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## **ОБЕДИНЕНИЕТО НА ЕВРОПА КАТО УЧЕБЕН ПРОЦЕС**

## **THE UNIFICATION OF EUROPE AS A LEARNING PROCESS**

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**Abstract:** Further shaping of the European Union presupposes that the participating states are **united** prior to any decision-making about each new step. However, such unity often fails to materialize on account of the self-interests of the individual states. Consensus is not always reached even on basic issues: each state is intent on retaining as much sovereignty as possible whilst at the same time reaping as much benefit as possible from European integration (Neurohr, 2008).

Currently, there is little sense of **enthusiasm** for Europe to be found amongst people living here. In fact, the future is regarded by most of them with scepticism and uncertainty. However, it is generally recognized that developments in world politics are making it essential that the European states close ranks if Europe is to be competitive with other continents in politics and business. This should already be mandatory material in schools (Moser, Bonfadelli, 2007). In fact, it is becoming increasingly apparent that the unification of Europe is proving to be a difficult learning process for Europeans, and is not just passive registration of a chain of political and economic measures in a unification process which involves other actors rather than ourselves.

As we are all affected, the time has come to realistically elucidate the problems which have arisen in the unification process so far. But what exactly are these?

**Key words:** European Integration, Social contract, social values, social structure

Further shaping of the European Union presupposes that the participating states are **united** prior to any decision-making about each new step. However, such unity often fails to materialize on account of the self-interests of the individual states. Consensus is not always reached even on basic issues: each state is intent on retaining as much sovereignty as possible whilst at the same time reaping as much

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### **I. Mistakes made in Integration so far: the Second Step before the First Step**

Now the draft of a EU constitution has been rejected by several referendums, we know that previous experience has failed to convince many Europeans that the integration of European states into a larger community of states will bring them more advantages than disadvantages. The advantages are hoped for in particular by those Europeans whose states can expect improvements to their economies and social issues via financial support from the EU. Many citizens in the richer EU states fail to see why they should have to support other states (Parker, 2008, Vukovic, et. al, 2008).

Scepticism or even rejection are the consequences of a mistake made in European policy so far: The initiators – admittedly often idealists – believed that all Europeans would welcome political pacification and economic cooperation between the European states because they would profit from integration. However, this is not the general attitude as yet. On the contrary, people feel that their social security and their acquired affluence are endangered. In the course of political and economic integration, it has been omitted to spark off the necessary **rethinking process** with the objective of **spiritual** integration and the creation of a new European identity. Such a rethinking process should have been the first step towards integration, and political and

economic integration should have been the second (Meyer, 2004).

Several things have occurred which also present the educational systems of the European states with new problems. It cannot be left to schools to allow themselves to be uncritically instrumentalized for justifying and propagating the objectives of the European treaties. Perhaps rulers in pre-democratic times would have been able to realize this, but with democratic parliaments and governments, this kind of “pressing into service” is not acceptable.

### **II. Only a “Social Contract”?**

The European Union and the other affiliated European organizations may have achieved a “**social contract**” which works on the principle of “I give you so that you give me back” but it is not like Rousseau’s contract, which foresees “each citizen placing his person under the supreme direction of the general will, and thus becoming an indivisible part of the whole” (Mestmäcker, 1997:15, [authors’ own translation])<sup>1</sup>. The fact that, on the free market which the EU has created, competition is more often driven by national egotism than by mutual moral principles, has caused tears to appear in Europe’s new fabric. Such competition could, of course, also be an incentive to enhance performance in the cultural and educational systems, but as yet this path has scarcely been followed. With regard to “doings and dealings”, each state is mainly concerned with its own interests. “The expected conflicts on community level can be explained by the fact that constitutions are involved, which have been formed by different historical experiences and are thus democratically legitimated” (Mestmäcker, 1997:15, [authors’ own translation]).

