Do Europeans Exist?

Coordinated by
Teresa Giménez Barbat

ALLIANCE OF LIBERALS AND DEMOCRATS FOR EUROPE

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Humanism & Science at the core of the European Parliament

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Kinga Nowak, born in Krakow in 1977, forms part of a generation of young figurative artists. She studied in the Krakow Academy of Fine Arts and graduated in 2011

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Do Europeans exist?

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Monographics EUROMIND - 1

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INTRODUCTION

Towards a European Identity. Fractures, Damages and Hopes

Over 500 million citizens are now part of the European Union. We are the world's largest donor of humanitarian aid, one of the three most powerful economies on the planet, the biggest trade partner and the largest foreign investor in most countries around the globe. We have the second most used currency. However, it would be naive to think that our worth is solely economic: It is not only a question of numbers, as the primatologist Frans de Waal points out in the monograph which the reader has in their hands ("Being European", p. 89). The EU is also a project with a global calling that aspires to a lasting international order based on laws and principles, aimed at sharing well-being, peace and

prosperity. We want to preserve the dream of Altiero Spinelli and Ernesto Rossi, to not live in societies where "children are taught to handle weapons and loathe foreigners."[1]

I am convinced that the European Union is both a challenge and a reward, stemming from our long history. As citizen representatives working towards the idea of a stronger and more united Europe, our duty is to ensure this construction process does not stop. EUROMIND,[2] the project I promote from the heart of the Union, in Brussels, within which this monograph *Do Europeans Exist?* is included, aims to help make the dream possible. Our intention is to bring science closer to politics, in the conviction that only the best European tradition of humanist and scientific knowledge can provide the means needed to strengthen the European project.

While the event held in Brussels last September (which gave rise to this monograph, and was honoured with the presence of the anthropologist Juan Luis Arsuaga, the differential psychologist Roberto Colom and the professor of law Francisco Sosa Wagner) offered us a valuable perspective of European identities from prehistory to modern citizenship, we are now privileged to have an excellent representation of academics and scholars to con-

1. Ventotene Manifesto: https://goo.gl/yliLSE
2. http://euromind.global

tinue analyzing the question of European identity from very different perspectives.

European civilization

Today the trenches and the out-and-out war between Europeans seem like a distant memory, but in 1945 the continent still smelled of "burnt iron", to quote one of the accounts on Stalingrad from the military historian Antony Beevor. Things that have come to seem natural: travelling from country to country without passports or visas, using the same currency or enjoying the same health-care standards, are the result of a long and laborious process of civilization.

In historical terms, the EU represents the last great effort to integrate the various European peoples into a superior unit of civilization. Although founded on enlightened and modern values, our Union still retains a substantial part of the Roman and Christian imperial heritage, and is the direct result of a long-standing cultural and artistic tradition stretching from Plato to Proust. According to A.C. Grayling ("Being European", p. 47): "Europe's art and music speak with a single voice, in a single language, to all those who live within the four-thousand-mile space that reaches from Ireland to the Urals."

Source: **European Commission**[3]

Europe also represents an important episode in the process of civilization and pacification of cultures and peoples.

As Steven Pinker explained, building on the ideas of military historian Quincy Wright, progress towards higher levels of civilization and peace seems to be historically linked to a reduction of independent political units, a trend we have seen in recent centuries: "Europe had five thousand independent political units (mostly baronies and principalities) in the fifteenth century, they numbered five hundred at the time of the Thirty Years' War – at the beginning of the seventeenth century – two hundred in the Napoleonic period

3. White paper on the future of Europe: https://goo.gl/6ZMg84

– at the start of the nineteenth century – and less than thirty in 1953".[4]

Any civilization that aspires to this process of unification requires diligent training and maintenance, which is always exposed to accidents and regressions, perhaps because since our era of ancestral adaptation, the natural size of human groups does not usually exceed 150 people. Cooperation between these natural groups is relatively simple because it accommodates human biological evolution, which foresees greater teamwork and altruism between those who are more genetically related to each other.

Thus, getting people to cooperate within large social units that transcend the natural traits of small groups, from family to tribe, is always difficult, as Robin Dunbar ("An ideal community", p. 29) and Peter Turchin ("The deep historical roots of European values, institutions and identities", p. 75) point out in this monographic, and history's natural paths seem to draw specific limits on the expansion of cooperation fostered by empires and civilizations.

The open questioning of the European project by separatists, populists and those nostalgic for the theocracy based on inside and outside (Maryam

4. Pinker, S. (2012), *The angels we carry inside. The decline of violence and its implications.* Paidos Ibérica, p. 119.

Namazie: "Confronting Islamism with secularism", p. 61) and new nationalists, illustrates the delicate balance between our familist and tribal instincts plus the need to expand human cooperation, if we aspire to share more peace, well-being and prosperity among us.

More than 75 years after the "Ventotene Manifesto" which advocated for a free and united Europe and, for the first time in the modern era, imagined a federal Europe, no one doubts that there have been breaches in the common house. In contrast to the robust idealism of Winston Churchill, who dreamed of a "United States of Europe", today we have politicians like Geert Wilders, who have the disturbing idea of restoring the physical borders between the Netherlands and Germany.

Some of these dysfunctions appear to be fracture lines caused by weaknesses in the European structure itself, its institutions and beliefs, but others are caused by external damage, especially from a "multipolar" world with ambitious political actors openly questioning order based on International law, human rights and the laity of the State.

But the European project has never followed a straight and ascending line. The road from the original "economic club" to that genuine identity and European citizenship that we aspire to is zigzagging. Just as we have in former crises, today we

must also find a balance between loyalty to fundamental values and the inevitable flexibility and pragmatism required by new challenges.

In the words of Federica Mogherini, when we map out what the European global strategy will be for the next few years, we need to "rethink how the Union works, although we know perfectly well what to work towards."

Fractures

There is no doubt that one of the worst recent fractures in the European house is due to the global financial crisis that began in 2008, exacerbated by sovereign debt problems, particularly in southern Europe; Trends that only aggravate the deepest demographic fractures of our continent, which has an ever more aging population and a lower birth-rate with each passing generation.

The discontent brought about by high unemployment rates, together with the citizen feeling of a certain loss of control over their destiny, is the lever that has driven the new populisms. Taking an analogy from the experiments of Edward Tronick, the developmental psychologist, who studied the effects of a lack of maternal empathy on children, we could say that many citizens have felt, in critical times, that

institutions showed indifference to their demands and sufferings. Unempathetic governments and an inattentive political class may eventually lead to populist and authoritarian responses in the electorate, per psychologist Michael Bader.[5] This apparent lack of empathy from the bureaucratic system and recent governments could be one of the reasons for the appeal of right-wing "movements" such as the one that has taken Donald Trump to the US Presidency.

For the economics professor Philip T. Hoffman ("Building a European Identity, Obstacles and Opportunities", p. 55), greater assistance and empathy from the union towards the losing European middle classes in this crisis, within the general context of globalization, would reduce the appeal of ethnocentric nationalism and prevent the proliferation of attitudes of rejection of immigration and the free market. "

Although rooted in the natural tendency to favour the group itself, the rise of nationalism and political authoritarianism in Europe is not irresistible, at least per some findings of political psychology. According to Karen Stenner[6] authoritarianism

5. Bader, M. (2016), "The decline of empathy and the appeal of right-wing politics", *Psychology Today* https://goo.gl/sC8A93

6. Stenner, K. (2005), *The authoritarian dynamic*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

is not a stable psychological feature, but is dynamic, and therefore can be inhibited or excited. The attractiveness of authoritative political measures, a phenomenon we observe with concern, would not rest, according to this theory, on permanent or suddenly contagious dispositions of the people – what moral psychologist Jonathan Haidt[7] caricatures as "The Zika virus of politics" –, but rather on poorly managed social risks and, often, on the perception that the moral order of society is in itself threatened. To give an example, the recent announcement by the European Commissioner for Migration, Internal Affairs and Citizenship, Dimitris Avramópulos,[8] that greater vigilance will be exercised over terrorists seeking to cross the external borders of the Union, will certainly reduce the perception of disorder and insecurity of many European citizens, thereby inhibiting those authoritarian dynamics.

Damages

Although it is in the interests of the Union to promote a policy of neighbourliness based on dialogue,

7. Haidt, J. (2016), "When and why nationalism beats globalism". *The American interest,* https://goo.gl/bWPNxO

8. Schengen borders code: Council adopts regulation to reinforce checks at external borders: https://goo.gl/fzF6pW

diplomacy and cooperation, some damage to the common house comes from political crises originating in areas neighbouring the South and the East.

To the East, even though Vladimir Putin is not an all-powerful "hypervillian,"[9] and the Russian Federation lacks the necessary force to exercise a genuine global domination, the fact is that his renewed foreign policy[10] (particularly following the annexation of Crimea and the Destabilization of Ukraine, in addition to the attempts to subvert the European order through what has come to be called the "hybrid war"),[11] represents a significant challenge for European aspirations. This challenge has clear economic and military dimensions, but also moral ones, as shown by the Putin regime's in-

9. Lawrence Schrader, M. (2017), "Vladimir Putin Isn't a Supervillain. Russia is neither the global menace, nor dying superpower, of America's increasingly hysterical fantasies": https://goo.gl/npWsCW

10. Russia's national security strategy and military doctrine and their implications for the European Union: https://goo.gl/73rfQr

11. "Hybrid warfare" is a newly coined term alluding to the new form of unconventional and untraditional conflict. According to Wikipedia: "Contrary to traditional warfare, in hybrid warfare the 'centre of gravity' is a specific sector of the population. The enemy endeavours to influence the most outstanding political strategists and the main decision-makers by combining the use of pressure and subversive operations". https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hybrid_warfare

terest in propagating an ideological vision drastically contrary to the values and the very idea of the West ("Zapad").

Towards the South, the Union is faced with a multitude of problems and uncertainties: the destabilization of the Mediterranean Arab countries, where there is a general democratic regression following the "Arab spring" – perhaps apart from Tunisia – the endless threat of the Islamic Terror, Erdogan's authoritarian drift in Turkey and, of course, the deflagration in Syria and the ensuing refugee crisis.

It is true that the reception and integration of refugees is a matter of special concern, although the political debate on immigration has been considerably overshadowed by different emotional reactions that hinder a humanitarian approach combined with rational decision-making. The change in the scale and nature of immigration flows to Europe has been so drastic in recent times that we need a much clearer and more honest reformulation of our own objectives if we really aspire to make the kind of open society that Karl Popper or Stefan Zweig imagined.

A common future

These damages and fractures, though not the first difficulties encountered in the history of the Union,

are really of great magnitude and indicate that we are in a phase of contraction; This is clearly illustrated by "Brexit", the freezing of negotiations with Turkey for EU membership, and the uncertainty of the Donald Trump presidency for the future of Euro-Atlantic ties, all of which has only happened in recent years.

The history of the Union is not that of an uninterrupted march forward. Our institutional trajectory has been uneven, somewhat similar to what evolutionary biologists call a "punctuated equilibrium," with moments of stagnation and decisive leaps forward.

After a rapid initial integration from a Community of six States, the EU experienced some paralysis during the 1970s and early 1980s, in the period known as "Euroesclerosis",[12] followed by a seemingly sudden push towards the so-called "Single market project" and the Maastricht Treaty (1992), which pursued not only monetary unity, but also external action and security; An auspicious period for the integration process that would culminate in the Lisbon Treaty of 2007 and the Europe of 28 States.

In short, the network of institutions of the Union has persisted over time amid a chronic

12. Peterson, J. and Shackleton, M. (2012), *The institutions of the European Union,* Oxford University Press, Oxford.

"frustration without disintegration", yet showing considerable resilience to avatars from inside and out.

