

UNITY, DISCOURSE, IDENTITY:
THE EUROPEAN UNION AS A DISCURSIVE CONSTRUCT*Robert DE BEAUGRANDE*University of Primorska, Faculty of Humanities Koper, SI-6000 Koper, Glagoljaška ulica 8
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ABSTRACT

Interpreting the history of Europe across the millennia is a daunting and almost paradoxical challenge. On the surface, we are likely to be impressed by the diversity of languages and cultures which has found expression in an unstable and conflicting patchwork of political and geographical entities pursuing their individual interests and histories. On deeper levels, in contrast, such terms and concepts as 'European unity' and 'European culture' are sustained as threads throughout European discourse. To be sure, these threads have multiple strands: political, legislative, economic, intellectual, and spiritual; but the voices that tie into them have been authoritative and resolute. This side will accordingly be featured in my retrospect on the evolution of the 'European union' as a discursive construct.

Key words: discourse, history, peace, economic, political, unity

UNITÀ, DISCORSO, IDENTITÀ: L'UNIONE EUROPEA COME COSTRUTTO DISCORSIVO

SINTESI

Interpretare la storia dell'Europa attraverso i millenni è una sfida intrepida e quasi paradossale. In superficie ci potrebbe impressionare la diversità di lingue e culture che hanno avuto modo di esprimersi nell'instabile e conflittuale mosaico di entità politiche e geografiche che hanno rincorso i loro propri interessi e le loro storie. Ad un livello inferiore, però, termini e concetti come "unità europea" e "cultura europea" vengono sostenuti come fili nell'ambito del discorso europeo. Per essere sicuri, tali fili sono composti da molteplici elementi: politici, legislativi, economici, intellettuali e spirituali; ma le voci che li legano sono state autoritarie e risolte. Di conseguenza presenterò questo aspetto nel mio esame retrospettivo sull'evoluzione dell'"Unione europea" come costruito discorsivo.

Parole chiave: discorso, storia, pace economica, unità politica

*The European Union [is] not so much a definite goal
as a direction of movement.*

Roy Jenkins

Europe is a construction of the mind.

J. B. Duroselle

DIVERSITY VERSUS UNITY

Despite a sea of subtle cultural differences, such terms and concepts as 'European unity' and 'European culture' run like binding threads throughout European discourse. As gauged by the internet (AltaVista in June, 2006), 'European diversity' shows just 4,800 occurrences and is massively outweighed by 'European unity' at 143,000 and 'European culture' at 939,000. To be sure, these threads are imbued with multiple ideas: economic, political, legislative, military, social, ethical, humanitarian, and spiritual; but the voices that tie them have been authoritative and resolute. This side will accordingly be featured in my retrospect on the evolution of ideas in 'European discourse', during which you encounter the very words of important thinkers (suitably translated).

A BRIEF 'HISTORY OF IDEAS'

My term 'ideas' is intended to associate with 'thought' and 'ideal'. Europe is of course a land mass, but, significantly, even as such its borders are in dispute, both in the west with Ireland and Britain, and in the east with Russia and Turkey, all of whose people have long seemed unable to make up their minds. The purely geographical idea of Europe running precisely up to the English (or Irish) Channel on one side and to the Urals and the Bosphorus on the other smacks of bland textbooks and encyclopaedias that would be hesitant to invoke 'European ideas'.

The earliest discourses of European unity were mainly political, or more exactly, imperial. Virgil wrote in Book 7 of his *Aeneid* (29–19 B.C.) of how the king of Latium was visited by a vision looking forward in history to an approaching empire-builder (Virgil, 29–19 B.C.):

*A foreign son upon thy shore descends,
Whose martial fame from pole to pole extends.
His race, in arms and arts of peace renown'd,
Not Latium shall contain, nor Europe bound:
'Tis theirs whate'er the sun surveys around.*

A similar vision, but looking backward in history, was voiced by Padre Dante in his *Convivio* (1304–08):

*To do away with these wars and their causes, it is
necessary that the whole earth, [...] should be a Monarchy – that is, a single principality, having one prince
who [...] would keep the kings content within the
boundaries of their kingdoms and preserve among them*

the peace in which the cities might rest (Alighieri, 1304–08).

He too suggested the Roman Empire as the supreme model:

Because no nature ever was or will be more tempered in the exercise of rule, stronger in its preservation, and more clever in acquiring it than that of the Latin race, God chose this people for that office (Alighieri, 1304–08).

Seeing that over a thousand years elapsed between the founding of Rome and the adoption of the Christian God Dante must have had in mind; and that most of the Roman emperors led barbarously impious lives in the eyes of God and man, I am inclined to regard this latter pronouncement as ironic or playful.

However, the spiritual idea of peace through unity has unquestionably remained a pillar of the Christian faith. There are 437 occurrences of the term 'peace' in the *Holy Bible*, distributed across the *Old Testament* and the *New*, e.g.:

The Lord will give strength unto his people; the Lord will bless his people with peace (Psalms 29:11).

Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you (II Corinthians 15:13).

