



Harry & Helen Gray
Humanities Program Series
Volume 10



DOES EUROLAND
HAVE A CULTURE?
AN AMERICAN-EUROPEAN
EXCHANGE



Edited by
Paul Michael Lützeler
Washington University

American Institute for Contemporary German Studies
The Johns Hopkins University



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FOREWORD

The arguments for debating European integration in cultural terms have been established for many years. They result from the frustration that neither political nor economic integration has produced sufficient symbolic images and events that could become the basis for a European identity. They build on the alleged lack of political drama and democratic legitimacy of the unification process but also on the enthusiasm of artists, film producers, performers and academics who consider Europe's rich cultural heritage the most distinguished asset of the continent's common future. Explored and extended over the last decades, these arguments have made it even into the 'constitution' of the European Union, the 1992 Maastricht Treaty whose article 128 ascribes cultural competence to the Union, though only in the most general terms. The article indicates the willingness of the legislators of various European countries to aim at a Europe that is more than the result of mere economic integration. A museum of Europe is in the making whose mission statement admits that most Europeans consider the fifteen-nation European Union a "cold, bureaucratic monster, a soulless producer of administrative edicts."¹

This volume provides insights into the state of the transatlantic discussion at a time when the integration of the currencies of fifteen countries led to labeling the European Union—first mockingly, then half seriously—after the new common currency the land of the Euro: Euroland. The term Euroland is often understood as a reference to a Europe without the cultural dimension. The question whether Euroland has a culture gains particular momentum when everything seems to result from financial and fiscal causes. The workshop on which the volume is based, was held under the title, "Does Euroland Have A Culture? Germany's Problem with European Integration," on October 13, 2000. Following a series of events on European unification at the American Institute for Contemporary German Studies, including the seminar, "Doing Business in Euroland: Corporate Responses to the Introduction of the Euro," in April 1999, this workshop sustained the attention of a sizable audience with its frank exchange of views between those who include culture in their Euro-optimism and those who contest the viability of culture within the construction of the new Europe. While the speakers confirmed the special place of German

politics for the extension of the European Union, the discussion tended to shift towards an intensive examination of culture as a general, though much-neglected component of European unification. Reflecting current trends, the notion of culture was used as a conduit to a broad array of questions concerning the emerging European identity or the lack thereof.

As so often in transatlantic encounters, the endeavor to arrive at a common definition of the concept of “culture” proved to reveal profound differences. Although identity politics have penetrated most current debates on culture also in Europe, the once dominating universalistic orientation of this concept is still being invoked in connection with current forms of universalism, especially concerning human rights and women’s and minorities’ rights. For American observers who tend to equate culture with identity politics, often referring to multiculturalism as the modern “solution,” universalistic claims of culture stir strong suspicions even if they appear in historic garb, equipped with the bright humanistic hopes of Kant and the Enlightenment. If, therefore, Europeans claim culture as part of their future equipment in modeling a Europe beyond the nation-states and their national cultures, American responses reach from sceptical to antagonistic. In turn, the American practices to leave universalism to the economy and the dynamics of the global market, encounter strong opposition on the part of Europeans. Who determines the new face of universalism? Is culture, conceptualized in Europe, still able to project the basis of a trans-national, yet collective social agenda?

The volume’s first two essays reflect this antagonism in an exemplary way. Its editor, Paul Michael Lützeler, has, for many years, written about the engagement of writers and intellectuals in Europe as a spiritual home (*Die Schriftsteller und Europa*, 1992; *Hoffnung Europa*, 1994). Drawing on this impressive body of essays and aphorisms from Goethe and Romanticism to the French-German exchange of the 1920s and the concerns with Central Europe among the intellectuals of the 1980s, Lützeler lays bare the long history of certain arguments on culture and identity, most poignantly in the juxtaposition of Goethe and Herder. He identifies Goethe with the transnational notion of culture in contrast to Herder’s nationally based concept of culture which has given rise to the nineteenth-century thinking of collective identity.

This is where Frank Ninkovich builds his critical argument against culture as a basis for the transnational Europe of the future. Ninkovich delineates the national—and nationalist—roots of cultural identities and pleads for switching

to the notion of ideology as a more valid paradigm. The attempt of displacing internal nationalisms by creating a new “Euroculture,” he argues, would run the risk of relying on outmoded nationalist assumptions which would legitimize again the adversarial role of “the other.” America in the West is a much invoked contender for this “other,” as has been Asia in the East or, more recently, Russia. Though his argument about “Euroculture” as a pseudo-solution seems to rest too exclusively on the polemics against culture as identity politics, Ninkovich’s juxtaposition of Europe with America under the dominance of the American concept of economic globalism and its integrating dynamics is highly stimulating for a more comprehensive discourse. In his concluding remarks, “A Look at Current Controversies,” Jacob Heilbrunn adds colorful insights into the profound differences in evaluating European integration, giving evidence of the persistence of identity politics on both sides of the Atlantic.

Yet Lützel is not oblivious to the fact that the cultural card is seldom drawn by politicians. He shows how much the speech by Joschka Fischer, Germany’s foreign minister, at Humboldt University, Berlin, in May 2000 stands within the intellectual tradition of pro-Europe declarations though it contains no reference to culture. In his estimate, Vaclav Havel, the writer-turned politician has gotten it right when he invokes, even builds on these references in his reflections in the European future. Indeed, Europe as a cultural reality was nowhere more passionately conjured than in the area of what is called Central Europe and what was excluded from Europe during the cold war. Without the impulses given by the Czech writers Milan Kundera and Vaclav Havel, the Polish writer Adam Michnik and the Hungarian author György Konrad and other Central European intellectuals, the acceptance of the cultural dimension of European integration in the 1990s would have been even more tentative. German writers like Hans Christoph Buch, Hans Magnus Enzensberger, Günter Grass and Peter Schneider responded with enthusiasm, as Hans Christoph Buch notes in his contribution to the volume. Buch presents a lively and intriguing plea for a “Europe of Culture,” full of historical and political associations. Pointing to the two East-West writers’ conferences on Europe in 1988 and 1998, he demonstrates that writers had their own mandate. They did not wait for the politicians who were still living in the cold war stalemate. They used it for their humanistic and democratic commitment under the auspices of the common European culture.

Claus Leggewie who joined the Euro-optimists at the workshop, pursues a different approach to the discussion of culture. In his contribution to the volume, he takes a bold step towards a first comprehensive assessment of the profound differences between the American and European religious cultures that shape both politics and everyday life on both sides of the Atlantic. Leggewie whose volume, *Amerikas Welt: Die USA in unseren Köpfen* (2000), found broad resonance in Germany, is far advanced in analyzing areas of future transatlantic conflicts. Among them the cultural conflicts demand growing attention. His is not only a plea for a thorough reflection of the religious roots of many transatlantic misunderstandings but also for a reflection of the enormous influence of cultural practices on politics in general.

The Institute expresses its gratitude to Paul Michael Lützeler and the other authors of this volume for their lively contributions to the ongoing discussion about the cultural dimension of the new (and old) Europe.

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ENDNOTE

¹. Michael Z. Wise, "Idea of a Unified Cultural Heritage Divides Europe," *New York Times*, January 29, 2000, B 9. - See also Roger Cohen, "Even in Euroland, Money Isn't Everything," *New York Times*, September 17, 2000, WK 4; Joachim Sartorius, "Kultur und Binnenmarkt: artfremd. Zu einer künftigen Kulturpolitik der Europäischen Union," *Merkur* 48 (1994): 937-42; *Political Symbols, Symbolic Politics: European Identities in Transformation*, ed. Ulf Hedetoft (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998).

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TOWARDS A MULTICULTURAL EUROPEAN IDENTITY: HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES AND CONTEMPORARY DEVELOPMENTS

Paul Michael Lützel

THE CULTURAL DIMENSIONS OF EUROPE'S IDENTITY

On May 12, 2000, German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer spoke at Humboldt University in Berlin, the new capital of united Germany. The title of his presentation was "From Union to Federation: Some Thoughts on the Finality of European Integration." It turned out to be the most important post-unification speech in regard to European matters made by a German politician, setting in motion a passionate discussion about the future of the European Union, especially in France and Germany. Four years earlier, Vaclav Havel, president of the Czech Republic, delivered a speech with the title "The Hope for Europe" in Aachen, the city of Charlemagne, and thus probably the most European German city there is. It is interesting to compare these two position papers on contemporary European matters. Fischer deals with political and economic questions exclusively. The cultural dimension, the idea of a European identity, does not play a role in his contribution. Havel, on the other hand, mentions the political and economic questions only in passing but concentrates on problems of identity, of history, and of culture. In the following essay, I will mention these two seminal lectures from time to time. I will try to show that both, Havel and Fischer, are participating in a discourse on Europe that has deep, century-old roots in the identity discussions of European thinkers and writers.

Over the centuries, a number of writers, philosophers, and essayists have been drawn to the scene of political power, to parliaments and state offices, to national assemblies and political parties. One of the most memorable early proponents of European unity was the French author Victor Hugo. Even today his novels are well liked; his speeches on Europe, however, are known only to those familiar with the discourse on Europe. These essays are still significant as milestones to a post-national era. Of similar importance were the numerous pamphlets on Europe written by the Italian author and revolutionary Giuseppe Mazzini, founder of "Young Europe." Mazzini's name is today essentially tied to the national unity of Italy, but he was the most eloquent advocate of a

European confederation. Another Europe visionary was the German writer Arnold Ruge.

The European revolutions of 1848 brought the Frenchman Victor Hugo to the French National Assembly, the Italian Giuseppe Mazzini to the government of the Republic of Rome, and the German writer Arnold Ruge to the Frankfurt Assembly in the Paul's Church. Ruge was the only one in this assembly to give a speech on the topic of Europe; like Hugo and Mazzini, he demanded a European council that would guarantee continental peace.

During the 1920s it was Count Coudenhove-Kalergi who, as a writer, sought to make contact with intellectuals and politicians alike; his pan-European essays and congresses became a source of inspiration for Churchill, Briand and de Gaulle, as well as for Hallstein and Adenauer. Another who deserves a special place in the European movement is the French poet Saint-John Perse; he was the cabinet director under Aristide Briand in the 1930s. At that time he helped formulate a great plan for European unification.

Today there is no dearth of writers producing essays on Europe, but hardly any are attracted to the issues of parliament or government. Perhaps the reason lies in the fact that the topic of European unity has become an integral part of the political routine, having left the realm of utopia; utopia—as is well-known—was the most-favored imagined location of modernist authors. Vaclav Havel is one of the small group of intellectuals who continue to combine vision with practice. He has recognized that Europe is a continent that needs to rethink its identity. Havel pleads for the establishment of a multicultural European identity that would reflect the intercultural conditions in the European metropolitan cities, a construct that too often goes unmentioned in contemporary essays on Europe.

The reasons for this omission may lie in the tradition of the discourse on Europe. From its beginnings in the seventeenth century to the decades after the Second World War, essays on Europe inherently received their impetus from a revulsion toward things foreign: first, toward forces outside Europe, and second, toward an inner-European state that might destroy the balance of power between the continental nations.

In the latter case (attacks from within Europe), the House of Bourbon, the Habsburg dynasty, Napoleon, Hitler, and Stalin come to mind. All of them claimed continental predominance and thus provoked the resistance of other European powers. No generation has felt as strongly European, and at the same time as

strongly national as the Romantic generation. Its major topic was the relationship between national independence and European cooperation. This was especially evident in the opposition to Napoleon. Napoleon's intention was to establish and perpetuate the national supremacy of one state (the French state) over all other European nations. In contrast, such authors as Novalis, the brothers Schlegel, Coleridge, Wordsworth, Görres, Madame de Staël, Saint Simon, Hazlitt, and Chateaubriand developed concepts of a peaceful, united, and cooperative continent in which individual nations could grow under a European roof according to their historical givens, without being dominated or colonized—politically or culturally—by another European nation. In the post-Romantic era of the nineteenth century, similar arguments can be found in essays on Europe by Hugo, Heine, Börne, Mazzini, and Ruge. Since that time, writers have continued to speak out against the domination of one European nation over other nations. The basic truth of this thesis still holds today; it has been the root of European integration since the 1957 Treaty of Rome, and it is referred to in the more recent presentations by Havel and Fischer.

Then there are the examples of revulsion toward extra-European transgressions—first the repeated military and cultural conflicts with the Ottoman Empire, and secondly the problem of dominant political and cultural influences, and specifically those of the United States or of the former Soviet Union. In the long run, essays dealing with extra-European influences have had a much smaller impact: during the past few decades Islam has entered Europe with migrant workers from Turkey and Northern Africa; the Soviet influence has left its own deep marks, and a Europe without an American impact is unimaginable.

The essays on Europe by Chateaubriand, Sartre, Novalis, Enzensberger, Shelley, Spender, Postl, and Kundera were replete with edicts of cultural tolerance, declarations of continental solidarity, and creeds of transnational faith. Nevertheless they rarely invited an open-minded, unprejudiced dialogue with non-European cultures. This attitude is also evident in the treatment of Asian and Indian issues in the Europe essays of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In these essays occidental deficits were generally projected onto non-European cultures, but genuine, culturally different aspects were not discussed. In his book on *Orientalism*, Edward Said has provided a critical examination of the Eurocentric validations of Asian cultures. In spite of the

essayists' self-criticism, the superiority of the European culture, conceived as a symbiosis of antiquity and Christianity, is ultimately not questioned. The cosmopolitanism of the Romantics is still essentially a Europe-oriented transnationalism, and the anti-Semitism of some German Romantics provided the National Socialists with welcome arguments. As far as the relationship to cultures outside Europe is concerned, one should seriously work on deromanticizing the European concept.

