 What the latter perceive in more general terms of a very loose historical, geographical, and civilizational commonality, the former tend to interpret in much stricter categories of (incomplete) belonging to a certain community of values.

The Euromaidan has contributed significantly to Ukrainians’ European self-awareness. While in May 2013 only 34 percent of respondents considered themselves Europeans (to various degrees),7 by the end of December the figure jumped to 44 percent,8 and in March to 57 percent.

**The Unknown: How Will the EU React?**

The Ukrainian choice seems rather clear. So is the Russian response. As director of Carnegie Europe in Brussels Jan Techau argues, Putin sees an existential threat to Russia in Ukraine’s westward drift and

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is therefore willing to bear a very high political and economic cost to prevent it.\textsuperscript{9}

The only unknown is the possible reaction of the EU. On the one hand, there are still some nonparochial politicians with sober vision and a strong commitment to values over interests. Yet on the other hand, there are many more self-professed “pragmatists,” variously corrupted by the spillover of Russian money and increasingly excellent in looking for excuses rather than solutions. They are sadly very likely to repeat the mistakes of their gullible predecessors from the 1930s who attempted to appease dictators while actually rather encouraging them.

Ukrainians should expect better, but must instead prepare themselves for the worst. They may well end up like a Hungarian radio journalist, whose last words from a 1956 Budapest broadcast on the Hungarian Uprising were, “We’re dying here for Europe.”


\textsuperscript{6} Stephen White, Ian McAllister, and Valentina Feklyunina, “Belarus, Ukraine, and Russia: East or West?” \textit{British Journal of Politics and International Relations}, 12 (2010), 351.
Europe Through the Eyes of Others

Unions cohere slowly and incrementally.

Charles A. Kupchan
Can the EU Regain Momentum?

by Charles A. Kupchan

From an American perspective the European Union warrants unequivocal admiration and affection. The integration and pacification of Europe after World War II represents one of the most profound and successful instances of peaceful geopolitical change on record. An integrated Europe, at peace with itself and its neighbors, has emerged as America’s most trusted and effective partner in the world.

At the same time, Americans, with good reason, are now wondering about the health and vitality of the European project. As a consequence primarily of the eurozone’s financial crisis, the economic downturn, and inflows of immigrants, European electorates are questioning – as never before – the project of European integration that has brought them peace and prosperity and helped turn Europe into America’s go-to partner. The worst of the financial crisis seems to be over. But the jury is out on whether and when the EU will recover its legitimacy and political momentum.

Europe Was Once America’s Other

For much of American history, Europe was America’s other. The Founding Fathers adamantly opposed US entanglement in European affairs because they wanted to leave behind both Europe’s social
hierarchy and the balance-of-power logic that long beset Europe with geopolitical rivalry and war.

Since World War II, however, Europe has headed down a path that has led to transatlantic solidarity rather than a sense of estrangement. Societies on both sides of the Atlantic are now democratic, with socioeconomic orders dominated by the middle classes, growing inequality nonwithstanding.

European integration has succeeded in banishing balance-of-power rivalry from Western and Central Europe. Europe and the United States today represent the world’s main anchor of liberal values and practices and together seek to spread a rules-based order that advances international cooperation rather than competition. Despite significant disagreements over, for example, the Iraq War and spying activities by the National Security Agency (NSA), Europe and the United States remain each other’s partner of choice.

**Populism on the Rise**

Of late, however, the EU has begun to confront ill political winds. To be sure, Europe’s main center-left and center-right parties are pro-EU and they remain in power across the union. But they are rapidly losing market share to populist parties on the left and right that are much less enamored with the union.

In France, for example, the National Front is making steady electoral gains. It is troubling, to say the least, that its leader, Marine Le Pen, recently called the EU “the Soviet Union of Europe.” By mixing anti-immigrant platforms with euroskepticism, parties like the National Front in France, the Party for Freedom in the Netherlands, and their counterparts in other EU member states are enjoying rising political fortunes.

These trends are evident in public attitudes. Indeed, with the sole exception of Germans, Europeans have been growing increasingly skeptical of the merits of economic integration and of ceding more power to Brussels. According to a 2013 Pew poll, “positive views of the European Union are at or near their low point in most EU
nations, even among the young, the hope for the EU’s future.” Euroskepticism in Great Britain is running so high that the country’s continued membership in the union is now in question.

A perilous gap is opening between the project of European unity and the European “street.” This gap stands in the way of the deeper integration needed to complete monetary union. It also stands in the way of a more collective EU approach to foreign and defense policy – of particular concern to Washington in the context of US retrenchment and hopes for a more equitable sharing of geopolitical burdens across the Atlantic.

Russia’s grab of Crimea does have the potential to serve as a wake-up call to European electorates. Events in Ukraine highlight the pacifying effects of union, reminding EU publics that integration has enabled them to escape a much darker past.

Ukrainians took to the streets and toppled their government in part due to their desire to affiliate with the EU – a compelling testament to the union’s magnetic appeal. And trouble in Ukraine reinforces the reality that EU electorates still live in a dangerous world – one that requires defense preparations and greater efforts to pool sovereignty when it comes to matters of collective defense.

Barring further acts of Russian aggression, however, the EU risks settling back to business as usual. That is a worrying prospect should populism and anti-EU sentiment continue to build. European leaders should thus take advantage of the Ukraine crisis to take back the political narrative from the populists and work to relegate the European project.

**Political Union: A Long-Term Project**

From a historical perspective it is not altogether surprising that a union roughly six decades old is facing major tribulations. Unions cohere slowly and incrementally. The United States, for example, enjoyed over seven decades of prosperity and relative political stability before falling prey to a civil war that took over a half million lives. It was not until after the Civil War that the United States had a sin-
gle currency and, arguably, not until the 20th century that the nation had a strong federal character and a robust national identity that trumped loyalty to the separate states. Processes of economic and political union in Germany, Switzerland, and elsewhere followed a similarly tortuous route.