Yet the nominally Christian states of Europe strayed so egregiously from the Biblical idea that the Church felt moved to legislative interventions. Thus, the *Peace of God* promulgated at the Synod of Charroux in the year 989 pronounced "anathema" and "excommunication" against any person who "robbed a church", "a peasant, or any other poor person of a sheep, ox, ass, cow, goat, or pig"; and who "attacked, seized, or beat a priest, deacon, or any other clergyman". The *Truce of God* promulgated in the Bishopric of Terouanne in 1063 forbade that any "man or woman shall assault, wound, or slay another, or attack, seize, or destroy a castle, burg, or villa, by craft or by violence", on pain of "exile for thirty years". Also forbidden was "taking from another an animal, a coin, or a garment, during the days of the truce". Such decrees provide disturbing evidence of the social chaos and violence that must have prevailed in those times.

Nonetheless, the linkage between the idea of peace and the idea of unity, whether political or spiritual, has remained intertwined in European discourse. In the event, the first 'modern' advocacy of European unity was published by the pious Quaker statesman William Penn. Allowing for historical drifts in English style and orthography, his *Essay towards the Present and Future Peace of Europe, by the Establishment of an European Dyet, Parliament, or Estates* (1693) sounds far-sightedly modern:

The Sovereign Princes of Europe [...] would, for the same Reason that engaged Men first into Society, viz. Love of Peace and Order, agree to meet by their Stated Deputies in a General Dyet, Estates, or Parliament, and

there Establish Rules of Justice; [...] before which Sovereign Assembly, should be brought all Differences (Penn, 1693).

Penn also put forth a factor we would nowadays call 'economic growth', though the split between 'rich' and 'poor' was apparently taken as a given:

Peace preserves our Possessions; [...] Our Trade is free and safe; [...] The Rich bring out their Hoards, and employ the poor Manufacturers; Buildings and divers Projections, for Profit and Pleasure, go on; It excites Industry, which brings Wealth, as that gives the Means of Charity and Hospitality (Penn, 1693).

Interestingly, the idea of military unity was also put forth, and with strenuous severity:

...if any of the Sovereignties [...] shall refuse to submit their Claim or Pretensions to them, or to abide and perform the Judgment thereof, and seek their Remedy by Arms, [...] all the other Sovereignties, United as One Strength, shall compel the Submission and Performance of the Sentence, with Damages to the Suffering Party, and Charges to the Sovereignties that obliged their Submission (Penn, 1693).

Yet Penn's proposal was essentially humanitarian and ethical, and his Quaker spirituality lay outside the confines of state-supported religions, so the British government, far from hailing his *Essay*, arrested and imprisoned him for his beliefs.

Over a century later, the idealist philosopher Friedrich von Schelling maintained that the essence of unity must be spiritual and freed from the domination of the political:

A study of modern history [...] reveals two attempts by mankind in its quest for unity. The first, which sought to create spiritual unity within the Church, was doomed to failure because it also strove to ensure unity outside the Church. The second sought to bring about that external unity through the intermediary of the States [who] believed they could forgo spiritual unity [and failed] to develop religious principles so that the union of all peoples can be based on the community of religious convictions (Schelling, 1810).

From a humanitarian viewpoint, we might conclude that in effect, politics and spirituality can de-legitimise each other through the divergence between tangible and intangible goals and values. If "war" can indeed be "the continuation of politics by other means" (Clausewitz, 1932) – a cynical aphorism with far too much historical evidence supporting it – then peace could well be the continuation of spirituality by other means.

At all events, the spiritual idea certainly contributed to the growing 19th century interest in societies advocating the idea of peace. The first of these, the *Society for the Promotion of Universal and Permanent Peace*, founded in London in 1816 and later called the *International Peace Society*, announced a plan for its discourse: *to print and circulate Tracts and to diffuse informa-*

tion tending to show that War is inconsistent with the spirit of Christianity, and the true interests of mankind; and to point out the means best calculated to maintain permanent and universal Peace, upon the basis of Christian principles (IPS, 1816).

The first such aggregation on the (undisputed) 'European continent', the *Société de la paix*, was founded in 1830 in Geneva, a liberal city destined to host numerous congresses on related themes, by Jean-Jacques de Sellon. Among the successors were the *Ligue internationale et permanente de la Paix*, founded in Paris in 1867; the *Inter-Parliamentary Union*, founded in Paris in 1889; and the *International Peace Bureau* founded in Rome in 1891 and consolidated in Bern as the central office and executive organ of the *International Union of Peace Societies*. Most of these were mainly guided by the legislative idea, and addressed such issues as arbitration procedures, bilateral peace treaties, manufacture and sale of arms and munitions, and a permanent court of justice.

In parallel, the linkage between the idea of unity and the idea of peace was prominently re-affirmed by a series of "international peace congresses" in London (1843 and 1851), Brussels (1848), Paris, (1849), and Frankfurt (1850). The dominant idea here was at first Christian humanitarianism – as for the London Peace Society. However, Victor Hugo, an eminent figure at the Paris Congress of 1849, drew a linkage among political, economic, and intellectual unity:

A day will come when [...] all you nations of the continent, without losing your distinctive qualities and your glorious individuality, will coalesce into a greater entity, and will constitute a European fraternity. [...] A day will come when there will be [...] markets opening to commerce and minds opening to ideas. A day will come when we shall see those two immense groups, the United States of America and the United States of Europe, stretching out their hands across the sea, exchanging their products, their arts, their works of genius (Hugo, 1849).