In the light of our recent history, I believe that maintaining confidence in the common project is not a vain hope. In fact, as time goes on the answer to the question Do Europeans Exist? has fewer and fewer political alternatives on the horizon.

Despite the Union's dysfunctions, its injuries and fractures, the wind of time does not yet blow in favor of small national states and small identities, and the political existence of Europeans remains almost a necessity for survival. The formation of larger political, economic and security units, such as the Russian-led Eurasian Economic Union, which is intended to include China, is an example that should serve to awaken us.

Paradoxically, at a time when scepticism seems to reign, the opening of these fronts on the inside and out, forces the Union to be much more proactive in defending its interests and values. In line with these Europeanist objectives, in which this monograph and the whole cycle of EUROMIND events are involved, mention should be made of the Horizon 2020 project, aimed at stimulating technology, science and innovation in the coming years, the implementation of a New communica-

tion strategy[13] to tackle third-party propaganda, or the renewed support for programs to disseminate knowledge and citizen fraternity within the Union, such as the "Europe for Citizens"[14] project, which I myself push from Parliament, and with which we intend to prevent future national divorces by increasing the level of citizen loyalty and knowledge – in line, incidentally, with some conclusions from social psychology that are explained in more detail by Mark van Vugt ("The Social Psychology of Brexit", p. 83).

I would like to thank all those who have made this Parliament event possible which was sponsored by the Group of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe; my team made up of Valentina Cefalú, Verónica Laorden Gómez-Pavón, Aisling Fenton and Juan López; the EUROMIND team; the MEP Javier Nart; the Brussels panel in which Juan Luis Arsuaga, Roberto Colom and Francisco Sosa Wagner took part, as well as the participants in this monograph: Maryam Namazie,

13. Report on the strategic communication of the Union to counteract the propaganda of third parties against it: https://goo.gl/4uYtyE

14. Europe for citizens https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/europe-for-citizens_en

A.C. Grayling, Peter Turchin, Nigel Warburton, Yolanda Gomez Sánchez, Camilo José Cela Conde, Adolf Tobeña Pallarès, Philip T. Hoffman, Robin Dunbar, Alexander Yakobson, Mark van Vugt and Frans de Waal. And, lastly, Max Lacruz and the Editorial Funambulista team.

Camilo José Cela Conde

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Do Europeans Exist?: Identity nuances

The question in the title is an ambiguous one. If we take it literally, the answer is simple: of course Europeans exist! But if we try to define what we mean by 'European', including what shared identity means and what it encompasses, the question becomes one of the thorniest that we can ask on the subject of Europe. And it is difficult from the outset because we would need to define what we understand shared identity to be, and how and when it appears.

We as Spaniards have some experience in this respect, because we have been discussing what it means to be Spanish for a long time now, and it doesn't look

like we'll be agreeing on an answer any time soon. So let's turn to history to help us understand its meaning. In the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella in the 15th century, Spain, as such, did not really exist, or rather, no one would have considered themselves to be Spanish. What is now Spain consisted at the time of separate kingdoms separated by borders, with the only link being the marriage of their monarchs. Despite this, however, a common identity – shared, to a greater or lesser extent, by all citizens of mainland Spain – could be said to have been achieved as early as the reign of Philip II. And it was this Spain, as a unit, that established an empire.

So what about Europe? Charlemagne is generally seen as the pioneer who first set about building a European identity, and the key factors it was based on are well known: Christianity – let's forget the wars between Catholics and Protestants – as opposed to Islam; and geographical affinity. Language, however, was not one of those factors. And we Spaniards also have quite a bit of experience when it comes to knowing how language unites and how it differentiates. Whatever happens, it will be a very long time before linguistic uniformity is achieved in Europe, if indeed it is ever achieved at all. And paradoxically, in the wake of the Brexit vote, the *lingua franca* in use is not the language of any EU Member State (except Ireland).

The paradoxical situation relating to the official EU languages shows that it would be absurd for the identity of European citizens to depend solely on their EU membership. But on the other hand, political ties are important. The United States provides a very clear example here: the multi-ethnic nature of the country, whose people have so many different origins, means it is perhaps more diverse than Europe. But there is a strong identity which stems from belonging to a State which, although federal, is very close-knit. You can be Irish, Polish, Hispanic or Kenyan in the USA, as well as being, above all else, an American.

And staying with the Americas for a moment, the continents of North and South America show that we must take account of political, geographical, historical, linguistic and ethnic elements – to mention just a few of the determining factors – if we want to set about explaining identities. Being a US American is not the same as being a Mexican American. Feeling Mexican is probably closer to feeling Guatemalan, Chilean or Argentinean than feeling American or Canadian, for that matter. But the necessary nuances are there when it comes to placing this historical and cultural identity above geographical identity in delineating what we feel. Do indigenous people in rural Mexico who do not speak Spanish really feel Mexican? Do the Inuit really feel Canadian?

As we can see, identity emerges in a confused, jumbled and very unstable way. Let's set aside the nationalist movements that seek to deny that they belong to a community associated with the State – Catalonia and Scotland are different examples within Europe and cannot be lumped together as one case. So although there are centrifugal forces in play, over and above this desire to divide there is a shared paradox, in that many of those in favour of a split from the UK or Spain not only claim to feel European but also say that they want to be European in practical terms connected with political integration. So we're not only talking about feelings, here, but about passports as well. Thus, European identity becomes a substrata of shared values, which, although they do not include language (as there are so many languages in Europe), clearly seem to be cultural and historical in nature. And the aim of this substrata of historical and cultural identity is largely to bring a wide-ranging political identity to the fore. Theoretically, when we talk about Europe's political identity as the combined identities of its citizens, we are talking about a concept that covers pretty much everything, ranging from little more than a forum for discussion among nation-states that have little success in setting up effective power structures (and even if the will is there, it is unlikely to happen),

right through to a federal mega-State, the best example of which is the USA.

And there is an additional factor which is crucial for us to bear in mind: the manner in which this European identity can be threatened or enriched (please choose whichever term you prefer) by the presence of immigrants who bring other sets of values with them. This would still be a problem even if the terrorist attacks of which we are all aware had not happened, although they seem to have led to a more radicalised approach, meaning that urgent solutions are required.

In Europe, immigrants from other cultures and of other faiths have been received in very different ways. To take just two textbook examples, let's look at what has happened in the UK and France. The UK has tried to integrate immigrants without them having to renounce their own cultural specificities. This is the more liberal, tolerant solution. France, on the other hand, has taken the principles of citizenship to be those which were established during the Enlightenment, and required people arriving from outside to abide by those principles and therefore to renounce their original values if need be. Neither form of addressing the immigrant integration has prevented the attacks, as we have seen, but those attacks do seem to have weakened the British approach and given the French one a boost.

If this is the case, then there is a determining factor in European identity that has already been established: it is based on the achievement of the New Regime, the end of the aristocracy, but it has more in common with the French revolution than with American independence. This, in my opinion, is what most distinguishes the Europe of today from the model of the USA that some are keen to look to in this case. One of the most significant differences is that the American identity has already been established, whereas the European identity is – alas! – still a work in progress.

Robin Dunbar

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An Ideal Community?

The modern world is challenging. Most of us now live in very large states that far exceed the scale for which our social psychology has been designed. This tension between our psychology and our situation has profound consequences both for the stability of the political world and for our individual experiences of life as citizens in this world.

The challenges arise from two quite separate trajectories – one of increasing urbanisation that has been running ever since humans first began to live in villages during the Neolithic some 10,000 years ago, the other of increasing globalisation that has only been at work for the last century and perhaps less (essentially the modern era of rapid com-

munication and travel). In general, increasing urbanisation, and ever larger cities, are associated with reduced familiarity with those one lives among, increased loneliness, higher crime rates, greater dysfunctionality and mental illness, reduced political engagement and a greater sense of disillusion. Increased globalisation leads to an increasing sense of losing control over one's life and circumstances as the *locus* of control[15] (big banks, multinational companies, political power) moves away from being local to an international arena where it is beyond influence.

To see why this is so, let us see how natural human communities look. Humans are members of the primate family, and we share with our monkey and ape cousins a number of key social and psychological features. There are two of importance here. One is that primates all live in bonded social systems – that is societies that are founded on intense, close, emotional bonds between pairs of individuals (mothers and babies, romantic couples, friends). The second is that all primate societies are implicit social contracts: they are collective agreements to solve the problems of survival and successful reproduction cooperatively. Social contracts

15. Editor's note: In psychology, the place or *locus* of control refers to the place from which the individual believes the events of their everyday lives are regulated and controlled.

of this kind require individuals to be willing to hold back on some of their most desired objectives (a trait known in psychology as the inhibition of prepotent responses) so as to allow everyone to have a reasonably fair share of the benefits of group life. If individuals steal too much of each other's food, or bully each other too much, it inexorably results in the break up of the group as those who lose out seek more congenial circumstances elsewhere – and hence the inevitable loss of the benefit that the group provided.

The intensity of primate social relationships are such that they depend generically on psychological skills that are cognitively very demanding. As a result, there is a fairly simple relationship between social group size and brain size across the primates: species that live in large social groups have large brains, and especially those parts of the brain that are involved in social decision-making (mainly associated with the front part of the brain). Humans fit rather neatly on the end of this distribution. In fact, the equation relating brain size with social group size in primates predicts a 'natural' group size for humans of around 150 individuals.

This value of ~150 reappears in all sorts of social contexts. It is the typical size of hunter-gatherer communities (or clans), the typically size of villages in medieval and early modern times in Europe, the

size of the foundational unit of all modern armies (the company), the optimal size for longevity in 19th century US utopian communities (or which there were many) – and even the size of residential campsite communities in contemporary Germany. It also turns out to be the typical size of personal social networks (the number of people with whom you feel you have a personal, reciprocated relationship – the people you would make an effort to keep in touch with).

In traditional small scale societies, such as those of hunter-gatherers and small scale agricultural communities, this community of ~150 is the principal social or residential unit. In these cases, everyone knows everyone else, and indeed everybody's social network of 150 people is more or less the same as everyone else's, just structured in a different way (for example, my grandmother is your grandmother's cousin). This close coherence in the community does two things. It provides a densely interconnected network in which the links between individuals allow everyone to keep up to date with who is doing what. In addition, it provides its own police force: the community acts as judge, jury and policeman on those who don't fulfil the community's expectations on how to behave.

Increasing urbanisation over the past few thousand years, combined with increased eco-

nomic mobility (especially in the last 50 years), have had an important impact on our social networks. Because we move frequently, our social networks are now much more fragmented and sub-structured, as well as being scattered over a wide geographical area: they now consist of a set of sub-networks that rarely intersect and seldom interact – a family network, and a set of friendship networks that track our working and social lives over many decades (the friends I was at university with who meet up from time to time, the people I worked with and socialised with when I worked in Amsterdam, another group from when I was in Helsinki, yet another group from the days I spent in Edinburgh, and so on). Because these sub-groups do not know each other and never interact, the network no longer acts as its own police force. If one group doesn't like what I do – well, never mind, I can forget them and spend my time with another group who didn't see what I did. And if one of them decides to say something to me about my behaviour, he or she is alone and will not have the backing of the whole community. Herein lies one of the commonly remarked negative aspects of modern urban life – people are less willing to intervene when someone behaves badly, and people are equally less willing to support each other in times of social or emotional need.

