PART I

CONTEXTUAL EUROPE
CHAPTER 2

The Idea of Europe: an Historical Perspective

Introduction

History illustrates that Europe is a dynamic and evolving entity with many faces, multiple identities, multiple expressions and experiences and diversified cooperation forms. Europe is a two thousand year civilisation with a multiplicity of cultures; it is also a socio-economic model and exhibits a unique integration process. The whole of European history is characterised by forms of and attempts at economic, political, military and cultural cooperation, as part of the search for equilibrium between integration and diversity within certain contours. Europe is, however, in the first place a community of shared values, based on values such as the centrality of the human being, freedom, equality, respect for human rights, and acceptance of diversity as an asset, tolerance, justice and solidarity. Europe is also a political project trying to unite people while respecting their diversity. Today, however, Europe is struggling to keep its diversified societal model alive in the midst of complex and interconnected issues of globalisation vs Europeanisation.

In his essay “The Crisis of the Mind” Paul Valéry, the French poet and philosopher, describes the common characteristics of Europe. It is a Europe of the spirit which is shaped by the legacies of Rome, Athens and Jerusalem, has made humanism its foundation and is rooted in Christianity. This means that Europe is a world of historical

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1 Parts of this contribution have benefitted from Andrea Chiarello, European Identity beyond the Nation State. Plurality and Inclusion for a New Democratic Space, Thesis, June 2012, University of Padua.


4 “The Crisis of the Mind” was written at the request of John Middleton Murry. “La Crise de l’esprit” originally appeared in English, in two parts, in The Athenaeum (London), April 11 and May 2, 1919. The French text was published the same year in the August number of La Nouvelle Revue Française (From History and Politics, translated by Denise Folliot and Jackson Mathews, Vol. 10, pp. 23-36.).
references, memories and experiences shared by people. He defines the “Homo Europaeus” as:

a man in whom the European mind can come to its full realization. Wherever the names of Caesar, Caius, Trajan, and Virgil, of Moses and St. Paul, and of Aristotle, Plato, and Euclid have had simultaneous meaning and authority, there is Europe. Every race and land that has been successively Romanized, Christianized, and, as regards the mind, disciplined by the Greeks, is absolutely European.

In his book *The Origins of European Civilisation* Hendrik Brugmans identified two major elements of European civilisation: the active participation to its many spiritual heritages and a series of historical experiences from the Roman Empire onwards. He distinguished three phases: the Empire of Constantine or a Mediterranean Europe, Medieval or Christian Europe and the Europe of the Nation-State. It is in the broader space of today’s Europe that the original virtues of the spirit of Europe, namely democracy, dialogue, respect for rights and harmonious development should be understood, sharing a common heritage and rooted in Christian values.

### I. Classical Origin

The term “Europe” has many origins and interpretations. For some authors it derives from the Greek word “eurus” meaning “wide”; some others refer to the dualism in the Acadian language between “asu/acu” and “erib/erebu”, where the first means “to rise” and would indicate the dawn, i.e. the East and Asia in particular and the second means “to enter” and stands for the sunset, so the West and specifically Europe.

In Greek mythology “Europa” was the daughter of Agenor, the Phoenician king of Tyre. The God Zeus felt in love with her, transformed himself into a bull and brought her to Crete, where he assumed human form and had three sons by her. It can be argued that the opposition between the West and the East was illustrated in the Classical Age by the Greek and the Persian world, where the first was a symbol of democracy and freedom, opposed to the absolutism and despotism of Persian rule. According to Herodotus, the geographical boundaries of Europe were defined by the Mediterranean Sea in the south, the Sea of Azov and the River Don in the east, and Gibraltar’s

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Pillars of Hercules in the west, which was also considered the limits of the human civilisation.

Following the historical path of the origin of Europe, authors such as Mikkeli and Braque argue that the Roman Empire cannot be defined as the first European superpower. According to Mikkeli, the principal aim of the Roman Empire was to control the main commercial routes, extending its territorial power to the southern coast of the Mediterranean and parts of Asia. However the impact of various philosophical and religious currents made it difficult to define Europe ideologically. Brague follows the same line of reasoning, asserting that the constant confrontation with “the Other” during the Roman Era, represented the most significant element on which a European common cultural heritage could be understood. This perspective conceives the European culture not as a fixed set of values, but in terms of “cultural transmission”. The myth of the “abduction of Europa” underlines the fact that its origins were constructed from an appropriation of what belonged to others, moving from the East to the West.

It is clear that in the Ancient Age, Europe was not perceived as a political community with unifying characteristics, but rather as a geographical area with unstable borders. In spite of some mythological common origin, none of the citizens of the Roman Empire defined himself/herself as a European, preferring instead the image of Rome as caput mundi. After the schism in 395 AD, the term “Europe” became more and more used to identify the western part of the Empire, whose identity was strongly shaped by Christianity.

II. A Res Publica Christiana in the Middle Ages

The period after the fall of the Western Roman Empire, which coincides with the enormous Arab expansion, was characterised by cultural fragmentation. The Frankish attempt to build a united political community is considered by many authors as the very origin of Europe. This term was used in the Middle Ages to create a sense of solidarity in addressing a common enemy, the struggle against Islam to preserve Christianity as the religion of Europe.

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7 Ibid., p. 18.
During the battle of Poitiers (732 AD) the word “Europeenses” (meaning “Europeans”) was used to refer to Charles Martel’s coalition army against the Arabs.\textsuperscript{11} However, there are some criticisms to the alleged unifying role of the Frankish Empire, as it did not cover the whole of Europe and it co-existed with the remaining Roman territories in the East. For some authors, the Carolingian period cannot be defined as the starting point of the European integration process and would be better termed as the end of a specific historical era, characterised by the attempt of Charlemagne to combine the classical heritage of the Romans with Christianity.\textsuperscript{12} The Crusades need to be understood in this historical context. The beginning of the crusading period is generally attributed to Pope Urban II’s calling of the First Crusade at the Council of Clermont in 1095 to an armed pilgrimage to the Holy Land to defend Europe from the Muslim invasion.

One of Christianity’s important contributions to European unity was from the Catholic Church. Its aim was the creation of a community of independent states, under the spiritual guidance of the Pope. It promoted a policy of international mobility of students and lecturers, with Latin as the vehicular language. In the 9th century the term “christianitas” stood for the whole territory inhabited by Christian people, with a focal attention towards universalism. Pope Innocent III (1198-1216), one of the most powerful and influential popes of the Middle Ages, affirmed the existence of a Christian territory (“terrae Christianorum”), with specific borders (“fines Christianorum”) and one single “populus christianus”, under different political communities, but with the common need to defend its identity against non-believers.