A sensitivity for the complicated contradictions inherent in the multicultural foundation of European civilization begins to appear in French literature after the turn of the century in novels like *Jean-Christophe* by Romain Rolland, and in German-language writings by such eminent writers as Thomas and Heinrich Mann, Lion Feuchtwanger, and Stefan Zweig, writers who were forced to emigrate under National Socialism. In the literary expressions of their identity crises, the eminent authors imagined themselves back in earlier historical eras, e.g., biblical times, the century of the birth of Christ, or the Age of Reformation. One might mention here at least one novel: Lion Feuchtwanger's *Josephus Trilogy*. Like other assimilated Jewish intellectuals, Feuchtwanger was convinced that the European identity, with its Greek, Jewish, and Christian components, could and should be defended against a National Socialist onslaught. The confrontation with the new barbarity induced him to reflect on the European cultural synthesis in its earliest phase, the beginning of European chronology. The *Josephus Trilogy* is intended to demonstrate how remote the idea of a merging of the contrasting cultures was that were encountering each other at the time. Greeks, Romans, Jews, and Christians are involved in controversial and at times deadly encounters. Josephus is at the center of these conflicts; for a long time he attempts to build bridges of understanding over the widespread confrontational course. It is his goal to develop and to live a cosmopolitan identity. Feuchtwanger makes it clear how difficult it is to remain a devout cosmopolitan once a person has entered the zone of warring cultures. During the attempt to bring the Greek, Roman, Christian, and Jewish heritages into a dialogue, Josephus is not spared from tragic conflicts. What is exemplified here in literary form has to do with what theoreticians of a European identity have more recently tried to grasp conceptually. I have in mind philosophers, authors, and scholars who have published books and essays on multicultural European identities, like Edgar Morin, Rémi Brague, and Jacques Derrida in France as well as Jürgen Habermas, Daniel Cohn-Bendit, and Claus Leggewie in

Germany. The factual multiculturalism of everyday life in the industrialized European countries has been documented by Daniel Cohn-Bendit and Thomas Schmid in their book *Heimat Babylon*. They called for a “multicultural democracy.” So did Hans Magnus Enzensberger in his essay, *The Great Migration*. The number of migrants who have emigrated to western Europe during the past fifteen years is about twenty million, with approximately three million coming from eastern or central Europe and the former Soviet Union. It was Jürgen Habermas who, one year before *Heimat Babylon* appeared, was the first German intellectual who outlined in an essay a vision of the European Union as a multicultural society. He recognized that a European public with a multicultural character was in the making. More recently Habermas commented on the topic of multiculturalism in Europe in his discussion with Charles Taylor. While Taylor pleads for special rules and laws for minorities, Habermas insists on equal rights for all citizens. A compromise position was found by the Canadian social scientist Will Kymlicka who suggests special protection for minorities in the name of universal human rights, and who sees human rights at the same time as a criterion to avoid any potential misuse of these special rights. The multicultural givens in contemporary Europe demand—in the sense of Derrida, Morin, and Brague—a dialogic relationship between the cultures of majorities and minorities; they demand a mutual openness toward the other, and a readiness to undergo new syntheses.

Contemporary European literature already carries easily visible multicultural traits. In Great Britain, authors from India and Pakistan, and in France, authors from Algeria and Morocco, have become famous nationally and internationally. Authors of Turkish, Jewish, Arabic, Japanese, Indian, and Persian heritage, who live in Germany, have become well known. This writing between the cultures, which has become more and more characteristic of the German, the European, and the international literary scene, is a process that has been accelerated by the literary successes of Salman Rushdi, Vikram Seth, Bharati Mukherjee, V.S. Naipaul, Mario Vargas Llosa and others.

At the outset of this essay, I mentioned prominent Europe essayists of the nineteenth and twentieth century who were at the same time politicians, i.e., who proved their affinity for Europe theoretically as well as practically. Often enough they were forced to pay for their commitment to European unity with exile, incarceration, or censorship. One of the few writer-politicians today is Vaclav Havel. In the speech mentioned, Havel outlined Europe’s

responsibility in a multicultural, postcolonial, and ecology-conscious world society. He stated that Europe should no longer try to impose its culture—in missionary tendency, as it were—on the rest of the world. Instead Europe will have to seek a dialogue with other cultures. Such a dialogue would avoid the error of the ethnocentrists, who operate with a model of an exclusive, often essentially racist, collective identity. In Joschka Fischer's speech the cultural dimension was left out, and in that respect he could learn something from the writer-politician Vaclav Havel.

GOETHE VERSUS HERDER

In regard to a multicultural European identity we can also learn from Goethe. Goethe did not write essays on Europe, as did his contemporaries Novalis, Saint-Simon, Coleridge, and Görres. Goethe produced no utopias depicting the continent's cultural, political, social, or religious unity. What he brought to the discussion was his vision of European and world literature, and this vision laid the groundwork for new ideas that went beyond national concerns, ideas of a growing European integration. Herder was the intellectual patron of the national movements of the nineteenth century, but Goethe was the spiritual father of European efforts toward international cooperation. While Herder stressed the insurmountable differences between the various cultures, Goethe concentrated on what they had in common. Goethe would never have formulated a thesis like this one of Herder's: "Each nation's happiness is centered in itself." In order to illustrate the difference between Herder and Goethe, I might mention a few more quotes from Herder's essay *Another Philosophy of the History of the Education of Mankind*: "Everything that fits my nature, everything that it can assimilate, is something I strive for, is something I want to be part of; everything beyond that I am protected against by my nature, protected against by unfeelingness, coldness and blindness; this negative emotion can even turn into contempt and disgust." Then follows Herder's praise of national prejudice: "Prejudice is good ... since it makes you happy. It brings the nations to their centers, makes them more concise as a community, lets their character develop more freely, makes their desires and goals deeper and more passionate." Herder continues: "This is why the most ignorant and most biased nation often is the highest ranking nation: the age of desire for hopeful travels to foreign countries is already a sign of

sickness, of flatulence, unhealthy abundance, foreboding of death!”¹ Goethe’s ideas of building national identities were entirely different, as his deliberations on European and world literature show. Goethe believed that literature could empower nations to overcome the racial, linguistic, and cultural differences of millennia. He was convinced that spiritual exchange and mutual influences could exist beyond the boundaries of space and time. He was certain that the various nations should not be limited to merely attempting to understand their own nature. These views enabled Goethe to place the concept of world literature above that of national literature, and this concept had a lasting effect on the cultural understanding of those essayists of the decades and centuries to follow who wrote on Europe. The fact that Goethe perceived the term “world literature” as a step up from, and as a further development of, the term “European literature” is sometimes overlooked. This perception is evident from a comment he made in 1828, in which he stated that he had “dared to announce a European, indeed a general world literature.” A transnational European literature would provide the model, as it were, for the next level of the internationalization of literatures toward what Goethe called the “approaching world literature”² that is, toward a literature that would construct a bridge to other world cultures. The choice of the word “approaching” is indicative of the progressive nature of this development as well as of its avant-garde character. Goethe saw himself as the promoter and agent of this burgeoning literature. World literature would cross national as well as continental boundaries, an idea reflected in his well-known comment to his assistant Eckermann: “National literature is not of much importance now; this is the era of world literature, and everyone should support this tendency.”³ Furthermore, he stressed that the Germans would have “an honorable role”⁴ to play in the process of this internationalization. While this stance must not be conceived as a condemnation of national literatures per se, it is obvious that here Goethe adopted a position counter to Herder’s, since he emphasized the insufficiency of a nationally limited horizon within the cultural realm.

Goethe’s perception of world literature found resonance and response not only among contemporaries but even today, two centuries later. In his 1994 book, *The Location of Culture*, Homi Bhabha demonstrates that even today theoreticians of multiculturalism and postcolonialism consider world literature a very useful concept. Bhabha believes that hybrid cultures are representative of the late

twentieth century. His interest is captured by the mixtures that have resulted from the confrontations, overlappings, and interrelations of various cultures during the course of colonization and decolonization, of wars and migrations. With reference to Goethe, while mindful of the current historical situation, Bhabha writes about the new places where one comes in contact with what is alien: “Where, once, the transmission of national traditions was the major theme of a world literature, perhaps we can now suggest that transnational histories of migrants, the colonized, or political refugees—these border and frontier conditions—may be the terrains of world literature.”⁵ While Goethe placed the greatest importance on the exchange and interaction of national literatures, Bhabha focuses on those literatures manifesting the cultural displacements that are the result of today’s dispossession, exile, diaspora, and migration. In Bhabha’s case we can refer to an expansion of Goethe’s concept of world literature.

Goethe associated his idea of world literature closely with his concept of cosmopolitanism. He recognized the “true cosmopolitan spirit perhaps nowhere in a more refined form than in the arts and in literature.”⁶ At one point he declared: “Where we educate ourselves, there is our fatherland.”⁷ It is hardly possible to find in Goethe’s time a more explicit position against limiting, nationalistic thinking, and from this position, it seems to me, we can draw lines to the current discussion of European multiculturalism. We must be aware that Goethe did not envision a neutral or passive tolerance toward other cultures; instead, he pleaded for the constant fusion of horizons and a readiness to examine, to modify, to supplement, or to revise our current positions. Intellectual growth and the recognition of new phenomena were the goals of Goethe’s educational vision; in this context he tolerated no regional, national, or even continental boundaries. The resurrection of the classical concept of humanity played an important, although not an exclusive, role in this process, as evidenced by Goethe’s late work, the *West-Östlicher Divan*. There he described the interaction between different cultures in these words: “The Orient has beautifully/ spread across the Mediterranean;/ Only he who loves and knows Hafis,/ knows what Calderon has sung.”⁸ The interconnectedness of cultures is even more strongly expressed when Goethe continues: “He who knows himself and others,/ will recognize:/ Orient and Occident/ can no longer be separated.”⁹

JOSCHKA FISCHER'S EUROPE

Back to contemporary issues. The war on the Balkans shook any multicultural self-confidence to its very foundations. The international community of writers was deeply divided in its assessment of what was at stake in the former Yugoslavia, be it in regard to Bosnia or Kosovo. The shock of the incredible bloodshed reinforced currents of pessimism. Countless intellectuals and writers in Europe and the United States published passionate pamphlets on the wars in Bosnia and the Kosovo. Most of the authors allude directly or indirectly to the future European identity as a multicultural identity. This was even the case in Peter Handke's most controversial essay: On the one hand there was this aggressive, militant, and unjust voice in Handke's contribution, a voice that makes unfounded accusations; on the other hand there is a thoughtful, considerate voice that questions its own position. The literary intertext in this part of Handke's essay on Serbia is Ivo Andric's 1945 novel, *The Bridge over the Drina*. This masterpiece is a poetic chronicle of the famous Visegrad bridge that for centuries connected the Ottoman Empire with the Occident. The bridge, which was beleaguered and even destroyed time and again, symbolized the difficult yet, on the whole, successfully functioning multiculturalism of this particular region. Handke believes that the bridges between the various cultures of the Balkans can be rebuilt, and he tries to encourage his readers to begin anew.

The eminent issue of multiculturalism and of a dialog with the "others" and their "otherness" is taken up in essays of many European writers, but it is conspicuously absent in Joschka Fischer's speech. Fischer at no point refers to those writers and thinkers who contributed to the European discourse in a decisive manner. He quotes politicians like Robert Schuman, Jean Monnet, Giscard d'Estaing, Helmut Schmidt, and Hans Dietrich Genscher. The merits regarding European integration of all these politicians cannot be questioned. But none of them came up with any genuinely new idea concerning the unification process of the European continent. If one wants to understand their thoughts and actions, one has to familiarize oneself with the discourse on Europe as developed by European thinkers and writers of past centuries. The first grand plan of European unification was made by the Duke of Sully during the Thirty Years War. This master plan was rediscussed and changed over the centuries: by St. Pierre in the eighteenth century, by Saint Simon and Victor Hugo, by Mazzini, Charles Mackay, and Julius

Fröbel in the nineteenth century, by Coudenhove-Kalergi, Paul Valery, Heinrich Mann, Alfons Paquet, Rudolf Pannwitz, Ferdinand Lion and many others during the twentieth century. The most interesting of all these plans was the one by Saint Simon, published in 1814 in French and German after Napoleon had been ousted and the Vienna Congress started to discuss the new order in Europe. Saint Simon's plan of a European Federation was the counter proposal to Metternich's restoration policy. Even today Saint Simon's book reads like the blueprint for Maastricht and beyond: there the unification of the continent is envisioned including one parliament, one defense system, a European constitution, and a single market. Already here the European Federation is seen as an alternative to the old European balance of power system. Fischer pushes the issue of a European constitution. Again, this is nothing new within the Europe discourse. Has the historic moment—the *kairos*—for this constitution really been reached? Can one discuss a constitution before agreeing on the political form of the future union?

Fischer combines his constructive suggestions with a critique of the existing institutions of the European Union: he points to the democratic deficits in the case of the European Parliament, and the inability of the Commission and the other institutions to cope with the many members of the EU, whose number will even increase in years to come. This type of criticism has been expressed in the Europe essays of many writers, particularly by Hans Magnus Enzensberger, both in his Book *Europe, Europe* of 1987 and in his essay "Brussels or Europe—one of the two" of 1989. Enzensberger compared the undemocratic Brussels bureaucracy with that of the Politburo of the former Soviet Union.

When discussing the steps to be taken in the direction of the European Federation, Fischer mentions time and again a nucleus or core of European states (*Kerneuropa*) that would take over the role of an *avant garde* in the unification process. This again is a century-old idea, also mentioned for the first time in Saint Simon's visionary text of 1814. He suggested that England, France, and Germany should see themselves as this European nucleus of a future European federation. Victor Hugo, Coudenhove-Kalergi, Saint-John Perse, Heinrich Mann and others thought of France and Germany as the two states that would play this role. Aristide Briand picked up the idea in his visionary federation

plans of 1929 and 1930 that he presented to the League of Nations in Geneva.

Fischer supports the idea of subsidiarity as the underlying principle that would make a European Federation work, thus guaranteeing the autonomy of the local, regional, and national governments: only those problems that are of a genuine continental character would be solved by the federal European government. The nations would still take care of their national concerns, the regions would solve their regional problems, and the local authorities would continue to deal with local matters. This is an old nineteenth century idea of the social teachings of the Catholic Church, and in the meantime it has been picked by social scientists who specialize on European matters (Weidenfeld).