All is not entirely doom and gloom, of course: since we first began to live in permanent villages 10,000 years ago, we have managed to find ways to make large communities work. In principle, what we have done is to take the fundamental psychological building blocks that create bonded friendships and apply them on the large scale. Friendship quality depends on how many of six major relationship dimensions we share with someone. These are: language, place of origin, educational level, hobbies/interests (including musical taste), worldview (moral/religious/political views) and sense of humour. The more of these we share, the stronger the relationship and the more likely we are to behave altruistically towards that person. Notice that they are all cultural rather than biological (i.e. genetic), so they vary over time. What they in fact identify is people who come from the same small community – indeed, they are almost certainly meant to identify that primitive community of 150 people, who in small scale societies are actually all likely to be related to each other (either biologically or by marriage).

We can use any one of these six dimensions to create super-communities that are welded together by a single common theme – people who have the same religious beliefs, who follow the same football club, who speak the same dialect. But because

these supergroups are based on a single dimension, they are necessarily much weaker than close family or friendship relationships that are based on several dimensions. Nonetheless, it seems that this trick has been good enough to make very large groupings work – most of the time. Ideologies, whether political or religious, seem to be especially effective in this respective.

But there is a downside to this: one-dimensional clubs are especially prone to fragmentation. This is especially clear with religion. Religion has its origins as a mechanism to create a cohesive community in small scale hunter-gatherer societies. The shamanistic form of religion characteristic of these societies is a religion of experience rather than of doctrine: such religions rarely have gods, and certainly not moralising high gods that rule over men, and they rarely have anything resembling either a theology or a moral code. They are based around emotional experiences during trance states, often induced by dancing and music, which create a deeply bonded sense of belonging to the community. The doctrinal religions that we are more familiar with (the world religions as we have them now) developed during the Neolithic as a way of controlling the members of the ever-growing community: God (a moralising high god) now is responsible for punishing backsliders so as to

keep the community cohesive, and to do this He needs a theology, some religious rituals and some priests who act on his behave. This is now a top down, hierarchical, discipline-based system, and it works quite well as a way of keeping people in line.

However, it has one major drawback: the ancestral bottom-up psychological bases of experiential religion, invariably associated with personal mystical experiences, still sits beneath this artificial superstructure. As a result, all modern religions are bedevilled by constant upwelling of cults and sects based around psychologically more satisfying, personal scale, mystical religions, often based around a charismatic figure, and this threatens to fragment the unity of the imposed doctrinal religion. The history of all the Abrahamic religions (Judaism, Christianity and Islam), in particular, has been one of continuous struggle to cope with this. Well known examples within European Christianity include the Cathars, the Munster Anabaptists, and, in their origins, the Quakers, the Baptists and the Methodists, all of whom have been frowned on by the church authorities, some of whom have been suppressed while others have moderated their claims and behaviour (often in response to their own success and growing community size, with its need to impose doctrinal discipline).

And herein lies the metaphor for all national and supra-national communities: they will always face a constant barrage of attack from below as small communities of like-minded individuals seek to establish something more congenial to their psychological predispositions, perhaps even breaking away altogether. The question the community has to ask is how it can manage this without creating fissions and schisms and destroying itself in the process. A draconian top-down imposition of communal discipline is always one option (that is how the military, and some religions, manage it), but, aside from the peculiar circumstances of the battlefield, that usually has the effect of making things worse. People generally resent discipline imposed by outsiders to their small community. A more profitable approach is usually to absorb the diversity that such movements imply and work it into the very fabric of the community. With a common icon to provide the totem-pole to which all groups can sign up, creating a bottom-up community in which each individual, and each group, is emotionally committed to the project that the super-community represents is always more successful. In the absence of that bottom-up commitment, however, it is inevitable that the super-community will fall apart.

Further Reading:

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Do Europeans Exist?: A legal view

From the establishment of the European Communities to the Lisbon Treaty – the last amending treaty to date – the completely unique phenomenon of the construction of a Europe united by economic links but also by ever-stronger social and cultural values and ties has taken place, although this phenomenon has by no means been untouched by crises, large and small. Between the initial emergence of three distinct – but closely linked – international organisations, and the advent of today's European Union, much has changed in Europe and the world, but the tangible existence of a genuine European citizenship, not only as a legal construct but also as an idea shared by Europeans, has become a decisive factor in the Union's present and future.

A little more than a decade after the failed draft constitution for Europe, which included the Charter of Fundamental Rights and important references to European citizenship (a failure mitigated somewhat by the Treaty of Lisbon, which gave the Charter the same legal value as the Treaties), the Union now faces undeniable problems and difficulties on its path towards greater European integration that should alert us to the need for unstinting work to maintain and strengthen the freedoms of our citizens. In Europe's ever-tumultuous recent history, two events have brought these always latent difficulties to the fore as a result of the severity of the repercussions we are currently suffering.

The first of these was the economic crisis which since 2008 has shaken – although to varying degrees of intensity – the Member States and which has hit Europe's peoples particularly hard, causing shockwaves to run through society, questioning the EU's action and policies, inevitably spreading to its institutions and, ultimately, the whole structure of the Union. This Union, already weakened by the economic and financial crisis, was then hit by a second event of major importance: the United Kingdom's referendum on EU membership (the 'Brexit' referendum). On 23 June 2016, citizens of the UK, which had been an EU Member State since 1973, and thus a part of Europe's citizenry, were called to

the polls to decide whether the United Kingdom should 'remain a member of the European Union or leave the European Union.' The outcome, with a turnout of 72%, was a small but decisive majority in favour of leaving the EU (51.9% versus 48.1%). This widely unexpected result puts us in an unusual situation of extraordinary complexity, which has caused one of the most serious institutional crises since the creation of the Communities. The United Kingdom had already held another referendum (the 'referendum on the Common Market' and 'referendum on Britain's membership of the European Economic Community') asking the same question in 1975, barely two years after its accession, whose outcome had been favourable to membership (by 67%). Via the 'Brexit' decision, a part of Europe's citizenry has expressed its desire to cease being European citizens. The reasons for this are complex, and beyond the scope of this brief commentary, but the fact that the European citizens of the United Kingdom have voted overwhelmingly to give up their citizenship of the European Union, which they have blamed for their country's social and economic regression, needs to be stressed. Now more than ever, the Union must strive to raise awareness of the true extent of what it means to be a European citizen. And it must do this because behind both the economic crisis – which has under-

mined so much of the social progress achieved in the last decades – and the British withdrawal from the EU, there remain millions of people that hold on to the European ideal and conserve a real hope that we can build a Europe of social progress and freedom. Millions of Europeans share a vision and a sense of belonging to a group which has a clear identity and is identifiable to third parties: the idea and feeling of being European. This idea and this feeling are more than mere abstractions; they are part of a legal reality and this should be one of the EU's major strengths. The EU of today is the most complete example of a supranational organisation ever known. Its institutional makeup and, in particular, the fact that it has created its own legal system, which is integrated into the domestic law of the Member States through the transfer of powers to the Union, sets this supranational organisation apart from all others. It is important to note, as we have mentioned, that the EU is not only a legal reality but also a social community, a genuine, free and pluralistic European society grounded in solidarity and founded on the values enshrined in Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union, namely respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. These values are upheld and advocated by the EU

and common to the Member States in a society in which pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality between women and men prevail, and are proclaimed in Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union. The commitment of the Union to respect cultural and linguistic diversity, which Europeans legitimately hold dear, the fight against social exclusion and discrimination, inter-generational solidarity and the safeguarding of the rights of the most vulnerable supplement the Union's commitment to its citizens.

In addition to safeguarding these values the Union also advocates, on its own initiative, peace and promotes the well-being of its peoples. This well-being and other progress is to be pursued within a fair economic and social framework, as set out in Article 3 of the Treaty on European Union, in which the rights of Europe's citizens are vigorously protected. This is our overarching challenge. If the European Union manages to send the right message about its aims and objectives, European citizenship will strengthen the idea of Europe as a political and social community. Recent events would appear to demonstrate that it remains a long way from achieving that goal.

In light of the above, we can still answer in the affirmative to the question posed by this publication: yes, Europeans do exist. This answer does need

to be qualified, however. As we know, European citizenship was established in the Treaty on European Union with the main objective of strengthening the concept of a European identity and thereby going beyond the established notion that the European communities were essentially focused on economic convergence by bringing the EU's work into the political and social spheres. European citizenship was supposed to be the link uniting all Europeans, regardless of their respective nationalities, and binding them to supranational institutions and policies. European citizenship was, therefore, a paradigm for overcoming the singular – nationality – and integration into the global – Europe for all – as an expression of a new political community. European citizenship is granted to every person holding the nationality of a Member State; it is a bonus complementing, and not replacing, citizenship of a Member State (Article 20 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU). All EU citizens enjoy a sort of dual nationality, since by virtue of being a national of a Member State of the EU they are also specifically granted European citizenship. But what is the essence of European citizenship? The most direct and pertinent consequence of European citizenship is that it confers a genuine legal status, that of European citizen, bringing a wide-ranging – and not always well known – cata-

logue of rights including, but not limited to, the right to move and reside freely within the territory of any Member State; the right to vote and to stand as candidates in elections to the European Parliament and in municipal elections in their Member State of residence, under the same conditions as nationals of that State; the, collective, right to submit citizens' initiatives petitioning the European Commission to adopt legislation; the right to consular protection from the consular authorities of any EU Member State in a third country in which the citizen's own Member State does not have consular authority; the right to petition the European Parliament, to apply to the European Ombudsman, and to address the institutions and advisory bodies of the Union in any of the Treaty languages and to obtain a reply in the same language.

There is nothing closer to citizens than the recognition of these rights. This is why a citizenship based on a catalogue of rights that are respected and safeguarded by the European institutions is the best way of securing and maintaining the support of citizens. It is useful to recall that the birth of the European Community was not an isolated event but should be placed in a context in which a union of nation-states was advocated with a view to rebuilding Europe and safeguarding economic stability and peace in the wake of the disasters caused

by the two world wars. As part of this process, the immediate objective of the European Community was economic integration, but it also subsequently made great strides towards political union and defending a common area of freedom and justice. Although the recognition of rights and freedoms was not originally a core concern of the Community, which only initially recognised the freedoms necessary for the achievement of economic objectives, the EU ultimately undertook to establish a comprehensive Europe-wide community in which citizens could be key players in the process and not merely economic agents. With successive reforms to the Treaties and, lastly, the Charter of Fundamental Rights, the EU has achieved this aim. Today, respect for human rights is an indispensable prerequisite for countries seeking to join the Union and a precondition for those wishing to enter into trade-related and other agreements with the Union, which actively promotes and safeguards fundamental rights both within its borders and in its relations with third countries. This is undoubtedly the way forward, but is a path that will require unstinting efforts to ensure that no European citizens wish to renounce their citizenship.

Profesor Anthony Grayling

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On Being European

Is there such a thing as a European culture, a European mind, a European sensibility, a European character? Is there such a thing as a European? The answer is emphatically Yes. It is Yes because what defines a European is the status of being a product and an inheritor of the European tradition, with all its riches of thought, art, literature, music, science and social development.

Anywhere from the Atlantic coast of Ireland to the Urals in Russia, an individual with a reasonably good education will recognize the names Homer, Plato, Augustine, Dante, Leonardo da Vinci, Shakespeare, Descartes, Rembrandt, Newton, Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Byron, van Gogh,

Tchaikovsky, Tolstoy, Proust – and many more. The art and music of Europe speak with a single voice, in a single language, to all who live within the four thousand kilometer space between Ireland and the Urals. And this art and music of Europe speaks to the entire non-European world also, as identifiably the mark of Europe: not just to the parts of the world that Europe traded with and colonized from the beginning of globalization in the fifteenth century CE, but to the entire world – as witness the fact that without any sense of incongruity one can Schubert played in the conservatoire of Shanghai, see Shakespeare performed in Tokyo, hear a lecture on Kant in Seoul, and discuss Descartes in Delhi.

