



A Soul for Europe Online Debate 2016

Documentation of the Major Contributions

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Preface

VOLKER HASSEMER

JANUARY 2017

It is time to speak about the Europeans' responsibility for the European integration process. They are the owners of Europe. It is them the European Union has to place confidence in.

Out of this conviction and a high esteem for the European project, "A Soul for Europe" initiated an online debate throughout the year 2016, a debate centred on European perspectives, on chances, threats and tasks waiting to be dealt with. This union is the single most outstanding achievement in the history of the community of Europeans, and today, these Europeans are the guarantors of the union's success. It is their Europe, which in the second half of the last century developed out of an unexpected and visionary perspective.

All these are aspects we did not want to discuss at our annual A Soul for Europe Conference in Berlin only. We were rather aiming at mobilising ideas, thoughts and commitments along the way leading to the conference – with the result of preparing the further path after and since the conference. United Europe is not a securely stored treasure. We will only be able to preserve it through constant, ongoing effort and reassurance.

A Soul for Europe mobilizes citizens and democratic institutions across Europe, fostering a sense of responsibility for the future of Europe and democracy through culture. It is our goal to connect communities in order to build a common European public space and a culture of proactive citizenship. Our annual **A Soul for Europe Conference** in Berlin is a meeting place for elected, dedicated, experienced, analytic, critical and enthusiastic stakeholders from all over Europe.

Bearing the title **Cultural Identities on the Move**, this year's conference—taking place in Berlin on 8 and 9 November 2016—will discuss new approaches to our fundamental strategy and that way also react to the current European challenges in a creative way. We intend to draft proposals for intensified co-operative and joint efforts of politics and civil society in the cities and regions of Europe. Yet with so much happening on and around the continent right now, why wait another few months to discuss the pressing questions?

For this concrete and urgent reason, we are hereby opening the virtual **A Soul for Europe Pre-Conference** for all those who cannot attend the main conference event in November but want their voice to be heard, for those who would like to prepare their attendance by reading what others think and for those who—like us—believe that the topic deserves much more attention than two session days can achieve. Impulses from the pre-conference will be presented to the panelists in November.

Faced with the dismissive attitude many Europeans have towards the EU and its institutions, we need to explore new avenues to convince the citizens of the necessity of a European unification process. We need to emphasize that citizens are not mere spectators in Europe, but the ones responsible for its advancement. More than ever, Europe has to become the Europeans' cause.

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A Soul for Europe Mission Statement

BY STEVE AUSTEN AND VOLKER HASSEMER, AUGUST 2016

A Soul for Europe advocates:

- The responsibility of European cities, regions, civil society organizations and of active citizens in the European unification process.
- The potential of culture and citizenship education in this process.

A Soul for Europe therefore promotes:

- Political and administrative bodies' awareness of their role and responsibility for the future and success of the European project.
- The sovereignty and the honest interest of the competent political and administrative bodies to cooperate with informal and formal citizen initiatives in social and cultural sense to support, innovate and promote the (European) common good.
- The creativity, innovation and sense of responsibility of those working in arts and culture to connect with citizens' actions in order to commit their work for the (European) common good.
- A Soul for Europe aims to achieve progress in all three domains.

The EU as a Scapegoat

The question is on the table as to what legitimation and which forms of cohabitation will keep the European Union cohesive. Institutions and mechanisms of the EU work from the top down and threaten to turn Europeans into passive beneficiaries or into persons simply affected by European politics. Elected officials and members of government like to strut about when they succeed in knocking out a deal for their respective clientele “in Brussels”. This is how to turn citizens into consumers of the goods of politics, along the lines of “I want my money back” (Margaret Thatcher, 1984). European common welfare on the other hand is an unknown quantity. In the eyes of many Europeans, the EU is mutating from a former project of the future to a scapegoat for globalization fears and dashed hopes. In Great Britain, political speculators couldn’t resist the temptation to pit one half of a deeply dis-United Kingdom against the other and to plough into a referendum on EU membership—top-down. Many in Europe praise this as the embodiment of democracy, even there, in the country where parliamentary sovereignty was born. But, if anything, this boils down to plebiscitary coercion when you force questions of such complexity and existential importance into a Yes-No vote without any qualified majority, the repercussions of which, like with the case of Great Britain, stretching far beyond the area of responsibility of those eligible to vote.

