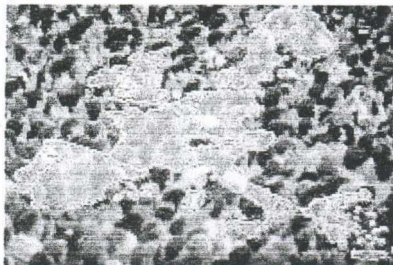


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Discovering Real Europe: a Cosmopolitan Vision

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The people of France and the Netherlands have spoken: But how did their 'non' and 'nee' to the European constitution spell? 'Help, we don't understand Europe. What does it stand for? Has the enlargement of Europe transformed it into an unknown, indefinable object? How can

the most original and successful experiment in political institution success which troubles people. Because Europe has called into time to view Europe as it really is. It is time to start a debate on legitimacy all about and what is it not about?

1. The national self-misunderstanding is blocking European politics

To think of Europe in nation-based terms is to awaken Europeans' deepest nation-based fears – this is the paradox we need to grasp. Thinking in national terms elicits the conclusion that one can either have Europe *or* European nations – a third possibility is ruled out. This nation-based misconception ultimately makes Europe and its member states into arch rivals who mutually threaten one another's existence. Misconstrued in this way, Europeanization becomes a diabolical zero sum game, in which both Europe and its nations are the losers in the end.

The other side of the paradox is: If Europe's member states are to be rid of their fear that by acceding to EU expansion they are, as it were, committing cultural suicide, then it is necessary to reject nation-based concepts of society and politics and to think of Europe in cosmopolitan terms. Thus, a cosmopolitan Europe is first and foremost a *Europe based on difference*, on actually practised, recognised national particularities. To a cosmopolitan outlook, this diversity (be it of languages, forms of

economic or democratic organisation or political cultures) appears first and foremost to be a source of Europe's self-awareness, and not, as it appears in the national outlook, as an obstacle to integration. Europeanness means: we each contain a clash of cultures.

However, Europe continues to be thought in national terms as an "unfinished nation", as an "incomplete federal state", and treated as though it had to become both - a nation and a state. This inability to understand the historically new reality of Europeanization forms a considerable part of Europe's real plight. And it is also one crucial reason why the institutions of the EU appear unapproachable, unreal and often even threatening to the citizens they are supposed to serve. Even sophisticated research on Europe has thus far hardly dared go beyond the basic conventional patterns of nation-state thinking. The European Union itself is also viewed in the light of nation-state patterns of territoriality, sovereignty, division of competences and national isolation. Even when it speaks in more complex terms of "governance" or of a "multi-level system", research on Europe - heavily influenced as it is by political science and law - still remains caught up in ordering systems aimed at comprehending the EU on the basis of nation-state patterns.

Something that is particularly striking is the failure of sociology with regard to Europe. Sociology acquired its conceptual tools through analysis of national societies towards the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, and since these tools are poorly suited for analysing European society, it draws the conclusion that there is obviously no European society worth speaking about. There are a number of explanations for this, but there is also a reason for it that is especially vulnerable to critique, and that is that the concept of society constitutes the focal point of sociology's methodological nationalism. According to the latter, Europe has to be conceived of in the plural, as a collection of societies, in other words, in an additive manner. To put it another way: European society coincides with Europe's national societies. By setting the conceptual stage in this way, it is small wonder that sociology brings the lack of understanding to the topic of Europe that it does. The methodological nationalism of the social sciences is historically wrongheaded, because it blocks out Europe's complex realities and arenas of interaction. To put it in a nutshell: methodological nationalism is blind to the realities of Europe - and therefore makes us blind to them as well.