The follow-up congress in Geneva in 1867 was more overtly, indeed radically, political and economic. Frédéric Passy, a highly respected participant, declared:

The aim of the Geneva Congress is to determine the political and economic conditions required for peace among peoples, and in particular for the establishment of the United States of Europe. It aspires to be the conference of European democracy, expressing through its most authorized spokesmen the elements of this great solution and sounding, in the name of the immortal principles of the French Revolution, the signal for consciences to awake: it is time for democracy to stand up and show itself (Geneva Congress, 1867).

Victor Hugo too raised his tone:

The first condition of peace is deliverance. [...] There will certainly have to be a revolution, which will be the greatest of all, and perhaps, alas, a war, which will be

the last. Then all will have been accomplished. [...] Liberty is the goal; peace is the outcome (Geneva Congress, 1867).

Even Mikhail Bakunin, who once wrote that "the liberty of man consists solely" in "obeying the laws of nature because he has himself recognized them as such, and not because they have been imposed upon him externally by any foreign will whatsoever, human or divine, collective or individual" (*God and the State*) was, on that occasion, a champion of unity:

To achieve the triumph of liberty, justice and peace in the international relations of Europe, and to render civil war impossible among the various peoples which make up the European family, only a single course lies open: to constitute the United States of Europe (Geneva Congress, 1867).

The 'revolutionary' ardour was probably reinforced by the Congress of the *International Working Men's Association* held just days before in Lausanne, which had "declared its complete and emphatic allegiance to the Peace League" and "demanded":

not only that war be abolished but also that standing armies be disbanded, and that a universal and free alliance of the peoples be constituted in their place on the basis of reciprocity and justice, [whereby] the working classes will be emancipated from their unfree and oppressed condition and social discrimination.

Historians agree that the emancipatory idea – 'peace through freedom' (Geneva Congress, 1867) – extending even to 'revolution', was a new element in the peace movement, and fomented a split at the Geneva Congress itself, as when both the *London Peace Society* and the *Ligue internationale et permanente de la Paix* declared their resolve to abstain from political associations and act merely as observers.

Nor can it be any coincidence that the first 'modern wars' dating from the period and ignited on the flimsiest imaginable pretexts – the protection of two churches in Palestine ('Crimean War'), a haughty telegram ('Franco-Prussian War'), and the assassination of an archduke whose family abhorred him and whose children were barred from succession ('World War I') – were fought among firmly authoritarian states; and that the losing side each time experienced a thrust toward freedom – the freeing of the serfs in Russia, the proclamation of the Republic in France, and the Weimar Republic in Germany. However, the transition in both France and Germany was marred by the bloody repression of decidedly more 'proletarian' revolutions – the Paris Commune in France and the Spartakusbund in Germany. Besides, the newly 'reformed' governments proved unstable and ineffective in combating the rise of a fascism craftily disguised as 'socialism' that was in fact the venomous reaction of the upper and middle-classes against real socialism.

Still, the destruction wrought by the expansively

named 'World War I' was sufficiently devastating that a consensus was finally reached on institutionalising the European ideas of unity and peace in the *League of Nations* at Geneva and the *Permanent Court of International Justice* or *World Court* at The Hague. The League of Nations was mostly steered by legislative and interventionist anti-war ideas, under such broad terms as 'disarmament', 'collective security', 'diplomacy', and 'welfare'. Its mission fell short of Woodrow Wilson's vision of

A general association of nations [...] formed under specific covenants for the purpose of affording mutual guarantees of political independence and territorial integrity to great and small states alike (Wilson, 1919).

The 1920s witnessed a series of cautious but heartening initiatives toward unity and peace. In 1923, the *Pan-European Movement* was founded by the Austrian Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi, who wrote:

The crowning act of Pan-European efforts would be the constitution of the United States of Europe on the model of the United States of America. Europe would present itself as a single entity vis-à-vis other continents and world powers and inside the Federation every State would have the maximum of liberty (Coudenhove, 1923).

The First Pan-European Congress took place in Vienna three years later. The membership came to include such diverse notables as Albert Einstein, Sigmund Freud, Rainer Maria Rilke, Thomas Mann, Miguel de Unamuno y Jugo, José Ortega y Gasset, Salvador de Madariaga y Rojo, and Konrad Adenauer. It lives on today as the *International Paneuropean Union*, and promotes four thematic "principles" posted on its website www.paneuropa.org:

Libertarian: *to encourage and help people to greater freedom and responsibility; [to] attain human and civil rights and the right of all peoples to self-determination; [and to support] a free market economy and a state of law and order constitutionally guaranteed.*

Christian: *[to sustain] the Christian view of humanity: that man's dignity is derived from God and he thus has rights which none can either give him or take from him.*

Social: *to preserve justice and the dignity of man; [to] resist discrimination and ensure the protection of all [...] ethnic, religious and social minorities; [to] value fully our history, traditions, religion, language, and education.*

European: *[to recognise] the European Community [as] a unique order of peace and justice; and [work for] the greater Europe of tomorrow, to which the newly-liberated peoples of Central and Eastern Europe will also belong* (Paneuropa, 2006).

In 1925, a set of treaties were concluded at Locarno, principally pledging peace among Germany, France, and Belgium, with Britain and Italy acting as guarantors.

Echoing the *Essay* of William Penn from 1693 – though coincidentally, I think – a victim was to receive united aid against an aggressor. Further treaties stipulated 'arbitration' among these several countries, plus, with chilling foresight, Poland and Czechoslovakia.