Building Europe from the bottom up

The discredited Union needs more “Europe from the bottom up”. We need to flip the work for Europe off its head and onto its feet. We need a Europe whose citizens don’t operate as consumers, but as jointly responsible producers of the European project. So that Europeans see and accept this project as their own, it needs to be returned to them. No one can then be confused by the Europeans only seeing the bigger picture of Europe from their own specific national, regional and local perspectives. A Finn’s perspective differs from a Portuguese’s, a Scot’s differs from a Latvian’s. They would have a lot to say to each other about this Europe which they know so well. And the same applies in their own country and region.

It is where Europeans live that we find the original theatre for the soul of Europe. When Jacques Delors, the distinguished President of the Commission from 1985 to 1995, says that Europe needs a soul (*Il faut donner une âme à l’Europe*), then this call for a cultural centrepiece to the political undertaking that is Europe always receives an answer from multiple voices, a somewhat cacophonous answer at times. This is the only way Europe’s soul can be understood, as a century-old plural entity, full of cultural self-will, that came into being before all nations.

Cities, city-states and regions produced the political culture of Europe, its public spaces, its judiciary, financial systems and trade, its languages and dialects, its sciences and cuisine. Other cultural bases for the life of the continent are the national academies, the public and private research facilities and the big and small festivals of music, theatre, dance, film or fine arts. They periodically transform cities and regions into cultural meeting points of Europe and the world. And they themselves “nourish” each other from the liveliness of the art and culture which thrives on their stages. However, the political and cultural instruments to make this diversity fruitful for the creation of the EU from the bottom-up are still in need of development.

At the first Berlin Conference of the initiative “A Soul for Europe” in 2004 the Romanian philosopher and former Foreign Minister, Andrei Pleșu, saw the problem in correctly interpreting the differences between us, to stand by these differences and to understand them! That’s the “union” we need to strive towards. The rest is purely administration.

The founding father of the European Community, Jean Monnet (1888–1979), reportedly said that if he had to start the European integration process over, then he would start with culture. The cultural similarities are a solid basis for the legitimation of a united Europe, while simultaneously longer lasting than the then important joint projects could be, such as the coal and steel industry or the Single European Market. At the same time, cultural differences and diversity also endanger cohesion, which is why they need to receive special political attention.

While politicians like to cite this Jean Monnet quote, few have actually been consequential in assigning a fixed role in the setup of the EU or its political agenda either to culture or specifically to the cities and regions which generate culture. As such, the phrase “Unity in diversity” is nothing but poetry without the commitment. Similarly, the admission of President of the Commission Barroso at the Berlin Conference in 2004 was also without any identifiable practical consequences: “The EU has reached a stage of its history where its cultural dimension can no longer be ignored...”. The task therefore is to pave the way from the defensive double negative of “no longer ignore” to a productive integration into development.

Europe needs them all

Europe’s culture is at home in the cities and regions. And among the people, the Europeans who live there. So anyone who has anything to do with culture in a city or region, be that as a citizen or as a holder of public office, is performing a European duty. Whether they know this or not, they are the protagonists of Europe from the bottom up. They need to be made more aware than previously that they have this responsibility.

This is currently becoming clear when dealing with migrants who played and continue to play such a prominent role in the campaigns for the referendum in Britain and when calling for further referendums. They are arriving in Europe’s towns and regions and it is in these places more than anywhere else that it is decided whether or not outsiders are to become fellow citizens, whether immigrants are to become inhabitants of Europe, and whether a European problem can become an advantage for the local people and for Europe as a whole.

But don’t be fooled: Europeans will believe in the EU, not based on how much their national and regional understanding of it is broken down to a lowest common pan-European denominator, but by how much it stays important to them—the Bulgarian Europe, the French, the Swedish, the Cypriot, the Dutch, the Sicilian, the Hanseatic, etc. If Europe is supposed to become more than just the sum of its parts, then this sum needs to be part of the game in the first place. Here, the “periphery” plays a special role, and in particular the eastern member states, with whose entry in 2004 the EU gained not only in terms of expansion, but also in terms of complementary cultural substance.

The EU needs all of them, all of these different versions, to be European, otherwise it will remain fragmented. No Prague taxi driver will agree with former Czech President Václav Klaus when he said that an integrated Europe is nothing for normal people, but is instead something for a minority who fly to London and go shopping the next day in Florence. No, Bohemian Europe has always belonged to the cultural core of all Europeans and vice-versa with Prague University, founded in 1347, modelling itself on Paris. Wenceslas Square in August 1968 and the German Embassy in September 1989 have become sites of a pan-European history. These lieux de mémoire do not belong to Prague and the Czechs alone. And Kafka’s Castle never did anyway.