This last point says as much about European identity as the awareness that Europeans themselves have of inheriting and sharing with all their fellow Europeans a single great self-defining tradition. From outside the geographical confines of Europe the richly textured history of European culture appears as a single history. In that history borders and boundaries are irrelevant to the fluid interplay of ideas, art and music that gives Europe its distinctive place in world history. Even the internal wars of Europe speak of the proximities that bind its peoples together, for they were internecine quarrels, very bitter at times, the jostling and rivalry of familiars, and all the more painful for being so.

We speak without strain or surprise of Dutch painters in Italy, Russian writers at the spas of Germany, French and English exiles in the Netherlands, any of them perhaps reading a Greek philosopher (Plato) or a Latin poet (Ovid), watching a play by a Norwegian playwright (Ibsen) or listening to an Austrian orchestra (the Vienna Philharmonic) play music by a Polish composer (Chopin) – none of this seeming in the least unusual, which it would do if the accidental nationalities of the authors, thinkers, composers and performers were of any relevance. They are not relevant. The fact that they are not is proof of the shared nature of what embodies that heritage. Accordingly it defines Europe as much as its extensive northern plains and its high southern mountains, its great peninsulas into the Mediterranean and the arch of Scandinavia into the Arctic.

There is of course diversity and difference in Europe; mention of the hot Mediterranean and the frozen Arctic, thoughts of the soft rain of Ireland and the Siberian tundra visible from the Urals, reminds one that there are other differences too. Stereotypes of national character abound, and they are not without foundation. There is assuredly such a thing as national character, distinguishing English people from French, Germans from Spaniards. There are differences of taste, of cuisine, of course of language. But these are not essential. The ste-

reotype that matters is the one that distinguishes Europeans from, say, Chinese: and this is a product of the unitary shared cultural history that gives Europe its internal bonds. China likewise has a powerful and long-reaching cultural history which has brought into a single polity a region as large, and with a linguistic diversity as great, as Europe itself – something that some historical European empires nearly did.

But the facts of political history, though too active in causing too many wars that scar Europe's past, are not the relevant ones. The Roman Empire and its ghostlier diminished avatar as Christendom maintained Latin as a universal language for educated people until the eighteenth century, a highly unifying legacy. Although the ghostly avatar of the Roman Empire's successor nearly expunged the learning and literature of classical antiquity, its recovery in the Renaissance brought back into focus the common inheritance of Europe in the philosophy of Greece and the high civilization of Rome.

For many centuries the main study in the schools of Europe was the classics, that is, the literature, philosophy and history of ancient Greece and Rome. This was a fine education – in government, military strategy, ethics, political theory, examples of good and bad rule, the changing nature of social conditions, educational theory, in-

stitutions of law, and much besides. Aristotle and Cicero, Homer, Aeschylus and Vergil, the ancient myths and legends, the examples of Horatio and Mucius Scaevola, had enormous influence on the mind of Europe.

The ethical life of Europe is often thought to derive from the religious outlook introduced nearly a thousand years after the age of Plato, but it was in fact Greek thought – not least the outlook of Stoicism which was the viewpoint of educated people throughout the Hellenic and Roman eras – from which it developed. One chief source was the Roman Republican commitment to the virtues of probity, honour, duty, restraint, respect, friendship and generosity that Cicero, Seneca, Virgil, Horace, and many others wrote about and ceaselessly enjoined.

'European values' thus have their roots in Greek and Roman values; how much more so does the philosophy, literature, art and music – the forces that shape the civilized mind – derive from the classical past. It is not possible to read the paintings on the wall of any major European gallery without knowing the continent's mythology and history. The literatures of the major European languages are richly soaked in the tradition from which they derive. And because it is a shared tradition – informing and inspiring all the European literatures – the

work they do in shaping the European sensibility is likewise a unifying one.

It would be no exaggeration to say that 'Europeans are Greeks and Romans' and by this mean that we are defined by the following words – and therefore concepts – of classical Greek and Latin origin: democracy, liberalism, values, history, morality, comedy, tragedy, literature, music, academy, memory, politics, ethics, populace, geography, energy, exploration, hegemony, theory, mathematics, science, theatre, medicine, gymnasium, climate, bureaucracy, dialect, analogy, psychology, method, nostalgia, encyclopaedia, education, paradox, empiricism, polemic, rhetoric, dinosaur, telescope, system, school, trophy, type, fantasy, photography… indeed, take almost any word denoting political and social institutions, ideas, learning, science and technology, medicine, and culture, and it derives from the language – and therefore the ideas and the history – of Greece and Rome.

As an act of piety the Emperor Justinian closed the schools of Athens – the institutions founded by Plato, Aristotle and others – in 529 CE, because they taught 'pagan' learning. A new tradition was added to the thus temporarily suppressed classical tradition, and it made its own contribution; but it was eventually leavened and then, by the recovery of the classical outlook in the Renaissance, over-

taken by it, and the promise of the earlier history of that tradition came fully into its own.

The world-view forged by Europeans in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, as a result, gave birth to modern times. Copernicus, Galileo, Gassendi, Roche, Huygens, Boyle and Newton are the principal names of a period of extraordinary genius in the rise of natural science, made possible by the loosening of the grip of doctrinal orthodoxy which had for many centuries barred the way to enquiry. The modern scientific world view, created by Europe and exported to every corner of the world, is now the functionally dominant world view: airplanes, computers, electronic communication and modern medicine are among its distinguishing marks. It is true that the majority of people in the world still see the world as pre-seventeenth century people did, but whereas then the religious outlook was functionally dominant and scientific views were functionally marginal, matters are now the other way round. This was the achievement of the European mind.

There is a flavor to the European way of conducting matters economic and political which is distinctive, and shared only by those other parts of the world which are offshoots of Europe itself. There is a sense of being at home anywhere in Europe which any European feels while travelling about

the continent, or living and working in other parts of it. One of the great successes of the European Union project has been – in addition to the peace it has brought: a magnificent achievement, given the scarred past – to bring Europeans, as individuals, into a more intimate sense of the shared purpose and destiny of their home continent. To say that is to say that there is such a thing as a European identity, and that therefore there is such a thing as a European. The writer of these words feels – knows – that he is a European: and where there is one, there are more: indeed, several hundred millions of them.

Philip T. Hoffman

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Building a European Identity: Obstacles and Opportunities

Today there really is no such thing as a European identity. True, young people may view themselves as European, and so perhaps do some EU officials and members of the European Parliament. But they are the exceptions, because a European identity does not yet exist. In fact, a European identity has not existed for centuries: since at least the Reformation and the rise of the sovereign state, and perhaps ever since the schism between eastern and western Christianity or even since the collapse of the Roman Empire in the West.

Instead of embracing a European identity, Europeans cling to separate national identities, national identities forged by shared political history

and anchored in language, ethnicity, and a common culture. Those national identities are deeply rooted and quite powerful. They can sway voters and even push them to turn against their economic interest. In the United Kingdom, for instance, they drove voters to opt for Brexit even though quitting the EU was expected to reduce British national income by closing off markets for goods, services, and labor.

National identities can do more, though, than driving voters to abandon open markets. They can also lead citizens – and hence elected officials in democracies – to oppose valuable policies that depend on cooperation across nations, from assistance for economies in crisis to cross country bank insurance. The cooperative policies they oppose would bring huge benefits. They would help lift Europe out of recessions and reduce the risk of financial crises. And in the long run they would help create a European identity and thereby ward off future votes to exit from the EU. But despite all the benefits, such policies are simply impossible politically, because people in general are usually reluctant to extend a helping hand beyond the borders of their own nation or their own ethnic group. Their cooperation, it turns out, is typically limited to people like themselves, or so research in anthropology and behavioral economics suggests. Although such a

limit to cooperation may have paid off in the bellicose societies of the early Middle Ages and although it may do the same in certain anarchic societies in modern Africa and Asia, in Europe today it is a barrier to policies that could make everyone better off.

But that grim conclusion does not mean abandoning hope. Cooperative policies can in fact be enacted in the future, but to do so, European leaders will have to take Europe's ingrained national identities into account and begin the long task of building support for the EU among alienated groups. That will relax the hold that national identities have on voters and win them over in favor of cooperative European wide policies. Over time, the benefits they receive from the cooperative policies will then help fashion a European identity, and ultimately, that European identity will limit the damage that national identities can do.

The first step here is to continue policies that are already helping to form a European identity and gain support for the EU. They include the EU's efforts that appeal to the young, such as university scholarships or initiatives to assist unemployed youths who are not in school or apprenticeship programs. The EU should also boost aid to areas that have that have suffered severe job losses, whether it is because of international trade or because of technical change. Offering the aid should be feas-

ible despite the EU's limited budget, since the areas affected would be small. The assistance would have the great advantage of getting the EU backing from voters who might otherwise blame it for their plight. Those voters might be unskilled workers whose jobs are threatened by immigrant labor or by imports of foreign manufactured goods. In theory, the EU's open markets for goods and labor should of course generate gains large enough to compensate these workers for the threat and make them and everyone else better off. But in reality workers in such a situation rarely receive adequate compensation, and they then have all the more reason to reject immigration and open markets, beyond the influence that ethnocentric nationalism has on them. The aid from the EU will help stop that from happening.

As a second step, European leaders should make a strategic retreat and relax current rules governing labor market mobility, by giving national governments some control over in migration of EU workers. The retreat here does not mean abandoning the goal of open labor markets. It is simply a temporary strategy to keep opposition to the EU from growing to such an extent that the EU itself could split apart. The economic costs of the strategy will not be large either, because mobility in Europe's labor market is still limited by language and by the power of existing national identities. And the retreat will

buy essential political good will from leaders who might otherwise sabotage cooperative policies.

The final step would be to enact-European wide bank insurance and supplementary wage insurance to compensate workers left unemployed (or underemployed) in middle age due to international trade or technical change. If combined with higher capital requirements for banks, the European wide bank insurance would not be costly, and it would prevent the sort of financial crises that have plagued Greece and other countries. As for the wage insurance, it would supplement existing national programs of unemployment compensation, which, despite their generosity, often fail workers who find themselves out of work in middle age, when they are too old to retrain or consider moving to another country. The wage insurance would then provide a bridge to existing national old age retirement programs, after unemployment compensation was exhausted.

This step would of course be the hardest politically, because it would demand far more resources and would spark resistance in countries that are thriving economically. Politically, is not yet feasible, and it will not be possible to take this step until European economies improve. But with the good will earned by a strategic retreat from labor market rules and by programs to aid the young or assist

areas that have suffered severe job market losses, it should be possible to take this step too in the future.

Once these cooperative policies of wage and bank insurance are in place, they will gradually win the EU backing among growing numbers of voters. The backing will likely be strongest among the young, but over time the EU should gain the allegiance of a majority in all countries. And with the political support and the benefits generated by cooperation, a European identity will take hold and thrive.

Maryam Namazie

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Confronting Islamism with Secularism

A future Europe must be secular. By secularism I mean the complete separation of religion from the state (and not the British version of equal tolerance for religions, which breeds communalism).

Whilst freedom of religion or belief is an important human right, it is a personal matter of conscience and a lived experience. When religion is part of the state or law, it's no longer about personal beliefs but power and control.

Given the rise of the religious-Right in Europe and internationally, a defence of secularism is an historical task. It's also a precondition for women's rights and a guarantee of freedom of religion as well as freedom from religion.

The defence of secularism is an important challenge to Islamist projects like Sharia courts, the burqa, or gender segregation at universities in

Britain. Islamism, like other religious-Right movements (including the Christian-, Hindu-, Jewish- or Buddhist-Right), uses religion for societal control as well as the far-Right restructuring of society. Opposing Islamism is not an "attack" on "the Muslim community" anymore than criticising the Christian-Right, Pegida, and Christianity is "bigotry" against the "Christian community".