When J. J. Rousseau claims in his “Social Contract” “that sovereignty can never be disposed of because it is the

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<sup>1</sup> J. J. Rousseau’s work “The Social Contract” is one of the most important Utopias of the Enlightenment

exercise of the general will” (Mestmäcker, 1997:15 [authors’ own translation] and sovereignty continues to lie with each individual national state and not with the new state of “Europe”, there will continue to be differences of opinion between the states involved – and all of them will invoke democracy.

It may be strategically correct to create European unity in small steps, for example by beginning with economic, political or legal integration, to then go on to consider a union of culture and education should this be desirable; however, from a psychological viewpoint, this is not the correct way.

### III. Europe’s Enduring Values

Many Europeans, including many young ones, have become dissatisfied with the fact that the current European discussion is limited to the economic norming, the political stability and the military security of the European continent. They realize that a European **identity** as the self-image of what constitutes a European cannot find expression in this constricted “handling” of Europe but could in the enduring values which are characteristic of Europe and which have made the European continent so attractive to people from other parts of the world (Feichtinger, Csáky, 2007; Lermen, Ossowski, 2004). Such values have been formed over a period of more than 2000 years. They have undergone change yet have lost none of their worth. People from other continents have always desired to make these values their own by learning them in Europe; by enjoying a European education.

We shall not attempt to provide a complete summary of these values here and now, but would like to elucidate somewhat on their relevance.

- The symbiosis of Ancient Times, Christianity and Enlightenment has resulted in an anthropology which views the human being as an individual, a unique and inimitable being that determines itself through the freedom of reasoning and freewill, able to plan its life as a mission and

a creative act. In this respect, the human being is its own sovereign, as well as that of the communities which it joins or creates. Human dignity is inviolable since in the eyes of Christianity, a human being is a creation of God and thus legitimized through its creator. Even if it loses its outer freedom, it retains its inner freedom.

- The dignity of a human being is not dependent on the degree of individual maturity but is unqualifiedly valid in childhood and youth. In the European tradition, education is not regarded as a mode of “biological maturation” or the imprinting of a behavioural schema but as a development of the person.

- The worth of a human life never varies, even when that life has limited capabilities owing to sickness. Humanity demands that deficiencies in the life development of a human being be overcome as far as possible with the support of fellow human beings.

- The freedom and dignity of the human being must not be discriminated against on grounds of origin, gender or affiliation to a people, a religion or an age group. The affiliation of human beings to groups must be protected by tolerance, and criteria of fairness must enable an orderly social cohesion. Responsible human beings must be allowed to decide by themselves on matters of affiliation to a state and other forms of social order.

- Fundamental rights form the basis of human life in all its forms and stages including mankind as the sum of all human beings, for example, freedom of thought and belief, of speech and publication, of association with others, the right to choose one’s life partner, the right to free choice of employment, the right to live where one wants, and freedom of mobility. These basic rights bind human beings in all social roles (whether superior or subordinate, young or old). All people are equal before law. The right to justice is always irrespective of personal or social status.

- Personal good and common good must be harmonized via law and reason

and may not be mutually detrimental. The ability to function of the social structure in which an individual life is integrated delineates the border of self-determination (autonomy of the individual).

- The ethnic determination of personhood remains constant although the meaning of life must be continuously redefined, cleared of one-sidedness and adapted to the requirements of changed life tasks, whereby scientific research and artistic creativity have a particular competence.

- The characteristics of the European identity are not rigid but are constantly revitalizing themselves, and some characteristics mature with growing insight and experience to become completely new ways of life. This is demonstrated for example by the emergence and development of democracy as the most suitable form of political life for enabling human freedom and dignity. Since democracy is based on the delegation of co-responsibility to all politically mature citizens, it is necessary that the ability to undertake co-responsibility must be elaborated and retained through life-long learning. Therefore, the demand for "Education for all" rather than only for a few, corresponds to the postulate of equality, justice and dignity for human beings.

All of this, including politics and business, and also law, is a **cultural** issue. Culture has manifested itself in the course of many epochs of human history in the arts and in the sciences, in styles and works which the whole world and humankind has recognised as being specifically European. "The Europeans have good reason to be self-assured about their own cultural riches. At the same time, they are faced with the obligation to introduce this legacy to the competitive variety of cultures in order to create a more humane world – one which is not simply subservient to the universal tendencies of a global economic structure" (Catholic Academy in Bavaria, 1997 [authors' own translation]).