That the historical record suggests that the EU’s current troubles are par for the course is by no means cause for complacency. Europe’s project of integration is not past the point of no return. Europe has thus arrived at a make-or-break moment. On the one hand, it could emerge from the financial crisis and the accompanying political setback a stronger and more coherent union, armed with the financial and fiscal institutions needed to guide the eurozone back to full health.

Deeper integration could also spill over into the realm of foreign and defense policy, ultimately giving the EU the ability to project its voice more effectively on the global stage. On the other hand, it is entirely plausible that the project of European integration has already passed its high-water mark, and that it will slide backwards in the years ahead.

**The Stakes Are High**

The stakes are high for Americans as well as Europeans. The restoration of financial stability and economic growth to the eurozone would have positive implications well beyond Europe. The EU is the world’s largest market; its return to economic health would help fuel global growth.

Moreover, an EU that enjoys economic growth and political stability is needed to help anchor an international system that is entering a period of historic change. For the first time since World War II, the output of the advanced industrialized democracies represents less than 50 percent of global GDP. The aggregate GDP of China is expected to surpass that of the United States within roughly 15 years. Clearly, a major change in the global pecking order is afoot.
An EU that is weak and inwardly focused will be unable to play its part in managing this period of historic change. Only if the EU recovers from its ongoing economic and political crisis will it have a chance of speaking with a more collective voice and projecting its power and will beyond its own neighborhood.

The starting point for consolidating the more capable European partner that the United States hopes for is financial stability, economic growth, and the re-legitimation of the project of European integration.
In about a year – on August 1, 2015 – Europe will mark the 40th anniversary of the signing of the Helsinki Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. The anniversary was expected to be celebrated on a large scale. The Helsinki process has long been seen as the starting point of the movement toward the idea of a “common European home,” a phrase first used by Mikhail Gorbachev in his speech to the Council of Europe in Strasbourg 25 years ago.

Since then, changes have come at kaleidoscopic speed. The Iron Curtain fell. The Soviet Union disappeared. The world became truly global. A new phase in European integration began: enlargement and deepening. NATO moved eastward. It seemed that a Europe without dividing lines had become reality.

Today it seems that such celebrations may well be canceled. The Ukrainian crisis has divided Europe. It is now even strange to speak of a single continent. The Helsinki spirit and the desire for mutual understanding are gone. The Iron Curtain has been replaced with a “red line,” which Moscow views as the outer boundary of its vital interests, and the EU and the US as a product of Russia’s imperial ambitions. The most important result of the Helsinki process was the consolidation of the principle of the inviolability of borders emerging in Europe after the end of the Cold War.
These borders lasted 15 years. Then their revision began – in many different ways. In some places they were changed by agreement, as in Czechoslovakia. In others they were changed by force, as in Yugoslavia. Other borders were victims of changing circumstances and simply had to be updated, as in the Soviet Union. Finally, some were changed at the will of a stronger external party to a conflict, as in Kosovo, South Ossetia, and Abkhazia.

In any case, borders stopped being viewed as something final and sacred. After the Cold War, everyone became accustomed to the idea that they may change, and it ceased to scare people the way it used to in the second half of the 20th century, when the memory of world war included a mental safety lock: anything but the borders. This idea holds special significance in a conception of European integration in which borders are erased and a single space is created where boundaries are merely symbolic.

**The Spirit of Helsinki Is Extinct**

Why did the adjustment of Ukrainian borders cause such a shock? Because Europeans thought that only they could initiate such actions. That is to say they believed that the process of the revision of the principles of the European and world order which took place after the end of the Cold War was controlled by the West and no one else could interfere.

What went wrong? Why, instead of a Europe without dividing lines, do we now have a new red line further east? And why is the Helsinki spirit dead?

Paradoxically, the success of the Helsinki process was due to European division. We often speak in terms of the return of the Cold War. But this is impossible. The Cold War was a unique period in human history when the international system was under maximum control. The balance between two superpowers, based on mutual nuclear deterrence, ensured stability – something that had not existed before and will not exist in the future. Both prior to the Cold War and after its end, the world was in a fairly chaotic state. At best,
the great powers sought to harmonize their interests, as in the era of the 19th-century Concert of Nations. No one pretended at that time that there were no conflicts, and a mechanism of big diplomacy and peace conferences where countries specified their spheres of interest existed for their resolution.

The Helsinki Final Act was signed and implemented only because there was a balance in Europe and the world. The end of the Cold War and the disappearance of one of the poles of the bipolar world upset the balance in both the global and European systems.

The utopia of “the end of history” and a world and a Europe without dividing lines stemmed from the assumption that the winner of the military-political and ideological confrontation would spread its political and economic system and its principles to others. But this has proved impossible – neither globally, where even the United States has failed to carry this burden, nor on the European scale, where the European Union has overstrained itself in its drive for expansion.

Europe Is Lost In the Global World

Generally, Europe is lost in the global world. Its mission at the end of the last century was very easy to understand. Comprehensive total competition leaves no opportunity for a world role for individual European countries, even ones as large as Germany or France. Only by combining efforts can Europe rank on par with 21st-century giants – the US, China, possibly India, and, in a political sense, with Russia. This is logical. All the more discouraging is the result.

The weight of united Europe in the world is not just less than the sum of the potentials of its member countries, but even the potentials of its individual large members have decreased compared to just twenty years ago.

European capitals such as Rome or Madrid have simply ceased to be players with at least some political significance. Paris has been hit by disaster – it is hard to remember a time when France was so
insipid in the international arena, even in European affairs. London
keeps afloat thanks to its status of a powerful financial center, but
otherwise it is the capital of a country rapidly losing strategic vision
and influence.

**Climbing Back Into Europe's Transatlantic Shell?**

All these factors make Berlin the uncontested center of Europe. Ger-
many can no longer evade responsibility. In fact, it has been a long
time since it took on responsibility (it took the entire second half of
the 20th century to cure Germans of their ambitions), but whenever
it tries out the role of a leading nation, it becomes an object of sus-
picion to all – especially when there is no counterbalance to it for
objective reasons. France is not coping with its traditional responsi-
bility in this respect.