Translated from the original German by John Neilan



Photo: Gregor Anthes

Bernhard Schneider, *co-founder and former thematic co-ordinator of “A Soul for Europe”.* *The architect, planner, author and translator worked as consultant to the Senate of Berlin and co-operator with Berlin Partners, the Capital City’s Marketing Company. From 1981 to 1989 he was executive planning officer with the Senators of Urban Development and of Cultural Affairs, Berlin and from 1991 to 1995 member of the steering committee of Stadtforum Berlin.*

Comment About “Our Europe”

2 SEPTEMBER 2016

MANFRED GENTZ

I can for the most part agree with Bernhard Schneider’s paper and his analyses of what is and what, incidentally described, should be.

But is that enough? We shouldn’t wait until all mayors and county commissioners simply accept what they do and what they, hopefully, will do to promote culture or cultural events as both a European duty and challenge, and consciously communicate this to their citizens.

The national governments and the EU Commission must be certain of the fact that there is indeed a common core to all desirable and, thankfully, existing cultural diversity of which everyone should be aware, a diversity which should be maintained and further developed. Achievements like freedom of opinion and religion, which uphold ideals like respect for the individual, but do not lose sight of tolerance in the community, are values which have been fought hard for and which must be preserved and defended in the face of the obvious threats to them.

Should we not take this (pseudo) religious fanaticism that expresses itself through terror as a reason for us in the EU, in the member states, but also in the European states outside of the EU, to reflect on core elements of our so versatile European culture? It would be nice if this could be initiated from the bottom up, from the citizens, from the people who live in the countries of Europe. I am fearful that, without any concerted influence coming from the EU institutions or the national governments, this will not come about, or if it does, then it will be too late.

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The fact that this bottom-up process would be supported and sponsored “from above” in this case should not keep us from doing it. Let us not forget how great an influence and cohesive effect the churches and secular sovereigns had in Europe for centuries. They were competing in advancing arts and culture. They eventually educed emancipation as deliverance from paternalism. But many things in our so treasured culture do simply come “from above” and the church and sovereigns were massively and in large parts very consciously controlled from above.

Translated from the original German by John Neilan



Photo: A Soul for Europe 2004

Manfred Gentz studied law at the universities of Berlin and Lausanne and graduated with a doctorate in law from the Berlin Free University. Joined Daimler-Benz AG in 1970. 1983–2004 member of the Board of Management of Daimler-Benz AG/DaimlerChrysler AG in various positions. Since 2013 Chairman of the Regierungskommission Deutscher Corporate Governance Kodex. He serves in a number of scientific and cultural institutions.

THE CULTURAL SECTOR MUST TAKE COUNTERMEASURES

KLAUS-DIETER LEHMANN

I've always seen Europe in its cultural diversity. Blaise Pascal wrote, "The multitude which is not brought to act as a unity is confusion. That unity which has not its origin in the multitude is tyranny." That's exactly what we are experiencing now. The European Commission's reaction to the Brexit is to say we need more Europe — hence to centralise power even more. It looks like an act of defiance. In my opinion, that is wrong. We need to see that Europe is not a homogeneous entity and instead put the different cultures and the non-simultaneity of Europe into focus. Central and Eastern Europe have a different experience than Western Europe. This requires specific and sensitive handling. I miss that in the statements from Brussels.

If we do not recognise the Brexit as a signal that we need to form a viable, more direct Europe, I think Europe is really threatened. Civil society has to exert more influence and promote social responsibility and participatory behaviour. Europe needs to again be a continent of acceptance, of respect and of discourse. If we do not regain that, then Europe will be lost. We, as the cultural sector, must take major countermeasures and demonstrate that the cultures have to stick together and that we have a shared responsibility for a European cultural region — not a national, but a community responsibility. Then I can see hope!

Extract from an interview first published on goethe.de, July 2016



Photo: Goethe-Institut / Andreas Wrobbel

Prof. Dr. h.c. Klaus-Dieter Lehmann, born 1940 in Breslau, is President of the Goethe-Institut (since 2008). He was President of the Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation (1998–2008), Director General of the German National Library (1988–1998) and from 1986 Honorary Professor for Economic Informatics at the Goethe-University of Frankfurt am Main. Klaus-Dieter Lehmann, who holds a degree in Physics and Mathematics, is a member of the Academy of Sciences and Literature in Mainz, a member of the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Science and an honorary member of the Bavarian Academy of Fine Arts. The Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich awarded him an honorary doctorate in 2001. In 2010 he became an honorary senator of the Humboldt University in Berlin. He holds the Grand Cross of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany, the Order of Merit of the state of Berlin and the "Kulturgrosschen" of the German Cultural Council, as well as high distinctions from France, Austria and Italy.