A crucial historical moment in the identification of Europe with Christendom was the fall of Constantinople to the Ottomans in 1453. It resulted in a clear separation between the Christian Europe and the Muslim Asia. Although the fragmentation caused by the schism between the Orthodox and the Catholic Church was reduced, a sense of unity in the continent was not yet present. The crusaders went fighting for Christendom and not for Europe.

Still the importance of Christianity in Europe needs to be put into its proper perspective. It was an Asian religion, born in the Middle East, with a universal message that transcended European borders. Nonetheless it gave Europe its territorial grounding and became the symbol of European unity against the Islamic East.\textsuperscript{13} In Pagden’s words,

\textsuperscript{12} See for example Mikkeli, H., \textit{op. cit.} p. 27.
\textsuperscript{13} Delanty, G., \textit{Inventing Europe. Idea, Identity, Reality, op. cit.}
it means that “an abducted Asian woman gave Europe her name, a vagrant Asian exile gave Europe its political and finally its cultural identity; and an Asian prophet gave Europe its religion”.

To summarise, it is difficult to state that the idea of Europe in the Middle Ages assumed a strong political connotation; it was instead used as a vague geographical expression which covered the cultural and religious common heritage of Christianity and the Classical Roman Age. The unification of the continent was therefore merely an answer to external threats and internal common interests were not strong enough to favour a process of actual integration.

III. A Process of Secularisation towards a European Civilisation

History shows that the idea of Europe assumed many different connotations throughout the centuries, according to political and cultural contexts. In the humanistic culture of the Renaissance during the 14th and 15th centuries, the word “Europe” regained a strong meaning, recognised as a common reference by the intellectual classes in most European countries. From the beginning of the 16th century Christianity gradually lost its central role in the conception of Europe. Both the outbreak of religious conflicts with the Protestant Reformation challenging the role of the Catholic Church as European cultural unifier, and the discovery of the New World with the colonisation of American territories, led to a process of secularisation. The ties with Christianity were loosened and the affirmation of a European civilisation emerged, exhibiting a high level of intellect and a differentiated culture.

The Protestant Sebastian Münster describes Europe in *Cosmographia Universalis* as the most fertile and cultivated area despite its relatively small dimensions. The actual conceptualisation of a “European civilisation”, however, was made during the Enlightenment (17th-18th century).

From the political point of view, the Peace of Westphalia in 1648 marked the beginning of a new European era, where the balance of power between sovereign states came to be a central element. The term “Europe”, detached from its religious connotations, came into common usage among political decision-makers. Moreover it constituted the
basis of political projects that aimed to achieve an internal peaceful organisation of the continent.

On the cultural side, Europeans believed in the universal value and superiority of their civilisation. It was seen as a process leading towards a virtuous and ideal state\(^{18}\) and finally to eternal peace.\(^ {19}\) The highest expression of civilisation was represented by the nation-state, which was to be legitimised in the context of “methodological nationalism”.\(^ {20}\) The idea of different yet equally valuable forms of society was not taken into consideration, and so other populations were labelled as “barbarians” who needed to be civilised by having European values imposed upon them. This concept of civilisation is thought to be the secular substitute for Christendom as the unifying element for the continent. Norman Davies notes that in the early phase of the Enlightenment “it became an embarrassment for the divided community of nations to be reminded of their common Christian identity; and ‘Europe’ filled the need for a designation with more neutral connotations”.\(^ {21}\)

Another contribution recognising the European common culture came from the French philosopher Voltaire. He argued that, in spite of political fragmentations, Europeans share the same religious background and the same civil principles. Strong focus was put on arts and natural sciences, which create close ties among nations and result in a “République littéraire”. This was, in his view, the decisive element that made Europe the most civilised continent in the world. It should be added, however, that the feeling of belonging to the same cultural community was shared only by the closed circles of intellectuals with the same classical education, without much influence on ordinary people; for them, the privileged reference was to their closer local community and the idea of Europe was seen as abstract.\(^ {22}\)

**Conclusion**

As previously mentioned, the idea of Europe has mainly emerged out of a constant confrontation with otherness. However, this process is more complex and cannot be reduced to a mere clash or rigid distinction from the “Other”. Hobson argues that Europeans have always had intense interaction and exchanges with the Eastern countries. In fact,

\(^{18}\) Wilson, K. and J. Van der Dussen (eds.), *op. cit.* p. 64.

\(^{19}\) Kant, I., *Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch*, 1795.


some elements of European culture are originated and borrowed from outside Europe. It is worth reminding that the mathematical models used by Copernicus were invented by Ibn al-Shatir and that the typical British tea-drinking comes from the Chinese tradition.23 The distinctive feature of European culture is often the appropriation, acculturation and reworking of elements of other cultures.

The fundamental ambiguity accompanying European identity-building throughout the centuries has been the constant effort to provide its identity with a kind of substance,24 referring to an alleged common geographical belonging, ethnic origins, or to a common cultural heritage. This effort has often implied the demonisation of the “Other” and the refusal to build constructive forms of dialogue with them, looking instead for unity in the form of a common opposition to an enemy. History shows however that every attempt to purify Europe from the presence of an alleged hostile “Other” has always turned into tragedy.

Understanding the historical trajectory of how the idea of Europe has evolved and how its identity has built over the years into a common cultural heritage, is fundamental to interpreting today’s scenarios and to making policy assessments for Europe’s future. Some of the cultural specificities of Europe can therefore be related to: 1) the rescue of history from memory to focus on ideas that travel irrespective of borders; 2) the move beyond assimilation and multiculturalism towards interculturalism to management of diversity and living with differences; 3) the acceptance of change so that dialogue and mutual listening becomes the driving social force and 4) the learning from humility so that Europe can draw from its religious and non-religious traditions and from its Christian roots when learning how to practice humility. We consider these characteristics major components of the European spirit.

In order to valorise these components, a cosmopolitan perspective of the European integration process might be helpful in recognising plural and multifaceted identities in Europe, accepting its constitutive otherness and benefiting from its diversity. Stimulating intercultural dialogue25 as an instrument and objective of building cohesive and sustainable societies might therefore create new forms of relationship.

between the Self and the “Other”, leading towards a democratic and inclusive Europe.
CHAPTER 3

Identity-building in Europe

Introduction

Identity and identity-building have been examined by numerous scholars from various disciplines and perspectives. Many have contributed to an understanding of the complexity and the dynamism of these terms and have even offered theoretical instruments to deal with their changing realities. However identity remains an open concept, increasingly shaped by growing interdependencies and transformations in the current international system. The globalising world is characterised by some asymmetry between the growing extra-territorial nature of power relations and the continuing territoriality of the ways in which people live their everyday lives.