A similar pattern of thinking gives rise to the political science formula 'a European demos does not exist'. In response to this it bears asking: what kind of demos is being referred to - the demos of the Greek polis, that of the Swiss cantons or that of nation states? And what about the real societies of our interconnected countries? Do nation states themselves still have a homogeneous demos of state citizens?

demos

Running through all this (and yet unspoken) is the nation state in the form of a conceptual benchmark, in relation to which the realities of Europeanization seem to be lacking: no demos, no nation, no state, no democracy, no public sphere. What *does* exist, however, besides disinterest and a plain lack of understanding for the debates going on in other member states, is an ever growing volume of transnational processes of communication about the challenges facing every member

state including, most recently, reactions to the Iraq war, to the democratic uprisings in the Ukraine and to European anti-Semitism. Thus, rather than doggedly continuing to assert that there is no such thing as a European public sphere, perhaps the nation state-fixated understanding of the 'public sphere' ought to be opened up to cosmopolitan meanings in order to take in the real dynamics that give rise to cross-boundary forms of a European public sphere.

Thus, Europeanization needs to be thought about not only in terms of the usual vertical dimension (national societies implementing European law, for example) but also in terms of a horizontal dimension. Here, Europeanization refers to the manner in which national societies, national education systems, national families, scientific institutions, economies, and so forth, form networks and merge with one another. In this respect, horizontal Europeanization means opening up the nation-state containers *at their sides*.

What counts as 'European' in this scheme are the 'co-national' forms of identity, ways of life and modes of production that reach through and across the barriers of individual states. Effectively, these are forms and movements based on incessant boundary transgression. New parallel realities emerge in the wake of horizontal Europeanization and are lived out "behind the scenes" in immigration offices, becoming widespread and taken for granted to the next generation: multi-linguism, multinational networks, bi-national marriages, 'multi-locatedness', educational mobility, transnational careers, scientific and economic integration. The data available on these key indicators are devastatingly poor, which just goes to show once again that the weightiness and significance of these new forms of transnational Europeanization cannot be perceived because state statistics – as well as empirical social research – are caught up in methodological nationalism.

The European positive sum game: Common solutions serve the national interest

Let us start with the dilemma of nation-state politics in times of economic globalisation. There is only one thing worse than being bulldozed by transnational corporations: not being bulldozed by transnational corporations! What frightens people is that, in the middle of the democratic society in which they live, they suddenly find themselves faced with a cruel gaping hole in the fabric of political power: the people they have elected sit powerlessly in the spectator stands, while those they haven't elected make all the decisions that affect their lives. Actually, the vote against the constitution was a vote against the dragon of globalization

What the Euro-sceptics have a hard time to understand is that it is wrong to see everything through national spectacles – because collective EU agreements often serve the national interest better. It was this attitude that produced the internal market, a project which entail letting go of some degree of sovereignty – but which also bring enormous benefits for national companies and employees. And this is where the EU shows its political added value: common solutions often bear more fruit than the solo efforts of individual nations.

Look around: all over Europe national governments struggle in the national context with what are seemingly national problems; they attempt to solve them by going it alone, and generally fail. This can be demonstrated by looking at the export of jobs and at controls on company taxation as examples. Businesses that are mobile and have operations throughout the world are in a position to weaken individual states by playing them off against one another. The more the national point of view is ingrained in the thoughts and actions of people and governments alike, the better such businesses are able to consolidate their power. This is the paradox we need to grasp: the national point of view is harmful to national interests because national interests can be better realized in a context of European – and possibly even global – interaction!

Population decline, for example, is neither a national problem affecting specific societies, nor can it be adequately tackled by any nation alone. No matter where one looks, the same situation appears throughout Europe. We will soon have an increase in older people in all societies, pension systems are breaking down, and yet the reforms needed to counter these trends are being blocked by organised resistance from the groups affected by them. As Fareed Zakaria observes 'Europe needs more of what is producing populist paranoia: economic reform to survive in an era of economic competition, young immigrants to sustain its social market and more strategic relationship with the Muslim world, which would be dramatically enhanced by Turkish membership in the EU.' One important way of finding a positive way out of this trap could be to define the complex of problems facing our societies – declining populations, ageing societies, the difficult but necessary reforms of social welfare and targeted migration policy – as a European issue to be addressed in a cooperative way. All those governments that are stuck in a national rut, content to accept pseudo solutions, can benefit from this.