Even so, because of multiculturalism and multi-faithism as a social policy, religion is now the sole marker that defines countless citizens. As a result, criticism of religion and the religious-Right is equated with real harm against Muslims though there is a huge distinction between the criticism of ideas and political movements versus bigotry against people. (It's this same regressive identity politics that is contributing to the rise of white identity politics and other religious-Right movements.)

Couching Islamist demands (always intertwined with threats, intimidation and violence) as "freedom of religion" gives the religious-Right legitimacy, ignores widespread dissent, justifies violence and abuse, and shrinks much-needed secular spaces of resistance.

Over the past several decades, the constraints on free expression, the imposition of Sharia law, increased veiling and gender segregation… in Europe are the direct result of a rise of Islamism and not

due to people becoming more devout or because of immigration.

Of course with the rise of Islamism, appearances of religiosity increases but much of this is imposed or due to pressure and intimidation; and it is often politically- or state-driven.

In fact, the rise of Islamism has seen a corresponding rise in secular and progressive movements, including women's liberation and a tsunami of atheism via the ex-Muslim movement. But because of identity politics, this dissent is seen through Islamist eyes, automatically labelled "Islamophobic", and even vilified.

But clearly, no community or society is homogenous; nor is culture or religion. What is considered the "Muslim community" is as diverse as any other community or society, filled with a myriad characteristics and beliefs. Yet much-needed solidarity with the progressive, secular and feminist forces within are not gaining the solidarity they deserve because Islamism is seen to be the authentic identity of "Muslims". Solidarity with "the Muslim community", therefore, has been reduced to support for Islamist projects rather than for secular political and social movements and with regards to class politics.

According to Algerian sociologist Marieme Helie Lucas: "If the left is serious about supporting oppressed minorities, it should realise that those

who speak in the name of the community do not necessarily have the legitimacy to do so. By supporting fundamentalists, they simply chose one camp in a political struggle, without acknowledging it".

This is the story of our lives.

The struggle against the burqa and veil is one example. The veil and its ensuing gender segregation is central to the Islamist project for the erasure of girls and women from the public space. There are countless fatwas, billboards likening unveiled women to rotting potatoes and sweets covered in flies with "morality police" roaming the streets to harass and arrest women in places like Iran. Many a woman has been assassinated in Algeria, attacked with acid in Afghanistan, or beaten and imprisoned for refusing to wear the veil in places like Saudi Arabia. Even in Europe where it is not compulsory by law, Islamist organisations, imams and Sharia courts make it very clear that it's obligatory to wear the veil and that refusing to do so is a "rebellion against God". Unveiled girls face much pressure by being labelled "whores"; those who are deemed "improperly" veiled are often called "hoe-jabis".[16] Despite the immense pressures

16. Editor's note: Hoejabis means "hoe with a hijab". It is a combination of the words 'hoe' and 'hijab' (the term 'hoe' is commonly used to refer to promiscuous women, as an equivalent to 'whore', while 'hijab' is the scarf worn by Muslim women). This derogatory term is applied to women who combine the hijab with fashion.

and threats, here in Europe, the discussion around the veil is sanitised and portrayed as a "right" and a "choice". These are of course formalities when there is little right or choice to remove one's veil and remain unveiled. In this fight like so many others, countless feminists, liberals and human rights groups rush to defend the veil, the burqa and the burkini but never those fighting for an end to religion's control over women's bodies such as the women's unveiling movement in Iran or nude protests to combat the perverse view that women's bodies are the sources of fitnah or chaos in society and therefore must be concealed from view.

It's ironic how religion's and men's imposition on women to safeguard "honour" and control their bodies are packaged as a "right" and "choice" for women.

It's the same when it comes to Sharia courts in Britain. Sharia courts are highly contested and challenged in Europe and globally by black and minority women, including many Muslims. Discrimination and violence lie at the heart of the courts. It's where the greatest abuses of minority women takes place. For example, under Sharia rules, a woman's testimony is worth half that of a man's; a man can have four wives and divorce his wife by simple repudiation, whereas a woman has limited rights to divorce; child custody reverts to

the father at a preset age; and marital rape is not considered a crime. It's one of the main battlegrounds for women's rights in the family across the globe. In Rojava, Syrian Kurdistan, Sharia courts have been banned in a measure to defend gender equality. In India, Muslim women are leading the fight against the "triple talaq"[17] rule, which gives husbands unilateral rights to divorce. In Algeria, women's rights activists have called 20 years of Sharia in the family code as "20 years of madness", "a code of despair", "a code obsessed with women". In Saudi Arabia, the male guardianship rules are being challenged by women's rights campaigners and on and on. But here in Europe, many feminists promote it as people's "right to religion". This is despite the mountain of evidence showing that the courts are discriminatory in content and intent and despite the immense resistance taking place.

It's the same when it comes to the tsunami of atheism in the "Muslim world". Social media is doing to Islam what the printing press before it did to Christianity. It's also given people the opportunity to break taboos, question the status quo and make connections with freethinkers across borders and boundaries.

17. Editor's note: 'Talaq' is an Arab word that means "divorce". In India, under the Sharia law a husband may divorce his wife immediately simply by repeating the word Talaq three times.

Though atheists from Muslim backgrounds can face the death penalty in 14 countries and can face shunning, as well as threats and violence even in Europe, many are coming out, loud and proud in support of freethought. Yet human rights and "progressive" organisations and personalities legitimise de-facto or de-jure blasphemy and apostasy laws and more often than not blame the victims. Ex-Muslims are seen though Islamist eyes: "Islamophobic", "native informants," "coconuts" and accused of "inciting hatred and discrimination" against Muslims when they are merely standing up for the right to think as they choose, criticise beliefs they have been raised in and to live to tell the tale.

Ironically, many of the liberals always siding with the Islamists might themselves be atheists. The racism of lower expectations and double standards means that they have one set of rights for themselves and another for us… We are only meant to have rights within the context of Islam and Islamic laws! And our dissenters are deemed "culturally inappropriate", "western", or "colonialist" because they are only concerned with Islamism's sensibilities and values and not that of the many who resist. In fact, though, no one understands the need for secularism, women's liberation and freethought better than those living under the boot of the religious-Right.

Identity politics and communalism is literally killing us by siding with our fascists rather than our dissenters.

More than ever, there is a need to articulate and defend secularism and show solidarity with the palpable fight-back in many communities and societies in Europe and globally.

Islamism is an international movement; so too is the secular movement. This is not about a clash of civilisations but a clash between theocrats on the one hand and secularists on the other – across borders and boundaries.

The systematic and theorised failure to defend secularism and people's, particularly women's, civil rights in many countries and communities, has aided and abetted the religious-Right to the detriment of us all – believers and none.

As British philosopher AC Grayling has said: secularism is a fundamental right. Today, given the havoc being wreaked by the religious-Right, it is also a precondition for fundamental rights and freedoms.

Secularism is not western or eastern; it's universal. We need a secular Europe and world and we need it now.

Our very lives depend on it.

Adolf Tobeña

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More Than a Club

The European Union is much more than a club, but it is also much less than a nation or a state. Everyone is clear about this distinction and hence derives, I suspect, the need to ask, again and again, if Europeans exist and, at the end of the day, who are those who truly hold and deserve that status.

When Britain decided to leave the powerful Brussels club last June, I was trekking in the Valais Alps and all of my fellow hikers were either Britons or local Swiss. At the end of the day, after hearing about the favourable Brexit vote, we suddenly realised that the only European citizen left on the expedition was me.

The dark-skinned, southern guy with somewhat anarchic habits was suddenly the only one who could present a passport fully recognized by the European club while my pale, methodical and reliable colleagues were, all of them, foreigners. Barbarians: people from beyond the border. It was obvious that a series of political and administrative decisions had generated a contradiction. Because everyone knows that few peoples in the subcontinent embody the traditions and values promoted in Brussels and Strasbourg better than the Swiss. And it is also a well-known fact that Britons are petulant and self-absorbed islanders, but they will continue to be tied to the subcontinent by contiguity and bonds so old and powerful that any true foreigner (a Japanese or a Polynesian, for example) would consider them far more European than any Mediterranean type, however cold or formal their manners.

Hence, this is a problem: the most obviously European Europeans, from an external point of view, do not belong to the great European club. I'm using this anecdote, but there are many more that would be equally plausible. And quasi-experimental observations could be made. Thus, if during a congress or meeting of experts, external observers were asked to to identify and rate levels of *Europeanness* on a simple scale based on physical appearance, I

suspect that that appreciable distinctions will appear between the members of tables made up of Scandinavians, Dutch, Russian, Germans, Greeks, Italians or Portuguese despite the inevitable overlaps. By adding voice to the physical appearance, these distances would likely progress into clear-cut gaps without any need for statistical comparisons.

This is a thought experiment that could be complemented with various controls to give it the necessary solidity. If the theoretical findings I have just outlined were to be verified, we would be facing various conclusions: 1. There are quite distinct types of Europeans; 2. They can be perceived and grouped easily by simple markers, detectable at distance and without asking anything; 3. These groups obtain different scores on *Europeanness*, from the uninformed and external perspective.

If this were close to the reality, and the European Union were to persist in its endeavour to function as a club or alliance rather than a nation or state, the instability of the situation would undoubtedly become chronic and the question of whether Europeans, as such, really exist, perennial. Thus far, the main steps have consisted of endowing the EU club with really powerful attributes. The most apparent are the single currency which has a solid value in the market, an equally unique issuing and regulatory Central Bank, a considerable

centralized budget and multiple regulatory instruments on trade, labour, environmental and health issues which have been left in the hands of Brussels' governmental labyrinth. Those are the reasons why countries, enterprises and economic operators around the globe take the great EU club very seriously, but still consider it a club.

Is there any remedy for this situation of relative and perpetual fragility innate to all clubs? In all likelihood, there is, and it is easy to imagine corrective measures that would strengthen what some have gone so far as to call the "European empire", when in reality it has not even come anywhere close to being a stable political alliance. I will remind you of just six amendments frequently proposed for the EU:

1. Sports teams that represent the EU in major competitions and in all facets and forms of sport.
2. To adopt a preferential EU language, to become the common and official voice.
3. To create a unified EU police agency, superior in powers to all other police forces in all areas: surveillance, containment, detention and information.
4. Adopt a strongly hierarchical EU legal system with unified higher courts.

5. Create and deploy an EU Army with capacity for effective action in any conflictive area of the globe.
6. Elect, by universal suffrage, a EU presidency every five years (with or without an additional symbolic monarchy), which all higher executive powers will depend on.

Nothing else is needed. The acceptance, voting and signing of these ingredients in a short Constitution would transform the great EU Club into a state and the experience of nationhood would, in turn, emerge and crystallize. There is usually a generalised consensus on this. The real challenge, of course, lies in overcoming the resistances of the pre-existing powers, to erect that structure.

Political experiments of this nature have frequently been carried out in different parts of the globe, in conditions that were just as complicated as those in Europe. The results are highly variable, but there have been cases with quite acceptable outcomes. There are two experiments that, due to their complex population base and the doctrinal scripts used, should perhaps serve as preferred models: the US and Israel. In both, the seminal cocktail was based on liberalism, Christianity or Judaism, plus a few drops of social and democratic values. In both cases, however, there was a foundational war sowing

the seeds of powerful nationalisms that foreshadowed the script of patriotic belonging: Americanism and Zionism. In the first case, success was so overwhelming that the rest of the inhabitants of the American continent were forced to forego the common demonym. Will it be necessary to ignite a militant Europeanism for the true Europeans to emerge? If so, and should the endeavour succeed, there will perhaps no longer be any need to worry about British narcissism, Swiss obstinacy or the occasional Scandinavian or Slavic apprehension. They will have lost their European status and the external, uninformed eye will easily detect who is who.