Another important aspect of Fischer's address concerns the eastern expansion of the European Union. He mentions a number of reasons for the priority he gives to this expansion. Among them is the aim of overcoming the old postwar division of Europe and avoiding a new split between the two parts of the continent. Again, this problem was widely discussed long before the Berlin Wall came down, long before the collapse of the Warsaw Pact, long before the Soviet Union decided to dissolve itself. Milan Kundera published his article on the tragedy of central Europe in the *New York Review of Books* in 1984, and ever since countless intellectuals, authors, and politicians have discussed the question of how to bring the two parts of the continent together again. The crucial debate of the 1980s on Europe was (at least in part) related to this discussion. Two of its most prominent proponents were the former dissident writers Vaclav Havel from Czechoslovakia and György Konrad from Hungary. When we look back in history, central and eastern Europe were always seen as parts of the European project. The only state that was discussed in a controversial manner in this context was and still is Russia, a Eurasian power: in the 1920s, Coudenhove-Kalergi rejected the idea to include the Soviet Union into his Pan European concept. Russia does not fit into Joschka Fischer's plans of a European federation either.

There are three weak points in Fischer's arguments. The first is his implicit idea that "what is good for the German economy is good for Europe;" the second is his idea about the so-called "finality" of the European project; and the third is his tendency to ignore the United States as a possible model for the united states of Europe. In the 1950s authors and essayists like Reinhold Schneider and Ferdinand Lion already pointed out that it makes little sense to

favor European integration primarily because of its economic aspects. The European continent is a cultural and political entity that needs a much broader basis than the economy can possibly provide. It is clear that all members of the European Union should profit from their membership economically, but as soon as one thinks about a European federal constitution there is more at stake than the economy. Furthermore, one should avoid phrases like “finality.” History is an ongoing process, and as long as mankind exists, there is no “finality” in any political or cultural project. A European Federation is an idea worth discussing and pursuing for many reasons: they have to do with peace, with the free exchange of ideas and goods, with creating wealth, with opening up possibilities on countless levels of human endeavors. As everybody familiar with the Europe discourse knows: the United States has served as a model for a future European Federation ever since the early nineteenth century. The plans of Saint Simon, Victor Hugo, Coudenhove-Kalergi, and Jean Monnet are unthinkable without this model. Their visions for Europe were variations of the American example. Except for mentioning the U.S. Senate once, the American federation is not discussed at all. But it is a workable model, and although it cannot simply be imported to Europe, it can provide the basis for a discussion on a constitution for a European Federation.

Whether knowingly or unknowingly, Mr. Fischer’s speech is the product of a centuries-old discourse on European culture and politics, a discourse set in motion primarily by thinkers, authors, writers, essayists, and dreamers. There is nothing new in his vision, but it was important that a leading German politician, the foreign minister of an influential member of the European Union, came forward and supported the idea of a European federation, called for a European constitution, criticized the existing institutions of the European Union, favored the principle of subsidiarity and wants to see the central and eastern European countries as new members of the European Union and of a future European federation.

Fischer’s political speech and Havel’s cultural address are important recent contributions to the ongoing Europe discourse. The integration process needs the Fischers as well as the Havels: the economic and political union will not come about and will not last without clarifying questions of a European cultural identity, and the philosophical debates about a European multiculture will lead to nothing without continuing the transformation processes in the realms of law, economy, and politics.

ENDNOTES

- ¹. Herder, *Auch eine Philosophie der Geschichte zur Bildung der Menschheit*, 44-46.
- ². “Goethes wichtigste Äusserungen über ‘Weltliteratur,’ in *Goethes Werke* vol. 12, 263.
- ³. *Ibid.*, 362.
- ⁴. *Ibid.*
- ⁵. Bhaba, 12.
- ⁶. “Einleitung in die Propyläen,” in *Goethes Werke* vol. 12, 55.
- ⁷. Goethe. *Jubiläums-Ausgabe*, vol. 6, 280.
- ⁸. Goethe. *West-östlicher Divan*, vol. 2, 57.
- ⁹. *Ibid.*, 121.

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EURO CULTURE: DOES IT MATTER?

Frank Ninkovich

The idea of creating a “Euroculture” matters immensely, but not for any positive reasons. To be blunt: Europe does not and cannot have a common culture. If the European Union should seek to create a common culture, and even if, for the sake of argument, it succeeded in creating one (whatever that might mean), the project would be destined to fail. My argument is based on two propositions: first, the belief that culture is a powerful source of identity and political cohesion is a questionable, even untenable, assumption when applied to modern developed societies; and second, the geopolitical tradition from which this cultural model originates is historically outdated and, even if it were not, it would be aimed against a target, the United States, that has little to do with the continent’s problems.

Although it may seem a matter of common sense, it might be useful at the outset to consider briefly why a shared sense of identity is an important source of internal cohesion. Why should identity matter? The answer, I believe, is that a politics of identity has emerged in modern times as societies have been desecrated. No longer defined by its connection to the sacred, society has become its own source of meaning. Once it became the norm to anchor sovereignty in the people, the changing definition of that abstract entity, “the people,” has made national identity problematic. Identity issues that revolved around the question of who constitutes the people—men? which men? women? with what rights? groups? which groups?—have been continually raised, settled, and disputed anew as groups at the margins of the polity have insisted upon being incorporated into the body politic. Because problems of membership have been inseparably connected with problems of goals, identity problems having to do with the value orientation of society have also emerged as objects of contention: What kind of society are we? What kind of society do we want to become? How do we proceed?

THE SHIFT TO IDENTITY POLITICS

International politics, too, have been defined increasingly from the standpoint of identity, especially in cultural and ideological terms. Many modern ideologies have accentuated this shift toward identity politics in international relations. Outward-looking ideologies like liberalism, socialism, and some varieties of imperialism have sought to promote identity transformations on a global scale. Ever since its inception, conservative nationalism as an ideology has emphasized internal identity by showing a hostile face to the outside world. Anti-colonialism and anti-imperialism tend to valorize national singularity and distinctiveness as a defense against an oppressive international society. Meanwhile, the emergence and growth of international organizations, governmental and non-governmental, has placed a premium on operating in complex international and transnational contexts in which knowing one's place in the larger scheme is a key to effectiveness.

The way in which modern societies are structured also contributes to this shift to identity politics. I refer here to the increasing complexification of societies and to the rapid institutional changes that the modern, and especially the contemporary world, is experiencing. The problem of complexity was described in a classic manner by Emile Durkheim a century ago in his famous distinction between "mechanical solidarity" and "organic solidarity." Mechanical solidarity was a cultural state of a very simple kind that was characteristic of tribal societies with a rudimentary division of labor, in which the collective conscience was fairly uniform and homogeneous. In the modern world, by contrast, with its proliferation of beliefs of every imaginable variety threatening to produce a loss of coherence, Durkheim saw society being held together by the complexity of a densely reticulated division of labor, or organic solidarity.¹ So, the problem in the modern era is this: How does one match up an unimaginably complex social structure and individual consciousness in a way that assures the cohesion and effective functioning of the society? This problem was solved to some extent by nationalism, but only for a brief historical moment and ultimately in a highly unsatisfactory way. Internationalism has sought to deal with nationalism's shortcomings, but in the process it has created some daunting new difficulties of its own.

The problem of accelerated institutional change in the modern world similarly highlights the importance of cultural factors. The work of a German

scholar, Arnold Gehlen, might be helpful here in providing some insights into what was happening. Gehlen helped to start up a new discipline called “philosophical anthropology” in Germany in the 1920s, a mating of two very different disciplines—biology and philosophy—that has never caught on in the United States, but his argument is nevertheless worth considering. Gehlen’s point of departure is that man is “unfinished” as a result of “instinctual deprivation,” unlike animals, whose repertoires of instincts provide a specialized “tight fit” with the environment. Therefore humans have a **need** to construct stable patterns of behavior—institutions, for short—to fill the gap between instinct and environment. That is, humans create institutions to provide a stable background to life.²

However, modern society, with its breakneck pace of change, produces **deinstitutionalization**, which creates serious problems, according to Gehlen. If the objective institutional background which normally provides stability and order in society is in flux, then the search for stability is turned inward to the subjective “foreground” of human existence. As a consequence of this forced subjectivization of life, modern personality becomes a luxuriant growth and disciplines like psychoanalysis become quasi-institutions whose *raison d’être* is to provide psychic stability to individuals. Sexuality and gender provide a major example of how basic categories, once thoroughly “naturalized” by society, have today become the subject of considerable nervousness and confusion. As identities and values are no longer taken for granted, as they become problematic, they have to be redefined. Pushing Gehlen’s arguments farther still, I would suggest that there are consequences for foreign policy, too. When the old rules and practices of inter-state behavior no longer apply or suffice, when the old institutions crumble, what do you do? How do you decide?

I do not pretend to be able to provide a comprehensive catalog of the reasons for this shift toward identity politics. It is sufficient for my purposes to make the point that there are many powerful reasons at work behind the scenes. In combination, these developments have eased survival concerns while shifting the emphasis to problems of national self-definition.³ I would press the argument about the political importance of identity to the limit by insisting that identity, as opposed to survival, has become **the** central issue of international relations over the last two centuries. Increasingly, wars have been fought not for existence, the hardest of hard national interests as the

realist view of international relations would have it, but over questions of essence, over the survival of national identities.

Take the example of the United States. The gravest of the foreign policy crises through which the United States has passed in the twentieth century have been framed not in terms of survival, but instead have focused on the survival of “the American way of life.” The passage from American isolationism to internationalism in the twentieth century was motivated to a large extent by a sea change in the way in which the nation redefined its identity, and thereby its national interests, in global terms. Or, if we take the cases of Germany and Japan, nations which did indeed see World War II as a struggle for existence, neither disappeared as a functioning modern society or, as things turned out, as a sovereign political entity after defeat in World War II, although to be sure their freedom of action was greatly circumscribed by the victors. The major result of the war was that these two nations have taken on identities far different from what they were pre-war. Vindictive talk about dismembering Germany gave way to a project in which liberal integration into the western world became the dominant approach to dealing with the so-called “German problem.” Similarly, though obviously the particulars differ enormously, Japan was integrated into an open world economy.

QUESTIONING CULTURE AS A BASIS OF IDENTITY

It would take a sizable book to make this case about the increasing importance of identity in a thorough fashion, but for my purposes the argument need not be accepted in its strong version. If it is acknowledged that there has been a greater emphasis on identity concerns in intra- and international relations, then it follows that culture obviously matters enormously, all the more so if you are an essentialist who believes that culture provides a solid foundation of values and beliefs upon which to build a political superstructure. By this standard, culture provides an armature around which the institutional coils of society can be tightly wound. Culture and institutions, ideas and objective circumstances, lock societies into their necessary stability.

But, and here is where my first objection comes in, to build on culture is to build on quicksand. Increasingly anthropologists have come to question whether anything like a unitary culture exists, and some have even gone so far as to suggest that it might simply be a shorthand term

for complex ensembles of social practices and conventions, not all of them functionally related to one another.⁴ That is, there appears to be a reaction in progress against the tendency to reify culture, to make a thing out of a word. If there is anything to this, it may well be that culture has been more of a scholarly invention than a scientific discovery and, from a historical standpoint, that culture was an artifact of nationalism, a creation of politics rather than vice versa. I find that there is much to be said for this argument for, even though culture certainly shapes human beings, it is in the last analysis a human product that is subject to transformation by its creators. Moreover, as an historian who believes that everything in this world changes over time, to accept cultures as transcendental forms or timeless essences would be to pull the life out of the very idea of history.

Now, if one agrees that there are no cultural essences or forms, this might seem at first sight to be advantageous to the project of creating a European culture, for it would mean that the plastic national cultures could be molded into a larger cultural pattern. But the argument actually cuts in another direction. As a practical matter, cultures and cultural nationalism are not what they used to be because, to one degree or another, all cultures have been invaded and transformed by modernity. Culture, which once stood for a unique and all-embracing way of life, has been forced back into the citadels of language and history and folk dancing and ethnic cuisine, so that cultural preservation has become an occasion for festive dressing up in peasant costumes, celebrating festivals whose meaning is increasingly obscure, and creating an air of antiquity for the delectation of tourists. My guess is that these cultural survivals will be just like many of the castles that dot Europe today, impregnable and never conquered in their time, but unlikely to provide the core for any empires of the future. Culture, or the idea of culture, no longer possesses the integrative force that it once did.

It would be easy enough to cast this argument in post-modern terms, as a glib deconstruction of culture as a “text” that is written and read by anthropologists, but I think that would be a mistake.⁵ What we have here is a working out of some basic assumptions about the universality of human rationality that date back to the Enlightenment era, assumptions in which culture has always been seen as an obstacle to be overcome. But overcome by what? The old answer would have been by science and rationality, but

today it seems more complicated than that. Here it is necessary to expand the discussion beyond culture by introducing another term that has been central to the way that identities have been defined: ideology. Much of what culture used to do by way of integration, I want to suggest, has been taken over by ideology. Over time, cultural particularism has given way, slowly and problematically to be sure, to a universalism that is ideological in nature.

IDEOLOGY VERSUS CULTURE

If we conceive of peoples' minds as finite spaces, over the course of centuries a space that was occupied wholly by culture has had increasingly to make room for the complex modern ideologies that form the basis of our civilization. Liberalism is best known for its political and economic components, but there is another, more personal, dimension to liberalism that has had an extraordinary impact in displacing old cultural sensibilities. In addition to helping us manage our political and economic behavior, ideologies also provide templates for coping with the micro-details of our daily lives: the way in which we define love, courtship, and marriage, manage our careers, administer our bodies, define our system of medicine and organize our universities, apportion social roles for men, women, and teenagers, and so on.⁶ The very idea of a career, for example, is a rather recent ideological invention.