Europe is the continent of cities, more than 70% of all Europeans live in urban areas. Hence it is entirely astounding, that the need for an EU Urban Agenda has been controversially discussed for such a long period of time. Even though the EU has no responsibility for urban policy, decisions that are made at the EU level, have in part considerable effects on cities – be it large, medium or small. **Opportunities and challenges** of EU policies converge in urban areas. **Economic growth** is generated in cities, jobs are created, **social cohesion** is practiced, the digital transformation is experienced and not least of all, cities possess significant potential in the field of **climate protection and energy policy**. This list could be easily continued without playing urban and rural areas off against each another (this is of great importance). **The urban and rural areas are complementary functional spaces**. The paramount goal of an ecologically, economically and socially strong Europe and a strengthened territorial cohesion can only be achieved when both areas are strong.

Therefore the Urban Agenda is a **European project of significant importance**. The goal is to improve the quality of life in cities and develop new “urban” governance that is implemented with a practical and concrete approach, coordinated through multiple levels.

On the 30th of May the Meeting of EU Ministers responsible for Urban Matters signed the **Pact of Amsterdam**, an informal (not legally binding) agreement at their Amsterdam conference. The General Affairs Council (the Foreign Ministers) accepted the Pact of Amsterdam on the 24th of June 2016 with the ‘Council Conclusions on an Urban Agenda for the EU’. Hence, the Urban Agenda is from now on officially recognized by the EU. More than twenty years of discussion regarding necessity, meaning and purpose of an EU Urban Agenda has led to this provisional conclusion.

The European Committee of the Regions’ demands were only taken into account to some extent by Member States during the negotiations for the Pact of Amsterdam. For example, the Member States’ decision not to incorporate the EU Urban Agenda in the EU-presidencies work-programs provoke concerns regarding the importance of the EU Urban Agenda. The Member States were obviously too concerned to lose influence on cities with the new governance model from the EU Urban Agenda.

The twenty-year debate and the negotiations around the Pact of Amsterdam suggest that the **EU Urban Agenda is by no means a sure-fire success**. The implementation of the EU Urban Agenda will determine if it becomes a successful model for future multi-level governance collaborations between cities, EU Member States and EU institutions.

Translated from the original German by Rose Connors Dance



Photo: Landesarchiv Berlin

Hella Dunger-Löper (SPD) served as the Permanent Secretary for Building and Housing at Berlin’s Senate Department for Urban Development (2004–2011). From December 2011 to December 2016 she represented the State of Berlin, acting as Permanent Secretary, State of Berlin Delegate to the Federation, Commissioner for European Affairs, and Commissioner for Active Citizenship at the Berlin Senate Chancellery.

Civil society has begun to fight, but it must be encouraged to move even further. Civil society initiatives have become more effective than governments, and not only in Bosnia-Herzegovina. In its ancient Greek origin, democracy was thought of as an identity, albeit selective, between citizens and politics. The agora functioned, without distinction, between those who were politically active. In today's representative democracies, there are voters (= citizens) on one side and institutions, such as parties, chambers, etc. on the other.

To put it openly and in broad terms: civil society in various countries has recently achieved more than its respective governments, in terms of handling the current crises. While the strengthening of civil society is a positive development, governments and administrations are still needed in order to move forward sustainably. What has been left of the European vision? Recent developments in the EU member states have been very dangerous. More and more parties have been founded, or are gaining in strength, to work against Europe, against global responsibility, and against active engagement with strengthening the EU. Instead they have considerably increased their aggressiveness against 'the others'. This is a danger, not only for the European Union but for democracy. Better politics are desperately needed. As Jacques Delors put it in October 2010, on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of German unification: it is necessary to give Europe a soul. By no means did he mean this in a spiritual way; he was concerned with empathy and compassion. As it turns out, Southeastern Europe might play a crucial role in defining Europe's common future, in all its relations to the rest of the world.