Peter Turchin

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Deep Historical Roots of European Values, Institutions, and Identities

The grand project of European integration is failing. Signs of dysfunction abound: from Greece's debt debacle to the immigration crisis and now "Brexit". A disintegrative trend at the European level is mirrored within constituent states: think of the Scottish and Catalan independence drives, or the inability of Belgium to form a national government for years. In a dramatic reversal of the post-war trend, Europeans have seemingly lost their ability to cooperate across different national units and across different ethnic groups.

To put this failure in perspective, getting people to cooperate in very large groups like the EU is difficult. The science of understanding how humans have been able to form huge cooperative societies numbering in tens and hundreds of million is still in its infancy. Social scientists cannot really run experiments involving hundreds of millions of people. Nevertheless, much progress has been achieved by taking a scientific approach to analyzing historical data.[18]

What we have learned is that the capacity of people to form large cooperative groups is conditioned by deep history – events taking place hundreds, and sometimes thousands of years in the past. One particularly important factor that historical analyses have identified is the long-lasting influence of past, and now long-gone, empires. Why?

Successful cooperation requires that people share values, institutions, and social identities. Values tell us why we want to cooperate: what is the public good that we collectively want to produce? Norms and institutions tell us how we are going to organize cooperation. Shared identities help people pull together to overcome barriers to cooperation (such as the temptation to free-ride on the efforts

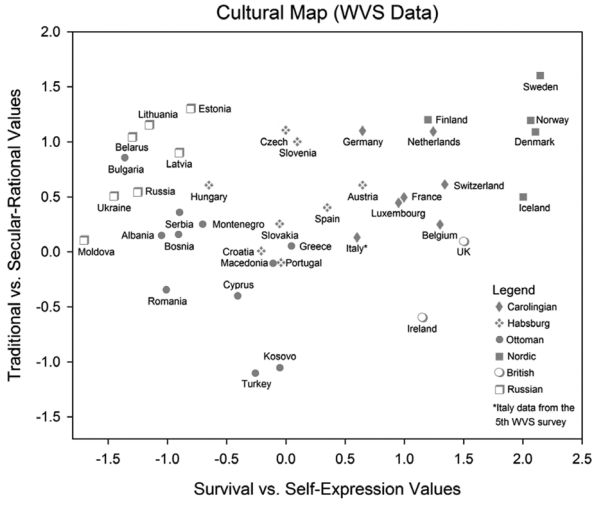
18. Turchin, P. (2016), *Ultrasociety: How 10,000 Years of War Made Humans the Greatest Cooperators on Earth,* Beresta Books, Chaplin, CT.

of others). As an example, the very first principle of managing cooperative action, identified by Nobel prize-winning political scientist Elinor Ostrom, was 1. Define clear group boundaries. Mismatched values, institutions, and identities often doom a cooperative effort even before it has had a chance to get off the ground.

Historical experience of living in the same state often results in the spread of common values, institutions, and identities among initially diverse groups. Elements of culture, including those that affect cooperation, change slowly, and often persist for long periods of time after the original empire has broken apart.

We can use the data from the World Values Survey (WVS) to visualize these "ghosts of empires past". WVS has been collecting data on people's beliefs in many countries since 1981. Researchers discovered that much of variation between populations of different countries can be mapped to just two dimensions: (1) Traditional values versus Secular-rational values and (2) Survival values versus Self-expression values. When values for each country in the sample are plotted in a two-dimensional space defined by these two axes, we have what is known as the Inglehart-Welzel Cultural Map. I have taken the WVS data for European countries from the latest (sixth) survey, and color-coded them

by shared history within past states: the Carolingian, Habsburg, Ottoman, British, and Russian Empires. "Nordic" refers to the Danish and Swedish Empires (since Denmark at some points in historical time included Norway, Iceland, and a part of Sweden, while Sweden included Finland).



As the figure demonstrates, modern countries, which belonged to the same past and long-gone empire, cluster very closely together. There is little overlap. And when there is, it may reflect the influence of even more ancient empires. For example, Spain, Italy, Greece, and the Balkans were all core regions of the Roman Empire.

Of particular interest is the cluster of the countries that used to be part of the Carolingian

Empire (which reached its peak in 800 under Charlemagne). It's remarkable that the original group of six European states that signed in 1957 the treaty establishing the European Economic Community, the precursor of the European Union (France, Germany, Italy, and the Benelux), were also the core of Charlemagne's Empire.

This is not a coincidence. The Carolingian Empire was the embryonic form of what we now call Western civilization. The main bulk of Latin Christendom, that part of medieval Europe which was Roman Catholic, rather than Orthodox or non-Christian, consisted of the Carolingian successor states (e.g., France and the German Empire, also known as the "Holy Roman Empire"). Later to this core were added regions that were conquered from non-Christians (e.g., most of Spain, Prussia) or proselytized from the formerly Carolingian lands (e.g., Denmark and Poland). Although never united politically after the Carolingian Empire fragmented, the inhabitants of Latin Christendom knew that they belonged together in a certain, supranational sense. They were unified by their common faith, headed by the pope in Rome, by shared culture, and by the common language of literature, liturgy, and international diplomacy – Latin. As the historian Robert Bartlett tells us in *The Making of Europe: Conquest, Colonization and Cultural*

Change, 950-1350, the outsiders were also aware of this supranational identity, and called Latin Christians collectively "the Franks" ("Faranga" in Arabic, "Fraggoi" in Greek). The minstrel Ambroise wrote about the First Crusade, "When Syria was recovered in the other war and Antioch besieged, the great wars and battles against the Turks and miscreants, so many of whom were slaughtered, there was no plotting or squabbling, no one asked who was Norman or French, who Poitevin or Breton, who from Maine or Burgundy, who was Flemish or English … all were called 'Franks', be they brown or bay or sorrel or white." Latin Christendom was the direct precursor of Western civilization, and even the religious schism of the Reformation, despite the blood that it spilled, turned out to be a quarrel within family. It did not destroy the overarching identity whose roots go back to the Carolingians, and which served as the basis for the current European unification project.[19]

In retrospect, however, the EU's overly rapid expansion from the core group of six to the current 28 has clearly contributed to its dysfunction. Dysfunction arose because, first, it's easier for six people (or six heads of state) to converge on a mutually

19. For more on this history, see Turchin, P. (2006), *War and Peace and War: The Life Cycles of Imperial Nations.* NY: Pi Press.

agreeable course of action, than for twenty-eight to do so. Second, and equally important, expansion beyond the Carolingian core (♦ in the figure) brought together people (and politicians) from diverse cultures, holding different values, and taking incompatible paths towards cooperation. This can be seen in how widely the circles representing additional 22 countries are dispersed in the figure. Such normative and institutional mismatch created additional barriers to effective collective action.

Would European integration be better served by a more "modular", stepwise approach? For example, Nordic countries already have their own "integration nucleus" – the Nordic Council.[20] Another one is the Visegrad group.[21] Perhaps the EU would work better as a nested set of such groups rather than one large one which relies upon informal arrangements between the more powerful states?

Writing recently in the international science magazine *Nature,*[22] I called for more research investigating such ideas, empirically and systematically, using massive historical databases that thoroughly

20. Editor's note: The Nordic Council is an organization made up of parliamentary representatives of Denmark, Norway, Finland, Sweden and Iceland.

21. Editor's note: The Visegrad Group is an Alliance between Hungary, Poland, Czech Republic and Slovakia.

22. Turchin, P. (2016), "Mine the Past for Patterns", *Nature* 535: 488-489.

sample the historical record (for an example, see Seshat: Global History Databank). Here are some of the questions we could ask. What administrative arrangements and political institutions aided co-operation in large empires (which often started as confederations), such as Rome, Maratha Confederation, the US? What can we learn from the fate of the Habsburg Empire – the previous (and failed) attempt at a "European Union," put together by a series of dynastic marriages? Does gradual, incremental construction result in a longer-lasting union? What kind of hierarchy of political units works better: a flat one with a single level, or a nested, multi-level one? How important is the sense of shared identity in holding together large human groups?

There is a marked tendency among policy makers to deal with the economic and political crises of today as though they were completely unprecedented, leading us to repeat old mistakes. But while we might choose to ignore history, history is not going to ignore us.

Mark van Vugt

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The Social Psychology of Brexit[23]

Europe is in shock. After a tight majority of Brits chose to step out of the European Union, the question is "What's next?" Over the past months we have heard many opinions from financial, legal and business experts about the consequences of "Brexit." Some experts claim with certainty that this means the end of the EU and the United Kingdom – which now is being called "The Divided Kingdom" – while others, with equal confidence, assert the exact opposite.

It is surprisingly quiet among social and behavioral scientists, which is partly due to modesty,

23. Editor's note: This text was originally published in the journal *Psychology Today,* on August 12th 2016.

I believe. It is risky to make predictions about the future; we would rather provide explanations of events after the fact ("Why did the Berlin Wall fall"). It might also say something about the poor quality of theorizing in the social sciences. Rarely does a theory come by that is so elegant, simple, and far-reaching, that you think "This must be true" or "Why haven't I thought of this?"

That was my experience when I came across the work of political economist Albert O. Hirschman. This German-American economist was born in Berlin, fought in the Spanish civil war on the side of the Republicans, and helped numerous European artists and intellectuals escape to the U.S. in the Second World War. In 1970 he wrote the classic "Exit, Voice, and Loyalty: Responses to Decline in Forms, Organizations and States". Hirschman made clear that there are two types of reactions when consumers are dissatisfied about the quality of a product. They can decide to no longer purchase the product, so exit. If many people decide at the same time to exit, this is a signal to the company to improve the product. Sometimes exiting is not possible, for example when a company has a monopoly, in which case consumers will react by making their opinions heard through complaints or protests. This is what he calls "voice".

In his book, Hirschman examined the relationship between exit and voice. Do people leave immediately or do they complain first before they quit? He reckoned that this coincides with their loyalty. When people are loyal to a product they will not be as quick to leave and rather make their displeasures heard. The "Exit-Voice-Loyalty" theory has been applied to many societal problems in the past 40 years. I have researched residents' reactions in England when they are dissatisfied about neighborhood facilities such as the quality of schools, parks, or their safety. Do they complain to the municipality or do they move? In the end it depended on how easy it was for them to move. People who lived in owner-occupied housing reacted with voice, while people who lived in rented houses sooner chose for the exit strategy. Exit and voice is also applicable in the area of employee well-being and even intimate romantic relationships. How do you react when you are dissatisfied with your relationship: will you discuss with your partner or will you leave? My wonderful former VU University colleague Caryl Rusbult (who died of cancer in her 50s) discovered that the more you have invested in your relationship, for example by having kids or loving your partner greatly, the more loyal you are and the less likely you are to exit from the relationship.

Now what does Exit-Voice-Loyalty Theory say about the future of the EU in light of the Brexit vote? Let me come up with a few predictions for the future. Firstly Brexit is a clear signal to the EU that this organization is in a bad state. Just as in an intimate relationship, exit hits harder than a voice because there are clear consequences: Actions speak louder than words! Brexit also shows that the loyalty of the Brits to the EU clearly is not very strong, which is probably also the case for inhabitants of other European countries. Brexit will make a collective exit from the EU more easy and attractive, especially when it turns out that the EU does not respond to such a powerful signal, and what will follow everywhere are more referendums. If citizens keep feeling that nothing is done with their critiques – their voice – concerning the EU, what will follow no doubt are further Spexits, Frexits, and Gexits until the union eventually breaks up.

Hirschman's insights also impart that exit may be prevented by increasing the loyalty of citizens to the EU. That is where the root of the problem lies, I think. We feel European, even a Brit feels that, but we don't feel like EU-eans. If we wish to increase the affinity of civilians with the EU we need to invest more in this project emotionally and symbolically.