In 1928, no less than 63 countries renounced war as a national policy and pledged to resolve disputes 'by pacific means' in the Kellogg-Briand Pact, named for the US Secretary of State Frank. B. Kellogg and the French Foreign Minister Aristide Briand. In 1929, Briand delivered a celebrated speech before the Assembly of the League of Nations, which responded by inviting him to present a memorandum with a detailed project. Whilst stressing that "it is on the political plane that constructive effort to give Europe its organic structure should first of all be made", Briand's memo also advocated an "economic policy of Europe":

The Governments might definitively [...] constitute a simple pact of economic solidarity [for the] establishment of a common market to raise to the maximum the level of human well-being over all the territories of the European community. [...] Immediate efforts could be undertaken practically for the rational organization of European production and exchanges, by means of the progressive liberation and the methodical simplification of the circulation of goods, capital, and persons (Memorandum, 1930).

Though the resemblance to William Penn's prescient *Essay* is probably another coincidence, the strangely contemporary sound of the Briand *Memorandum* reflects the enduring conviction that the obstacles to unity and peace were primarily economic. And in the event, the economic depression of the 1930s, though in fact a crisis of laissez-faire capitalism, was widely misunderstood as a catastrophe of socialism, even in its mild and hesitant formats of the times, and as the ultimate discredit to the European ideas of solidarity and cooperation in international relations.

At such an historical stage, the League of Nations, and the series of "treaties" and "pacts" that followed its creation, were ineffectual in pursuing the political and legislative ideas of erecting some fashion of 'crisis management' to avert renewed outbreaks of warfare. Crass violators like Japan, Italy, and Germany simply left the League, renounced the treaties, and unleashed the most ruthless warfare of all time without effective sanctions.

Or rather, those sanctions assumed the format of World War II, for fascist states are impervious to any opposition short of full-scale eradication. Yet the demonic ideologies and genocidal tactics of hard-core fascism are so simplistic and self-righteous that they can slip into the policies of official 'democracies' like South Africa and Rwanda, and in recent years, of Serbia in Bosnia, Israel in Palestine, and the United States in Iraq. It is not merely that 'those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it', as remarked by George Santay-

ana (1906), but that those who are *obsessed* with the past feel *compelled* to repeat it.

During the war, the advocates of European unity naturally faced formidable obstacles, including arrest and imprisonment like their forerunner William Penn. Among the most redoubtable was the Italian Altiero Spinelli, who was confined for sixteen years until the fall of Mussolini in 1943, when he founded the *European Federalist Movement* and wrote:

A federal system would allow each state to develop its national life in the way best suited to the level and character of its civilization. [...] The federal authority should [have] the sole power to raise and employ armed forces (which would also be responsible for public order within States), to conduct foreign policy, to fix the administrative boundaries [...] and to see that ethnic minorities are not mistreated. [...] It would issue a single federal currency; it would ensure full freedom of movement for all citizens (Spinelli, 1942).

Eventually, he became an honoured member of the European Commission, and described the European Union as "one of the most extraordinary political adventures of the human spirit".

In the midst of the war, a far-sighted bundle of ideas was put forth in Geneva by 'Members of the Resistance Groups in Europe', viz.:

The Federal Union must be based upon a declaration of civil, political, and economic rights which would guarantee democratic institutions and the free development of the human personality, and upon a declaration of the rights of minorities to have as much autonomy as is compatible with the integrity of the national States. [...] Frontiers will be nothing but demarcation lines between administrative districts (MRGE, 1944).

It would be many years before such any such scope was tackled by "treaties".

Though not widely known at the time, movements toward unity and peace occasionally stirred inside wartime Germany. During the summer and autumn of 1942, a flyleaf campaign was carried out in Munich through the 'White Rose' movement, led by the young siblings Hans and Sophie Scholl.

Only broad and generous cooperation among European nations can provide the foundation for a new structure [and] put new life into exhausted Europe. [...] The illusion of economic self-sufficiency must disappear from Europe. Every nation and every individual has a right to the goods of this world! (Scholl, 1942)

They were arrested in February, 1943, and guillotined.

Another document looking ahead to the end of the war, stated "provisions" for a "European Confederation" and was approved by the high-ranking German diplomat and head of the Foreign Ministry, Joachim Ribbentrop:

The members of the Confederation are sovereign States and guarantee one another's freedom and political

independence. *The European economy will be organized by the member States on the basis of a uniform plan arrived at by mutual agreement. Customs barriers among them will be progressively abolished. While preserving their national character, the States [...] will conduct intensive cultural exchanges* (Ribbentrop, 1943).

Whether Ribbentrop sincerely expected Hitler to favour these ideas is uncertain in view of his trademark habit of overstating himself. He outlived his idolised Fuehrer, but not the Nuremberg trials.

The post-war era was punctuated by speeches, meetings, and treaties on European ideas. Speaking at the University of Zürich, Winston Churchill declared:

We must build a kind of United States of Europe, [...] re-create the European Family, [...] and provide it with a structure under which it can dwell in peace, in safety and in freedom. [Its] structure, if well and truly built, will be such as to make the material strength of a single State less important. Small nations will count as much as large ones and gain their honour by their contribution to the common cause (Churchill, 1946).

Ironically, much of the decisive material wherewithal for European unity came from outside, namely through the American Marshall Plan, which also put the "economic" idea first.