#### IV. Europe: More than a Geographical Entity – A New Social Structure

A completely **new social structure** has emerged in Europe owing to decades of migration, which will continue as long as the original European population continues to shrink (Triandafylliou, 2001, Tibi, 2000). The ethnic groups that were once concentrated in one specific country are now all intermixed. Thus, people of Turkish nationality, members of all the peoples of south-eastern Europe and a growing number of former Russian citizens (including a large number of Jews) will remain in Germany – something that would have been inconceivable five or six decades ago (Neumann, 1995). The old rule that a state consists of only a single people of the "same blood" no longer applies. A nation is now the sum of all its citizens rather than a "biological collective". However, it is a fact that traditional ways of thinking and patterns of behaviour which are associated with ethnic groups continue to live on, and may collide with each other in a host country. Mentalities are mainly rational structures but they also involve irrational components. It used to be said that they form the character of a nation. This is true in as far as the European states have very different views of Europe, and collective stereotypes play a key role here. This is particularly the case with reference to terms like "People" or "Nation" – even more so than "Europe". Usage of the same terminology does not create a sameness of meaning. One only has to think of the very different interpretations of the word "Nation" in the European states. For the French, France is "la grande nation". France's long history of being a centralized state strengthened the national identity much earlier than, for example, in Italy and Germany, where the cultural and political characteristics of the different regions played a greater role. The Italians view "Nation" as the force which binds the very diverse regions of Italy into a whole. In Germany, "Nation" was perverted by the National Socialists and continues – 50-odd years after the end of the Hitler Era – to have a negative connotation.

And yet: if there is agreement about the fundamental values of Europe, then it is that Europe is a frame of mind and much more than a geographical area. One example: Although Israel and Turkey are geographically in Asia, they are more accustomed to the European mentality. Contrarily, we should ask ourselves whether particular regions in south Russia have not long since developed Arabic or Asian mentalities on account of their continuing Islamization, even though these areas are, geographically, a part of Europe (Mattei, 2010; Gower, Timmins, 2010).

In the course of the process of European integration, the yardstick which was applied by EU bodies when co-opting new EU members was to all extent counterproductive: only economic stability was deemed the criterion for membership, and not, for example, a long association with the European culture and tradition (von Dietz, 2007; Sedelmeier, 2006).

What a one-sided or even “primitive” picture of Europe is being painted in our work in the field of education when students are taught the criteria for differentiating between European states!

This really needs thorough discussion in Europe’s centres of education. It will emerge that Europe can only make sense in the long-term if it is regarded as a **mentality** which cannot be geographically delineated. Economic and political cooperation is necessary and useful, but it is insufficient for creating spiritual ties as a basis for trust and peace. Of more effect is that, for example, in Turkey, close contacts with German academics have existed since the time of Kemal Atatürk. These have been strengthened recently through the founding of a German Turkish University in Ankara and Istanbul (the Memorandum of Association was signed on 30 May 2008). Several decades previously, there had been a group of German émigré scholars (amongst them, Wilhelm Röpe, Ernst Reuter and Alexander Rüstow), who were promoting a German and European mentality during the Hitler era, and that with great success. Europe as a mentality can

achieve much if the schools of European states outside Europe are also opened up to indigenous students, creating more belief in European values than diplomats or economists are apt to do.

## **V. Muslims in Europe: Between Naturalization and Ghettoization**

Three of the approximately seven million immigrants in Germany are **Muslims** and their numbers are growing. They form, for example, the third largest religious community in Germany (Studienbüro für Tourismus, 1997, Tibi, 2000).