So: make it mandatory for our schoolkids to have class trips to Brussels and Strasbourg, change

the Eurovision into the EU-song festival, and organize the EU football cup (without England, of course) starting in 2020. Even a dating site linking people looking for partners within EU countries might work. The EU-project is an interesting social scientific experiment of historic proportions. Yet whether it will survive the 21st century is increasingly doubtful.

Readings:

DOWDING, K., JOHN, P., MERGOUPIS, T. and VAN VUGT, M. (2000), "Exit, voice and loyalty: Analytic and empirical developments". *European Journal of Political Research,* 37: 469-495. doi:10.1111/1475-6765.00522

Frans de Waal

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Being European

Despite having lived and worked continuously in the USA for the past 35 years, I still feel very European. I am of Dutch origin, married to a French woman, and visit Europe several times a year.

I look at all European citizens as having a shared background, a shared history, a shared culture, and definitely shared interests. Even though all of us speak different languages (I am fluent in four), and have different cuisines, we obviously have a common cultural heritage dating back many centuries. My own country has been under Roman, Spanish, French, and German rule, and even

though we generally don't consider these invasions in a positive light, they mean that we have always been connected to and influenced by other nations. This is true all over Europe.

It has hard to formulate what makes me feel European rather than American, but one simple example is the structure of the cities. In Europe, cities are compact, with narrow streets, arranged around a square and a large church or cathedral. We all take this for granted but it is radically different from many American cities, and also from Asian ones. The way people interact, the music they prefer, the way they dress, in all of these aspects I still feel most at home in Europe.

My view of the European Union is perhaps typical of a post World-War II child. The horror and devastations of the two world wars explain the union's founding. We needed to change the attitude of nations, which until then had waged almost non-stop war. I certainly don't view the EU the way a bean-counter might: how much does my nation put into it and how much does my nation get out of it. The European project is first of all a political project. I rather look at it as an absolute necessity for a peaceful future. The EU has brought us sixty years of peace, and will bring us many more years if we allow it to do so, which is worth every penny we put into it.

As a side note, since my specialty is animal behavior, I have studied conflict resolution in primates all my life. I don't necessarily want to compare European politicians with apes, but it is undeniable that they arrived at the same insight that is common in my field. Our most important theory is that the chance of peacemaking increases with the value of the relationships at stake. Friends, sisters, brothers, and collaborators will reconcile after a fight, or keep from fighting in a potentially competitive context, because they need each other. This has been found over and over in studies of chimpanzees and other primates, and has also been demonstrated experimentally: if you make two monkeys dependent on each other to obtain food, they become more conciliatory towards each other and fight less. This is because they have an interest in keeping the peace and fostering good relationships. The EU is the perfect example of promotion of peace by means of increased relationship value. It has managed to create incentives for nations to stick together.

Given that I am used to look at Europe from across the Atlantic, and have family in two countries, national differences are less important to me. They are a source of easy stereotypes and jokes, and there are of course genuine differences, but secondary to what binds Europeans together. I have just sat through the UEFA European Championship of

2016, and despite the fierce competition and strong national loyalties on display, Europeans clearly are one. There is great unity in its diversity, and most fans behaved quite brotherly towards those of other nations. Europe has not reached the same point of solidarity and unification as the USA, with its much longer history of integration and its unifying language, but with time Europe may get there.

Being an academic, my orientation is rather international. I am a professor at Emory University in Atlanta, but also hold a Distinguished Professorship at Utrecht University. As such, I see all those Erasmus students from other countries who study in the Netherlands, while elsewhere I meet Dutch students taking classes in France, Germany, the UK, and so on. All of this mixing of young talent, all those collaborations in the workplace, all those international marriages, guarantee further European integration. While millennials[24] are used to looking beyond their national borders, I am not sure that they fully realize how politically essential the EU is. They seem to take its institutions and open borders for granted, and take full advantage, but I hope they realize that there are forces seeking to undermine what we have gained. These political

24. Editor's note: Millennials are those born approximately between 1981 and 1995, that is, those who reached adult age at the turn of the millennium.

parties feed on anti-immigration sentiments, and stir up national pride. They appeal mostly to older folks outside of the dynamic urban areas, who still have an image of their country as separate from the rest. These attitudes are a relic of the past, and my hope is firmly on the younger generation, which has a much more open-minded attitude towards nationality, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, and so on.

In order to battle nationalist movements we need more engaged politicians: elected officials rather than appointed bureaucrats, who are willing to stand up for EU interests. The tension between local control and collective interest is easy to recognize in American politics where we are used to saying that "everything is local." Similarly, Europe must find a way to enshrine both the local and supranational interests in its political system. Being too tightly integrated will pose grave dangers, as there will always be corners of this vast economic block that feel ignored or exploited and want to get out, whereas at the same time local interests need to be subordinate to the common good.

Nigel Warburton

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Choosing to be European

Each of us has many potential identities, some overlapping, some discrete, many compatible without contradiction. At one level I choose to be, with Diogenes the Cynic, a citizen of no state, but of the world, the cosmos: a cosmopolitan. This is a choice, not a given, and one that cannot be taken away from me by a referendum or any political act. My passport won't ever read 'citizen of the world', but as a matter of self-identity I remain a cosmopolitan, however any bureaucrat chooses to pigeonhole me. At the same time, I can see myself as a philosopher, a writer, a freelancer, red-haired, left-handed, Kentish, from Bexley, English, British, white, middle-aged, and yes, European, depending on context. There are many other aspects of myself I can chose to fore-

ground too. I can give these different features different emphasis in my self-image, and vary the nuances of this self-portrait in relation to whoever is in front of me. I can be cosmopolitan in spirit and European by choice; I could also have chosen to be anti-cosmopolitan, English through-and-through with no emotional ties to Europe, or, as I might say, narrow-minded and insular. At a football match I might want to emphasize my Englishness; while discussing a referendum, I might want to stress that I am European. I can choose to end my world of concern with my immediate family and friends, or perhaps at the arbitrary border of my county or town. Many do this. They may tell themselves that this is not a choice but a fixed feature of who they are; they're wrong about this and are guilty of a kind of Bad Faith, a denial of responsibility.

Hierocles, the second century Stoic philosopher, described the human predicament in terms of concentric circles: at the centre is a circle representing the individual, then a circle which stands for immediate family, then one for the local community, one for the area, one for the nation, and then one for the whole of humanity. Hierocles' aim was to make us think of those in the outer circle as equally worthy of our concern as those within the inner one, to draw that outer circle closer to us, to make it fall within the realm of what matters to us. Despite the claims

of effective altruists and committed universalists, there may well be rational grounds for giving greater weight to local concerns – care of the self, care of the family, and those who are near to us geographically. We are psychologically predisposed to be most affected by those genetically, emotionally, and physically close to us. We can have the most human effect on those we can literally touch. Yet, the dangers of narrowness of vision can be profound, and decisions taken without concern for circles beyond our country's can have long-lasting effects.

So we chose our self-identity, and we shift our emphases over the course of a day and over the course of a lifetime. We don't have a completely free choice here, of course: I can choose to identify with humanity, or even with all animals, or all sentient beings, but if I chose to self-identify as a piece of granite, I've simply made a mistake about what I am. There are facts, givens, and these are harder to change or choose (despite the best efforts of some European politicians to determine what is to count as history). I can't straightforwardly decide to be a Cockney, because I wasn't born within the sound of Bow Bells.[25]

25. Editor's note: 'Cockney' is a term used to designate those born in the East End of London. 'Bow' is one of the districts of this area. The English expression "Bow-bell Cockney" refers to an ancient tradition by which a person could only consider themselves a true Londoner if the bells of St. Mary-le-Bow could be heard from their home.

I can't choose to be black, because my skin is white. I can't choose to be Lancastrian, any more than to be Asian. I can attempt honorary status in some of these classes, or I could adopt features of those who are squarely within those categories; but that is different.

We can for the most part sculpt our self-identities only within a range set by fact. How others choose to identify us is even less within our control. I may choose to see myself as English in the narrowest sense, and believe that I present as English, while others, perhaps might persist in thinking of me as European. I can protest at this, but that might not change very much. My compatriots may want to see me as quintessentially English; whereas I might want to self-identify as affiliated with continental Europe, perhaps because of family genealogy (in my case maternal relatives emigrated from Switzerland in the early Twentieth Century), or simply because I identify with values that I consider European, in contrast with English values.

In short, identity comes from a combination of three features: my own choices about what I wish to foreground about myself; other people's choices about how they see me; and a bundle of facts about myself and my history that I can't change (though I can change my attitude to those facts).'European'

as an identity, exists for me as a choice, as a projection made by others, and as a fact of origin (or possibly adoption).

What it means to be European, and whether choosing that identity genuinely draws in one of Hierocles' concentric circles towards the centre, is a collective choice, and collective choices involve co-operation and interaction. The collective choice about the meaning of 'European' involves an on-going conversation that draws on facts of history, and moral and political choices, and, to some extent, how those who are beyond Europe see the matter. This conversation should aim to articulate what 'European' means, to bring half-recognized features of European values into fuller consciousness, and perhaps to some degree to invent those values: within Europe's history there are traditions of liberal democracy, but also of fascism, and xenophobia. Collective decisions, conscious or otherwise, will foreground different aspects of what it means to be European in the Twenty First Century. More formal collective decisions will also determine whether some of us remain European in a bureaucratic sense. Yet, whatever the outcome of negotiations, no one can take from us the free choice to self-identify as European in spirit nor completely exclude us from the conversation about what that means.

Jean-Paul Sartre famously declared that we are alone without excuse in a world without pre-existing values. I'd rather see us as together without excuse in a world of many competing values. The choices we each make about individual identity, including as European, aren't simple lifestyle choices. They're moral choices about our relations to the rest of humanity, and in particular to those people who live in reasonably close proximity to us. They're choices about our 'in' and 'out' group with far-reaching consequences. How we see ourselves as individual social beings, and how we see ourselves as members of groups, will shape what we become. How nations and regions self-identity, can make the difference between peace and war. Our individual choices of identity may be put under pressure by collective decision-making, but that does not mean that our European identity can be entirely taken away by political action. As a UK national I will probably soon lose my EU passport and my European Human Rights, and these will be real and significant losses. But being European is ultimately a state of mind, a possibility opened up to me by recent history, a personal choice, not something that any treaty could revoke.

Alexander Yakobson

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European identity, European Union and European statehood

The idea of Europe as a historical and cultural entity – an over-arching identity of its various peoples – is, in many ways, a plausible one. It is certainly plausible to me as an historian of Ancient Rome. It was Rome that first brought much of Europe under a single government, eventually conferring its citizenship on all of the Empire's free inhabitants, integrating local elites in its system of administration and law, and exerting a profound and long-term cultural influence on the Empire's diverse population. The heritage of Rome and of the Greco-Roman civilization is still relevant, in various ways, in much of today's Europe. This finds expression, *inter*

alia, in the fact that much of Europe speaks some later version of Latin, and in the Roman Catholic tradition. The Roman imperial heritage has influenced, over the ages, various notions of European unity, including the modern, post-World War II idea of a united Europe now embodied in the EU.

Of course, what has provided the main direct basis for the modern European idea has been neither the Greco-Roman heritage nor any of the later historical and cultural elements, as such, but the modern Western-type liberal democracy, to which all these earlier elements and traditions have contributed. At the present stage of its development, as part of its strong emphasis on equality, liberal democracy tends, beyond insisting on equality between individuals, to promote equality between cultures as well. While the concept of multiculturalism, at any rate in its more radical ideological versions, has in recent years become quite controversial, even its critics (those who remain within the liberal-democratic paradigm) accept today, as a matter of course, a much higher degree of cultural pluralism than was customary in the past.