Our policy is directed not against any country or doctrine but against hunger, poverty, desperation, and chaos. Its purpose should be the revival of a working economy in the world so as to permit the emergence of political and social conditions in which free institutions can exist. [...] Any government that is willing to assist in the task of recovery will find full cooperation, I am sure, on the part of the United States Government (Plan, 1947).

Despite the disclaimer, the "policy" was partly "directed against" the Soviet Union and its singularly icy and interventionist perversion of the "doctrine" of communism.

Similarly, the Hague Congress in 1948 saw no need to explain why it saw "an unprecedented menace to the well-being and the security of Europe". Symptomatically, its "Political Resolution" consistently links "economic" and "political" before coming to the "convening of a European Assembly" and the "guarantee of liberty":

The Congress recognizes that it is the urgent duty of the nations of Europe to create an economic and political union in order to assure security and social progress; [...] declares that [...] European nations must transfer and merge some portion of their sovereign rights so as to secure common political and economic action for the integration and proper development of their common resources; demands the convening, as a matter of real urgency, of a European Assembly chosen by the Parliaments of the participating nations; [...] declares that in no circumstances shall a State be entitled to be called a 'democracy' unless it does, in fact as well as in law,

guarantee to its citizens liberty of thought assembly, and expression (HCPR, 1948).

The same Congress issued an "Economic and Social Resolution", dotted with associated key words, such as "currency", "capital", "budgetary", "credit", "goods", "trade", "quotas", "customs", "duties", and so on. I find little in that discourse relating to the "social idea".

As subsequent history reveals, it was indeed the economic idea that assumed the lead toward the European Union, and I shall argue it still does so today to an intrusive extent. Openly citing the "Cold War", the French statesman Jean Monnet sounded a call:

"Words are not enough. Only immediate action, bearing on one essential point can change the present stasis. The action must be deep real, immediate and dramatic." (Monnet, 1950)

The sphere of "action" he envisioned was coal and steel production, one of the few areas where real co-operation could be anticipated. In the same month, he and his team worked closely with the French Foreign Minister Robert Schuman on a suitable "Declaration" to be presented forthwith:

Europe will not be made all at once, or according to a single plan. It will be built through concrete achievements which first create a de facto solidarity. [...] The French Government proposes [...] that Franco-German production of coal and steel as a whole be placed under a common High Authority, within the framework of an organisation open to the participation of the other countries of Europe. The pooling of coal and steel production should immediately provide for the setting up of common foundations for economic development as a first step in the federation of Europe (Schuman, 1950).

The "real action" followed the next year with the founding of the European Coal and Steel Community, which attracted not just France and Germany, but also Italy, Belgium, Holland, and Luxemburg, who together acquired the tenacious nickname "The Six". To be sure, it was a purely economic idea, but the expansive rhetoric of the "treaty" suggested much more. The signatories vowed themselves

convinced that the contribution which an organized and vital Europe can make to civilization is indispensable to the maintenance of peaceful relations; [can] create [...] the basis for a broader and deeper community among peoples long divided by bloody conflicts; and [can] lay the foundations for institutions which will give direction to a destiny henceforward shared" (TEECSC, 1951).

These grand aims heralded a multi-layered complex of discourses in the ensuing years: speeches, proposals, "declarations", "memoranda", "white papers", "reports", "acts", "agreements", and above all more "treaties". Of the latter, only a relatively modest number were fully ratified and effectively steered the gradual construction of the European Union. The *Treaty of Rome* (1957) es-

tablished the *European Economic Community* (EEC) and the *European Atomic Energy Community* (Euratom). These two agencies were "merged" along with the Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) by the appropriately named *Merger Treaty* (1965), which created the *European Commission* and the *Council of European Communities* as general governing bodies. The *Single European Act* (1986) established the *Single Internal Market* and promoted majority voting, research and development, and co-operation between the Council and the European Parliament. The *Maastricht Treaty* (1992) led to the creation of the *European Union* and the eventual introduction of the *Euro*; also, it reorganised the Union into three *pillars*: one for economic, social and environmental policies; one for foreign policy and military matters; and one for police and judiciary. The *Treaty of Amsterdam* (1997) regulated fundamental rights, freedom, legal and personal security, equal opportunities, immigration, and fraud.

This capsule history of successes is of course a drastic simplification of the actual processes. Each treaty was negotiated at great length and was in part a revision or amendment of one or more previous treaties which had not proven satisfactory or practicable. The predictable result was a proliferating web of cross-referring rules and regulations promulgated and then altered or cancelled. Thus, the *Treaty of Nice*, ratified in 2002 and still in force as of this writing, was almost wholly aimed at revising the *Treaty of Rome* and the *Maastricht Treaty* with a view to the enlargement of the Union.

The accumulation of treaties over the years has expanded the roster of agencies with differing and unstable names, sizes, powers, and means of selection. Coal and Steel's *Common Assembly* from 1952 became the *European Parliamentary Assembly* in 1958, and the *European Parliament* in 1962. The members were elected by the various national assemblies until 1979, and thereafter directly by the citizens. The latest elections of its 732 delegates were put to the choice of nearly 400 million citizens and so were the largest simultaneous transnational elections ever held.

The *Council of the European Union* set up in 1974 unites ministers of the governments of each member and so is also called the *Council of Ministers*. It is assisted by the *Committee of Permanent Representatives* formed by the European ambassadors from the Member States, plus an elaborate echelon of working groups, so that the entire agency presently employs at least 3,000 civil servants.