The national outlook sees only the end of politics; the cosmopolitan outlook, by contrast, can see the renaissance of national politics.

The most egalitarian and solidary societies in Europe (indeed, in the world), the Scandinavian countries, have also been the most reformist, including in ways that empower citizens and localities. How much can the rest of Europe, including the new member states, learn from these more successful countries? Many say, not much, because they are mostly small and have distinctive welfare systems that can't be copied elsewhere. But we say: a lot. We can't all become Scandinavians. But we can profit from examples of best practice, old and new member states alike. For instance, active labour market policy, pioneered in Sweden, is a provision that every country which has high levels of employment has adopted. The same is true of policies promoting educational reform, the expansion of universities, the diffusion of IT, the decentralisation of health services and the provision of well-funded childcare.

What the success of Europeanization teaches us, generally speaking, is simply the new logic of cosmopolitan realism: pressing national problems can best be solved through transnational cooperation. In other words, permanent cooperation between states does not hinder state capacity, it increases it. To put it in the form of a paradox: when you relinquish sovereignty, you extend it. And *that* is the secret of the European Union's

legitimacy. By contrast, those who attempt the impossible task of isolating themselves nationally will only endanger their own prosperity and democratic freedoms. This is because wealth and economic growth, as well as managing unemployment and maintaining the stability of democracy, all presuppose a cosmopolitan approach.

Europeanization as a transnational culture of remembrance

'Oh, Europe', says Thomas Mann, referring to the calamitous history of the West. Two and a half thousand years filled with war and bloodshed. Go to any village in Europe, and there, in the middle, you will find a large monument engraved with the names of those who have fallen – 1915, 1917. And over there, mounted on the wall in the church, is a stone tablet commemorating the dead from the Second World War. It bears the names of three men from the same family: fallen in 1942, fallen in 1944, missing in 1945. The concentration camp memorials remind us of the Europeanization of race hatred. That is how Europe used to be.

How long ago did it all happen? Not very long at all – even up until the end of the 1980s, the people of this belligerent Europe faced one another in a nuclear stalemate. The policy of rapprochement between East and West only seemed possible by accepting that Europe would apparently remain divided for ever. Yet look at where we are today! A European miracle has occurred: enemies have turned into neighbours! This is something that is historically unique – in fact, it is more or less inconceivable. It is incredible to think that at the very moment when the history of states is at its most volatile, a political invention should have succeeded that makes something almost inconceivable into a possibility: that states themselves might transform their monopoly on violence into a taboo against violence. The threat of force as a political option – whether between member states or towards supranational institutions – has been banished absolutely, once and for all, from the European horizon.

This possibility has come about because something new has arisen in Europe's historical space: the horror of the extermination of the Jews, the pain of war and forced migration – these things are no longer remembered solely as events affecting individual nations. Instead, the national space of remembrance is being forced to open itself up – albeit painfully – to the European space of remembrance, breaking through the parochialisms of (methodological) nationalism in the process. This means that we are seeing at least the beginnings of a Europeanization of national self.

This change to a European perspective is no substitute for different national histories, but it does enrich them by adding new external perspectives and constant border crossings, thereby opening them out and extending them further. It was Hannah Arendt who drew attention to the connection between remembrance and political action. For her, every course of action becomes entangled in the irreversibility of its consequences. Not only must God offer forgiveness, so too must people forgive other people – publicly, because this is the only way to regain the capacity to act. Only the ability to forgive makes transnational creative politics become possible.

In this respect, the Europeanization of remembrance contains a genuinely

European contradiction in itself – morally, legally and politically. If the traditions out of which the horror of the Holocaust – as well as that of colonialism, nationalism and genocide – emerged are European, then so too are the values and legal categories that enable these deeds to be adjudicated for what they are in the global public sphere: crimes against humanity. Both nation-based modernity and post-modernity make us blind to Europe. Europeanization means struggling to formulate institutional answers to the barbarity of European modernity – and, as such, entails departing from post-modernity, which fails to recognize it at all. In this sense, a cosmopolitan Europe is the institutionalised self-critique of the “European way”.