Hence there is an inherent difficulty involved in trying to define contemporary European identity in cultural and historic terms. Can any such definition apply in equal measure to all the cultural groups – including immigrants and people of immigrant

background – who populate today's Europe? Should not liberal democracy and universal human rights be regarded as the sole true basis of European identity, its moral and, in the broad sense, cultural content? But if so, what makes this identity specifically European, as opposed to being shared by all modern liberal democracies? Moreover, is it really the case that modern liberal democracy itself – which has historically developed in European and European-origin context, and under a strong influence of European cultural traditions – is, in its present form, culturally neutral between the different groups of people that inhabit today's Europe? This question is most often asked a-propos controversies on secularism, gender and sexual orientation – issues crucial both to the liberal democratic system of values and to the different cultures. In practical terms, to take a famous example, should the efforts, in various European countries, to restrict the Muslim veil, and to ban the burka, be regarded as a defence of European values or as an attack on them?

Finding a 'thick' cultural definition of European identity is thus problematic from the standpoint of some – though not all – interpretations of liberal democracy. Such a task cannot be reconciled with radical ideological multiculturalism and notions of 'state neutrality' in matters of identity and culture – for all that a modern liberal democracy must be ready to ac-

cept a substantial degree of cultural pluralism. On the other hand, a 'European identity' based solely on the values of liberal democracy does not, perhaps, provide a common ground that it strong and specific enough. Moreover, and even more crucially, fundamental liberal principles themselves, as they are understood in today's Europe (and other Western-type democracies) are, in fact, far from being 'culturally neutral'. There is often great reluctance to acknowledge this obvious fact in public debates on liberalism, culture and identity, for fear of putting minorities in an unfavourable light, and undermining modern liberalism's claim to universality – i.e. the claim that its principles apply universally and equally to all human beings. But it is in many ways precisely because of Western liberalism's radical ideological universalism, that its norms – certainly the more radical ones characteristic of its current version – are as a matter of fact, in today's world, far from being universally shared.

The French governmental 'Stasi Commission'[26] which recommended, in its 2004 report,

26. Editor's note: The Stasi Commission, established by Jacques Chirac, was made up of 20 members and their goal was to establish and socially regulate the notion of secularity. The Commission's conclusions were published in December 2003. The commission took its name from Bernard Stasi, the State Ombudsman of the French Republic at the time. This report provided the foundations for the French Law on secularity, passed in 2004.

the ban on *(inter alia)* the Muslim veil in France's public schools, speaks of laïcité as 'constitutive de notre histoire collective' and describes its long pedigree: 'It goes back to ancient Greece, the Renaissance and the Reformation, the Edict of Nantes, the Enlightenment, each of these stages developing, in its way, the autonomy of the individual and the liberty of thought. The [French] Revolution marks the birth of the laïcité in its modern understanding.' Christianity is, significantly, absent from this account, coming as it does from the laïque French Republic – but in some of its elements it is unmistakably reflected. The spirit of this account may perhaps be best defined as post-Christian, but with an emphasis on 'Christian' rather than 'post'; it would be useless to pretend that it is neutral between the different religious traditions. The historical-cultural heritage described in this text is common, in large measure, to Europe as a whole; so, specifically, is the principle of a (largely if not wholly) secular state, even in countries that do not practice a French-style strict secularism. But this heritage is not 'all-European' in the sense of being common to all of the people (at any rate, all large chunks of the population) in today's Europe. It is the heritage of the European majority – or rather, a liberal and secular version of this heritage. Thus, any notion of a European identity based on this heritage, cannot

be 'culturally neutral'. It has of course to be open to all, but it is heavily imprinted by the culture of the majority.

The tensions, dilemmas and internal contradictions involved in trying to define a European identity do not in any way imply that there is anything wrong or artificial about this idea. A collective identity is always a complex matter – even an individual one often is; it would be unrealistic to expect to be able to define an identity common to hundreds of millions of people in a way that applies to all of them straightforwardly and in equal measure. But what are the borders of 'Europe' in this context? Surely, not the whole of Europe all the way to the Ural Mountains. What is probably meant is the European Union. The EU, despite its current problems and the drama of Brexit, is certainly a phenomenon of huge importance and significance, in European terms; this justifies discussing its identity, present and future, as a 'European identity', bearing in mind the necessary qualification. What must be on many people's minds, when they talk about European identity, is whether this identity is, or can be made to be, strong enough to provide the basis for a federal European (EU-wide) state. This is seen by many as the natural 'telos' of the European project, while others opposite this idea and wish to preserve the European nation-states, regarding the

EU as (no more than) a close union between them.

My view on this is that if a European state emerges, this will signify not the disappearance of the European nation-state but the emergence of a European nation. This is what it would take for a genuine European state, governed as a genuine democracy and enjoying a genuine popular legitimacy, to emerge. Of course, a sense of common nationhood is not a formal legal entity; it does not materialize, in the full sense, on a particular day. But for a European state and European democracy to come into being, the notion of common nationhood will have to have taken root to a sufficient degree for the peoples of Europe to wish to set up a common state on its basis; the state itself would then foster it over time. Culturally and historically, such an idea is perfectly plausible. None of the tensions and contradictions mentioned above makes it impossible.

Of course, nationhood is a very flexible term. The nationhood envisaged here would naturally be 'federal' no less than the state in question – it would comprise various national and cultural sub-groups. Plurality of languages presents a difficulty, but not an absolute impediment, as is demonstrated by the example of Switzerland. The only thing that matters, in the final analysis, is for the people to regard themselves as belonging to a collective entity signi-

ficant enough for the state based on it to be truly 'theirs'. Germans and Greeks, for example, would have to think of each other primarily as 'us' rather than as 'them'. They would have to regard each other much the same way as Bavarians today regard the people of Hamburg: 'them' in a significant sense, to be sure, for local identities matter a lot, but still, first and foremost, part of the larger German 'us'. Such a feeling among the majority of Europeans may emerge in the future; it is certainly legitimate to hope and strive for this. But it is obvious that presently, the peoples of Europe are not there. Until this happens, it would in my view be a great mistake to try to set up the structures of such a state, without the support provided by common identity and popular legitimacy.

The Deep-Rooted History of Europeans

(Chronicle of the event: "Do Europeans Exist?", which took place on September 27th, 2016 in Brussels and included talks by Juan Luis Arsuaga, Roberto Colom, Francisco Sosa Wagner and Nigel Warburton)

These are troubled times for the European project, with emerging conflicts, distrust and the resurgence of nationalism. Euromind's third ALDE seminar (Brussels, 27th of September 2016), presented by Teresa Giménez Barbat, revolved around the deep-rooted origins of these issues: What unites Europeans? Do we Europeans have a true "identity"? What can we do to rebuild the European house?

We are all migrants

The first speaker was Juan Luis Arsuaga, professor of Palaeontology at the Universidad Complutense de Madrid, and joint director with José María Bermúdez de Castro and Eudald Carbonell of the team excavating the Pleistocene deposits of the Atapuerca Mountains (Burgos, Spain).

The Spanish palaeontologist spoke of human evolution on the European continent. From this profound anthropological perspective, Europe is far from the true centre of human origins: we are a mere "geographic appendage" of Asia, according to our oldest ancestors from Atapuerca (Spain).

Europeans share the genetic structure of a mixed population, composed of 4 main groups: ancient hunters and gatherers, farmers from the Eastern Mediterranean, pastoral peoples from the Russian and Ukrainian steppes, and finally peoples from the North of Africa. The only indigenous species never to have been produced in Europe were the Neanderthals. In fact, the modern sapiens did not entirely replace the Neanderthals: we,

From left to right: Nigel Warburton, Francisco Sosa Wagner, Teresa Giménez Barbat and Roberto Colom

the "modern" sapiens, preserve at least 2% of the Neanderthal genes.

Juan Luis Arsuaga left a clear message at the end of his talk: "supremacist" ideas lack any scientific base, we all belong to a single species that shares a common history, including the modern Europeans.

Ode to the individual

Roberto Colom, Professor of Differential Psychology at the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid approached the problem of European identity from the study of individual human differences.

A member of the advisory board of Euromind, Colom stressed that politics must be evidence-based and called for scientists to have the freedom to study the reality: "To say what we know, not what people want to hear". The cases of Alice Dreger or Thilo Sarrazin, punished for holding ideas considered "heterodoxic", serve as a reminder that academic freedom is essential in the democratic process, and that there must be room for dissenters, as long as they do not pursue values that are inhuman or contrary to individual freedoms.

In his talk, Colom underlined human individuality as the backbone of all identities. Even

from the genetic point of view, there are no two identical "connectomes": each individual is unique, and as Steven Pinker also reminds us, any collective culture may only derive from the individual mind integrated in the brain.

The problem is that these minds are not "blank pages", thus complicating the transformative work of the politician.

For "Europe" to be incorporated into the profound set of individual identities, Colom suggests debating national stereotypes and irrational beliefs about the superiority or inferiority of the groups. In fact, he proposes a scientific study of the national differences: "It is worth it. Any group comparison will reveal far more similarities than differences between the groups".

Europe must be a sum of identities that take shape on an individual level. To be European, yet continue to be Spanish, French or German, and above all, continue to be a unique individual.

Against neonationalism

Next, the law professor, Francisco Sosa Wagner went on to lay the foundations for his presentation in a critique of the notion of "identity" that nationalisms feed off. This former Euro MP believes it

necessary to differentiate between the "traditional" nationalisms that originated in the 19th century that flew the flags of freedom and progress, from the current "neonationalisms", rooted in tribal and reactionary identities, such as the so-called reserved or "historic rights".

Sosa Wagner proposed three major "materials" to build the European identity.

On the one hand, the values "legalised" in fundamental texts, such as the Nice Charter of Fundamental Rights (2000), which continues to be our benchmark.

Secondly, the common European cultural points of reference. Creative geniuses such as Mozart, Verdi, Rubens or Moliere, who influence all nationalities.

And lastly, those "materials" relating to the common European interests: things like quality of life, the single market, or the banking discipline that we can all agree upon.

Europe neither is "nor needs to be" a nation. According to Sosa Wagner, we do not need that "collective passion" that drives the nationalists. The grandiose and heroic epic of the past is replaced by a gentler "ethic", visible in the documents and rulings approved by the European institutions aimed at achieving a common citizenry.

Choosing to be European

Nigel Warburton, philosopher, podcaster and popular British writer, had the task of closing the seminar with a more speculative reflection on European identity.
We all have different identities, but it is not always necessary to choose. Individual choice matters: one can feel themself to be a "citizen of the cosmos" without the approval of a legislative framework.

To understand how the identities are interwoven, Warburton reminds us of the 2nd-century philosopher Hierocles, who imagined different circles capable of encompassing different loyalties: from the small circle of family and friends, to the larger circles of state and humanity, and the upper circle which, ultimately, would include all that exists.

Following Erving Goffman, it's possible to suggest something like a "dramaturgical" approach to human interaction: we are all actors, we act as one character or another, although there are limits: one cannot identify with a piece of granite.

How to sculpt a European identity? Warburton believes the there is more to being European than the EU, and he stresses core civilisation values that all Europeans encompass: from a passion for

From left to right: Francisco Sosa Wagner, Roberto Colom, Teresa Giménez Barbat, Nigel Warburton and Juan Luis Arsuaga

education, to freedom of expression and creed, to a representative democracy.

We are not just "thrown" into the world, as the existentialists suggested, in a world without any pre-existing values. These values preceded us, they are there, and it is up to us to choose between them. To be European is not to choose xenophobia or fascism. Warburton has never felt more European than after Brexit: and he wants to continue to be European.

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