Their families tend to have many children. This will make itself noticeable in the educational field and will change it in the long-term in all those industrialized European states in which Muslims have been settling in search of a “better life”. The immigrants are not only seeking work and economic security but also protection from political oppression. In the long run, Muslims will influence the integration of Europe, including the models on which integration orientates itself. For example, it will not be a matter of course, as it was in the past, to connect to the tradition of a Christian occident (Remien, 2007). The “European mainstream population” and the immigrant Muslims “belong to two different ideologies” and “are very different from each other”; it is “necessary that both civilizations strive towards consensus for a peaceful coexistence” (Tibi, 1997:12, [authors’ own translation]). Muslims do not only bring their religion with them to Europe but also their type of civilization, their educational tradition, their lifestyles – all of which have been formed over centuries. As soon as they try to retain their identity in European host countries, which it is their right to do so, they quickly “fall between all stools”, at any rate when they collide with the traditional European identities.

When the Turks (most of them Muslims) were asked to come to Germany during the economic boom years, they were welcome. However, the indigenous population regarded them as temporary visitors. In the interim years, they have been living for

decades in the corresponding states, have had their families come over to live, have mainly assimilated or have formed “subcultures” involving their own economic, cultural and religious facilities. When Muslims conglomerate in cities in particular streets and districts, they frequently develop a feeling of solidarity and power – also vis a vis open or hidden racist and xenophobic tendencies. Under the notion of “religious freedom” and “tolerance”, these communities demonstrably develop their own style of religious worship. For instance, the Muezzins call people to prayer over loudspeakers in a similar way to which Christian churches ring their bells, both of which are loud and clear for all inhabitants. The original inhabitants (including those who describe themselves as being non-religious) do not take kindly to such innovations in the district where they live). However, “what is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander” and that also applies to education; Just as Christians support their own nurseries, schools and further training facilities, Muslims are now starting to do the same. As indigenous children live together with the immigrant children (at school, too), a new kind of coexistence and communal thinking is developing. If Muslim children and youths are ostracized, they also segregate themselves by seeking conflict with those who “want nothing to do with them”. The Ghettoization which is already recognizable in the living conditions of a part of the Muslim community is also reflected in the mindsets of the individuals: a militant stance towards those surroundings which are denying them social integration. In the long run, this will result in ghettoization– it is not only Kreuzberg, Berlin, which is known as “Little Istanbul”.

As a counterbalance to xenophobia, Bassam Tibi perceives a “cultural self-denial”, which is pervading all of Europe (Tibi, 1997:12 [authors’ own translation]), particularly amongst those individuals who are no longer aware of their own European values or who think that traditional values should be suppressed or neutralized out of tolerance towards different-minded people.

In contrast with this, Muslims tend to openly embrace the values of their religion. Perhaps their courage in displaying their commitment is a sign of their self-assertion in this new, secular environment called Europe. But perhaps it is also proof of the vitality of their religion. Christians could follow this lead and re-discover the values of their own religion. One thing is certain; the more Muslims there are in Europe, the stronger the demands of their religion will be in the active shaping of public life, and the more secularization, including the relinquishing of both Christian and Muslim ways of thought and behaviour in schools, will meet with resistance. In the meantime, Muslims who have been born, brought up and educated in Germany are increasingly opting to become teachers. The number of Muslim confessional schools is growing, to which Muslim parents will prefer to send their children rather than the often religiously neutral schools which abound in European states.

According to Tibi – a spiritual ruling class of new European Muslims will be animated towards an “esprit de cours” – known in Arabic as “asabya” - and will read the “lack of values”, the indifference and the spiritual neutrality as a “sign of the demise of the West” (Tibi, 1997:12, [authors’ own translation]). “The Europeans are mistaken if they believe that they could earn the respect of others with their self-negation” (Tibi, 1997:12, [authors’ own translation]).

Integration perspectives such as these are presumably as yet unknown to politicians, who assume that everything is under control as long as economic prosperity and political concordance are achieved. European politics are unrealistic in as far as they are not yet taking the spiritual and religious changes and the moral changes, which have occurred through migration, seriously enough as factors of change. This also means that European politics do not refer adequately to the changes to the education system which have also been brought about by migration. The dialogue between the cultures –

including that of the Muslims – is being marginalized.