The European Union can be perceived as a unique but complex system of governance with a policy mix of supranational and intergovernmental elements. After many centuries of rivalries and wars among European countries, the end of the Second World War paved the way for a peace-building process of integration. This process has followed a “neo-functionalist” step-by-step approach very much embodied by Jean Monnet, envisaging spillover effects from the economy to the political area and beyond. We are convinced that the only way of making people identify with Europe and build a sense of belonging without trying to replace national affilliations or marginalise regional or national identities, is the development of a community-driven political project, embodied in a set of shared values and common principles. Such a political consensus might give coherence to its actions, legitimacy to its institutions and inspiration to the citizens of Europe.

I. Concept of Identity

Identity is related to the way individuals reach certain self-awareness, in relation to their family, social or ethnic group, language, culture, religious affiliation and political commitment. It is often expressed by the idea of “belonging”. Therefore psychological and social factors play an important role in creating that awareness. As identity always implies both a strong interaction between the individual and the group and an affirmation of a group as distinct from other
groups, its political implications are fundamental. This is especially the case in the different ways identity can be experienced or exploited.

However, identity determination is not a constant invariable process, but changes over time according to criteria such as birth, family, language, religion, territory, etc. Nowadays this has become more complex with the heightened mobility of people and the trespassing of visual and virtual borders; it has also become more disturbed by the growing individualisation and vagueness of the moral norms within society. In short, given the growing interdependent globalisation trends in today’s world, a shift has been taking place from a more static definition of identity to a more contextual and dynamic understanding of identity.

Such a relational identity requires an open attitude towards “the Other”. It requires a desire to listen to them and to induce comprehension of and benefit from dialogue with them. However many people are still afraid that intercultural encounters result in a loss of identity and create insecurity. Therefore, to overcome the perception of “the Other” as a potential threat, it is necessary to build the sense of belonging as close as possible to the citizen and to valorise local communities and cities as living places of intercultural conviviality. Subsequently, a spillover effect can support the building up of identities, characterised as belonging to a group differentiated but sharing a basic set of common values and interests.

II. Concept of European Identity

In search of the identity of Europe we have to accept that Europe presents a whole range of peoples and thus a great diversity of languages, cultures and religions. In theory and in practice Europe should be seen as an added (enriched) value to our multiple identities. The European identity relates to a community of shared values such as solidarity, the rule of law, respect for diversity, attention to the person and the human dignity. Debates about European identity have intensified in the context of EU enlargement and the EU Constitutional Treaty. Although the motto “unity in diversity” is generally seen as best describing the aim of the EU, opinions differ widely as to how it should be understood.

The point of departure of most discussions on European identity is the idea that a political community needs a common set of values and references to ensure its coherence, to guide its actions and to endow them with legitimacy and meaningfulness. With the fall of Communism in Eastern Europe in 1989 and the founding of the “European Union” in 1992 with the Maastricht Treaty, endowing the European Community with new and stronger competences in a wide range of areas (e. g. in the
field of foreign affairs, security and defence), two questions gained renewed urgency: the definition of EU borders and that of the political legitimacy of the Union in the eyes of its citizens – the “glue” that unites all Europeans and keeps the Community together. However, despite fundamental differences, preconditions for the emergence of a European identity are linked to the strengthening of democratic participation at all levels of decision-making, the valorising of the European dimension in education and culture and achieving social and economic sustainable cohesion.

Still the nation-state continues to be the predominant reference for European citizens despite the growing Europeanisation of identity-building. The Eurobarometer surveys show that EU citizens continue to identify first of all with their own country. A relatively low political participation and weak attachment poses, of course, a legitimacy problem to the EU.¹ Moreover, in the current period of dramatic transformations of societies within the globalising context, new (and different) political actors are shaping the world scene, undermining traditional forms of national statehood.²

III. Models of European Identity-building

Literature presents different models of European identity-building with various policy consequences.

1. Europe of cultures

The Communitarian view stresses the Europe of culture as a family of nations anchored in a common history and culture. It emphasises that European identity has emerged from common movements in religion and philosophy, politics, science and the arts and argues for a stronger awareness of the Christian (or Judeo-Christian) tradition. Therefore, they tend to exclude Turkey from the ranks of possible future member states. “United in diversity” is taken to refer to Europe as a “family of nations”. On this basis, it is high time to define EU borders. It is evident that if what is considered as an original “culture” is a very complex phenomenon mixing a multitude of human traditions, characters and behaviours, then the way a group tries to express its own particular “cultural identity” is very often focused on one aspect of that complexity, because it is considered as the most essential element which reveals it. The selection of such an element is not always rational, but it finds its source in the recent history of the group, in sentiments and

reactions born from a particular social or political situation, and also very often in what still appears to be presenting a problem, or a question raised when facing an uncertain future. However, opponents argue that this view is a form of “Euro-nationalism” that leads to exclusionary policies within European societies (as regards non-European immigrants) and the polarisation of global politics, with the “clash of civilisations” prophesied by the scholar Samuel P. Huntington as its worst possible outcome.

2. Europe of citizens

On the contrary, the Liberal and Republican view argues for a common political culture, or civic identity, based on universal principles of democracy, human rights, the rule of law etc. expressed in the framework of a common public sphere and political participation, a Europe of citizens or “constitutional patriotism”. They believe that cultural identities and religious beliefs should be confined to the private sphere. For them, European identity will emerge from common political and civic practices, civil society organisations and strong EU institutions. It is said that cultural identities, religious beliefs etc. should be confined to the private sphere. According to this view, European identity “United in diversity”, will emerge from the common political and civic practices of citizens sharing the same political and civic values, while at the same time adhering to different cultural practices. The limits of the community should be a question of politics, not culture. The liberal-republican view is often criticised for what is seen as the artificial distinction between the private and the public, the subjective and the universal. Democracy and human rights, according to critics, are not universal values, but themselves spring from specific cultural traditions. Problems related to cultural differences are ignored, rather than dealt with. Furthermore, solidarity and emotional bonds in societies can only result from cultural feelings of belonging together, never from purely abstract principles.

3. Europe of encounters

Constructivists believe that a “European identity” can only emerge as a consequence of intensive civic, political and cultural exchanges and cooperation. As identities undergo constant change, European identity would be encompassing multiple meanings and identifications and is constantly redefined through its relationships with others. According to this view, “United in Diversity” means a participation in collective

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Identity-building in Europe

political and cultural practices. It would be wrong and impossible to fix EU borders.