Juxtaposing and contrasting culture and ideology in this way poses some analytical problems. I have been around long enough to realize that there exists an extraordinary degree of confusion over the meanings of these two terms and that they have been the sites of some remarkable intellectual wars. Although each concept individually has been an object of often bitter contestation, to make things more confusing still culture and ideology are sometimes viewed as being one and the same thing. But for a whole host of reasons, I would suggest that they are very different phenomena. The following is an incomplete list of differences, with capsule commentaries that could be greatly extended:

1) Ideology is often defined in terms of interests, whereas it would seem strange to talk about cultural interests. The old Washington saying, "Where you stand depends on where you sit," suggests that the explanation for an ideological position taken by a bureaucrat can be traced in the end to the interests of his agency or department. This definition of ideology as a

conservative, interest-based phenomenon is not the only way to define what an ideology is (this is basically a sociological definition in which objective social patterns are presumed to serve as reliable predictors of mental states), but there is no doubt that it is, on occasion, a legitimate and fruitful way of speaking about ideology.

2) Ideologies often have utopian elements, but does it make sense to talk about cultural utopias? The attitudes of Marxism and liberalism toward culture are instructive. Thus Marxism foresees a world without nations in which culture figures not at all, because it does not fit the Marxist formula in which material factors like the forces of production and the relations of production determine how people think. Similarly, liberalism's utopia is a humankind in which cultures, whose existence was at the beginning at least recognized, will someday be obliterated by the realization of a common human core once the surface "cake of culture," as it was commonly referred to in the nineteenth century, has been washed away.

3) Ideologies are, by definition, optimistic. Because believers are often willing to sacrifice on their behalf, ideologies, with their utopian visions, are sometimes referred to as "secular religions." To be sure, one can speak of cultural pessimism, but this refers to a particular stratum rather than the culture as a whole.

4) Ideologies can only flourish within cultures, but one cannot argue the reverse. Liberalism in its many varieties does quite well in the United States, but would a "civic religion" of Americanism be tenable without a common culture based on language and history and consumerism? An ideology in this sense is a superstructure built upon the indispensable infrastructure of culture. Or, metaphorically, we can conceive of ideology as the software to culture's operating system. One of the chief intellectual weaknesses of Marxism was its assumption that ideologies were simply reflexes of material conditions that required no cultural medium. That is also why ideologies, in cases when they do cross cultural boundaries, are always to some extent assimilated and shaped by the cultural receptacle into which they are poured.

5) Ideologies can become sedimented within cultures, e.g., we oftentimes speak of American political culture, thereby suggesting that democracy is culturally rooted in the United States. As an example, American policy makers during the cold war insisted in all seriousness that their overriding concern was to preserve the American "way of life." That way of life had changed enormously over the course of two centuries, from one in which republicanism, with its debt to the

classical heritage of Greece and Rome, was powerfully rooted in American culture, only to be replaced over time by liberalism, whose beliefs were in a number of ways at odds with the republican creed. In other words, different ideologies have become sedimented as part of the American way of life at different times.

6) Despite the inroads made by the ideologies of modernity, culture continues to regulate areas of life that ideology cannot reach: language, family, folk traditions, religion, etc. So while secularization is often taken to be a central element of modernization, the ultra-modern United States continues to be a very religious society in many ways. And while it has been the ambition of some totalitarian ideologies to make inroads into these areas, their ferocious assaults, for the most part, have been unsuccessful.

7) Ideologies provide programs of action whereas cultures are neutral in that respect. Thus German culture has been able to support a variety of ideological identities within a relatively short span of time—Wilhelmine autocracy, Nazism, liberalism. Given this rapid turnover, it seems difficult to argue that German culture alone predetermined the ideological make-up of society. But a word of caution is in order here. Because ideology does sediment into culture, and sometimes rather rapidly, it can be difficult to separate the two. One must remember that both are, in some ways, intellectual terms of art for analyzing the solitary life worlds of people.

8) Ideologies can be coherently articulated, whereas cultures tend to be pre-reflective, resistant to articulation, their “natural” condition being closure. That is why anthropological “outsiders” are sometimes necessary to tell the native “insiders” what they are all about. If we reflected constantly on our cultural presuppositions and codes, we would have a (probably unsustainable) culture of reflection.

9) Cultures change over long periods of time, but ideological trajectories or careers are inevitably more abbreviated and structured. Indeed, some social scientists have even talked about ideologies as having “natural histories” in which their careers have followed a typical pattern of intellectual formulation, embryonic organization, institutional success, and decline or decadence that stems from the inability of a pure creed to maintain its purity in coping with the messy problems inevitably confronted in the real world. This typology can be applied to the history of the Roman Catholic Church, General Motors, labor unions, or Marxism-Leninism, to mention but a few possibilities.⁷ Thus social scientists have at times distinguished

between “fundamental” and “operative” ideologies to distinguish between belief systems before and after they have come to power.⁸

10) Ideologies can be assimilated as wholes by different cultures, whereas cultures cannot be so absorbed. Put differently: ideology travels, but culture does not. To be sure, elements of culture travel, but culture itself is a local phenomenon that can be transplanted only by mass migration, if at all.

11) The elements of culture are sometimes disaggregated by referring to high culture, mass culture, corporate culture, and so on. This is often done out of a sense that culture is composed of conflicting, discordant tendencies and that its various components are not necessarily functional in the way that the various systems of an automobile are. But ideology tends to be sold as an integrated package. That is why Americans believe that economic liberalization in China, if allowed to proceed, will lead inevitably to political liberalization and to the growth of democratic individualism in the People’s Republic of China. Economic liberalization is the “loss leader” in the supermarket of globalization.

12) As a general proposition, it seems safe to say that ideologies are relatively recent historical phenomena, whereas cultures date back to the emergence of human societies. Put differently, ideology is modern, culture is traditional. One can talk about “republicanism” in Greece and Rome, or the early Christian religion as an ideology, but that is not the same thing as modern ideologies, which have emerged as ways of regulating the lion’s share of modern life as a result of their knowledge claims. By this definition, even science would qualify as an ideology.

For the purpose of supporting my argument, some of the most important differences between culture and ideology can be gotten at through some historical reflections on the now-fashionable term, “global culture.” This is a hopelessly muddled expression that should never have been introduced into academic discourse, but it is too late to stop it now. No such thing as a global culture exists today, and most likely never will for the simple reason that globalization is impossible if cultural homogenization or syncretism is the goal.⁹ The only way that globalization can be made to work is if peoples adopt similar economic, political, and social philosophies, that is to say, ideologies. Even though culture does not travel, intercultural attunement is possible because

ideology does readily travel across cultural frontiers without need of passports. Because of global modernization, one can find points of identity and commonality with people from other countries who only a century ago would have been considered to be living on another planet or universe or outside of time altogether.

Consider **how** people have been driven closer together. Modernization does not entail the adoption of one cultural pattern of thought, but it does demand time discipline, the acceptance of organizational routines, the learning of new behaviors like driving cars, reading newspapers, and watching television, listening to recorded music, the use of “symbolic tokens” like credit cards, and so on. It requires a faith in science and technology and an attitude of trust: that there will be money in the bank, that food will arrive from overseas, that an architect has designed your building so that it will not collapse if you jump on the floor, etc. Modern life consists of many standardized social behaviors that are processed by peoples’ minds. The behaviors can be similar because they entail the acceptance and internalization of similar rules, but at the same time they are inevitably different, too, because an ideology cannot exist without culture as its supporting medium. Rules have to be transmitted by language, after all, and they have to be reconciled somehow with collective memories and cultural tradition. But on balance, it seems incontrovertible that people throughout the world are more alike today than they were one hundred years ago.¹⁰

EURO CULTURE AND AMERICAN INTERNATIONALISM

Just as there can be no global culture, there can be no “Euroculture,” short of a linguistic assimilation and deracination on a scale that boggles the mind. Recall that the USSR, with all its power and resources, was unable to stifle nationalism during its seventy-five years of existence. And even in a globalized world, it is unlikely that we shall be looking for restaurants that identify themselves as specializing in “human food,” nor is it likely that we will be frequenting purely European restaurants, ordering generic European wine, or European cheese, or wearing generic European suits. If, on the other hand, such root-and-branch deracination is not what advocates of Euroculture have in mind, what good will it be?

Euroculture would be to true culture what homeopathy is to modern medicine, a belief in the curative powers of highly diluted substances.

This brings me to my second point. If, for the sake of argument, we set aside the question of whether a Euroculture **could** be created, my belief is that the attempt to create one would miscarry because of the way in which such a project would be implemented. I understand full well that there are weighty inward-looking reasons for promoting a Euroculture. Among other things, it seems a promising way to deal with the German problem in the absence of the cold war system of double containment and a convenient device for neutralizing the other unruly nationalisms that keep getting in the way of the realization of the European ideal.

But the attempt to displace internal nationalisms by creating a new “Euroculture” runs the risk of relying on outmoded nationalist assumptions in the continent’s external relations. It is no accident that cultural identity has been most closely associated with nationalism. If one asks: “What is the test of a national identity?” we could do worse than to adopt Hegel’s definition, which emphasized the willingness to fight and die for an ideal, a test which the national idea has met in spades. This willingness to sacrifice one’s life presupposes the existence, or the creation, of external threats as a unifying factor. Culturally based identity requires an “other,” an antagonist, an enemy that furnishes a focus, a we-feeling, a competitive motivation. This kind of thinking makes perfect sense from the realist tradition of foreign policy thought in which cohesion is obtained by defining other nations as “others.” This is the manufacture of identity by negation.

In going through some reference works in search of quotations about enemies, I was surprised to see how many remarks about enemies focused on their indispensability. Take the following two examples, chosen from many possibilities:

Carl Jung: The real existence of an enemy upon whom one can foist off everything evil is an enormous relief to one’s conscience. You can then say, without hesitation, who the devil is; you are quite certain that the cause of your misfortune is outside, and not in your own attitude.

Friedrich Nietzsche: Whoever lives for the sake of combating an enemy has an interest in the enemy staying alive.¹¹

What these people then are saying is that an enemy can be a good thing. “If God did not exist, it would be necessary to invent him,” said Voltaire. But if Jung and Nietzsche are to be believed, he might have said the same thing about our need for the devil.

It is on the basis of this kind of reasoning that some Europeans are playing the anti-American card. I recall being rather shocked when I first heard Sir John Keegan characterize the European Union as basically an anti-American project, but upon further reflection I think his assessment is on the mark. Thus far, much of the opposition has been to an unfettered global market rationality, i.e., Americanization, that threatens to sweep away local traditions. Indeed, some of the chief opposition to Americanization has come from the most parochial of interests. The European Community, by one reading, is itself an attempt to do away with the self-imposed straitjacket of high wages and tight regulation that have grown up within the European countries. That is a form of liberalism, to be sure, but this liberalization on the inside and anti-Americanism on the outside is a form of political economy redolent of the old *Mitteleuropa* schemes, a derivation of the old-line tradition of *Realpolitik* and the geopolitics of nationalism.

There is considerable room for argument on this point, but even the most charitable interpretation must admit that European unification is motivated by a sense of inferiority vis-à-vis the United States and a desire to restore Europe’s status in the world so that it is something more than an American dependency. And this brings me to my central argument: any attempt to conjure up a Euroculture out of anti-American sentiment, or any attempt to use anti-Americanism as a political contrivance for consolidating Europe, is badly misconceived. It mistakes what the United States is about, and it mistakes what the modern world is about. Although a geopolitical view of America as competitor may provide temporary political advantage, the traditions on which it is based are sterile.

Europeans have had an extraordinarily difficult time in understanding American internationalism. That misunderstanding was evident not only during the cold war, as evidenced by the many strains in the Atlantic alliance and the

many criticisms of what seemed an excessive American involvement in other regions of the world, but it was present long before, and, regrettably, it is much in evidence today, most notably in criticisms like those of M. Hubert Védérine that accuse the United States of being a “hyperpower,” a term intended to replace the no longer adequate “superpower.” France’s foreign minister suggests disarmingly that any anti-American connotations in his rhetoric are only a misunderstanding. He speaks the language of multilateralism, a tongue that he suggests the United States (which happens to have been its chief promoter over the course of this century) ought to learn. But when he argues that “it is impossible to conceive of the multi-polar world that we are advocating without a strong Europe,” it is difficult not to see this as a resuscitation of Charles De Gaulle’s vision of using Europe as a lever to multiply French power vis-à-vis the Anglo-Saxons. France is not Europe, of course, but since the 1960s it has been the most articulate and active of European powers in defining and attempting to organize anti-American sentiment.

No doubt the United States stands alone today at the Everest of power whereas other nations survey the world from atop the foothills. But how exactly is this power being deployed? After all, Védérine is referring to a nation that is greatly concerned to develop a defense against a hypothetical nuclear threat that does not exist, and is not likely to; a nation whose military capabilities dwarf those of any other nation in the world, yet a nation which is extraordinarily reluctant to commit those forces **except** with the close cooperation of allies—witness Somalia, Iraq, Bosnia, and Kosovo. He is also referring to a nation that fails to meet the Hegelian standard of sacrifice because of a reluctance to commit American lives that first appeared early in the cold war and was confirmed in the 1970s after Vietnam. The present-day logic of internationalist war, which mandates zero casualties and a resort to overwhelming high-tech weaponry, simply reinforces that unwillingness.

Some hyperpower! In all, this doesn’t seem much like a colossus bestriding the earth. In its post-cold war, post-crisis mode, American internationalism is no longer on full alert status. Despite arguments by historians like Detlef Junker that the United States needs an enemy, my sense is that the nation, in its fundamental foreign policy orientation, has no need of devils. John Quincy Adams warned long ago of the folly of the nation going abroad in search of monsters to destroy and I believe that his injunction has been heeded. Whatever

dragons have been slain have fallen as a result of the conviction that they were breathing fire at the nation. If anything, the problem in future is not likely to be cutting the United States down to size; rather, it will be to assure a continued American engagement with the world.