Photo: A Soul for Europe 2004

Erhard Busek is Chairman of the Institute for the Danube Region and Central Europe in Vienna. He was Vice-Chancellor of Austria between 1991 and 1995. From January 2002 until June 2008 he served as Special Coordinator of the Stability Pact for Southeastern Europe. Correspond directly with the Author via e.busek@idm.at.

Following the June 23rd referendum, the United Kingdom will probably leave the EU. Although the list of obstacles, difficulties, and disadvantages is getting longer by the day, the government seems determined to do what a very slim majority of voters said it should. There is still a chance the letter required by Article 50 of the Lisbon Treaty will never be written. It would be the sensible thing to do. But whether anybody in Westminster will have enough courage to do that, is more than doubtful.

It was certainly amazing to see the lack of political thought that made the referendum happen in the first place. Why, if not for keeping us from making such stupid decisions, do we go through the immensely cumbersome and expensive procedure of electing political leaders?

Fundamentally, the outcome of the referendum is the result of many decades of refusing to come to terms with the modern world and Britain's role in it. As close as one may feel to one's country's glorious past, there is no way one can get round making an honest assessment and looking ahead. Having won a war more than 70 years ago is simply not good enough as a base on which to build identity in the 21st century. What is particularly puzzling is that Britain, by voting to leave Europe, has turned its back on the reason why that war was fought – to preserve Europe's freedom. Besides, Britain has been involved in European affairs for more than 2,000 years. Brexit does NOT mean continuing in Britain's traditional policy; it means a complete turn-around! And on top of all this, chances are the United Kingdom will fall apart. It will be England (and probably Wales) that will be outside, not the UK.

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Be this as it may, Europe has suffered a loss of prestige. It is no longer the continent that sets political standards, but one that cannot get its act together. We will surely miss the pragmatic, experienced, and well-informed voices of Britons in shaping the future of Europe. We will find it more difficult to stand our ground versus China, Russia, the United States, and increasingly, the BRICS countries. The European Union, for years to come, and to its detriment and chagrin, will have to deal with Brexit rather than getting on with its far more urgent business.

The only bright side of all this may be that all over Europe, including the UK, civil society and individual citizens are beginning to rethink Europe. Many people know very well there is no alternative but to get on with building the Common House of Europe. Think tanks, academics, political and cultural leaders and all kinds of engaged citizens who are proud to be part of this unique venture, are discussing scenarios and road maps. Even more should do so.

We must face the fact that this is better than waiting for outside pressure to become so threatening that we become easy prey for a strong leader who unites Europe by the rules most European states were originally created by – by conquest. If we don't get our act together and develop Europe bottom-up, someone is going to do it top-down.

One possible scenario is to reframe the European Union. As the treaty stands, it is the 28 national governments who make up the Council who are in the driver's seat, and while neither the Commission nor the European Parliament should question that, the Council may begin to accept the responsibility and pledge to be loyal to the Union rather than to its members. Hopefully, palming anything that is uncomfortable off on to the Commission and then blaming it for making unnecessary rules, will come to an end. Also, member governments might realize at last that a vehicle with 28 drivers is difficult to manoeuvre and come up with a more suitable option.

Another scenario however is to let the European Union do its business, but to do away with the notion of an „ever closer union“ and to start building the real Europe afresh. Jean Monnet, one of Europe’s founding fathers famously said that if he had to start again, he would start with culture rather than with the economy. Perhaps, we should take the European project out of the hands of politicians, economists, lawyers and regulators. What Europe needs is a vision, not ever more complicated rules and political compromise. There is no need to harmonize more and more details of people’s daily lives. We want a varied and colourful Europe. And we want the Brits in!

In order to get our act together, we need to realize that European Civil Society has gained strength and is gaining momentum. 21st century society will be built on a functioning division of responsibilities and checks and balances between civil society, the state and the market. Civil society alone can shape the notion of a European demos. By definition, this will be ultranational and will entail complex arrangements of mixed loyalties to family and friends, segments of civil society, and multiple governmental structures.

Europe’s intellectual elites must think about what a European ‘state’ structure could look like. Europe should not and will not be the United States of Europe built on the theory of the United States of America in the 18th, nor a Union of Sovereign States like the German Confederation in the 19th century. It could be the United Regions of Europe, which would ease tensions between the smaller and the larger countries, or the United Citizens of Europe or something quite new. We need lots of disruptive proposals on the table to discuss. At the moment, we have very few.

United Europe, as created by its citizens, and with the help of committed and honest leaders, is all we have to offer our children and grandchildren. It just might be a great place to live in!