This view, according to critics, overemphasises people’s ability to adapt to a world in flux and underestimates their need for stability. Too much diversity can eventually lead to the loss of identity, orientation and coherence, and can therefore undermine democracy and established communities. However, despite fundamental differences there are a number of factors that are seen by most as preconditions for the emergence of a European identity: politics: the strengthening of democratic participation at all levels and more democracy at the EU level; education and culture: strengthening of the European dimension in certain subjects (especially history), more focus on language learning, more exchanges etc.; and social and economic cohesion: counteracting social and economic differences.

IV. Process of European Identity-building

The identity of the European Union has predominantly been defined politically. According to the Treaties, the EU is founded “on the principles of liberty, democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law” (Article 6 TEU). Fundamental disagreements emerged in the work on the EU Constitutional Treaty about a reference to “God” or “Christianity” in the preamble. It now only refers to the “religious heritance” of Europe. In accordance with the principle of “unity in diversity”, it shall promote the diversity of its cultures, while “bringing the common cultural heritage to the fore” (Article 151 TEU). Furthermore, the EU must respect fundamental rights, as guaranteed by the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental freedoms and the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the Union.

As regards the accession of new members, any European state can apply for membership, while Europe and its borders are left undefined (Article 49, TEU). The Copenhagen criteria of stable and democratic institutions, a functioning market economy and adequate administrative structures, are to be interpreted in this process of European identity-building and possible membership. The prospect of Turkey’s possible EU membership, as well as issues related to globalisation and immigration, have further added to the identity debates. Relatively low political participation and weak attachment pose a legitimacy problem to the EU. However, there is little agreement on how identification can be strengthened.

The recent developments in European identity-building very much refer to the EU legal context. The treaties from 1951 onwards, up to the Treaty of Lisbon, highlight the different contexted approaches which
were used to strengthen the idea of Europe and European identity. During the first decades of the European integration process the only reference to the identity issue was made to distinguish Europe from other international political actors. From the second half of the 1980s, Europe has been conceived more and more as a community of shared values and a political space for active citizens, embodied in the Treaty of Lisbon and implemented in various EU programmes.

1. The first years of European integration

The end of the Second World War paved the way for the process of European integration. The French Foreign Minister Robert Schuman stressed in his Declaration on May 9th, 1950, that durable peace in Europe could only be achieved if the age-old rivalry between France and Germany was eliminated. The first period of an economic driven integration was thus characterised by a strong pragmatism and a “step-by-step” strategy aimed at building up a common economic space.

In this context, little space existed for debating about identity. The preamble of the treaty that established the ECSC in 1951 expressed the conviction that “the contribution which an organised and vital Europe can make to civilisation is indispensable to the maintenance of peaceful relations”. The pursuit of common economic interests would create “the basis for a broader and deeper community among peoples long divided by bloody conflicts” or, as the Treaties of Rome suggest, “lay the foundations of an ever-closer union among the peoples of Europe”.

The idea of Europe that emerges from the first treaties is deeply influenced by the historical tragedies of the First and Second World Wars. Economic areas were privileged for their cooperation, in accordance to the neo-functional approach. It was nevertheless always the objective to develop the process of integration beyond the European Economic Community. However, in the early years, most attempts to go beyond the mere economic orientation of the European integration process failed.

2. The Declaration on European Identity (1973)

The concept of European identity was introduced for the first time in the European political agenda with the “Declaration on European Identity” (Copenhagen, December 14th, 1973). It was said that cooperation among European peoples represented a real need to effectively face the current global threats. The action proposed was oriented to “defend the principles of representative democracy, of the rule of law, of social justice – which is the ultimate goal of economic progress – and of respect for human rights. All of these are fundamental elements of the European identity”.

A number of articles from the Copenhagen Declaration are illustrative for this changed (at least rhetoric) focus on European identity-building. Very interesting from this perspective is Article 3:

The diversity of cultures within the framework of a common European civilization, the attachment to common values and principles, the increasing convergence of attitudes to life, the awareness of having specific interests in common and the determination to take part in the construction of a United Europe, all give the European Identity its originality and its own dynamism.

Article 4 reaffirms the open nature of the Community, leaving space for further enlargements to peoples who share its same ideals. Another important aspect is the external dimension of identity, i.e. Europe’s place and responsibility in the international landscape. Article 6 recognises that global problems can no longer be solved at a national level and consequently that Europe is to “speak increasingly with one voice” to other countries and regional areas.4

It has already been stated that in the first decades of integration, the issue of European identity was raised mainly in its external dimension, as an attempt to collocate the new supranational actor within the world context, or as a common project, founded on the search for “l’intérêt communautaire” in the coordination of national policies. But from the Single European Act onwards, the existence of a community of citizens was to be taken into consideration.

3. Europe as a community of citizens

The first attempt to push European integration beyond the notion of a common market dates back to 1976 with the Tindemans Report. In the chapter, “Europe of the Citizens”, a community of citizens was proposed by raising European awareness through visible (symbolic) measures (e.g. the unification of passports, the vanishing of border controls, the common use of the benefits of the social security systems, the accreditation of academic courses and degrees, etc.). In 1984 the European Council of Fontainebleau set up the Adonnino Committee to address issues related to a “people’s Europe”. In spite of their ambitious goals, only some (modest) proposals were adopted to increase the sense of belonging to the European Community (e.g. the European flag, a unified passport and the anthem).5 In the same year, Altiero Spinelli advocated a more ambitious idea of the establishment of a political

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union, which wasn’t, however, translated into a more political commitment.

The Treaty of Maastricht (1993) represents a milestone in the European integration process. It instituted the establishment of a “European citizenship”, a legal status that guaranteed a set of rights to individuals possessing the nationality of one of Europe’s member states. At last, a path had been forged that was headed towards an ever-closer relationship between the European institutions and their citizens. European identity was no longer exclusively addressed to the external dimension, but acquired a more specific internal meaning. It was no longer simply an instrumental usage for coordinating national policies. Instead it created a constitutional and founding value of the concept of a “Europe of citizens”.

Still the debate on the existence of a European demos, which often refers to “the peoples of Europe” remains open to various interpretations. The construction of a single European subject is an ongoing process thanks to the direct application of EU norms to its citizens. The democratic base is no longer the representation of “the peoples of the European States brought together in the Community” (art. 189 TEC); in fact “Citizens are directly represented at Union level in the European Parliament” (art.10.2 TEU).