Internal balance in Europe is nonexistent, especially if we take
the other twenty-some countries into account; some are deep in
socioeconomic or political crisis, while others (for example, Poland)
seek to climb higher in the continental hierarchy.

This confusion is coupled with knotty relations with the United
States, the habitual patron. The idea of challenging America, which
Europe cherished 10 to 15 years ago, has vanished. The Old World
is again ready to return to US patronage, primarily in the form of
the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership now under
negotiation.

By ill luck, the US has in turns revealed how it really regards
Europe. First Edward Snowden spoke out about total surveillance,
then US Assistant Secretary of State Victoria Nuland made an
obscene reference to the European Union’s foreign policy. It is espe-
cially sad that the reference was not completely unfair – the EU is
not doing well on the international scene.

Another challenge of globalization stems from growing societal
diversity. Such change affects the entire ideological palette, but often
works in contradictory directions. On the one hand, over the last
twenty years the Old World has shifted to a much more liberal
understanding of democracy, illustrated above all in sensitivity to minorities and pronounced secularization. This is largely due to the growing number of immigrants from other parts of the world, primarily Muslims, settling in Europe. The desire to smoothly integrate “aliens” into European societies entails a deliberate softening and erosion of specific notions in favor of a greater flexibility of the model.

Universal and Mandatory Standards?

Attempts to present this understanding as a universal and mandatory standard of society, however, not only meet with a lack of understanding among many external interlocutors but also cause internal resistance and encourage the growth of protectionist aspirations in a broad sense. Opponents of integration and the extreme right of various hues mobilize around such issues for elections to the European Parliament, with the extreme left marshaling their forces on the other flank. All of them are united by one thing: dissatisfaction with present-day Europe.

The Ukrainian crisis seems to be putting everything in its place and returning a familiar picture of the world. All previous instincts have immediately come back. The appearance of the habitual enemy has breathed new life into NATO, again providing solid ground for relations between the two shores of the Atlantic, which they had been unable to find over the last twenty years. They are once again united around the same old threat. Europe now feels it has a moral ascendancy to defend a freedom-loving people against an imperial monster. And so on and so forth.

But this is an illusion. Yes, Europe can crawl back into its transatlantic shell, where it hid so cozily forty years ago – especially since it has expanded significantly in the meanwhile. In the final analysis, the West has gained a lot. After all, Crimea’s annexation by Russia pales in comparison with the drastic reduction of Moscow’s sphere of influence. But the zero-sum game, which the two blocs played until the late 1980s, no longer exists.
No Rapprochement Possible Solely Through EU Norms

It is true that Russia and the West have never overcome their mutual suspicion, nor have they stopped competing with one another. They also failed to find a balance of interests that would help them build stable relations: at first because Russia was very weak and dependent, and later because everyone was already accustomed to this weakened Russian status and did not find it necessary to make concessions.

As a matter of fact, the EU has never given up its approach of basing rapprochement only on acceptance of EU regulations not subject to discussion – here not a matter of if but of how soon. And when Moscow began to behave defiantly and demand reciprocity, Europe resisted on principle.

There can be no other explanation, for example, for endless and fruitless talks on a visa-free regime for short trips which would make things much easier for both parties and which would contribute to their rapprochement. The EU has always looked at trips to Europe as a reward to third countries, which simply smells of arrogance.

But all this does not mean that the 20th-century world of confrontation should return. Last century, east-west relations were at the core of world politics, with everything else revolving around it. Now it is a mere part of that picture, and far from the most important.

Confrontation With Russia Would Not Help Europe

Confrontation with Russia over Ukraine or something else will not help Europe or the US solve their problems in the Middle East or in Asia. On the contrary, Russia’s eastward turn will create many additional difficulties. This turn is inevitable, as in the 21st century a country bordering the Pacific simply cannot afford not to have an active and well-thought-out policy there. Pressure on Russia on the part of the West will only accelerate this process.

A zero-sum game on a global scale is no longer possible. There are simply too many players today and no room for a separate game in Europe either, as European politics now play out in an open system.
We will therefore meet the 40th anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act at a complicated juncture: during its first twenty years, the Helsinki process seemed a success, yet we now find ourselves returned to a situation reminiscent of the original, yet sorely lacking its intrinsic balance.
In the history of the Turkish Republic, the European Union has traditionally been viewed as a positive force, both by the vast majority of the Turkish public as well as by the political elite. Turkey’s contractual relations with the EU go back a long way – to 1959, when the country applied to become a member of the European Economic Community. These efforts continued in a cyclical fashion, with various ups and downs, to the present day as Turkey conducts accession negotiations as an official candidate country.

Europe – and the West in general – was the ultimate destination of the Republic’s founding ideology, and remained consistently so for decades. The golden age of Turkish-EU relations was undoubtedly the period between December 1999, when Turkey was officially declared a candidate country subject to EU enlargement policy, and October 2005, when the EU opened accession negotiations with Turkey. This period witnessed a vast array of political reforms undertaken by Turkey toward fulfilling the Copenhagen political criteria, thereby consolidating its democracy.