The tendency to see Americanization as an imperialist project also misconceives what American internationalism has been all about. Yes, the United States can be an international busybody and Americans still see themselves as a chosen people, qualities that can be maddening to peoples with past histories of greatness. But one must be careful not to interpret in traditional geopolitical terms what has been a quite untraditional approach to world affairs in which the objective has been not domination through power, however defined, but the consensual promotion of modernity world-wide. No matter how powerful the United States, its foreign policy successes have depended on its ability to cultivate successfully world opinion. Critiques of American cultural imperialism also ignore the openness of American culture. In all this fuss about the Americanization of the world, there is a tendency to forget to how great an extent the United States has been transformed by globalizing forces over the past century. If even America has been to some extent caught in the grip of vast historical forces, are we entirely certain that globalization would not have proceeded without the United States?

EURO CULTURE AS A PSEUDO-SOLUTION

As for culture, what America has been promoting over the past century has not been Americanization, but a global ideology in which making the world safe for democracy has not been the same thing as Americanization of the world. Americanization presupposes the imposition of American culture upon others when, in fact, the cultural dimension of American globalism has always been anti-cultural. Culture—the source of nationalism, and particularism, and historical hatred, and insularity—has always been viewed as the enemy by Americans. Admittedly, the American promotion of globalization can be seen as something that is much worse than imperialism, because it mobilizes the steamroller of modernity at the expense of traditional cultures. Capitalism, according to Joseph Schumpeter, unleashes a process of creative destruction, whereas globalism at its worst can be a destructive process without any redemptive creativity.

But at the same time, it can be viewed as something that is far preferable to old-style ways of managing competitive international behaviors. If nothing else, the American approach is based on the assumption that a liberal world order will promote universal prosperity and great power cooperation—the historical jury will be out a long time before it renders a verdict on this issue. The critique of globalization as Americanization also overlooks the fact that traditional societies are deeply conflicted, hoping somehow to retain their cultural essences while at the same time partaking fully in the banquet of modernity. And modernization is in any case not something that can be imposed unilaterally. The tendency to treat globalization as an historical juggernaut neglects the element of human choice that is indispensable to its being accepted by its alleged victims. Who is imposing it upon Myanmar? Or North Korea?

Admittedly, today's global order bears an unmistakable "made in America" label. But that order exists because America was willing to fight for it in the absence of any objective necessity for so doing. America did not have to go internationalist. It chose to do so because the existence of a peaceful, democratic, and economically open world was believed to be essential to preserving the American way of life, i.e., America's identity. That was an arguable interpretation of history between the two world wars whose ultimate adoption as policy was accompanied by a huge dose of chance, without which the United States might well have traveled down another historical road entirely. But even after the United States opted for global politics, second thoughts and reservations continued to plague policy makers along the way, nagging doubts that continue to resonate to the present day. This singular globalist career demonstrates that American internationalism and the American conception of national identity have not conformed to the usual nationalist and realist standards. How could a global policy be realistic? What kind of nation would have an interest in, or even the hubris, to suppose that it could conquer or dominate the world? Neither Hitler nor the Japanese imperialists ever aspired to so much.

The belief that the United States is a hyperpower, that America is engaged in cultural imperialism, is a projection, I believe, of how Europeans imagine themselves if they were in the same position. A cohesive culture has always been an indispensable element of nationalism and of power politics in the culturally based nation states that formed the atomic units of the old international system. In contrast to the United States, which has been operating on a global model of geopolitics, in which the crucial integrative

force has been ideology, Europe still gravitates as if by instinct to a traditional national model of geopolitics, in which culture has played a central role. Europe's problems have stemmed from nationalism; but alas, it appears that this is all too true of some of its preferred solutions as well. If the pattern holds, it appears that any attempt to develop a European culture will rely upon a political style that, historically, has been the European idea's chief enemy.

There are global considerations involved here, too. To the extent that the idea of Euroculture is rooted in traditional nationalist geopolitical conceptions, they fail to address modern global realities. Because the external forces with which Europe is contending, the forces of globalization, are ideological in nature, I think it is a mistake for Europeans to believe that the differences with America—and there are important differences—can be fought, much less won, on the battlefield of culture. Inasmuch as the American ideological approach has successfully implanted itself at the global level and will remain in place until it demonstrates its inability to promote peace and prosperity, the European cultural model cannot hope to supplant it. Thus, on balance, I believe that the Europeans are tilting at windmills, attempting to solve a pseudo-problem with a pseudo-solution by aiming at an enemy, the United States, that doesn't exist. Because the United States does not constitute a cultural threat at all, it presents only an imaginary cultural “other” against which Europe can define itself.

Unless Europe can come up with a different global ideology, I don't know that the continent will ever be in position to become a serious competitor to the United States. But to speak of “competition” is to suggest the wrong framework. Europe does have something distinctive and valuable to contribute to the world: its experiment in democratic, open market regionalism. American internationalism does not have all the solutions to the world's problems. It is quite fuzzy, and relies inordinately upon market forces to achieve integration. It is also institutionally quite weak and has difficulty in dealing with cooperative regional frameworks. The European approach, by contrast, is an extremely important experiment that might become a model for other regions in the future, for the reason that the jump to globalization from nationalism might be too great a leap to make without mediating regional institutions. Well, “model” may be too strong; “inspiration” might be a more appropriate word. To that extent, in the development of practical modalities for integrating different cultures into larger functional wholes by means of transnational institutions and cooperative politics, the Europeans are far

ahead of the United States and its preference for relying upon market mechanisms.

Such a global promotion of regional cooperation would be a welcome development. In the 1880s, John Fiske, a Harvard professor, predicted that Anglo-Saxon civilization, including the global spread of democracy and the English language, would dominate the future. But Fiske also foresaw an important impact upon Europe:

The economic competition will become so keen that European armies will have to be disbanded, the swords will have to be turned into ploughshares, and thus the victory of the industrial over the military type of civilization will at last become complete. But to disband the great armies of Europe will necessarily involve the forcing of the great states of Europe into some sort of federal relation, in which congresses will become more frequent, in which the principles of international law will acquire a more definite sanction, and in which the combined physical power of all the states will constitute (as it now does in America) a permanent threat against any state that dares for selfish reasons to break the peace.¹²

Although Fiske was anticipating that economic competition with the United States would drive Europe into a federal union, he did not believe that this competitive spirit would extend to culture or politics. In the end, he thought that an adjustment to global realities could not help but bring peace to Europe and cooperation between Europe and America. While Fiske's secular prophecy failed to foresee two world wars, the cold war, and much else, the broad contours of his vision were remarkably prescient and articulated a sensibility with which many Americans today would agree wholeheartedly. A key element of this historical vision, the idea of a united Europe in an open global society, continues to hold great appeal for Americans today.

If Euroculture is indeed a pseudo-solution to a pseudo-problem, how then should Europe proceed? That is not the focus of this paper, but it may well be that the cultural problem in Europe has already been solved, to the extent that it can be. European elites seem to share a common core of transnational values, as in some ways they always have. At one point

that core was Christendom, at another it was an aristocratic ethos, while today it is a democratic faith. Rather than pin the blame for Europe's sputtering integration upon the mass publics and mass cultures, and rather than seek solutions in cultural integration, it might make more sense simply to give the various national publics a greater stake in integration by allowing them a greater voice. To this outsider, at least, it seems rather incongruous that the ethos of integration, which is driven by liberal beliefs, should ignore one of the fundamental elements of liberalism as an ideological package.

Thus far the hope has been that a functional integration of Europe would produce what has been called a "creeping transformation" of beliefs which, in the end, would create a common European consciousness.¹³ But bureaucracies, by their nature, seem best suited to producing anti-bureaucratic sentiment unless they are tolerated out of a sense that they have been legitimately created and sustained. "*Civis Romanus sum*" was a powerful expression of civic pride nearly two millennia ago, and there is no reason in principle why a modern version of multi-ethnic citizenship and its powerful civic attachments could not be attained in Europe, provided that a sense of democratic legitimacy can be created for European institutions. But that is a political, not a cultural, project.

While Europe will certainly have its hands full in trying to harmonize its dissonant internal elements, the success of Europe's regional experiment will depend, in the end, upon the continent's ability to transcend narrowly European concerns. An identity, to be whole and healthy, must be more than negative; it must have a positive outward-looking component as well, an element of identification with something larger than the local polity. Unless Europe can come up with an ideology that is also sensitive to universal themes and problems, any attempt to pursue the creation of a competitive Euroculture can only end up as a nonproductive muddle. Until Europe conceives its identity in broader terms, the idea of a Euroculture will be more a symptom of the continent's ongoing identity problems than a cure.

ENDNOTES

¹. Emile Durkheim, *The Division of Labor in Society* (New York: Free Press, 1933), 129-32.

². Arnold Gehlen, *Man in the Age of Technology*, trans. Patricia Lipscomb (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980).

³. Those interested in following the historical argument in detail may consult my *Modernity and Power: A History of the Domino Theory in the Twentieth*

Century (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994) or *The Wilsonian Century: U.S. Foreign Relations Since 1900* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998).

⁴. See, e.g., Sherry B. Ortner, ed., "The Fate of 'Culture': Geertz and Beyond," special issue of *Representations* 59 (Summer 1997); J. M. Balkin, *Cultural Software: A Theory of Ideology* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998).

One might note here that this is a development not unique to anthropology. Sociologists have come to question whether society exists as an objective structure, international relations theorists have come to question whether objective structures of power rationally determined actually explain the functioning of international politics, and, of course, post-modernists in a variety of fields have argued that nothing meaningful exists outside of language. See Anthony Giddens and Jonathan Turner, eds., *Social Theory Today* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1987).

⁵. See, e.g., James Clifford and George E. Marcus, *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986).

⁶. In its own way, ideology is as problematic and contentious a topic as culture. For a scintillating exposition of its many possible meanings, though without endorsing its argument, see Terry Eagleton, *Ideology: An Introduction* (London, 1991).

⁷. To my knowledge, this typology was first elaborated in a classic essay by Rosa Mayreder, *Der typische Verlauf sozialer Bewegungen* (Vienna, 1917). For one variation, see Theodore J. Lowi, *The Politics of Disorder* (New York: Basic Books, 1971), 32-50.

⁸. Martin Seliger, *Ideology and Politics* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1976); Seliger, *The Marxist Conception of Ideology* (Cambridge/New York: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 4-5.

⁹. See Leszek Kolakowski, "Looking for the Barbarians: The Illusions of Cultural Universalism," in Kolakowski, *Modernity on Endless Trial* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 14-31.

¹⁰. For extended discussions of some of these points, see Anthony Giddens, *The Consequences of Modernity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), and Peter L. Berger, Brigitte Berger, and Hansfried Kellner, *The Homeless Mind: Modernization and Consciousness* (New York: Vintage, 1973).

¹¹. Leroy Frank, ed., *Random House Webster's Quotationary* (New York: Random House, 1999), 239.

¹². John Fiske, "Manifest Destiny," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, 70 (March 1885): 589.

¹³. Alvin Gouldner, "Some Observations on Systematic Theory, 1945-1955," in *Sociology in the United States of America*, ed. Hans L. Zetterberg (Paris: UNESCO, 1956), p. 39.

**FORTRESS OR FORUM?
EUROPE AND THE OTHER**

Hans Christoph Buch

ASIA AS A PROJECTION SCREEN FOR EUROPEANS

Any discourse on identity leads into a trap, because every asserted identity is directed against all others: the affirmation of one's own identity means the negation of other identities. If I call myself a white man, I exclude other skin colors, women, and—depending on how I accentuate the word man—homosexuals from my self-discovery. If I say I am a German and a European, at the same time I am saying I am not a Pole and not an African. This dichotomy has accompanied the European discourse on identity from the earliest times and can already be found full-blown in the works of Herodotus, the founding father of Greek historiography.

Herodotus of Helicamassus not only determined the geographical boundaries of Europe for the first time, he also set its culture apart in two directions: from barbarian nomads like the Scythians, whom he thought devoid of all culture, and from the great Middle Eastern empire of the Persians, an Indo-European people whose political culture was not compatible with that of the Greek city-states: “Delegates of Sparta, why do you refuse to become friends of the King? If you submit to Xerxes, he will give each of you a country in Greece to govern!” They answered: ‘Hydarnes, your advice does not fit us, for you understand only slavery, but you have never tasted freedom and whether it is sweet or not. If you had tasted it, you would advise us to fight against you not only with swords, but also with axes.’” (Herodotus, *Histories*, 7th book)

This quotation is revealing in two ways. First, Sparta, whose delegate here teaches the King of Persia a lesson in democracy, would today be seen as a military dictatorship rather than as a free society; and second, Herodotus thus created a political paradigm whose influence has continued for two and a half thousand years, from the Persian Wars to Samuel Huntington's *Clash of Civilizations*, regardless of whether the story cited above actually happened that way—doubts are permitted, as with many statements and anecdotes that come down to us as historical.

The dramatically staged encounter between delegates of a Greek polis and a satrap of the Persian divine king is thrown into high relief as a confrontation

between European democracy and Asiatic despotism, although—and this is another irony of the text—Herodotus repeatedly emphasized that the Greeks had adopted their culture, religion, philosophy, and science from Asia, more precisely the Middle East, and from North Africa. Periodically invoked by emperors and popes, the fear of Asiatic hordes—Huns, Mongols, or Turks—is here prefigured in Herodotus, as is the warning against the blue ants or the yellow peril (“I say only one thing: China, China, China!” Germany’s then-Chancellor Kurt George Kiesinger called out in the Bundestag in Bonn in 1966) or, today, the conflict between Islamic fundamentalism and western democracy.

It is revealing that the demonization of Asia is found not only on the right end of the political spectrum, but also on the left, whereby racist contempt for the Other can go hand in hand with admiration for the deep wisdom of Asian culture. Thus, no one less than Karl Marx justified British rule in India with arguments that could just as well have been advanced by a convinced racist and colonialist—and this although Marx had no illusions whatsoever about the negative consequences of colonial exploitation.