The *European Commission* began as three Commissions from each of the "communities" set up in the 1950s – the ECSC, the EEC, and Euratom – which came together in the *Merger Treaty* into the *Commission of the European Communities*; it now seats 25 Commissioners appointed by the governments of member states, and employs at least 2,600 officials. Perhaps because the

Commissioners are supposed to represent the interests of the citizens of the EU as a whole, they are the only body empowered to both initiate legislation and to implement it after approval or amendment by the Parliament and the Council. For some reason, though, this power is limited to the socio-economic "pillar"; for the foreign policy "pillar" and the "judiciary pillar", the power of initiation is shared with the Council.

This complicated superstructure is hardly rendered more transparent by an array of parallel unities in the region. The *North Atlantic Treaty Organisation* (NATO) set up in 1949 filled the gap left by the failure of the *European Defence Community Treaty* in 1952, as well as of later futile efforts to incorporate the military idea into the EU. Ironically, NATO never ventured upon active defence against its supposed enemy, the Warsaw Pact, but did get embroiled, by a strange lapse of logic, in the first Gulf War.

Somewhat redundantly, the *Western European Union* (WEU) was formed as another defence and security organization. It has – you might guess – its own *Council of Ministers*, and a *Parliamentary Assembly*, which, now that the WEU is being absorbed into the EU, has been lobbying to save itself by changing its name to *European Security and Defence Assembly*. Whom they are to "defend" against is not clear.

The *Council of Europe*, inspired by Churchill's speech (cited above), was also founded back in 1949 and now has 46 member states and its own also confusingly named *Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe* with 616 delegates (half of them substitutes) elected by the national parliaments of the member states. Its powers extend only to investigating, recommending, and advising.

Whereas the European Union has been carried along mainly by economic and political ideas, this organisation has highlighted social, humanitarian, and ethical ideas, mainly the protection of human rights, democracy, and the rule of law. It has sponsored a *Social Charter*, a *Convention on Human Rights*, a *Convention for the Protection of National Minorities*, and a *Charter for Regional and Minority Languages*. As of this writing, all the states of former Yugoslavia are members except Slovenia.

A recent development of special interest for us here is the initiative of the European Commission to create the *Euro-Mediterranean Partnership* in 1995. Here, unity is promoted between the EU states and Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, Egypt, Israel, and Lebanon, and even the Palestinian Authority, Syria, and Jordan. It has a three-part organisation: a *Political and Security Chapter*; an *Economic and Financial Chapter*; and a *Social, Cultural and Human Chapter*. Its latest impulse is the Ministerial Conference on "Strengthening the Role of Women in Society" in Istanbul in November, 2006. The agenda covers "women's rights as a guarantee of human rights";

"women's access to education and employment"; and "culture and the media as key instruments for changing perceptions of gender"...familiar and welcome topics in the EU, but much less so in North Africa and the Middle East.

Much could of course be said on the darker side about the negotiations, compromises, disagreements, verbal sparrings, and temporary blockages and failures in the progress toward European unity, but such are not my chosen topic. The discursive threads I have made a point of retracing constitute an 'inner history' of the *ideas* of European unity that cannot be voted or vetoed out of existence and can survive all the recalcitrance of overweening politicians and restive electorates. In particular, the humanitarian and ethical ideas of freedom and equality cannot be, and never will be extinguished, no matter how often and how relentlessly they may be abused. But neither can they be imposed by purely economic legislation.

To be sure, the prospective happy end to my 'inner history' encountered a disappointing deflection when the *European Constitution* was rejected by plebiscites in France and Holland, ironically two of the main leaders on the long road to unity. I cannot accept the claim circulated in the press that the majority of voters had read the document, or even the summary of it posted in 10 languages on the internet (europa.eu.int/constitution/download). How can goals like these be disapproved?

The Union must take into account [the] requirements linked to promoting a high level of employment, education, training and health protection; to guaranteeing adequate social protection and to fighting against social exclusion.

The aims of energy policy include [...] promoting energy efficiency and the development of renewable energies.

The Union must draw up measures establishing high standards for the quality and safety of medicinal products and measures to safeguard public health as regards tobacco and alcohol. (www.europa.eu)

Surely these are eminently sensible and valuable initiatives that should seriously threaten nobody's notion of 'rights', 'sovereignty', 'nation', and so on and so forth.

But here we need to re-think the history of the several European ideas, which decidedly did not pull together like strands in a staunchly woven rope. Though rarely acknowledged as such, the European Union is essentially a *discursive construct*: a plurality of diverse and at times contradictory discourses that would need to be deconstructed and reconstructed before any stage of ultimate reconciliation can be expected. By themselves, discourses do not create or reshape realities, but many of those promulgated by the Union seem to imply it can; e.g., announcing what "must" happen even in sectors where effective control would be elusive to administer:

The growth capacity of Europe [...] must result in the

creation of a technological community; [...] this process must enable European industry to become a powerful competitor; a successful techno-industrial development [...] must increasingly allow wide scope for individual creativity (Dooge, 1985).

The most visible tactic throughout has been to deploy the legislative idea of laws, rules, regulations, and so on, for consistently linking political and economic ideas, as if the other ideas of a "shared destiny" invoked by the Coal and Steel Treaty back in 1951 would follow by themselves in so far as they are relevant.