The Convention on the Future of Europe produced a draft for a Constitutional Treaty which expressed an intention to increase the level of participation from European citizens in the decision-making process. Despite its failure following the negative outcomes of the French and Dutch referenda in 2005, the Treaty of Lisbon (2009) has finally followed the same focused line on citizenship. Next to the principle of representative democracy, which is at the basis of the functioning of the Union (Art. 10.1 TEU), Article 11(1) states that “the institutions shall, by appropriate means, give citizens and representative associations the opportunity to make known and publicly exchange their views in all areas of Union action”. The method chosen to put this general principle into practice is the “Citizens’ Initiative”, as formulated in article 11(4):

Not less than one million citizens who are nationals of a significant number of Member States may take the initiative of inviting the European Commission, within the framework of its powers, to submit any appropriate proposal on matters where citizens consider that a legal act of the Union is required for the purpose of implementing the Treaties […].

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According to Article 24 of the Lisbon Treaty, the details and the conditions for an effective implementation of the Citizens’ Initiative have been discussed by the Council and the European Parliament within the so-called “ordinary legislative procedure” and a specific regulation has been adopted. The ECI was finally launched on May 9th, 2012 with the registration of Fraternité 2020.

4. The role of cultures and EU founding values

The aspect of the cultural and religious heritage of the European peoples is introduced in the treaties as an element of differentiation rather than unification. However, to imagine a Europe beyond the well-worn path of institutional, economic and political integration requires a value driven foundation of the search for the European identity. This is underlined by the words of Karel Verleye, one of the founders of the College of Europe in Bruges:

It is excluded that a European citizenship or a European commitment will be stimulated with the population, when no ample consideration will be given to a number of forgotten or undervalued factors in the construction of the new Europe, such as the cultural, regional, ethical, historical and spiritual dimensions.

European identity-building within the EU legal context is not based on a common linguistic nor cultural nor religious origin; the focus is instead on the necessity for EU institutions to “respect the equality of Member States before the Treaties as well as their national identities” (Art. 4.2 TEU). The Treaty of Lisbon includes the Title XIII on culture and clearly defines the role of the Union in cultural matters in its Article 167. It affirms that “The Union shall contribute to the flowering of the cultures of the Member States, while respecting their national and regional diversity and at the same time bringing the common cultural heritage to the fore” (Art 167.1). Furthermore, “The Union shall take cultural aspects into account in its action under other provisions of the Treaties, in particular in order to respect and to promote the diversity of its cultures” (Art 167.4).

A clear sign of the EU attitude is the lack of reference to Europe’s Christian roots in the Constitutional Treaty. Despite a strong opposition from the Catholic Church, the preamble reads as follows: “Drawing inspiration from the cultural, religious and humanist inheritance of Europe, from which have developed the universal values of the

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inviolable and inalienable rights of the human person, freedom, democracy, equality and the rule of law (...). The same formulation has been adopted within the Treaty of Lisbon, adding the intention “to deepen the solidarity between their peoples while respecting their history, their culture and their traditions”.

In recent years, significant progress has been made in recognising the importance of fundamental rights within the European Union. The Amsterdam Treaty (1997) introduced for the first time a specific reference to human rights. The Treaty of Lisbon reinforced this perspective:

The Union is founded on the values of 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 common to the Member States in a society in which pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality between women and men prevail (Art. 2).

It also stipulates that

the Union shall respect fundamental rights, as guaranteed by the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms signed in Rome on 4 November 1950 and as they result from the constitutional traditions common to the Member States, as principles of Community law (Art.6.2).

Moreover the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union has been given the same legal value as the treaties. Its binding value commits the EU to building a political community within which human rights have the utmost importance as the ultimate reference. It illustrates a relevant qualitative shift in European integration, leading towards an inclusive community where the citizens can be the real protagonists.

Conclusion

The historical path of the idea of Europe shows that European identity-building is the result of a mixture of numerous elements coming from different contexts, set in a process of cultural appropriation and a continuous reworking of a dialogue of civilisations. The evolution of the European identity issue within the main European treaties highlights the fact that it was only in the 1980s, when the importance of the political legitimisation of EU institutions was clearly perceived, that the

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European Commission started engaging in the cultural sphere. It defined EU founding values and officially embraced the universal human rights paradigm. The relative failure of the EU in its attempt to make people identify with the European project is partly due to the state-like “top-down” strategy and the lack of a genuine post-national identity.

Prospecting a sustainable European future today requires more advanced forms of supranational and multi-level governance, capable of managing complex and interconnected economic and political issues while strengthening a common sense of belonging. It is therefore important to understand the necessity for European identities to be inclusive and intrinsically plural, far from the exclusive national patterns of identity, nationality and citizenship. It would be undesirable, and rather impossible for the EU to return to the historical path of nation-state building. Europe does not represent an actual European “demos”; its borders are not fixed and it contains many different peoples and cultures. That’s why the “Unity in Diversity” motto represents some big institutional and political challenges in today’s Europe.

Cosmopolitanism as a new way of conceiving cultural otherness opposes both hierarchical subordination and universal equality, recognising instead the existing (and undeniable) differences between peoples and giving them a positive value. Territorial boundaries, social groups and cultural barriers are transcended. The ultimate reference remains “the worldwide community of human beings”¹⁰ where everyone is seen as both equal and different in order to expand the concept of the public beyond its national borders, opening it up to an emerging European space.

CHAPTER 4

Europe’s Challenges and Responsibilities in a Globalising World

Introduction

What is Europe’s relevance today? What is its cultural heritage, its values and norms, its societal model? The answers to these fundamental questions will shape the European future and the building of our European societies. Is Europe still an inspiring idea(l) of a value-driven society, worthwhile of pursuit? Themes such as the frontiers of Europe, European citizenship, cultural diversity, and the role and purpose of Europe in a global perspective all require a vision of what Europe is and should be.

Europe is at a cross roads between its past, present and future. We are now confronted by a number of (internal and external) challenges to the European model of socio-economic cohesion and cultural and regional diversity. Nonetheless, Europe still has a mission and responsibility in the globalising world.

Europe is at a crucial intersection in its history and at a decisive moment in the process of European integration. History illustrates that Europe is a dynamic and evolving entity with many faces, multiple identities and diversified cooperation forms. The recent enlargement (or re-unification) of 10 new member states reinforces this image.

Europe has an appointment with its destiny. Its model of society, based on fundamental human rights, culture as a vehicle of emancipation, on sustainable development and socio-economic cohesion, and on a multilateral vision of the world order, has been put under stress and pressure. In other words, we are experiencing a confrontation between the confusing actual European (political, economic, cultural and institutional) reality and Europe’s global responsibility in the context of an ever-increasing globalisation.