During this period the perception of the EU as a “normative actor” reached its pinnacle, transforming Turkish politics and society through the policy of conditionality. However, as relations between the EU and Turkey soured, the widespread perception in Turkey that the EU was indeed a force for good diminished.
Opinion polls on the EU reflect this. Turkish public support for the country’s EU accession remained considerably high until the second half of 2005, when the accession negotiations were launched. Support for EU membership rose significantly around the Helsinki Summit of 1999, from 62 percent in 1998 to 74 percent in 1999 and 75 percent in 2001. Nonetheless, the data suggests that by the first half of 2011, support levels fell to 41 percent.\(^1\) Data from other sources confirm this trend. For instance, according to the World Values Survey, while the average “(mis)trust rate” for the EU among the countries surveyed remain at around -8 percent, it registered -37 percent in Turkey, almost five times worse than the average.\(^2\)

**Does Europe Really Want Turkey?**

This shift in perception did not happen overnight. Various factors led to it, the most important of which was the belief that the EU did not treat Turkey fairly and displayed an equivocal attitude with regards to its ultimate membership. This perception was strengthened by the discourse in and various policies of the EU toward Turkey. Influential politicians in France and Germany questioned Turkish membership, even in the wake of the opening of accession negotiations, on the grounds that the EU lacked the necessary “absorption capacity” to include Turkey as a full member, and hence a “privileged partnership” needed to be designed instead of full membership with the country.

In a similar vein, for the first time in the history of EU enlargement, Turkey’s “Negotiating Framework” permitted the introduction of permanent derogations to the EU acquis in the fields of structural policies, agricultural policy, and free movement of people, and it also

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paved the way to a possible “privileged partnership” with Turkey should accession negotiations fail. The questioning of Turkish membership in principle continued even after the opening of accession negotiations, with references to culture and identity as key points of alleged incompatibility between the EU and Turkey.

Against this background, setbacks in the negotiations darkened Turkish perceptions of Europe. Turkey’s accession negotiations have proceeded at a snail’s pace, with just 14 (of 35) chapters having been opened by January 2014 and only one chapter (science and research) provisionally closed. France is vetoing the opening of four additional chapters on the grounds that these are too closely linked to the prospect of full membership, which Paris, most notably after the election of Nicolas Sarkozy to the French presidency, has openly begun to reject.

Moreover, the accession talks – increasingly entangled with the Cyprus conflict since the entry of the divided island in the EU in 2004 – risk grinding to a complete halt lest a solution on the eastern Mediterranean island is found. Cyprus is vetoing the opening of six negotiation chapters. More importantly, the EU decided in December 2006 to suspend the opening of negotiations on eight chapters of the acquis and not to provisionally close any of the opened chapters until Turkey meets its obligations toward Cyprus, pointing to Turkey’s failure to implement the protocol amending the customs union agreement and thus allowing Greek Cypriot-flagged planes and vessels into Turkish air- and seaports. The current situation leaves Turkey with only three additional chapters to open.

**EU Membership: Still a Desirable Option?**

There is also evidence to suggest that other, more recent factors have also played a role in the souring of public attitudes toward the EU. Turkey’s growing self-confidence as an actor on the international stage and its growing economy, coupled with the euro crisis and the existential problems it poses for the future of the EU, has arguably strengthened the perception in Turkey that the country no longer
needs the EU as much as it once did. The Turkish economy has tripled in size over the last decade, which led Ankara to pursue a more active foreign policy.

According to one study, 63 percent of Turkey’s “EU membership skeptics” explain their waning enthusiasm by pointing to the perceived weariness about Turkey on the EU side, and 30 percent point to the performance of the Turkish economy and Turkey’s diversifying foreign policy options, which in turn renders the country less dependent upon the EU, whose material and strategic benefits to Turkey seem to be increasingly clouded by the effects of the euro crisis. The EU’s role as a global and efficient actor is also being questioned, in particular with regard to its wider eastern and southern neighborhood.

Despite the stalemate and the increasingly negative perception of the EU in Turkey, there may still be grounds for hope that the accession process can be revitalized and the EU can be rescued as an attractive model. The recent Readmission Agreement signed with Turkey in exchange for visa liberalization is important in this respect. The fact that a large portion of the waning enthusiasm for membership among the Turkish public is still attributable to the perception of EU discrimination against Turkey suggests that such steps could have a positive impact on changing Turkish public attitudes toward the EU for the better.

The relaunch of UN-led negotiations in Cyprus earlier this year is a hopeful sign that resolution of the conflict may be possible, which in turn would improve Turkey’s accession prospects. But most importantly, political actors on both sides need to adopt and infuse the accession debate with stronger commitment and a wider vision. Only then can the prospect of a “European vocation” again become an attractive option for Turkey.

Europe’s Gifts, Europe’s Burdens  
by Meera Shankar

When I meet European friends these days, I am struck by their deep feelings of anxiety and uncertainty about Europe’s future. The global financial and economic crisis, which started in the US in 2008, had a worldwide impact. It cast a long shadow over Europe – a shadow from which several European countries have yet to emerge.

While the worst of the European debt crisis has been weathered, the more difficult task of regaining confidence and growth momentum in the economy remains, with growth in several countries still in negative territory and facing very high levels of unemployment. This has led to questions about the validity of the European experiment and its sustainability and relevance in today’s world.

Looking at Europe from India, this angst appears misplaced. Firstly, Europe has been a spectacular success in terms of reorienting a continent away from conflict and toward cooperation. The early part of the 20th century saw the reckless pursuit of unbridled nationalism and competition in Europe, which imposed a heavy cost in blood and treasure in two World Wars, devastating the continent.

Yet Europe rose from the ashes of these wars to build a community of states in which the whole was larger than the sum of its individual parts, in which nationalism could be subsumed and anchored within a regional framework. Starting from humble beginnings with six members establishing the European Coal and Steel
Community in 1951 and the same six members founding the European Community with the Treaty of Rome in 1957, Europe has come a long way in building the European Union that we know today, comprising 28 members and constituting the world’s largest economic grouping.

India understands how complex and delicate this process has been, for India itself is a subcontinent-sized, extraordinarily diverse democracy of over a billion people. Integrating this multilingual, multireligious, multiethnic society while giving space for these diversities to flourish has been a challenge for India’s nation-building efforts and one that it can rightly take pride in meeting with considerable success.