Just like other migrants, most of the Muslims wish to become European citizens and to fully abide by European law. However, this means that the Sharia can only be obeyed in their private lives but may not be allowed to influence basic law. Muslims must also fully abide by education law and respect the fact that Europe has its own civilization and culture, just like the Muslim world from which they have come. European culture manifests itself in numerous national cultures. These are related to each other and are not a cultural “hodgepodge” but are rather an expression of a **cultural pluralism** – something entirely different from today’s vaguely defined “multiculturalism”. Tibi differentiates quite rightly between these two forms (Tibi, 1997:12).

Democratic “civility” is much more than a product of a bureaucratic act, such as the granting of new citizenship. “Citizenship does not simply consist of a passport but manifests itself much more in the belonging to the “common weal” in the sense of citizenry/Communaute des citoyens” (Tibi, 1997:12, [authors’ own translation]). This means too that new citizenship requires a European and national school education which “makes the new young citizens aware of their new homeland” [authors’ own translation]. Since Europe is scarcely conceivable without the influence of Christianity, Muslim children in European schools ought to at least be formally acquainted with Christianity as one of Europe’s roots.

For “migrants to become locals” (Tibi, 1997:12, [authors’ own translation]), privileges for ethnic minorities should be avoided, since the call for privileges forces migrants into a new ghetto, rather than integrating them into the European community of citizens.

## **VI. Globalization of Europe: A Learning Problem**

Right back to the 1960s (see the fundamental work by Schneider, 1959), books on European **Education** have concerned themselves with Europe only in its form of an autonomous, self-sufficient continent. In the meantime however, Europe’s situation and the resulting European awareness have completely altered. Emanating from Europe – as an economic area – together with North America and the East Asian industrial countries, a process of globalization is gaining momentum, i.e. an interlinking of states, worldwide cooperation in business, trade and transport, an opening up of regions which only a few decades previously had had practically no international contacts at all. The media report daily on geographically remote regions of the world in the same ways as they do on neighbouring states, whereby a new global ubiquity is becoming apparent: the simultaneousness of unexpected events in parts of the earth which are far apart from each other. Globalization is recognizable in simple things such as the similarity of clothes fashions, eating habits, political and economic tendencies and also a certain assimilation of goals, contents and methods in education systems. Such global levelling has its advantages and its disadvantage and is caused by the media informing everybody all over the world about new lifestyle trends. Big Mac, Hollywood films, Tamagotchis are – with the exception of a very few remote and untapped corners of the world – known practically worldwide. In the large cities of the world, a monoculture has emerged due to city life exacting the same human behaviour and the same lifestyle from city dwellers everywhere. This levelling is causing the intrinsic values of many national and regional cultures to be lost. However, it appears to be a process that is now inexorable, due to the worldwide progressive technicalization of civilization. Even politics are exacting this process: Just as the states of Europe are uniting to become a union, so are the industrial East Asian states uniting to become the ASEAN pact, the Africans becoming the OAS

(Organization of African States) or the states of Latin America in order to be better prepared to meet world competition and cooperation than they would be as isolated individual states.

Although these new power blocks are primarily motivated by economic, political and military objectives, they are producing a new **spiritual** and **moral** solidarity, which is concentrated in the UNO and its numerous sub-organizations. As the world has become a “**Global Village**” owing to the rapidity of information exchange and transport and the ability to overcome big distances, or all the countries have the feeling they are “all in the same boat” and have to pull together as a “Family of Mankind” because of the new threats to the world from the environment and changes in power relationships – if they all want to survive peacefully, traditional patterns of differentiation – such as allocation to a certain continent – will not be feasible. Europe can no longer claim hegemony over other parts of the world, as it did when these were relatively under developed, and can no longer regard itself as the hub of the world. The new world has a polycentric structure and in both American and Asia there are nowadays centres of power as strong or even stronger than those in Europe. The European continent can certainly no longer lay claim to being the centre of the world for science and research, education and culture, which it apparently was right into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The focal point of trade and industry is moving increasingly from the Atlantic region to the Pacific region, which is on the way to eclipsing its rival Europe. As of yet, we have paid too little attention in our work in the educational field to all of these aspects, even though the economic recession is confronting us with the new polycentricism and globality. A “de-westernizing” of the world is already fairly advanced (Kraus, 1997, in an interview for WDR radio in the series “Zeitfragen – Streitfragen”).