The challenges are multiple and multi-dimensional within and outside the EU. It requires a new mobilising myth for Europe, i.e. a project for further European integration that guarantees institutional governing structures and financing mechanisms for European internal and external solidarity. Only such a vision may inspire the commitment of its citizens (and certainly of its young people), and strengthen the
European role in the globalising world. However, recent political signals have not been very hopeful. Discussions on the European Constitution, the debate surrounding and methods being used to create the new Commission, are already very telling. And today’s European approaches to policy and its answers to the global financial and economic crisis, demonstrate tension and incomprehension between the member states.

This chapter consists of three main sections: the first section briefly describes the historical context of Europe’s future; the second section examines five main challenges to the European societal model (i.e. globalisation, Europeanisation, identity and specificity, culture and perception) and the final section presents three major European tasks for the future (i.e. the quest for meaning, favouring European citizenship and responsibility at the global level).

I. Historical Context: Europe at the Cross Roads between Past, Present and Future

Hendrik Brugmans, the first rector of the College of Europe, wrote many years ago:

Europe is not any longer an abstract concept, neither is it a mere geographical, difficult confining area. It is a culture circle/environment, a community. Now it is on the way to become an ordered society, with citizens who take up civil responsibility for the whole, although this is not yet clear for many. Transition times as ours are characterized by extra-chaos. The hope is focuses on a change in continuity. But a radical change

Europe has to draw from the many lessons it has learnt from both its distant and more recent past. The whole of European history is characterised by forms of, and attempts at, economic, political, military and cultural cooperation, which attempted an equilibrium between integration and diversity within certain contours. However, Europe is first and foremost a diversified but coherent societal model shaped by vague geographical frontiers, fundamental values of freedom, solidarity and respect for the other, its common cultural heritage and shared historical experiences. In short, both the historic and recent development of the current European integration process is marked by an ongoing search for equilibrium between integration and cohesion on the one hand, and maintenance of diversity and regional and cultural identity on the other hand, within certain governance structures and institutions.

This radical change in continuity is not an objective in itself, but a process that prioritises the objectives of peace and sustainable development both within and outside Europe. The main lesson we can draw from the past is that Europe’s reality and responsibility is to a multiplicity, a plurality of diversity, with positive and negative
consequences. The solution is neither a dogmatic Euro-centrism nor a cultural relativism but a critical European-centrism based on what James Tully excellently describes as practical identity; that is the aspects of citizens’ identities that matter to them, transform our societies into multiple minorities contending and collaborating with a general ethos of forbearance and critical responsiveness and make our institutions diversity-aware.

II. Challenges to the European Model of Socio-economic Cohesion and Regional Diversity

The present European debate is animated and confronted by internal and external challenges. They shape the current and future wellbeing of Europe, i.e. the sustainability of the European model of society as a macro regional reality with global responsibility. I distinguish five fundamental challenges:

1. Globalisation

A first important challenge refers to the process of globalisation. This process leads to a radical decrease in the political-economic power of states in the management of socio-economic activities, an increasing domination of democratic societies by transnational plutocracies and to a slow depersonalisation of economic relations, which undermines our societies. Economic globalisation strongly influences territorial re-organisation and the process of state formation. The new regionalism causes a retreat of national states and a re-orientation of regional policy towards a more competitive approach between regions, and consequently leads to more active regions within Europe. Europe is however not an exclusive economic space, but is firstly a community of shared values, which is being forced to revisit itself as a result of the current globalisation debate.

This globalisation trend is increasing the tension with culture. Next to its economic and political dimension, globalisation is also a cultural phenomenon with consequences for cultures, peoples and persons. The intensification of communication systems and international mobility flows leads towards the kind of global culture that the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu has warned of. Globalising cultural industries isolates men from their historically developed local, religious, moral and societal reference frames and leads to a further individualisation and commodification of values and human relations.

The homogenisation of cultural production and consumption patterns goes hand in hand with an increase in cultural assertivity and a growing consciousness of cultural differences. A kind of paradoxical process takes place. While in some, globalisation strengthens cultural assertivity...
and participation to global culture, a lack of comprehension of and respect for cultural differences has led others to develop a distrust of other cultures, and has increased the possibility of a clash between cultures and civilisations (Huntington). But it has certainly strengthened the clash of ignorance and increased stereotypical behaviour.

The impact of globalisation on cultures, societies, human relations and persons should be understood from a polycentric and pluricultural perspective. It implies that cultural differences are accepted and respected within a certain pattern of values without the domination of a-priori superiority by any one culture. This requires a more compassionate globalisation or a cosmopolitan humanism.¹

The greatest challenge is to look for governance structures that both create zones of common interests and shared values, as structures for civilised confrontation. Such structures should offer economic, social and cultural wellbeing, with a guarantee of internal and external solidarity and accessibility for all to the opportunities and advantages of globalisation. Certainly in a period when extra-national and extra-territorial transfrontier concepts and governance structures are gaining in importance, this represents a real challenge to global political governance. Currently the international community is lacking global political institutions and common values, which could replace a culture of competition, distrust and fear with a culture of cooperation, peace and mutual respect.

A second important impact of globalisation is the accelerated development towards an informed and knowledge-driven society. The accelerated use of new technologies during recent years has produced enormous productivity increases, as well as a progressive replacement of labour by capital. There is a real danger that these changes could lead to a further fragmentation and duality of the labour market if technological innovations are not complemented with social innovations. The rethinking and revalorisation of labour and education as a fundamental condition to full integration of the citizen into society is underway. The conclusions of the Lisbon Special European Council of 23-24 March 2000, for making Europe the most knowledge-driven economy by 2010, or the objectives of the Bologna process, for realising a European university space, are obvious indications of this.

Another important development in the globalisation context is the revival of the civil society in institutionalised and non-institutionalised

The civil society is a mixture of social forces with diverging agenda, means, scope and power. It is being perceived more and more as the place for answers to the challenges of economic globalisation and is becoming increasingly more involved in local, regional, national and international decision-making processes. The civil society supports the construction of social capital. The realisation of social common goods creates confidence and results in solidarity, which binds people and communities. People and citizens become more active and responsible at the grass roots level and are inspired by mobilising projects within formal and informal groups and communities. Although defining and protecting the common good is the responsibility of the state, from the local to the global action field, the active civil society has become, next to the market and the state, the third pillar of societal development at all governance levels.

2. Europeanisation

As well from the globalisation process, the Europeanisation process also shows clear internal and external tensions, which endangers the specificity of the European integration process, and European unity in diversity. The important challenge today is how the EU as a sui generis integration process, based on a common cultural heritage, common historical experiences and common and shared values, can maintain its specificity and particularity.