In 1853, Marx published an article in this vein in the *New York Daily Tribune*, an American newspaper that was otherwise extremely critical of the British Empire: “Now, sickening as it must be to human feeling to witness those myriads of industrious patriarchal and inoffensive social organizations disorganized and dissolving into their units, thrown into a sea of woes, and their individual members losing at the same time their ancient form of civilization, and their hereditary means of subsistence, we must not forget that these idyllic village-communities, inoffensive though they may appear, had always been the solid foundation of Oriental despotism, that they restrained the human mind within the smallest possible compass, making it the unresisting tool of superstition, enslaving it beneath traditional rules, depriving it of all grandeur and historical energies. [...] England, it is true, in causing a social revolution in Hindostan, was actuated only by the vilest interests, and was stupid in her manner of enforcing them. The question is, can mankind fulfil its destiny without a fundamental revolution in the social state of Asia?” (June 25, 1853)

The convergence of rightist and leftist thought is made even clearer by the example of Karl August Wittfogel, who, commissioned by the Frankfurt

Institut für Sozialforschung (Institute for Social Research) and later by the Moscow Comintern, was the first to examine, summarize, and systematize Marx's and Engels' scattered remarks on the Asiatic mode of production, until he fell from Soviet grace in the early 1930s because the parallels between Stalin's rule and "Asiatic despotism" had become impossible to overlook. After temporary imprisonment in a Nazi concentration camp, Wittfogel emigrated to the United States in 1934. There he changed from a Marxist to a fanatic anti-Communist and, in testimony before the McCarthy Committee, denounced some of his academic colleagues as crypto-communists—among them renowned Orientalists like Owen Lattimore and Norman. The latter committed suicide in 1957 under the weight of these accusations. Wittfogel's primary work, *Oriental Despotism*, which appeared in the same year, bears few traces of its author's former Marxist convictions, but his book still impresses with its encyclopedic wealth of material assembled in lifelong work. Wittfogel's main thesis is so idiosyncratic that it amounts to a fixed idea: from ancient China and Egypt through the Aztecs, Inca, and Maya to Hitler, Stalin, and Mao Tse-Tung, he subsumes the most disparate historical phenomena under the notion of the hydraulic state that enslaves the population to build the waterways and roads needed to exercise its rule: Hitler's Autobahn falls within this category along with the canals, dams, and artificial lakes created on orders from Stalin, Mao, or Pol Pot.

Although Marx clearly based his theory of the Asiatic mode of production on pre-capitalistic socio-economic formations, Wittfogel also applies it to modern industrial states. Here, his concept does not deny its kinship with Karl Haushofer's Geopolitics, which influenced Hitler's conduct of the war, and with Oswald Spengler's theory of cultural realms, which Samuel Huntington has resurrected in a new form. At the same time, Wittfogel's ideas about the hydraulic state are connected with the theory of totalitarianism conceived in the early 1950s by Hannah Arendt. All this shows that, just as in the works of Herodotus, Asia still serves as a projection screen for European wishes and fears: a term like Oriental despotism says more about its users than about its addressees.

AMERICA AS A PROJECTION SCREEN

The situation is similar in regard to America, which Europe sees situated at the opposite end of this spectrum, not only in a geographical sense. From this perspective, Asia, as Europe's older brother, is characterized by despotic rule, cultural riches, and unfathomable wisdom, whereas America, its younger brother, is synonymous with modern civilization and democracy, but at the same time suspected of being barbaric and uncultivated. The Americans are regarded as the Romans of modern times: just as Rome conquered Greece and appropriated its most valuable art treasures, America has inherited only the external form and not the spirit of Europe's culture, whose deeper meaning remains eternally closed to her. "America, you have it better / Than our continent, the old one, / You have no ruined palaces / And no basalt rocks," wrote Goethe at the same time as he had the protagonists of *Wilhelm Meisters Wanderjahre* (Wilhelm Meister's Journeying Years) emigrate to the New World: "You are not disturbed inside / In living time / By useless memory / And futile strife." Nothing in this pretty poem is true: from basalt rocks and ruined palaces—merely consider the Aztec, Inca, and Maya ruins—to the erring assumption that, in contrast to Europe and Asia, America was a continent devoid of history, a tabula rasa of human culture.

This paradigm, in which Africa symbolizes prehistory, Asia antiquity, Europe modernity, and America the future, is as misleading as it is tenacious, because it reduces a complex reality to a few handy slogans, which just happen to coincide with the directions of the compass. This model of thought sets the stage for the cyclical shift from euphoria to depression: the emigrants, once tired of Europe, return to the Old World, now tired of America if the promised land does not turn out to be a bonanza or an El Dorado of unlimited possibilities.

These European emigrants did not consider that something might be wrong with their exaggerated expectations and that America is neither a paradise nor a hell, but a country inhabited by ordinary people: perhaps this is why, in the first chapter of his novel *America*, Kafka presses a sword, instead of a torch, into the hand of the Statue of Liberty—as a warning to the reader. Freedom as an avenging angel: the German leftist intellectuals who had emigrated to the United States to escape the Nazis reacted to the culture shock of the American way of life like the protagonist of Kafka's novel, Karl Rossmann, who ends as a missing person, "more pushed to the side than beaten down." Ernst Toller hanged himself in a New York hotel room, Alfred Döblin and Franz Werfel converted to Catholicism,

George Grosz turned apolitical, and Oskar Maria Graf entrenched himself, as in a fortress, behind his Bavarian beer stein. Only Thomas Mann—and after him Uwe Johnson—met the American challenge without prejudice. But most German-speaking writers clung to the ideologically-distorted images they had brought with them from home: Bertolt Brecht maintained in all seriousness that there was more freedom in the USSR under Stalin than in the United States at the time of Roosevelt's New Deal; and the philosopher Theodor W. Adorno even saw the grimace of totalitarianism peeking out behind the manifestations of pop culture, jazz, and advertising: "The same babies grin eternally from the magazines, the jazz machine stomps eternally. The radio becomes the universal mouth of the *Führer*. (...) While the *Führer*s of both shades in the European dictatorships foamed at the mouth against jazz, the youth of the other states had long since allowed themselves to be electrified by the syncopated walking dances as if by marches. The dichotomy between cadres and unarticulated followers resembles that between the party elite and the rest of the masses."¹ It is a bitter irony of history that Adorno sensed fascist tendencies in, of all places, the music of the slaves abducted from Africa. Even more astonishing is the fact that this paradigm of America as a simultaneous hell and paradise retained its effect unchanged in the last third of the twentieth century, as well. Even residing in the United States for many years does not immunize against this kind of clichés, as Reinhard Lettau's book *Täglicher Faschismus—Amerikanische Evidenz aus sechs Monaten* shows: even the title contains an ideological preconception.² Lettau fails to notice that the cases of police brutality he depicts, as shocking as they may be, have little or nothing to do with fascism, because the United States, unlike Europe, has never produced a dictator like Hitler or Stalin.

In conclusion, let me cite a cult book of the 1980s. The following quotation is by Rainald Goetz, a critically acclaimed author of what was then the young generation, and it displays an anti-Americanism derived from the Vietnam War, which later turned into a blind reflex. Behind it lies an even older structure of prejudice, the image of the uncultured, gum-chewing Yankee, as drawn by Nazi propaganda. The terroristic bloodlust that overcomes the author when he thinks of an American president is molded—even in its choice of words—by the spirit of the fascism he claims to be fighting: "I see the face of such a president-swine, of such an imperialistic politician's character mask, of such a state nincompoop, and it is automatically the epitome of the face of the enemy of the people, into which I must shoot, with the largest-possible caliber weapon, with a destructive

dumdum bullet with the most extensive possible effect, so that the face is well and totally ripped to shreds; it is not a hole in the forehead, as beneficially lethal as that might be, that seems worth striving for; I see only absolute shredding, a president face completely pulped to a skin flesh and bone shredded bloody face-mush, that's how I see the face of such a president-swine.”³

UNIFIED EUROPE: A EUROPE OF CULTURE

What does all this have to do with Europe? Quite a lot, for similar mechanisms serve not only to distance Europe from the outside, but also its nation states from each other. For example, Germany has waged several wars against her neighbors in the name of an aggressively asserted identity, whereby Russia stood for Asia while France, England, and the United States stood for the decadent civilizations of the West. The anti-Semitic propaganda of the Nazis fused both, communism and capitalism, into a poisonous compound of a worldwide Jewish conspiracy. Writers and intellectuals took and still take a leading role in the production of such irrational clichés: the most recent example is the war criminal Radovan Karadzic, wanted by the UN Tribunal in The Hague, who wrote a flaming poem invoking the destruction of Sarajevo, even before he turned his words into deeds.

But there is also good news. Europe not only brought forth the Inquisition and the Crusades, colonialism and imperialism, but also formulated critical objections against such evils: the ideals of the Enlightenment, tolerance, human rights, and democracy are older than a one-dimensional identity discourse that leads into the dead end of chauvinism, racism, and ethnic expulsion. And writers imagined European unification long before politicians put it on the agenda of national governments and parliaments.

I myself made a modest contribution to this development. In May 1988, I worked with Peter Schneider and other West Berlin authors to organize an international writers' conference with the telling title: “A Dream of Europe.” Poets, philosophers, literary critics, and social scientists from East, West, North, and South took part: Agnes Heller, György Konrád, Tzvetan Todorov, Efim Etkind, Susan Sontag, Libuse Moníková, Claudio Magris, and Lars Gustafsson, among others. The choice of the topic was not an obvious one: at that time and still today, it

was considered the boring domain of inscrutable Eurocrats residing in Brussels or Strasbourg.

Compared with the dangers of the peaceful and military uses of nuclear energy, European unification seemed a superfluous luxury or a distraction from more urgent problems, and thus welcomed by the powers that be. West German writers who were protesting against NATO plans to station antiballistic missiles in Europe did not even think of such issues, because they considered the peace movement and the utopias of 1968 more important than human rights violations and censorship in the Warsaw Pact countries. The status quo set down in Yalta was not questioned in East or West Germany, but it was in Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia, the successor states of the Hapsburg Empire that Hitler and Stalin had kidnapped against the will of their people, as Milan Kundera put it in his influential essay, “The Tragedy of Central Europe.” Kundera, Adam Michnik, and György Konrád combined the debate on Central Europe with the idea of a civil society, Glasnost, Solidarnosc, and Samizdat, thus inspiring the nonviolent opposition that peacefully subverted the Iron Curtain and the confrontation between the military blocs in Europe.

At our 1988 conference, we did not exactly predict this positive result—writers are not clairvoyants—but we did anticipate it in thought: the Dutch novelist Harry Mulisch called for the erosion of the Berlin Wall from the inside until it would collapse under its own weight. And the conference participants wrote a telegram to Mikhail Gorbachev that read: “It is time that the tenants of the common European house can go freely from one room to the next. Leaving the house should also be allowed.” Both demands were granted soon after, and this time the writers could justly claim more foresight than historians and politicians.⁴

But writers weren’t as prescient about the newly ignited wars in the Balkans and in the Caucasus, which turned the “New World Order” proclaimed by George Bush into its opposite. In place of civil society, consensus, and compromise came naked violence, whose most cynical expression was ethnic cleansing, a slogan from the dictionary of fascism; it smashed the dream of multicultural life together into bloody shards. To limit the damage, Peter Schneider and I staged a second writers’ conference at the end of 1998. This time, the title was much more serious: “Europe—Wishful Dreams or Nightmare?” A critical reassessment of the wars in Bosnia, Kosovo, and Chechnya dominated our debates, but

the balance of the meeting drawn by the new State Minister of Culture, Michael Naumann, was not solely negative; writers in the reunified Germany have overcome their timidity toward politicians, and together with their colleagues in other European countries they are beginning to form an extra-parliamentary opposition that addresses a rallying cry to the national governments, the Eurocrats in Brussels, and the Euro-skeptics at home: Unified Europe will be a Europe of Culture, or it will not be!

ENDNOTES

¹. Theodor W. Adorno, "Zeitlose Mode: Zum Jazz," in *Prismen: Kulturkritik und Gesellschaft* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1955), 144-61.

². Reinhard Lettau, *Täglicher Faschismus: Amerikanische Evidenz aus sechs Monaten* (Reinbeck bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1973).

³. Rainald Goetz, *Krieg: Stücke* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1986).

⁴. About the conference see *Literaturmagazin 22: Ein Traum von Europa*, ed. Hans Christoph Buch (Reinbeck bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1998).

**CLASH OF CIVILIZATIONS?
CULTURAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN EUROPE AND
AMERICA ARE, IN ESSENCE, RELIGIOUS IN NATURE**

Claus Leggewie

When the United States entered World War II, Franklin Delano Roosevelt announced that the battle would bring the triumphs of freedom and democracy to the western world—and of religion. That an American president listed freedom of religion as one of the goals of the war underlines the large role of religiosity in American society, but it also anticipated its growing meaning in a post- or trans-national world order—one largely dominated by American institutions. When one discusses the cultural differences between Europe and America and, from a European perspective, wishes to understand some of the characteristics of the U.S. economic and legal systems, one must—and this is my thesis—always consider the secularization processes in both regions. What role religion plays in the public sector and also in the private lives of Americans appears at first glance to be divergent and, for many “enlightened” Europeans, striking. The American case makes it clear that neither the increase of enlightened ideas, the capitalist market system, nor even higher education necessarily bring about radical secularization. Only in Europe are all of the facets combined: the separation of church and state, the drop in religious zeal and the fall of religion from public life.

In terms of the first point, secularization has seldom been as radical elsewhere as it has been in the United States. The “wall of separation between church and state” (Jefferson) erected in the Bill of Rights has been reinforced and referred to numerous times by the Supreme Court, making impossible things which are normal for the quasi state churches of Europe: church taxes, religious instruction in public schools, social services under church control. School prayer and religious education have heretofore been barred by the courts despite great pressure, but it was always hard to restrict religious freedom, as adherents of diverse sects complain—a well-known example of this being the waiver of mandatory school attendance for children of the Old Order Amish, a people who see the “worldliness” of hanging a light on the back of their horse-drawn carriages as an imposition.