This sort of cosmopolitanism is different from multiculturalism or post-modern vagueness. It involves opening up lines of communication and incorporating what is foreign and strange, while focusing on common interests and accepting the inevitable interdependencies this brings with it; it also involves incorporating the historical exchange of perspectives between perpetrators and victims in a post-war Europe. Even though this cosmopolitanism is supposed to be based on a framework of binding norms aimed at preventing us from sliding towards post-modern particularism, nonetheless it is not merely universalistic. For an entity such as Europe, active engagement with diverse cultures, traditions and interests in the course of integrating national societies is crucial to survival. Only forgiveness based on such engagement can create the trust required to define a common European interest across borders.

In a cosmopolitan perspective cultural tolerance becomes constitutional tolerance. National (political) cultures are not erased, they are acknowledged – indeed, they are what give rise to a European identity. The uniqueness of the EU is that it locks in policy coordination, thus producing a political plus value, while respecting the powerful rhetoric and symbols that still attach to the national identity.

A new cosmopolitan mode of integration

The process of EU expansion and its active policy of neighbourliness can and must be understood in the sense of integration through expansion. The introduction of a new cosmopolitan integrationist approach that no longer depends upon the “harmonisation” of rules and the elimination of (national) differences, but on their recognition, opens up new arenas of cooperation and institutional power for Europeanization.

For a long time, the European process of integration took place primarily by means of eliminating difference, that is, national and local differences. This “policy of harmonisation” confuses unity with uniformity; it assumes that uniformity is the precondition for achieving unity. In this respect, unity became the most important regulatory principle of modern Europe – rather like applying the principles of classic constitutional law to European institutions. The more successful EU policy became within this primary principle of uniformity, the greater resistance it met with and the more clearly its counter-productive effects came to the fore.

Cosmopolitan integration, by contrast, is based on a paradigm change that says: diversity is not a problem, it is the solution. In this way of thinking, the ongoing process of European integration should not be

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oriented towards traditional notions of uniformity associated with a European 'federal state', but must take the unalterable diversity of Europe as its starting point. Only in this way is it possible to link together two requirements in the process of Europeanization that at first sight seem to be mutually exclusive, namely, the recognition of difference on the one hand and the integration of difference on the other.

To summarize our argument: The national idea is not capable of uniting Europe. A large superstate made up of an expanded Europe makes people afraid. I don't believe that Europe can rise up from the ruins of nation states. If there is one idea, though, that could unite Europeans today, it is the idea of a cosmopolitan Europe, because it takes away Europeans' fears about losing their identity, elevates constitutional tolerance in relations among the many European nations to a goal, and at the same time opens up new political arenas for action in a globalised world. The more sure Europeans feel of themselves, the more acknowledged they feel in their national dignity, the less they will need the nation state, and the more determinedly they will openly argue for European values in the world and make the destiny of others their own.

Thus the EU must demonstrate that its main institutions can secure a better future for Europeans, conceived as individuals with personal goals and aspirations rather than as bearers of particular ethnic identities, than can national governments acting alone. In a globalised world, such a hope is not unrealistic. In commerce monetary policy, immigration, the environment law and order, foreign policy and defence, the EU is better placed to advance people's interests, regardless of their language or location, than are its constituent states. In fact, the many crises could be run up to a chance, redefining Europe as a cosmopolitan project, that is: something completely new in human history, namely a vision of the future involving a state structure that has as its foundation stone the recognition of those who are culturally different.

Ulrich Beck has written three books on these subjects: 'Power in the Global Age', 'The Cosmopolitan Vision' and 'The Cosmopolitan Europe' (with Edgar Grande), all are published in German with Suhrkamp Verlag and are being published in English shortly at Polity Press.

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