Firstly, there is the large societal debate concerning the values and vision of how the individual is related to his surroundings. The functional integration of thinking and acting, based on the principles of rationality, specialisation, competition, etc., has led to economic welfare within the European Community; but its underlying value patterns are increasingly coming under more pressure, because of the lack of person-driven answers in its complex institutional structure. Furthermore, the globalisation process undermines the European model and shakes its values of solidarity, good citizenship, tolerances and respect for diversity. The lack of direction, underpinned by political leadership, is leading to indifference and frustration and fundamental uncertainty as to how a rich Europe is to be further developed.

Within this general societal debate, the European model of unity in diversity is threatened by a number of specific challenges at the social, financial and political level: The European social model, i.e. the cohesion between economic and social objectives and between economic growth and social justice, is threatened. The danger of a

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reduction of the individual life world and of cultural identity is real; The further development of the European integration process is undermined by modest financial support for carrying out European policies in some specific fields; There is a democratic distrust from the citizen towards society and the state and a clear lack of enthusiasm for the European Union. Europe is no longer inspiring as an ideal in the globalisation context. Enthusiasm for the largest single enlargement in terms of people and number of countries, may have been genuine in the 10 new member states on and around May 1st 2004, when it was celebrated with some festivities, but has since cooled down rather quickly. According to the recent Euro barometer, the confidence of the new Central and Eastern European member states has decreased to a mere 40%. In the old member states it is a bit less than 50%.

3. Identity and specificity

The debate concerning the concept of identity in Europe and of a European identity is crucial for further direction of the European integration process. To what extent is Europe part of our identity? The answer to this question is linked to the definition of European, national and regional identity in relation to nation, state and citizenship.

As stated in Chapter 2, identity refers to a particular value-sharing, a community of values which are decisive in the construction of an identity. This is formed at different levels by a process that changes over time according to criteria such as birth, family, language, religion, territory, etc. Nowadays this identity-building has become more complex and is now contextualised as multiple identity-building, as a result of people’s heightened mobility and the trespassing of visual and virtual borders. It has also become more disturbed by the growing individualisation and vagueness of the moral norms/ethics within society.

In focussing on the European dimension of identity, we have recognised the presence of a whole range of peoples, expressing a great diversity of languages, cultures and religions throughout Europe. Therefore we insist on a departure from a unilateral determination of identity on the basis of birth, language, religion or territory because such a reduced interpretation often implies intolerance and distrust against other peoples. We have referred to this European dimension as a community of shared values that is part of our collective memory. However, for many, even more today, this is only a vague part of their historic memory.

Still we should embrace the idea of “Europe” as an added (enriched) value to our multiple identities. Identity does not have exclusive characteristics; multiplicity is the key characteristic of the European
identity: multiple identities, containing compatible partial identities. This is certainly true for cultural identity, which binds and unifies countries, regions and groups of persons. They are the shared memories and shared expectations (the common subjective interpretation) of each group’s own history and determines their future cultural identity.

The political meaning of the importance of identity lies in the fact that mutual respect for uniqueness can constitute the basis for more and certainly better collaboration and solidarity, both within and outside of the EU. Cultural and regional identity is therefore an important factor for further integration and a source of inspiration for the strengthening of the European model of society. It implies that the development of a European identity depends on the influence of common European institutions (i.e. the community structure) on daily life as well as on the commitment of the citizen to the European project. This is not only the task and responsibility of politics, but mainly of education. (See Chapter 13.)

4. Culture

A fourth challenge to the European societal model is presented by the role of culture. We start from an anthropological definition of culture as heritage, creativity and way of life. This point of departure is clearly applicable to European culture, which is not a mythical story or untouchable concept, but a dynamic interaction of historic, spiritual, intellectual, material and artistic characteristics and attitudes. These characteristics illustrate the multiplicity and wealth of European cultures, cultural expressions and traditions.

Culture is firstly a source of inspiration for further integration and socio-economic development. It certainly can encourage greater commitment in the citizen to the European project. Culture can be integrated in the economy and polity, not as a marginal factor, but as an intrinsic added value in societal development. Culture unfolds itself within society as a dynamic combination of spiritual, moral and intellectual elements, which are offered through education and formed through lifelong learning. Cultural multiplicity is also a source of wealth and strength. No culture can be missed out in the European cultural mosaic. Europe is pre-eminently a space of cultural diversity, but respect for cultural diversity does not mean a mere nationalistic or regional reflex/behaviour. The respect and stimulation of cultural diversity are a guarantee for further European integration and a renewed cooperation with other cultures.

Within the European context, culture is permanently placed in a tense relation between further market integration and the maintenance of cultural diversity (e.g. the book, film, audiovisual sector, etc.). The
history of EU intervention in the cultural sector is characterised by a number of phases; from a political-rhetoric discourse, via a formalistic discourse, to finally a pragmatic discourse of cultural cooperation programmes; from negative to positive integration and to a communitarian integrism of the decisions of the Court of Justice; and from a focus on European cultural identity and unity, to a focus on cultural diversity.

Within this context, intercultural dialogue is of great importance. Intercultural dialogue can be instrumental in softening and avoiding the (negative) consequences of the globalisation process (i.e. the issue of minorities, migration, poverty, etc.). A dialogue between peoples and cultures can be constructive if we accept a number of common and moral values as points of departure (i.e. human dignity, respect for differences and diversity, solidarity, etc.). In the current framework of the tension between (economic) globalisation and internal and external solidarity, and between different religions, such a dialogue can be a vehicle for conviviality and multiculturalism in which cultures influence each other without destroying each other or clashing with each other.

Europe as a global player has an important voice in this dialogue, primarily from the value of its socio-economic model. The EU has made the first vital institutional steps under former president Romano Prodi to favour such an intercultural dialogue in the framework of the European-Mediterranean partnership, with its overall good neighbourhood policy.

5. Perception

Our final challenge is related to the perception of Europe and its reality in practice. Europe is being confronted with a general orientation crisis. There exists a stereotypical perception of the EU as a slow, non-transparent administration, with complex decision-making procedures, which shows a lack of determination and vigour at the vital moments of political decision-making. Recent statistics tell us that less than half of the population of the member states participated in the last European elections of June 2009. That this image is rather negative also comes from ignorance. Few people realise that the European Parliament is a fully-grown legislator, with European laws and regulations in many policy fields, which determine national policies in many fields.