The dynamic effects of a single market with immense purchasing power [...] would mean more jobs, more prosperity and faster growth and would thus make the Community a reality for its citizens." (Dooge, 1985)

Yet politics and economics are at least as likely to render citizens unfree and unequal. The "free market" is quite trendy and selective in doling out its degrees of "freedom" and "economic growth" – a fact craftily concealed by averaging wealth across a whole nation – and has done little to hinder the rollback of labour unions and the massive concentration of wealth among a tiny sector of the population. If "war" can be "the continuation of politics by other means", then politics might be the continuation of economics by other means.

The integration of the former Warsaw Pact countries (one reason cited for rejection) seems to have been favoured on overriding political and economic grounds as well. I have no doubt they would all happily ratify the Constitution if asked, and will in any case form a substantial and obliging voting block to approve Union initiatives. They are also easily imagined as eager and grateful consumers of "western" goods and services who will funnel back much of the "aid" into "western" economies. Yet whatever real freedom and equality they gained in 1989 was achieved not by material assistance from the European Union, which largely left them to their fate (just as it had done with the dictatorships in Spain and Portugal) but by a rare international victory of people power for freedom and equality. In the rejections of the Constitution, however, we see people power arrayed against freedom of movement and equality of the job market – precisely a defiant refusal to "share one's destiny". If citizens *refuse* to share, then they don't *deserve* to share; pampered western countries who reject should be suspended from the Union until they rediscover their humanity.

Observers all across the political spectrum have speculated that the Constitution is officially defunct, but I see reasons to believe this judgment premature. The history of the path toward European unity is dotted with rejections by individual countries or their petulant leaders abusing the unwise requirement that large classes of decision must be unanimous, which not merely empowers vetoes by any member state but lends them a spurious glow of patriotism. The Treaty of Nice now running

the Union was never very satisfactory or appetising – it narrowly escaped rejection by the European Parliament itself – and experts agree it is not suitable for governing the expanded Union, although that was its declared purpose. In June, 2005, a draft was released by the Centre for Applied Policy Research proposing a *Treaty Amending the Treaty of Nice*. Such a treaty would

incorporate the core of the constitutional innovations into the existing Treaties [by] identifying the central reforms of the Constitution and bringing them together (TATN, 2005).

It would also have to amend the treaties of Rome and Maastricht over again.

I would argue that opposition to enlargement runs totally contrary to our European ideas as a whole, and even in purely economic terms. I cannot see why the western European countries that grew fat on the plunder of colonialism and the funding of the Marshal Plan should have an option to slam the door on eastern European countries stifled and starved by the phoney socialism of the Soviet juggernaut. In the words of Mario Soares, President of Portugal:

Europe cannot just be the European Union within the frontiers as they stand today. Hungary, Poland, Bulgaria, have the right to join our Community: their history and their contribution to the European identity fully entitle them to membership. They have contributed as much to the European ideal as we have (Soares, 2005).

For the present, the enlargement of the Union and the rejection of the Constitution present twin motivations for rethinking and renewing our conception of "Europe" and indeed of "Union" as well. The ideas most conducive to our guiding ideas can be lifted out of the discourse of the Constitution and if necessary enacted by means that are not hobbled by demands for unanimous plebiscites.

In order to avoid false steps in the minefield of European national egos, the Union has been circumspect to the point of inefficiency, generating discourses replete with clauses, reservations, postponements, and circumlocutions. One conspicuous product was the principle of *subsidiarity*, created by Jacques Delors, the longest-serving and most efficient President of the Commission:

"The Community shall take action [...] only if and insofar as the objectives of the proposed action cannot be sufficiently achieved by the Member States and can therefore [...] be better achieved by the Community." (Maastricht Treaty, 1992)

The border delimited by "sufficiently achieved" versus "better achieved" can potentially remain disputed until *no* "action" is "taken".

The prospective accession of Turkey has thrown an abrupt light upon the relation of the political and the spiritual ideas of unity. Politically, with a larger population than all member states except "reunited" Germany,

Turkey would merit a large voting block. Spiritually, the Union would have to finally come to terms with the growing presence of Islam. Figures released in 2005 show more than 53 million Muslims living in Europe, 14 million in the then European Union (*World Net Daily*).

Although the very word "Islam" is based on a root meaning "peace", the "western" press has made vigorous efforts to decry it as a source of conflict, playing up the wilful misdeeds of fundamentalist groups or regimes whose actions in fact flatly contradict the teachings of the Prophet Mohammed (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) and the wisdom of the *Glorious Qur'an*, which commands the believers to "observe your duty unto Allah and make peace among mankind" (*Surah al-Baqarah*, Ayaat 224). Whereas the God of the *Holy Bible* unmercifully "confounded the language" of mankind so that "they may not understand one another's speech" (*Genesis* 11:6-8), the *Qur'an* offers an aphorism that would indeed make a shining motto for an ethical, humanitarian, and spiritual rethinking of European unity (*Surah Ruum*, Ayaat 22):

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ خَلْقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ
وَأَخْتَلَفَ الْأَلْسِنَتِمْ وَالْوَأَنِيكُمْ
إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّلْعَالَمِينَ

And of his signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth,

and the difference of your languages and colours.