The prize in earlier years, as well as in today’s debated separation between church and state,¹ was a substantial gain for “horizontal freedom

of religion.” In other words, by the fact that no single church was elevated and privileged, the legitimate and equal religious worth of all sects was guaranteed. And exactly because of this decentralization and deinstitutionalization, religious practices have a better chance of surviving in the modern than in the old world. There church organizations remained intact and in some cases had a close symbiotic relationship with the social state. But other aspects of secularization developed: abandonment of regular church attendance, a creeping dechristianization of values and ways of life and, above all, the decrease of religion in public life.

Religiosity in the United States is almost omnipresent. No president would allow himself to be observed not attending church on Sundays or to end a State of the Union address without a spirited “God Bless America!” Moreover, prayers are always said at the beginning of Senate or House sessions as well as those of the Supreme Court, and religious communities enjoy special tax privileges. How different it is in Europe: were a French president to announce his religious ties it would be a moral sin against the Republic, and a German *Bundeskanzler* who ended his oath of office with “...so help me God” would create quite a stir.

This points to the conclusion that first, the majority of Americans consider themselves a religious people who believe in a higher power, and secondly, religion is seen as the basis for morals, rights and as a precondition for good governing—and these are all perceived to be applicable much beyond America. Local societies can trace their roots back to religious communities. They make up the historical backbone and the modern scaffolding supporting the American society, which Sidney Mead correctly depicted as a “nation with the soul of a church.”²

On what is this based? Contrary to Europe, it was never necessary to declare an attack on the “counterrevolutionary” clerical church. In its own way the American Revolution was also about the restoration of religious freedoms, with the result that atheism was only able to develop in niches. The “inner world asceticism” (Max Weber) of the Puritans on which the rise of capitalist work ethics and economic morals were based, did not harm—contrary to Weber’s thoughts—private piousness and a public society imbued with religion. Rather the religiosity of the American people increased in the nineteenth and especially in the twentieth centuries. And even the famous “shift in values” of the 1960s, which sped up the secularization of most European

societies did not stop this trend. Today nine out of ten Americans believe in a God and two out of three U.S. citizens pray and take part regularly in religious services.³ From the American point of view the question is not why this “remains” the case, but rather why it “no longer” applies in Europe.

From the European perspective it is incredible how smoothly personal piousness is being disguised within the common traits of the capitalist market economy; how “commercial” some religious practices seem. The fact that the European Pope is occasionally equally critical of capitalism and of communism, alienates American Catholics. It was not coincidental that the Catholic theologian Michael Novak influenced the formulation of the encyclical “*Centesimus annus*,” which overtly legitimized the Catholic role in the market economy for the first time.⁴ Economic success means to be chosen by God and worthy of eternal life, not just in certain branches of Protestantism—and through capitalism one can shine the brightest, economically speaking. Add to this a religious structure based from its inception on competition: denominations⁵ cannot make free use of their adherents neither in principle nor in practice and must therefore constantly compete for them. They are addressed as autonomous individuals, who came to this or the other faith of their own free will, even when in the end they do not wish to distance themselves from their biographical roots and social milieus.⁶ And yet with all the dispersion and multiplicity of this multi-religious society, practically all believers unanimously affirm the capitalist market and the nation. Considered from this viewpoint, denominations of widely variant theological and liturgical tenets seem to have more in common with each other than with their direct relatives outside of America.

Believers can be addressed as consumers or customers. And because religious sects do not materially or personally reproduce themselves and certainly are not established as church states or state churches, the mission—which proceeds without pressure but rather appears persuasive like a trading partner—offers a brand new product for consumption. From this experience the American religious sociologist Peter L. Berger suggested the change to a *McJesus, Inc.*; a type of “on demand diocese,”⁷ for the European churches. Berger’s provocation has a strong argument in its favor: religious movements are growing all over the place, the Islamic Renaissance, the Protestant Pentecostals, Catholic people’s movements in Africa and Latin America, neo-Buddhist, neo-Hindu and Shinto-influenced religious groups in Asia, the

orthodox Jews in North America and Israel—only in Europe are the official churches shrinking and only there looms a deep dechristianization.

MCJESUS WORLDWIDE, INC.

The consequences of a global economy and global society are in no way banal. Globalization is not restricted to corporate mergers, Internet communication and international financial transactions. Cultural and, specifically, religious phenomena transcend national borders and compose a transnational ecumene and an arena for conflict. This has visible consequences when, in the future or in a weakly populated Europe, one must extrapolate from the generalizations of immigration. Migrants bring with them their own gods and rituals. And migrants who have lost ties often seek a “connection to their past” which is nothing more than the literal translation of religion. This leads back to the dimensions of world religions and spiritual movements that were always universal and whose sphere of influence could never be restricted to one nation’s society alone. In this context, the Catholic Church was the first global organization and Latin the first *lingua franca*. But even when God knows no boundaries, this is not necessarily so for the organizational structure of the churches, which, despite their universalistic claims, frequently wrap themselves in the cloak of national societies, thereby fusing religion and politics together into a state Church—Anglicanism and Orthodox churches are current examples of this.

From this emerges tension and the powder keg of religious transnationalization. The state church proports to represent a superior majority or dominant culture, whose hegemony increasingly comes under pressure from the world-wide circulation of religious ideas and world views. In Germany it is difficult to maintain the notion of a “dominant Christian culture” such as that supported by the CDU/CSU and the churches, when this eclipses the claim of numerical dominance by Catholic and Protestant believers and requires a privileged group or even a monopoly. The so-called Church Christianity is put in a vise: on one side from wide-ranging secularization and on the other from the growth of non-Christian beliefs and believers who are not particularly secular-minded. While the Protestant Church loses members at a rapid pace, the number of Muslims, Jews, Buddhists and also Evangelists, Mormons, Pentecostals or even Scientologists and New Age groups—whom one was

not accustomed to categorize under the term “church”—is on the rise. In Germany and western Europe in general, one needs to get used to this practice even in regard to the Church of Scientology,⁸ which in Germany is monitored as “detrimental to the constitution,” despite the fact that its status as a church for tax purposes is a matter of contention (as in the state of Florida). The battle over Scientology in Germany has burdened the German-American relationship for some time—an example of how so-called “soft topics” push themselves to the foreground. Still, Americans have trouble understanding why the Germans resist an “Americanization” of their religious structure.

This area can be seen as typical for the numerous “transatlantic misunderstandings”—and the seed of future cultural conflicts in the western world. The path from the fiscal and educational privileges of Christian adherence to the coexistence of all known beliefs can be understood as a type of Americanization of religious life. It has been boorishly described as a “divine supermarket,”⁹ a metaphor which suggests a loss of quality, causing irritation and objection in Europe: neither should spiritual life be commercialized, as it is done by dubious televangelists and TV preachers, nor should gurus, sects and psycho-cults—so common in the United States—be allowed to compete as serious providers of religion. It was not an Americanization of the German religious system when the East German government opened a Mormon temple in Freiberg and restored a synagogue in East Berlin, even when the Mormons can perhaps be seen as the most American of all religions, and Erich Honecker’s goodwill act addressed itself more to the American Jewish community than to the few Jews still living in the GDR.

“Americanized” in the sense of horizontal religious pluralism would be preferable for the German palate if minarets did not accompany it and also if the “Church of Scientology” was no longer branded as damaging to the constitution. In other words, acknowledgment of these and many others as religious communities would be accepted as a matter of course.

EXCURSUS: MOSQUE CONFLICTS IN GERMANY

Let me give an example which shows the strength of feelings and the consequences that arise from the relationship between politics and religion on the European continent. These mosque conflicts¹⁰ are not rare, on the contrary, they are almost the rule wherever a new place of worship for Muslims is erected or when existing buildings are converted for this purpose. Often they concern visual trifles such as how high the minaret can be built or if loudspeakers can be used to amplify the muezzin's call. In big cities as well as in flatland areas there are believers and neighbors, residents and administrations, local councils and mosque officials, Muslims and Christians, members of different ethnic-national groups and religious communities as well as believers united with secularists and atheists who all fight with each other about these topics. At its core the struggle revolves around the measure of the visibility of Islam in the public spaces of western societies. Similar to the religious instruction of Muslims by Muslims at public and private schools, the head coverings worn by teachers and students and the ritual slaughter of animals, such conflicts over mosques place a question mark behind the idea of a "German *Leitkultur*."

The visible presence of Muslims tests the boundaries of the pluralism of modern (and therefore pluralistic) societies. As a symbolic representation of a "foreign" religion, mosques press themselves into the public spaces of western societies and challenge the European template for secularization. At the same time such exchanges do not remain bound to the actors and general public of a nation, but rather make up a transnational constellation. Mosque conflicts of an apparent local nature become the centerpieces for wider processes that the sociologist Roland Robertson once accurately termed "glocalization."

These developments have effects for natives as well as newcomers. The native Church-Christianity finds itself pinned between exponential secularization and arbitrariness, particularly in eastern Germany, and the increasing interest in non-Christian faiths whose adherents are often less secularly minded. While the Protestant Church loses members at a great rate, not only do Islam and Buddhism gain adherents, but so too do Evangelists, Mormons and Pentecostals—which do not make up the mainstream of Protestantism—as well as Scientologists and New Age groups, which here are not classified under the term "Church" but are seen instead as sects.

RELIGION WITHOUT BORDERS

The powder keg of religious transnationalism is evident: the official (Anglican or orthodox) or unofficial community church in Europe always made the claim to represent the majority or *Leitkultur*. But little more can be taken from this than historical pervasiveness and domination by numbers—no longer, however, the privileges in a corporate state-church-system. As the former constitutional judge Ernst Böckenförde emphasized, modern societies are drenched in religion and influenced “by the involvement and ability to convince of the religious organizations.” But the corporate structure of contemporary religious life does not allow a real and fair competition to exist. The alternative to having a denomination which dominates the market is to give individual religious communities, in this case Islam, prominence and to equip them with similar privileges which range from the collection of church taxes to religious education in the public sphere. This incorporation would support a regulation of such competition and would necessitate the determination of “good” churches and “bad” sects. The religious-political axis turns, however, in both directions—away from the fiscal, social and educational preferences of the Christian faiths and towards the market-oriented coexistence of all possible faiths.

An open structure is problematic not only for the established faiths, but also for some newcomers. Muslims in particular are “churchified” only with difficulty and, due to their ethnic-national heritage and theological heterogeneity, are seldom seen as likely key partners in an expanded cartel of churches or a concordat. Whether Islam should be promoted in the West, whereby its social aspects are expanded and assimilated, or whether this presents a loss of religious substance is being debated by Muslims. Liberal representatives point to the experiences of Christians and Jews, who because of their intensive adaptation and social mobility have achieved a high level of autonomy and influence in modern society; but precisely this role of religion is not acceptable to all Muslim integrationists, who question whether religion loses its substance and efficacy by playing such a role. This skepticism reminds one that religion remains a virtual opponent to the modern world. This makes itself evident in seemingly harmless things like the Sunday rest, but can also expand to include reproductive technology while relating, as seen by papal encyclicals, to the consequences of unfocused capitalism.

Even in the United States there is resistance to this horizontal structure and there have always been attempts to keep the “supermarket” small and easy to keep an eye on. The Catholic immigration from Italy, Ireland and Poland provoked antipathy among the majority Protestants, who saw America’s national essence threatened by these “papists.” Later Christian Americans developed a united front against Jewish immigrants and, in the middle of the twentieth century, a Jewish-Christian coalition formed against cults from other parts of the world. These defensive reactions were not particularly successful, yet America relives them again and again. George W. Bush awakened anti-Catholic sentiments during his recent election campaign while Christian fundamentalists spread anti-Jewish conspiracy theories. Muslims are routinely lumped together and denounced as Islamic fanatics.

Such exclusive tendencies boil up regularly, particularly in the (recently somewhat weakened) Christian Coalition which makes up a minority in the Republican Party worthy of observation. It is only a minority that goes as far as the group surrounding Paul Weyrich in its “theoconservative” secession, which, like a cancer, wishes to do away with almost all of the progress which the United States has achieved since the middle of the nineteenth century: equal rights based on race or sex, the abolition of slavery, and eventually even the republic itself.

The intransigence in fundamentalist circles is fed by the deep disappointment over the moral laxness of the political class and particularly the outcome of the Monica Lewinsky affair. Whether they will become so strong that “the conservative revolution in America develops into an American fascism or brings such a political form to power” (Manfred Henningsen), can only be pondered. The retreat of evangelists and other fundamentalists should rather be seen as a type of Christian counterculture,¹¹ which certainly reacts, as far as the general public is concerned, and has a broad private school movement bound to it, differing massively from the constitutional tenets of the separation of politics and religion.

OUTLOOK

The religious repercussions in American politics are becoming more and more visible, as can be seen in the announced policy of President George W. Bush. That he wants to put an end to legalized abortion is no secret, and neither is his wish to populate the Supreme Court with like-minded justices. In his administration there are appointees who come from or have leanings to the religious right. Even educational policy will test the limits of the separation of church and state. “Faith based initiatives” and charitable organizations are to receive state funds to enact social and educational policy goals that the government does not want to manage or cannot manage while keeping their religious ambitions concealed. This comes closer to a “Europeanization” of the American religious structure.

Clearly the basic difference remains. Without religion nothing works in the United States. The Religious Right is nearer now to their goals than under any of the other conservative presidents of the past few decades. But in Europe one should guard against false reflexes: Bush is no beadle of Christian fundamentalism. Above all he receives the same popular support from the American society which would have been expressed under Al Gore and his designated Vice President Lieberman—a practicing Jew. Even Lieberman belongs to the expanded team which George W. Bush has gathered around himself and this is likewise so for the leading proponents of a movement which is known to us as “communitarianism.”

What does this mean for the overall political culture? Even in the Enquête Commission of the German *Bundestag*, which is presently trying to hammer out the position and perspectives of “citizen engagement” in Germany, Greens and economic liberals, Christian and Social Democrats—without really differing from each other in their view of the world—are each trying to give the concept of “communitarianism” their own direction. The question of how greatly one should be (re)bund to religion in order to function as a citizen (not just in name) plays almost no part anymore. American professors like Amitai Etzioni and Robert D. Putnam, who in years past levied scolding criticism on the isolationist tendencies of materialistic liberalism and praise for more citizen responsibility and common interests, provide key words for Bush’s “compassionate conservatism” with which he claims to set himself apart from the libertarian market devotees as well as the pure-blooded supply side

economists. The “compassionate conservatives” cannot simply take it for granted that after a decade of enormous growth rates and even greater stock market gains so many people will disregard this and go along with them.