This faulty perception reveals a clear problem of communication. The European jargon and language in the discipline of European studies doesn’t always lead to a clear and simple message. For the media, Europe remains an isolated subject; what is no longer true in the daily reality. There is a growing interconnection between regional, national and European dossiers and European issues/problems are becoming more complex for the non-specialist journalist. For many politicians
Europe remains a distant subject, sometimes a scapegoat for unpopular measures but mainly an important financial source for national dossiers. However, most of the time one is kept in ignorance of Europe’s positive contribution in many domains. And often the (national) rhetoric of the member states is transparent and neglects the European common good. Europe is not selling itself very well; it communicates insufficiently with a rather technical and hermetic language and a complex bureaucracy.

In short, only a correct perception and the delivery of a positive image can lead to respect from the population and European partners. They are important for the legitimacy of and the involvement of the citizen to Europe.

III. Europe’s Task and Responsibility in the Globalising World

This third section outlines the three major tasks for Europe in the globalising world.

1. Quest for meaning

We have to continue working towards a better Europe, one that is more democratic and social, which has respect for its multiple cultures. The European dream must be inspired by a purpose that goes beyond the existing economic, political and social frontiers. The question remains to what extent can a common vision, founded on global common goods, be developed in a context of economic globalisation and cultural relativism. Problems of social inequality and poverty, as well as non-accessibility to the advantages of globalisation, take important forms from an economic and cultural perspective at the global level.

In short, the present situation refers to the need for an inspiring vision and a strategy that embodies such a vision. Europe cannot be sold as a technical project, but requires purpose and mobilisation. Structures and institutions don’t constitute aims in themselves, and are only a means to achieving a sustainable model of society, based on the rule of law and opportunities, which can serve as an example.

Europe is tasked with being an actor for change and has a responsibility to revitalise its original project, and therefore has to mobilise the citizen, and particularly young people. How? By investing in knowledge, by creating a European industrial policy, by guaranteeing social protection, by stimulating a European democratic space and mainly by favouring the involvement of citizens and young people in the European political project. That is what the European and international
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information and training centre of Ryckevelde has been doing for nearly 50 years. In general, it is the mobilising task of genuine education.

2. Favouring European citizenship

Karel Verleye, one of the founders of the College of Europe in Bruges, wrote:

It is excluded that a European citizenship or a European commitment will be stimulated with the population, when no ample consideration will be given to a number of forgotten or undervalued factors in the construction of the new Europe, such as the cultural, regional, ethical, historical and spiritual dimensions.

There is a need for a large societal basis to support further European integration – the signs of which are not always hopeful. (European) Politics and the (European) administration do not always make an inspiring example. An overt support for more extreme tendencies in Europe may lead to intolerance and an undermining of the European societal model. Therefore, a drastic increase in the commitment of citizens and young people to the European project is necessary if Europe wants to be truthful to its destiny.

It is essential that with a bigger EU and greater political cooperation in fields such as social policy, employment, asylum, immigration, policy and justice, foreign policy and general security and defence policy, citizens are capable of expressing their cultural/regional identity within this changing environment. A further integration of the European continent requires continuous attention being attracted to traditional social, regional and cultural identities. The fundamental wealth of its diversity is not only geographic, but also institutional. Therefore, it is important that respect for diversity is encouraged and reflected in the institutions, the democratic processes and the policies of the EU. Furthermore the future of Europe is not the exclusive responsibility of its governments, but is also the responsibility of its citizens and their organisations. In order to valorise different dimensions of the cultural diversity and diverse forms of civil participation in Europe, various associations need to promote active European citizenship.

In short, the reference terms for a European citizenship require an inspiration that exceeds the existing economic, political and social boundaries. This insertion can give sense to a vision in which Europe may evolve to a multiple citizenship. New concepts and multi-level political structures are being developed that can give form to the complex European governance structure and make it transparent for the citizen.
3. Europe’s responsibility at global level

The globalisation of our increasingly unipolar world means Europe needs to claim a bigger role in global governance structures and needs to start speaking with one single voice. Europe has a responsibility to conduct a more daring and coherent common security and foreign policy and, subsequently, needs to actually favour a culture of peace, genuine dialogue, solidarity and sustainable development. This may not appear to be easy, given the present international developments and diverging viewpoints. Yet a modest institutional step towards this has made by the Treaty of Lisbon, which created the role of High Representative of Foreign affairs of the Union, who is also the vice-president of the European Commission.

With a courageous foreign policy Europe can grow to be a strong and trustful partner in a multilateral world order. The strategy of the European Commission of a good neighbourhood policy (i.e. “a ring of friends”) is seen as an impulse towards such a broad international policy framework. This strategy should avoid the enlargement of the Union creating new divisions between the Union and its neighbouring countries. The European neighbourhood policy proposes to actually and financially strengthen the links of the Union with these partner countries, through a series of new cooperation structures.

Conclusion

We can now draw some conclusions. Europe is confronted with both the need and moral responsibility to maintain its own model of integration and diversity, within a strongly changing world system. This implies that Europe should defend its values and principles of solidarity, tolerance, democracy in the limited but open dialogue between cultures and peoples both within and outside of Europe. This requires a change in mentality, a broad imagination and proactive thought and action from the outset, but also political leadership and particularly an education that focuses on learning responsibility. However, the question has to be raised (even though the answer is unclear) whether Europe within a further unifying European economic space can guarantee an acceptable common institutional basis in which states, regions and communities can live diversely (with a guarantee of internal solidarity) and whether Europe can offer an open societal model within the process of further globalisation (a guarantee of external solidarity versus the European fortress).

The challenge facing further European integration is the search for a new equilibrium, between diversity and unity, in a globalising world. The European model should take into account the economic, historic,
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social and political changes which are taking place at the international level, but must still be faithful to its principles of internal and external solidarity. “Repenser l’Europe” implies recognition of a radical increase in the level of complexity within our societies, a further development of a multiple citizenship within multiple identities and the elaboration of multi-level governance. There is also the need for an enlarging and mobilising vision, which has the capacity to raise new spirit and regained enthusiasm in the citizen. Furthermore we must recall and build upon the enthusiasm and faith in the European project that was first embodied by the Founding Fathers of Europe.

In short, Europe needs bridge builders who can concretely complete the rhetoric of the European story, promote the European ideals of peace, unity in diversity, freedom and solidarity and mobilise young people towards the European model of society. The role of education is therein fundamental. In this model, new forms and places of dialogue, active citizenship and cooperation can develop outside of the existing institutionalised structures of representative representation. The European civil society becomes emancipated and develops opportunities in the globalising society through which persons, peoples and cultures, within and outside Europe can meet peacefully and respectfully.