The Hope for More Integration

However, efforts towards regional cooperation in South Asia, which began in 1985 inspired by the European example, have had only limited success. Integration in Western Europe was propelled by the compulsion to avoid war, shaped by a common adversary and under a common security umbrella. This was not the case in South Asia, where after independence a partitioned subcontinent sought to politically sever its connections of geography, culture, and economy. The process of rebuilding these connections and overcoming entrenched rivalries will require patience, persistence, and imagination. The example of Europe gives hope.

Of course, the economic crisis also exposed Europe’s vulnerabilities, with the process of deepening financial and economic integration still far from complete. With a common currency, but without common fiscal and economic policies, the response to the crisis was initially slow and somewhat hesitant.

Countries with high levels of debt required bailouts, which those with more healthy economies found difficult to provide without some way of ensuring responsible behavior in future. There were naysayers who felt that the eurozone may not survive the crisis with countries opting out of the euro. European leadership has demon-
strated the resolve to prove such skeptics wrong. Far-reaching steps have been taken in setting up the European Stability Mechanism to help countries in difficulty, and major banks are now to be overseen by a Single Supervisory Mechanism. The recent agreement to have a Single Resolution Mechanism, which will spell out how the problem of banks in difficulty will be addressed, will carry this process forward.

Politically, too, progress has been made toward a common foreign and security policy since the Lisbon Treaty was signed in 2007. With the appointment of a high representative for foreign affairs and security policy, there is no longer the vacuum Henry Kissinger famously referred to when he asked who he should call when he wants to talk to Europe. A European External Action Service is also in place.

The European Parliament, though emboldened in recent times, does not as yet have a clear role or a clearly defined legislative mandate. The balance between national sovereignty and a European approach is still a work in progress. This can often lead to excessive delays and bureaucratization in the decision-making process. Hopefully, as the process of policy integration deepens and the balance between sovereign member states and the EU as a whole is more clearly defined, Europe will be able to simplify its processes and leave behind the perception of being mired in red tape.

**Europe’s Shared Values**

Europe is heir to a great civilization whose scientific and technological advances laid the foundations of the modern world. The values of democracy, secularism, individual freedom, and the rule of law, which Europe embodies, find increasing resonance across the world today. These values are also integral to India’s polity which has seen a deepening and broadening of democratic participation over the years, with the increasing assertion of hitherto marginalized sections of society and their accommodation within democratic political processes.
There is, however, a measure of discomfort in India when these values are aggressively pushed, quite often for geopolitical or economic advantage. Recent interventions to bring about regime change in North Africa and the Middle East, for example, have destabilized a volatile region creating space for terrorist and extremist groups to flourish. A policy characterized by greater caution and restraint is called for.

The Colonial Experience

Perhaps India’s skepticism stems from its own historical experience of nearly two centuries of colonial rule. The Portuguese, the British, and the French came to India to trade, but stayed as colonizers. This was possible not only because of their superior military technology, but also because of India’s own internal divisions. British colonial rule left a deep imprint on India, reflected both in India’s adoption of a Westminster-style parliamentary democracy and in the English language, which is widely spoken and has become a link of sorts in India’s polyglot society.

Colonization also proved a huge setback to India’s economic and social development, with unequal terms of trade and inflexible agricultural taxation destroying India’s traditional craft manufacturers and impoverishing the countryside. The extremely adverse impact of colonization on India’s economic vitality and well-being can be gauged from the fact that for 50 years prior to independence in 1947, the Indian economy stagnated, with per-capita income barely growing at the meager rate of 0.1 percent. Independent India also faced huge developmental challenges, with average life expectancy at 32 years (28 years for women) and literacy levels as low as 17 percent. India’s historical experience with Europe was, therefore, not an unmixed blessing!

For India, the best way to promote the democratic values we share is by the power of example and by helping to develop the capacities to build democratic institutions in states in transition. It is in this spirit that India participates actively in the UN Democracy
Fund. India’s success in accelerating economic growth and lifting its people out of poverty within the framework of a lively – and sometimes rowdy – democracy should have a huge demonstration effect in the developing world. It should matter more to the EU, too, for it is an example of democracy and development advancing hand in hand, proving a dichotomy between the two a false choice.

A Model Welfare State?

One of Europe’s signal achievements has been the creation of the social welfare state, which helped soften the harsh edges of capitalism in the second half of the 20th century and create more just and equitable societies. As Europe’s citizens grow older and the working-age population declines, Europe faces the challenge of ensuring the sustainability of this framework.

Building political consensus for the required reforms and modifications for keeping European nations competitive while preserving the gains in human dignity and security will be difficult and require statesmanship of a high order. Europe’s experience in cushioning individuals from market volatility and moderating inequalities would have relevance for India, where the challenge of finding the appropriate balance between fostering economic growth, being fiscally responsible, and building an affordable social safety net is formidable.

Globalization has lifted many countries out of poverty and helped to reduce global inequalities. India has also benefited even though its overall trade is still modest. The increasing integration of the global economy has also exposed developed countries to new competition. Though this has given rise to anxiety and some protectionist sentiments in Europe, historical experience shows that industrialization and development in emerging economies enlarges global markets and also benefits developed economies.

For instance, the rise of the United States in the late 19th and early 20th century did not lead to the decline of Europe. The expansion of the European Union itself has been based on the premise that
faster development of the periphery would benefit not only those countries but also the developed European economies. India hopes that Europe would maintain its commitment to a liberal, rule-based, open international trading system and resist protectionist sentiments.

Sustained economic revival in Europe would be good for Europe, good for India, and good for the world economy. Europe is India’s largest trading partner, with trade doubling from a mere €25 billion in 2000 to €55.6 billion in 2007. Today, trade in goods and services has reached nearly €100 billion, even with a small decline in 2012. The EU is also one of the major sources of foreign direct investment in India and an important destination for investments by Indian companies as they increasingly seek both technologies and markets overseas.

Room for Improvement

While all this represents a significant increase from levels of economic engagement prior to the opening of the Indian economy in 1991, it is still modest, with considerable unrealized potential. It is in recognition of this potential that India and the European Union began negotiations on a comprehensive Free Trade Agreement in 2007 covering trade, services, and investment.