Europe’s impact on world development is far less strong than it was in earlier epochs, and is no longer deemed a model

or a standard setter because nowadays different world standards apply. The spiritual energies now flowing into European life come from regions of the world which used to model themselves on Europe. Consider for instance the not inconsiderable influence of India and East Asia with methods of meditation and self-discovery. Movements like communitarism and “political correctness” are coming in from the USA, and a strong sense of religiousness (sometimes, although more latent) in the form of fundamentalism, from Arab-Muslim states. All of this is forcing Europe to completely redefine its identity. It is still rather difficult for us to admit to ourselves that we Europeans will, in the future, have to learn in other regions of the world, just like Asians, Africans and Americans used to learn from us. Learning is now becoming an **exchange** task. The European education systems can learn for example from the upcoming industrial nations of East Asia. More recent comparisons between the schooling systems of the different continents have shown that the German one does not currently achieve the same standard of performance as do Japanese and Korean schools (particularly in subjects such as mathematics, natural sciences and foreign languages, where performance can be correctly measured). Negative findings in comparisons of this kind are still to some extent dismissed with the claim that East Asians place too much emphasis on measurable performance and that students’ are subjected to unhealthy stress and antisocial peer competition. This is however more of a defensive excuse. Not only in Germany but also in other European states, a new emphasis on performance is more or less a unanimous point on the reform agenda, since global comparisons have shown that, for example, Asia’s education system has played an active part in pre-programming Asia’s economic upswing (Pöggeler, 1993:382f).

## **VII. A More Distinct National Identity is Required**



For the time being, the integration of immigrants in Germany and in the European culture is being made more difficult because the new citizens are not being shown distinctly enough nor having it explained to them what Germany's "national identity" is. After more than half a century following the end of Hitler's dictatorship, it is no longer necessary to continue to keep a German national identity hidden away, as though it were something that is forbidden or offensive. But it is not enough to presume that at least the children of the immigrants will discover all of this for themselves. Currently, the percentage of immigrants attending courses in adult education is marginal. Immigrants must become a specific target group in the promotion of education. Immigrants will only gain a correct picture of Germany if they are informed of Germany's achievements in culture, art, science and technology. For some immigrants, this would incur a new way of thinking which would not come easy to them, e.g. with regard to the fundamental value "tolerance". We often hear about how intolerant Germans are towards foreigners, including in the classroom. However, what about the tolerance of different groups of immigrants towards each other and towards Germans? Learning how to put tolerance into practice is an important new teaching focus in educational facilities.

There is a large deficit here, for example with regard to objective information about Christianity as the basis religion of Europe. Immigrants should realize that anti-Christian tendencies and also anti-Semitic tendencies (Christianity being founded on Judaism) in their countries of origin are mistakes that may not be made in democratic states. The indigenous population should not misinterpret tolerance as a denial of the Christian foundations of the European culture.

In curricula and guidelines for the future, there could be more emphasis on the aspect of both national and European identity as there has hitherto been, and this as a mandatory guiding theme in as many taught subjects as possible. Here, there is

also a deficit to be made up because many teachers were not particularly confronted with the topic of "identity" in their own schooldays and teacher training. Right-wing radicalism and xenophobia amongst young people would probably never have become a public topic had the state – as the education provider – itself placed more emphasis in schools on the concept of "nation" rather than leaving it to political fanatics to do so.

It is unfortunate that the renewed agenda of national identity in schools is being brought into discredit by nationalistic tendencies (that is, an overemphasis on nationalistic thoughts). There are quite a few teachers in Germany who regard this as an affirmation of the rejection of a national identity, as was propagated by the student revolt movement "Achtundsechziger". Unfortunately, when this movement ended, the damage it had caused failed to be repaired by schools providing elucidation on national identity. Also in the shaping of public opinion, the subject of "national identity" remains a taboo. Now, increasing migration and the related problems of integration demand that we address this issue.