Lo! Herein indeed are portents for men of knowledge. (trans. Marmaduke Pickthall)

THE "NEXT GENERATION"

In 1996, the Forward Studies Unit of the European Commission organised a *Carrefour Européen des sciences et de la culture* in Coimbra with the title "Reflections on European Identity". The participants concurred that "the classic response to the question of European identity is: **unity in diversity**" (Edy Korthals Altes), viz.:

A characteristic of European identity is that it facilitates, fosters and stimulates variety in modes of expression, form, content and approach. And it is clear that this same principle can be applied to the definition of this identity itself: several paths may lead to the recognition and the assertion of a European identity which in itself is made of a plurality of ethnic, religious, cultural... (Jean-Claude Thebault, Forward Studies Unit Director).

The sensation of paradox here is merely apparent. Many of the member states of the Union are de facto multicultural, though the political and economic consequences may be drawn in quite divergent ways. The Union merely lowers the barriers that tended to block

the view of multiculturalism on a far greater scale. Our future goal must be the *egalitarian acceptance* of the multiculturalism that has been present all along.

My proposal would be for the European Union to replace the term and the concept with **interculturalism** wherein multiple cultures actively promote mutual respect and support for each other's human rights and social privileges. Expanding upon the declaration of the Hague Congress (cited above) whereby the duty of any 'democracy' must be to "guarantee liberty of thought assembly, and expression", I would add the duty to promote interculturalism.

In parallel, the Union should instate the alternative term and concept of **interlingualism** wherein the diverse languages are deployed to actively promote mutual respect and support for each other's human rights and social privileges. It would thus also devolve upon the duties of a 'democracy'. If interculturalism and interlingualism were resolutely applied in such sectors as social and educational policy and planning, we might achieve a society in which all people, whatever background – religious, cultural, national – have a right and the possibility to lead a decent life, a society in which people have respect for life in all its forms, a European Union with a balanced relation between the individual and the community, sustained by citizens who realise that each individual has a unique value that may never be reduced to an object for exploitation (Edy Korthals Altes).

The key players for such a future will be the European youth:

If we can support those young people who feel concerned, and give them reasons to be grateful for what the European Union does, [...] we may win over the next generation for the European project and make them feel more European than the older generations have felt (Bryder, 2002).

The key institutions will logically be our universities.

The term 'university', happily derived from 'universe', can best be interpreted as communal, intercultural, and interdisciplinary consciousness-raising; as learning to understand not just other languages, but other cultures; as respecting, not resenting diversity; as expanding one's vista of the many modes to be human and humane.

On the drawing board of our Science and Research Centre in Koper (Znanstveno-raziskovalno središče), is a comprehensive, openly accessible general data base of authentic discourse in the several European languages, as well as special-purpose discourse of the several faculties, disciplines, and professions, with an ongoing needs assessment in the respective discourse communities, such as "Slovene for computer programming" or "English for tourism". Evaluation would be conducted on eminently practical tasks, such as: given the specifications of an accounting programme, how would you present it to the banking industry? Or: given the geography, climate, and amenities of a region, how would you present it to attract tourism?

Community outreach would be a vital focus, with workshops and discussions for industry managers but also for language teachers, for teachers in multilingual faculties such as anthropology and business management. Interregional and international co-operation, input, and data interchange would be heartily welcomed and reciprocated.

In closing I return to the fine aphorism of the pioneering federalist Altiero Spinelli, that the European Union is "one of the most extraordinary political adventures of the human spirit". If you call to mind our traditional grand stories of "adventure", are they not a gallery of impossible quests, terrifying dangers, secret pathways, baffling barriers, and wretched reversals, only to end, against all odds, in glowing victories? How then can we be disheartened when this our grandest adventure beckons us to new heights of our talent, imagination, generosity, and hospitality?

ENOTNOST, DISKURZ, IDENTITETA: EVROPSKA UNIJA KOT DISKURZIVNI KONSTRUKT

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POVZETEK

Konferenca "Pre-misliti Evropo: konstrukcije novega" v Portorožu, junija 2006, se ne bi mogla odviti ob primernejšem času. Zgodovinarji in interpreti celotnega geografskega in političnega spektra se namreč soglasno strinjajo, da se je Evropska unija znašla pred preizkušnjo, ki – če si sposodimo besede Abrahama Lincolna – bo pokazala, ali lahko ta ali katerakoli druga enako zastavljena in zamišljena zveza, obstaja dlje časa. Toda tu je soglasja, kolikor lahko iz pestrih in občasno neskladnih javnih razprav zaključimo, očitno konec, medtem ko se status Evropske unije prepleta z "evropsko" identiteto v najširšem smislu. Pričujoči prispevek preučuje Unijo na podlagi po-

drobne zgodovinske zbirke diskurzov, ki so postopoma pripeljali do njenega oblikovanja in ki morda nakazujejo svetlejšo prihodnost. Dejstvo, da lahko po stoletjih konfliktov in nezaupanja mešanica najrazličnejših narodov, jezikov in etničnih skupin oblikuje takšno zvezo, vzbuja upanje, da se bo slednja izkazala za najpomembnejšo zapuščino našega časa, vendar le pod pogojem, da bomo na izziv, s katerim se sedaj soočamo, v prihodnjih letih znali odgovoriti s talentom, domišljijo, velikodušnostjo in gostoljubnostjo, kakršno si zasluži.

Ključne besede: diskurz, zgodovina, mir, ekonomija, politika, enotnost

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