The negotiations, however, have been protracted and more difficult than originally anticipated, with several key issues yet to be resolved. Perhaps the economic downturn in Europe since 2008 and the slowdown in the Indian economy since 2011 have constrained the ability to put together a pragmatic package where both sides feel they have much to gain. The new government in India needs to engage seriously with the EU to move this forward, with greater flexibility also required on the European side.

The industrial revolution originated in Europe, which has remained at the forefront of science, technology, and innovation and will continue to be one of the world’s leading centers. Frequently one hears the lament that Europe is losing its edge in frontier tech-
nologies. This is overstated. Though Europe lags behind the US in some key areas like information technology, it still remains at the forefront in a wide range of advanced technologies.

Technological breakthroughs will drive economic competitiveness in the 21st century. They will also be the key to meeting the challenge of climate change through cost-effective, environmentally sustainable, renewable energy and clean technologies. India has set itself an ambitious goal of lowering the carbon intensity of its economy by 25 percent by 2025. A stronger partnership between India and the EU in the development and deployment of clean technologies would help to build a more sustainable future.

A Well-Spring of Great Ideas

Europe was the frontline of the Cold War, divided into two opposing ideological and military alliances. With the end of the Cold War, the ideological rift in Europe has healed. Many more countries have since joined the European Union.

However, as recent events in Ukraine have shown, transition to a stable post-Cold War order in Europe has yet to be achieved. Russia’s countering of expansion of the EU and NATO eastwards into Moscow’s immediate neighborhood and into areas strategically sensitive for Russia has had an unsettling impact. The annexation of Crimea has led to the imposition of sanctions by the US and the EU, with the threat of more if Russia were to intervene in southern or eastern Ukraine.

India does not support either the unilateral redrawing of borders or the unilateral imposition of sanctions. From India’s point of view, it would be imperative for both sides to avoid getting locked into an escalatory spiral which will benefit neither side, could seriously increase tensions and could thwart cooperation on global problems. A policy of restraint as well as discussion and dialogue represents the best hope of finding a way forward.

Looking at the future, India sees Europe as an important pole in the global order, with the ability to contribute to global stability and
global prosperity in the 21st century. It shares with Europe the values of democracy, the fundamental foundations of the modern Indian state.

Europe has been the well-spring of many great ideas shaping the contemporary world, from free market liberalism to social welfare democracy. It has demonstrated the resolve and coherence to overcome adversity in the last century. Will it find the resources and the will to overcome its current problems and emerge stronger?
Can Europe’s Dream Survive in Global Competition?

The combination of austerity and reforms is in the interest of the European Union.

Henrik Enderlein
Strengthen the Euro’s Drive
by Henrik Enderlein

The euro crisis has reached a turning point. The disintegration of the euro area is no longer a direct threat. Interest rate spreads have declined and the vicious circle between banks and states has seemingly lost much of its destructive dynamic. And yet, the crisis is far from over. The Glienicker Group, of which I am part, wrote in autumn 2013: “There is no reason to let our guard down. On the contrary, the complacency of large sections of the German public with regard to the euro crisis is not only unfounded, it is dangerous. Not one of the fundamental problems underlying the euro crisis has been solved – not the banking crisis, nor the sovereign debt crisis, nor the competitiveness crisis. National debt problems continue to escalate. Banks are overloaded with bad loans, crippling the private sector. In crisis countries a generation is being deprived of its livelihoods and opportunities. The margins of the political spectrum in these countries are becoming increasingly radicalized.” This analysis is still valid today.

In light of this context, two key questions emerge: How can the single currency be made successful without the need for a European federal state, something which no longer seems to appeal to the political majority? And how can an integration project which has hitherto primarily been shaped by economic considerations give rise to a political union which can successfully solve the conflict between effective and legitimate multilevel governance?
These questions cannot be answered separately. They are indicative of the many interrelations between the economic and political aspects of the integration project and call for their amalgamation to be increased further still in the coming years.

Most economic and financial market crises occur in three stages. First is the financial and banking crisis. This is followed by economic downturn, which result in harsh cuts for the general public. The third phase of the crisis is political. From every crisis emerge winners and losers. In those European countries hardest hit, entire generations now find themselves among the losers. The question of who will ultimately pay for the crisis remains open. The result in many countries is a mixture of crisis fatigue, austerity fatigue, and political radicalization. The European elections will reveal the consequences to be drawn from this. The question of how Europe can deal with a radicalization of the political spectrum also remains open. Anyone who fails to grasp this political context runs the risk of inflicting great damage upon the European integration project.

**Intelligent Long-Term Savings**

Yet it must be noted that the economic context is also much less positive than it is often portrayed these days. Europe has become entangled in a two-part snare of backlog – in investment and in structural reform. Economic crises first end when (often isolated) growth stimuli generate a snowball effect, eventually building up a broad wave of prosperity. There are two key triggers for this dynamic: structural reforms and investments. Structural reforms are politically costly and require a significant amount of time to produce results. Investment programs can have an immediate effect, but will only succeed in the long term when accompanied by structural reforms. This is why it is so important to implement both elements in tandem. The debate on austerity should thus be steered in a different direction: the core issue is intelligent savings in the long term, which no longer applies solely to the resources available at short notice – which are, generally speaking, investments. The 3-percent deficit rule could be
supplemented with a “future factor” in this case, with the prerequisite being the continuing implementation of structural reforms.

It is an important signal to the crisis countries that the combination of austerity and reforms is in their own best interest – and furthermore in the interest of the European Union. The impression that reforms and austerity measures have been implemented due to political pressure from individual countries will strengthen the populist extreme even further and threatens to fracture the continent politically. Conflicts will continue to mount and hinder a joint resolution to the crisis as long as individual countries see themselves as “political rating agencies.” Therefore Europe’s capabilities for political action must be urgently strengthened after the European elections. There is nothing wrong with robust intergovernmental cooperation in the European Council – as long as the EU Commission reclaims its key political role by ceasing to be a mere political onlooker at the edge of the intergovernmental process. The European Parliament, too, which is staunchly committed to the Community approach, will have to play an increasingly important role. Against this backdrop, the European Parliament elections present an opportunity, in that they open the way for a renewal of four key positions on the EU level and can thus show the level of gravitas with which state and government leaders approach the elections.