### **VIII "No" to the Superstate Europe, but Strengthening of Cooperation Between Europe's States**

The interest of the states and people of Europe has up to now been subject to strong fluctuations. Russia, following the collapse of the Soviet Union, turned away from Europe towards Asia. If "renewed interest in Europe" has come about during the last decade (Hoffmann, 1997:1, [authors' own translation]), this can be explained by the expectation of new economic advantages which Russia's political leadership is expecting. The question, though, is: how long? Particularly those states on the periphery of Europe partly turn their backs on the concept of a unified Europe, e.g. the United Kingdom in the west (Kraus, 2008). Such fluctuations of interest must be expected all the time, even though the current political climate does not

appear harmful to the European treaties. Does this mean, then, as Hermann Lübbe claims, that there will not be a "United States of Europe"? That Germany has a particularly intensive interest in a united Europe is historically founded: situated in the middle of the continent, most of Germany has – after 1945 and in the wake of two world wars - hankered for a peaceful coexistence with other nations, which no national egotism would be able to disturb. Immediately following the establishing of the Federal Republic of Germany, bilateral friendships came into being (e.g. with France). Very soon, the economic advantages of this cooperation became particularly noticeable in Germany and aroused the wish to create international and supranational alliances. Some did, by degrees, come into existence. But at the same time, at least after 1989 – a new concept of sovereign identity was growing in those states which had long existed under the domination of big states like Russia and the USA. Following on from a new kind of nationalism, a strong feeling of regionalism came into being. In most European states, ethnic minorities or historically formed regions began to clamour for the fulfilling of their own interests – in some cases for their own statehood. The champions of the new "United States of Europe" detected in this a separatist movement which would sever the unity of Europe, but one could also view these centrifugal tendencies as a reaction to – in some cases, overhasty – centralization endeavours. At the same time, a lack of trust developed towards a new form of rule – "Eurocratism". Europe seems to have taken on the form of a superbureaucracy, the structure and meaning of which is not transparent to the majority of the continent's inhabitants, and which is deemed too expensive for them as tax payers (even though the EU Commission in Brussels scarcely has more administrative bureaucrats working for it than does Munich – and with a significantly higher budget status!)

What speaks in favour of the claim "There will not be a United States of Europe" (Lübbe, 1997: 15, [authors' own translation]) is that the sovereignty of a democratic state does not seem to be ensured in a political "giant" but in strong state structures which thrive tangibly and intangibly on a multitude of cultures and which are comprehensible and transparent to their citizens. Any levelling out of historical formative influences on the understanding of Europe would mean negating the historical insights of the states and placing trust in a new power structure, of which one cannot know whether it will for ever remain an artificial construct. This perspective does not mean however that by retaining the sovereignty of the individual European states, the cultural unity of Europe will not become stronger and more effective – both in competition and in solidarity. Saying "no" to the superstate Europe does not have to be proof of a new national narrow-mindedness. Cooperation in all areas of life – and in the future more than hitherto – in culture and education – can in the long run create a new European identity and a unified political stance of all European states when dealing with other continents.

On a global dimension, the surrendering (even though only partly and in a very limited way) of components of previously national sovereignty to the European Union is taking place in the field of tension between globality on the one hand and national and regional politics on the other hand, reminiscent of the continuing flare-ups between warring tribes in developing countries. As Theo Sommer points out: "The municipality rises up against it – the uniform world. Tribalism against globalism, the cultural war of the cultures"(Sommer, 1997:64, [authors' own translation]). "Globalization means open borders, sharpened international competition, a battle of displacement. It is depriving national states of their last bit of autonomy in their activities" (Sommer, 1997:65, [authors' own translation]).

<p>“And is it really presumptuous to wish that Europe might at long last present a unified front in order to assert itself</p>	<p>politically, economically and culturally against Dschiad and MacWorld?” (Sommer, 1997:67, [authors’ own translation]).</p>
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