In this manner George W. Bush is perhaps on the way to renewing the Republican Party in the way that Bill Clinton did with the Democrats in 1992. “Community” is the mantra of this third path and the ecumenical powers that the communal block has, despite all justified criticism, are visible. As a consequence, Bush bases the hope of a honeymoon with the liberal intelligentsia, insofar as it is not completely deaf to religion and has something left for “character development”—under a president who mercilessly implements the death penalty yet at the same time announces how much he does for the dependents of prisoners and low income areas. Fed by the openly seductive charm of the Texan, former Democratic supporters become soft and excuse the new man in the White House’s clumsy speeches and rhetorical failures.

Deeds should follow words. So-called Charter Schools are allowed to follow individually tailored educational plans; a “capital fund for compassion” will support community initiatives. For this the national assistance program AmeriCorps is to be rebuilt and new community support elements are even built into the new tax law. Not only are improvements planned for those who are married or have children but also for those who care for dependents and work with the less fortunate. In this the communitarian rhetoric becomes a weighty interest policy while the conservative dilemma is avoided. As is known, this came about when conservative governments propagated the values of precisely the families that they undermined through their own economic and tax policy.

Criticism of these intentions cannot wait. Adherents of the Democratic opposition only see flowery rhetoric in Bush’s intentions or, at the most, a tributary to the main source of a radical tax reduction policy that greatly benefits “the rich” and to an environmental policy that mercilessly exploits natural resources. Secular America is particularly concerned. It sees barely concealed religious machinations and a return to cultural war in Bush’s “compassion.”

Gertrude Himmelfarb, a hardcore neo-conservative, announced this revenge. She sees a “nation with two cultures”: while the Democrats rule the liberal coastal areas with the large metropolises—the intellectual industry of

Gotham City and Beverly Hills—Bush has behind him the “Country Belt” in the heart of America which stretches from the Rocky Mountains in the north to the Gulf of Mexico, being simultaneously a Bible Belt. In this area, Bush’s ideas of decentralization and private initiatives as well as his concept of self-responsibility are actually much more popular than elsewhere in the Republican Party. The America that Alexis de Tocqueville saw dying at the beginning of the nineteenth century seems yet to live.

Since communitarianism already once wafted from the United States to Europe, one can expect an echo of the movement here too. This vague concept has proven itself here as well. Wolfgang Schäuble aligned himself with it, as did Johannes Rau, while Chancellor Gerhard Schröder can gain from it as can politicians from the Greens and the Free Democrats. That the CDU/CSU has fallen measurably behind in this area shows the depth of the disorientation—and the extent of the secularization which was reached on Europe’s unique path within a desecularized world community.

ENDNOTES

¹. Jeffrey Rosen, “Is Nothing Secular?” In *New York Times Sunday Magazine*, January 30, 2000. Compare with José Casanova, “Religion und Öffentlichkeit: Ein Ost-West-Vergleich,” and David Martin, “Säkularisierung in Europa – Glaubensvielfalt in Amerika: Zwei Ausnahmen und keine Regel?” In *Transit* 14/1997, 21-41 and 42-52, also in Otto Kallscheuer, ed., *Das Europa der Religionen: Ein Kontinent zwischen Säkularisierung und Fundamentalismus* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1996).

². Sidney W. Mead, “The Nation With the Soul of A Church” In: *Church History* 36 (1967): 275-83; Robert N. Bellah, “Civil Religion in America”: *Daedalus* 96 (1967): 1-21.

³. Michael Corbett/Julia Mitchell Corbett, *Politics and Religion in the United States*, (New York 1999); Jeffrey D. Schultz, ed., *Encyclopedia of Religion in American Politics*, (Phoenix: Oryx Press, 1999); Martin E. Marty, ed., *Trends in American Religion and the Protestant World* (Munich: K.G. Saur, 1992); Charles H. Lippy, *Being Religious, American Style: A History of Popular Religiosity in the United States* (Westport: Praeger, 1994); Robert Wuthnow, *The Restructuring of American Religion: Society and Faith Since World War II* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988).

⁴. Michael Novak, *The Catholic Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (New York: Free Press, 1993), also, *Business as a Calling: Work and the Examined Life* (New York: Free Press, 1996).

⁵. Richard Niebuhr, *The Social Sources of Denominationalism* (New York: Holt, 1929).

⁶. Compare Claus Leggewie, “Zur rechten Gottes, Religiöser Fundamentalismus in den USA,” in *Kursbuch* 134 (1998): 119-41; Heiner Bielefeldt/Wilhelm Heitmeyer, ed., *Politisierte Religion: Ursachen und Erscheinungsformen des modernen Fundamentalismus*, (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1998).

⁷. *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, October 22, 1999; critique by Harvey Cox, “The Market as God: Living in a New Dispensation,” in *Atlantic Monthly*, March 1999.

⁸. Claus Leggewie/Alexandra Lagalée, “Scientology versus Germany: Religionsgemeinschaft, Gewerbebetrieb oder Verfassungsfeind?” In *Frankfurter Rundschau*, July 30, 1999; Bernd Dürholt, ed., *Streifzug durch den religiösen Supermarkt: Jugendreligionen, Sekten, Gurubewegungen, Psychokulte* (Munich 1994, 2nd edition).

⁹. Malise Ruthven, ed., *The Divine Supermarket: Travels in Search of the Soul of America* (New York: Arbor House/W. Morrow, 1989); Jacob Neusner, ed., *World Religions in America: An Introduction* (Louisville, 2000); Fulbert Steffensky, ed., *Christliche Spiritualität im Supermarkt der Religionen* (Frankfurt am Main. 1996).

¹⁰. The author is currently pursuing an empirical research project with Angela Joost and Stefan Rech, see Claus Leggewie, *Römisches Minarett und deutscher Islam: Wie weit geht der religiöse Pluralismus?* Bad Homburg, 2000.

¹¹. Manfred Henningsen, “Der Aufstand der Fundamentalisten,” in *Merkur* 53 (1999): 901-10; Margaret Talbot, “A Mighty Fortress,” in *New York Times Sunday Magazine*, February 27, 2000.

A LOOK AT CURRENT CONTROVERSIES

Jacob Heilbrunn

The Bush Administration may be the best thing that ever happened to the European Union. The EU now has a foe that it can define itself against. The clash, by and large, is cultural. It started during the Clinton Administration, when Europeans chafed over the American embrace of the death penalty and its leadership of the war in Kosovo, as well as the refusal of the Americans to join the global ban on land-mines and the International Criminal Court. European feathers have only become more ruffled by the election of George W. Bush to the presidency. Bush's gruff dismissal of European concerns over the environment and the cavalier manner in which he treats the death penalty is tailored to send Europe into an uproar. French Education Minister Jack Lang called Bush a "serial assassin." Add his embrace of missile defense and you have a sure-fire recipe for antagonism between the "new" and "old" worlds. Another Frenchman, foreign minister Hubert Védrine, has declared that his country "cannot accept a politically unipolar world ... nor the unilateralism of a single hyperpower." The real rogue nation, some Europeans like to argue, is the United States. And so, Europeans have a golden opportunity to return to their favorite past-time of bashing the United States. Already the champions of the European Union dream about the euro displacing the dollar as the number one currency and the establishment of a separate military force.

But will it ever amount to more than a pious wish? Probably not. No matter how much it resents the United States, Europe itself is a house divided. The old religious conflicts have been replaced by an internal war over culture. On the one side are the champions of unity such as German foreign minister Joschka Fischer, who see a "United States of Europe" in the offing. These crusaders have constructed their own bit of dogma, a history lesson in which the bad European past was made up of nationalist leaders and movements. Hitler, Mussolini, Franco, and, most recently, Milosevic are examples *par excellence* of what happens when retrograde nationalist impulses are channeled into expansionist land-grabs. The result is havoc. The only way out of this dead-end, so the story goes, is for European nation-states to stop being nation-states. They need to shed their sovereignty and become a big happy family lolling about on the beach under a protective tent called Brussels, where

they slap on EU-approved suntan oil, eat EU-approved food, and wear EU-approved swimsuits.

How boring! cry the infidels. They want a multi-colored umbrella, swim-suits in any size, and worm-filled cheese. They see bureaucrats in Brussels as intent on wiping out local traditions in favor of creating a gray, dismal EU. As *New York Times* columnist Thomas Friedman recently put it, “the fact that Ireland, which has become wealthy thanks to EU membership, just voted against the EU’s Nice Treaty paving the way for EU enlargement to Eastern Europe, is a warning sign that while people in Europe like what the EU has done for their wallets, they don’t want to see their national identities turned into Euro-mush, by Euro-bureaucrats paid in Euro-dollars from the Euro-Parliament.” Then there are the right-wing, xenophobic forces in Austria, Belgium, Denmark, and France who take it a step further, rejecting the idea of a common Europe tout court. They depict the EU itself as a quasi-totalitarian outfit, intent on imposing alien customs on their telluric countrymen.

Of course, both of these views are rather cartoon-like. The European Union is a success story—just not as successful as its supporters would like to claim. Nor is it a wrecking ball—but it has wrecked some traditions. The bottom line, however, is that, for the most part, the European union is simply muddling through, which is to say that it is behaving like most democratic governments. Were it the seamless, authoritarian institution portrayed by its detractors, it would not experience as many birth pangs like the recent Irish debacle.

Consider the euro. To listen to the naysayers, the euro was doomed to failure. It hasn’t happened. The surprising thing is how smoothly the transition has gone. For one thing, the euro has reduced transaction costs between companies operating in different countries. Moreover, the European Central Bank has not succumbed to the lure of easing interest rates to stimulate growth, running the risk of inflation. On the contrary, it has stuck, perhaps excessively so, to a tight-money policy. Deficit spending has not taken place, however tempting it might be for European countries suffering from high unemployment or slowing economies. Even the new Italian coalition government led by Silvio Berlusconi shows no sign of upending this arrangement. It could always undertake to carry out a Ronald Reagan-style tax-cut program, but it would come under rather intense pressure from the European Central Bank.

Then there is Austria. Brussels had a conniption when Austrian chancellor Wolfgang Schüssel entered a coalition with the right-wing Freedom Party. Voices were raised, sanctions issued, school trips to Austria cancelled. Here was a case of Brussels acting in a ham-fisted manner. But a few months later, reason prevailed. If Austria was to be singled out, what about Italy? What about France's own fascist movement, perhaps not in government, but still a force not to be sneezed at? What would be the purity test for membership in the European Union? But if the Austrian case showed the limits of the EU, it also displayed the limitations of the nationalist right. The EU flurry of sanctions was preposterous precisely because Jörg Haider and his pals represented no serious threat to democracy in Austria. Instead, Haider & Co. felt, or pretended to feel, threatened by possible immigration from the newly independent countries of central and eastern Europe. They wanted to hunker down inside the European Union rather than open it up. What could be a better testament to the success of the EU? Haider and his party most likely saw it as a good target for populist rage, but also as a possible bulwark against the east, even if they did not say so publicly. In the event, Haider rarely campaigned directly against the existence of the European Union, which would not have been a popular stance, but attacked specific policies.

Foreign policy is where things get dicey for the European Union. Nowhere was the weakness of the EU more glaring than its flaccid response, or failure to respond. The triumphant talk, after the fall of the Berlin Wall, of a single, confident Europe was exposed as nonsense. During the conflict Europe as AWOL, or, worse, intervening in the form of feckless mediators such as David Owen, who had nothing to mediate. The American role came as a bitter pill to European governments as it showed up their diplomatic and military ineptitude. The response, however, has been rapid. British Prime Minister Tony Blair had led the charge for separate, European military force. He, like Joschka Fischer, has become a liberal war hawk. At Camp David, Blair even obtained Bush's blessing for a European military force to the consternation of American and British conservatives, who view any concessions on this front as a fatal weakening of American ties to Europe.

But the likelihood of Europe really pulling off full union, military and political, is really rather slim. The truth is that cultural differences remain the main impediment. Adam Smith or Colbert? Free market economic or welfare-style socialism. Ultimately, the big economic or political questions come

down to cultural traditions that are not easily uprooted. Indeed, the crusaders for European unity have no clear idea of how to reach Jerusalem. It is no accident that German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder and French Prime Minister Lionel Jospin are jousting about where the EU should be headed. For Schröder and Fischer, it should be a United States of Europe, along the outlines once sketched by Winston Churchill. But the French suspect that older Teutonic impulses lurk behind this scenario. They suspect a German plot to go eastward, in which France becomes an appendage in a German-dominated European Union. Meanwhile, British conservatives see a French plot behind any plans to increase the power and scope of the EU.

No doubt these tensions are not unnatural. In the past century, one empire after another imploded in Europe. Now Europe is trying to reverse the trend toward fragmentation. It seeks to create a democratic empire, which is what the United States has already become. Some of the distaste for the U.S. can be reduced to contempt for Bush personally. Dominique Moisi has written that, "Europe has more in common with California than Texas ... Texas is another world, one most Europeans want nothing to do with." But more profound frictions do exist. These frictions are not, as Anthony J. Blinken has argued in the May/June 2001 issue of *Foreign Affairs*, simply "a myth manufactured by elites—politicians, intellectuals, and the media—whose views clash with those of the people they purport to represent."

Still, one of the more curious aspects of European unification is that the European Union would recoil from the very model it is attempting to emulate. Europe has not yet decided whether American culture determines its economic success. If the freewheeling, unilateral style espoused by Bush is also what explains the economic vibrancy of the United States, Europeans would be most discomfited. For now, the cultural divide between America and Europe provides a useful stick with which to pull the EU together. But it will take more than that to turn the European Union into a success story.

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