But calls for “more Europe” are only convincing if they are backed by real political content. In the crisis years, solutions were often formulated to have maximum effect in order to tackle the euro crisis. But the desire for a “United States of Europe” is as semantically strong as its content is weak. When Fritz W. Scharpf demands that we “save Europe from the euro,” the undertone is a fear that the integration steps needed to complete the euro project could overwhelm European democracies. The demand for an EU superstate rightly engenders concern that the European unification process could continue to accelerate in a political vacuum, only to be torn apart at the end by the forgotten centrifugal force of democracy. This is not the right path to take. Instead, we must ask ourselves what additional integration steps are essential for the project’s success. If
we want to secure broad support for the next integration steps, then we must seek a solution with a minimal approach: add as much Europe as urgently needed, but no more. Habermas calls for a “supranational, democratically constituted community.” This is not a concrete term, but rather provides a clever theoretical blueprint waiting to be enriched politically.

In this context, the completion of the monetary union is of particular importance. At the heart of the crisis were inconsistencies among the relationships of different national economies to the common currency. There are two options to resolve these discrepancies: either Europe returns to its old currencies, thereby jeopardizing the internal market and with it the future of the joint integration project; or Europe finds a way to harmonize the national economies to the extent that the euro successfully functions as a common currency. The maximum approach is not necessary here either: we do not need comprehensive Eurobond constructs, nor permanent sovereignty relocations that are incompatible with national constitutions, nor long-term unidirectional cash transfers. What we need is coherent, legitimate economic governance at the European level, combining solidarity with crisis countries with new rules that allow the transfer of sovereignty in exceptional cases. In a 2012 DIE ZEIT article, Jacques Delors and I called this type of regime “exception federalism”: In ordinary times, the nation-state rules, but in times of crisis the orientation shifts toward a federal solidarity system, by means of solidarity mechanisms in the banking and fiscal union – in return for giving up some sovereignty. The monetary area must take the following approach: sovereignty ends when solvency ends. Those who do not adhere to the rules must be willing to relinquish power.

The euro has always been a political project. The common currency is based on the belief that trade brings more prosperity for all nations taking part in trade – and with that prosperity comes peace. The euro is simply one element in a much longer history of integration. And yet, its introduction was a turning point. Now it is up to us today to sustain and strengthen the drive behind it, so that Europe may remain successful in a global context of fierce competition.
There were and there are of course many cultures in the world. But almost every one of them has fallen into insignificance after its heyday. Only in two regions have advanced civilizations developed that have been sustained over millennia: in China and in the Mediterranean region of Europe. Even the former British colonies, such as those in North America and Australia, are products of European cultural heritage.

China’s advanced civilization temporarily stepped down from the world stage around half a millennium ago, even though 3,000 years ago it was still in many respects much more advanced than Europe. From the state of its systems of government, administration, and law to the technologies it had mastered: paper and printing, wheelbarrows, gunpowder, porcelain, and magnetic compasses were in use far earlier in China than they were in Europe. Several years ago, the Scottish historian Niall Ferguson put forth the question: “Where was the World Economic Forum held in 1411?” His answer was in Nanjing, China. The Middle Kingdom stood firmly at the center of the world.

At the end of the 14th century, the Chinese planted some 50 million trees around Nanjing to create the timber supply needed to construct a deep-sea fleet. These imperial trading ships sailed to East Africa far earlier than their Portuguese counterparts. The fleet con-
sisted of huge, nine-masted, oceangoing junks and up to 30,000 sailors. In comparison, it was nearly a century later when Columbus discovered America with three caravels and a crew of just 90 men.

By this time the rulers of China had already lost interest in seafaring and in maintaining their influence over the rest of the world. The empire destroyed its fleet at the beginning of the 16th century, made it a criminal act to build large sailing boats, and radically redirected its focus inward. Simply put, China was enough for China. It isolated itself – politically, economically, and culturally – and lost influence over the rest of the world.

It is thus not initially surprising today that most world maps place Europe at their center: for a long time European civilization was simply the only significant advanced culture with global influence. Europeans developed large areas of the world, bringing with them their cultural heritage. This is changing in the 21st century: China is increasingly assuming the role that it abandoned centuries ago. Independent civilizations have developed in Japan, India, Southeast Asia, Africa, and South America, although some of them are built heavily upon European elements.

**Europe Is Built on Three Hills**

Why are certain European elements found almost everywhere? It is primarily four elements of European culture that the world still – consciously or unconsciously – considers exemplary: its values; its tradition of using scientific knowledge to promote the progress of humankind, not least also their material progress; its systems of government and laws and their legal bases; and its fine culture of music, art, literature, and much more.

It all begins with European values. German President Theodor Heuss once said that Europe is built upon three hills: upon the Acropolis, with the values of freedom, philosophy, and democracy; upon the Capitol, with its Roman law and public order; and upon Calvary, with its Christianity. In them lies a promise: together they
offer the world an attractive vision of a life worth living and a life of togetherness. Today more than ever, people all over the world wish to lead lives of dignity, freedom, and self-determination, under the rule of law. Places like Tiananmen Square and Myanmar, names like Nelson Mandela and Aung San Suu Kyi, and most recently young people on the streets from Istanbul to São Paulo stand for these ideas. In Tahrir Square in Cairo, there were banners that read, “Thank you, Europe.”

As Europeans, it must touch us to know that there are people around the world who are so captivated by our values that they are willing to risk their lives for them. Not only do they trust our values, they fight for them. This is even more reason to strengthen Europe’s dedication to keeping the spirit of the three hills alive, guaranteeing respect for the individual and underscoring the importance of freedom.

Freedom in particular has always played a prominent role in intellectual development. This brings us to the second element of European civilization taking on a leading role in the world: the systems of science and economics. The Enlightenment, a profoundly European intellectual movement, shaped in particular Germany, France, and England in the 17th and 18th centuries. It was preceded by revolutions in astronomy, physics, and other natural sciences. Locke, Rousseau, Voltaire, and Kant: their liberal spirits turned against church and state paternalism. The figures of the Enlightenment held up the light of reason and the ideals of spiritual freedom, equality, and tolerance against the shadows of the Middle Ages. Out of the growing intellectual and individual freedom in Europe emerged scientific and technological progress. The steam engine marked a turning point for all of humankind: the beginning of the industrial age. It was this era that brought growing prosperity for evermore people, first in Europe and then in an increasing number of regions across the world.

Economic output per capita – had this measure been used previously – was approximately the same across the world until about 250 years ago. The factors of production were more or less the same the
world over: labor and land. It was the Europeans who creatively implemented scientific knowledge, making industrialization possible and developing a third factor of production dominating the world today: knowledge and capital.

Along with the advances in science, technology, and industrial production, the economic model of the market economy also originated in Europe. From Thomas Aquinas to Adam Smith, European visionaries have developed a battery of economic resources. The Americans made radical changes to the model, and, starting with Deng Xiaoping, so has Communist China – with success. No nation has done this out of love for Europe, but rather because they know that a better, more prosperous life is only possible when technological progress and market economy conditions prevail. The social dislocation that capitalism and industrial society have brought with them drove the European Karl Marx to reflect on their causes and consider alternatives. He never foresaw that his analyses and the ideologies they gave rise to would end up dividing the world for more than a century. But my point is the following: even this world revolution had its roots in Europe.

Thus I arrive at the third element, Europe’s system of government and laws and the foundations upon which the rule of law is based. Liberty can only be enjoyed in democratically constituted states, and this realization took hold earlier and more forcefully in Europe than elsewhere. The Greeks and the Romans brought us the first lessons in democracy some 2,500 years ago; the European philosophers of the Enlightenment developed those ideas further. Europe’s constitutional tradition has long been the dominant force worldwide, and even dictatorships which enjoy economic success today thanks to market economy reforms and technological progress will not be able to withstand this force in the long term.

Fourth, there is also a worldwide acceptance – if not dominance – of European culture. Once the basic material needs of the people are satisfied, culture begins to evolve, and art, music, and literature develop. This is true everywhere in the world, and great cultural and artistic achievements can be admired across the globe: in China, for
some 5,000 years now; in numerous countries in Asia; in the Arab world; in Africa; and in the Indian civilizations of Central America. But I believe that it is the creations of European culture that have found greatest acceptance the world over. Today they influence – and in some cases dominate – local cultural landscapes everywhere. As descendants of European émigrés, the vast majority of North and South Americans are themselves part of a larger Euro-Atlantic cultural group. Nevertheless, American cultural production only achieved world-class prominence after the immigration of members of the European elite in the 1930s, followed by a second wave after 1945. This can be said of literature, music, visual arts, and even Hollywood. The influence of European art and culture is also staggering in Asia, the Arab world, and Africa. Those who are not world travelers can also confirm this with a mere glance at various online event programs.

I say this not out of European arrogance and not as a form of chauvinism. I say this as a means to call to mind Europe’s importance to the world – far beyond its current political and economic crises. But it is also an appeal to consider Europe’s responsibility for culture, values, and civilization along with their further development.

The “Notion of Europe” Is Not Being Called Into Question

Thus if we are to speak of a new center of the world map, we must be aware that Europe’s contributions – its values, its tradition of scientific thought, its system of government and laws, and its culture of fine arts – will continue to play a prominent role, and certainly a decisive one, among emerging civilizations and cultures.

Moreover, there is also Europe’s economic strength to be considered: the EU remains the largest economy in the world, almost twice the size of China’s despite a considerably smaller population. Thus in economic terms as well, there is no need for Europe to hide its light under a bushel. This is only true, however, if it continues to pursue an intelligent approach to European integration. For as the population of Europe ages and shrinks, so too will its share of the global GDP diminish. This makes a common European policy all the
more important. Wherever possible, Europe must make an increased effort to maintain and strengthen the importance of European civilization and culture for the world. While it is true that Europe has experienced a loss of confidence during the recent crisis, it is crucial to bear in mind which areas have been affected. It is not the “notion of Europe” being called into question. The erosion of confidence is related to how this notion has been implemented in practice. Lack of confidence is not the cause of Europe’s problems, rather an unfortunate result. As such, Europe can only gain more confidence through better governance.

I am optimistic because there has long been a natural sense of belonging together. By large majorities, citizens across the EU support the same political and social rights and obligations. One no longer sees a great difference between someone from Munich and someone from Madrid, and thus the social construct of the “foreigner” is slowly disappearing within the EU. Many Europeans seem to find the concept of union citizenship as set out in the Maastricht Treaty more familiar than I would have expected.

In summary, Europe’s values play an outstanding role as a compass for the world and continue to have international appeal. The fact that the economic and geopolitical center of the world is slowly moving away from Europe is something we cannot halt. By 2030 China will be the largest economy by far in terms of purchasing power: 50 percent larger than the US economy, twice the size of that of India. For their part, Germany, Brazil, Russia, the United Kingdom, and France will equal less than a tenth of China’s size. Yet by banding together as a continent and as a community of values – nay, only by doing so – we can continue to play an influential role in the world.

In the words of Tony Blair, “The 21st century case for Europe is based not on war or peace, but on power or irrelevance.” If we do not want to face a future determined by a G2 of the US and China, then we Europeans must work together. It is only as a community of Europeans that this continent will have long-term strength, significance, and a future – geopolitically, socially, and economically.
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