Photo: strachwitz.info

Rupert Graf Strachwitz is a political scientist and historian. He has been involved with civil society and European affairs for well over 30 years. Today, he is Executive Director of the Maecenata Foundation, a Berlin-based Think Tank on Civil Society and Philanthropy; he also heads the Maecenata Institute, the foundation’s research and policy centre (www.strachwitz.info).

No Culture No Europe

A LAND OF STUDIOUS PEOPLES

GYÖRGY KONRÁD

25 AUGUST 2016

What is the role of culture in European integration? It is lasting and decisive. A unitary European culture existed before an economic or political community in Europe. This is because the first is derived from relationships between people, the second between states; and people find common ground more easily than states.

Europe's great innovation is cultural pluralism, a tendency that runs parallel to the spread of the philosophy of human rights, based on an obligation to respect the individual.

What makes Europe special is its balance between the universal and the particular, the general and the unique, the common and the individual.

It is a political triumph if those in power manage to establish a meaningful dialogue with the thinking public. It is important that the intelligentsia have an appropriate role in the European Union. There is a need for counterweights, for positions of authority that—by law—cannot lead into actual governing. We need outstanding thinkers, scientists, and artists who will, after round-table consultations, take a position on issues in such a way that they will be interesting to public opinion.

I mention this not to say that they could replace the Parliament, but only to note that there is space for them as well. As well as the elected and the appointed, the invited should be given a significant role on the stage of European decision-making so that public opinion will be able to follow the dialogue between politicians and independent intellectuals with greater engagement.

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Photo: ALEX Berlin 2014

György Konrád, *Novelist and essayist. Studied literature in Budapest and published his debut novel in 1969. President of the International P.E.N. Club (1990–1993), President of the Academy of Arts (1997–2003). Recipient of the highest state distinctions awarded by France, Hungary and Germany. Recent publication: Europa und die Nationalstaaten, Essay, 2013.*

Brexit – An Opportunity to Create a New Europe?

6 SEPTEMBER 2016

HANNES SWOBODA

It is high time the European Union submit itself to a critical evaluation and redesign. In fact, we need to do more than just oil the wheels of the EU machine; we need to replace entire components within the system.

Our goal cannot be to create a version of the European Union meant to stay fixed for all time with no room for alteration. Indeed, by its very nature, the so-called House of Europe is a never-ending project subject to ongoing revision. What we need today are structural reforms capable of convincing the vast majority of citizens of the benefits of a united Europe.

It is simply wrong to suggest that the EU faces only two alternatives: that we must pursue either a stronger EU or increasingly shift responsibilities to member states (and their regions and municipalities). The issue is not about “more” or “less” Europe. It is about strengthening some European competences and relinquishing other responsibilities.

The number of proposed and/or actually adopted laws is not an indicator of a strong EU. As a matter of principle, the EU would be best served if it focused more on incentives, as it does in the field of research, and less on demands and restrictions. The EU needs fewer constraints, less bureaucracy and a modern incentive system that covers everything from infrastructure renewal to the distribution of refugees.

Regardless of its precise shape, the European Union’s credibility is anchored in the vicissitudes of its cultural physiognomy. The spectrum of cultural faces in their diverse historical contexts must be reflected in the EU just as much as a vision of our continent’s future in a globally networked world. With these features in mind, we must seek to achieve a Europe that thrives on grassroots initiatives. We also need to foster this diversity by providing incentives to engage in cultural activities. In doing so, we should target not only the multicultural societies already existing in major metropolitan areas. More importantly, we need to target communities struggling with economic hardship, social crises and other disadvantages. This involves focusing on peripheral regions, where cultural initiatives are needed to improve the quality of life and foster openness and curiosity. Measures conceived with these goals in mind can help protect and strengthen the social fabric under threat of being torn apart.

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Translated from the original German by The Hagedorn Group



Photo: A Soul for Europe, Frank Nürnbergger 2008

Hannes Swoboda is President of the Board of various NGOs dealing with politics, economics and architecture. Former President (2012–2014) of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament, MEP 1996–2014. His parliamentary work covered south-east Europe and Russia, the fight against right-wing extremism and promoting minority rights. He fights for economic growth as well as social equality across Europe.

Brexit happened, but Brussels seems to be unwilling to face the tough questions. No compromise, no pick and choose for the UK, and no need to reform. The EU stays as it is and anyone who does not accept this is wrong and thrown out. It's a huge blow for people like the First Minister of Scotland Nicola Sturgeon and the SNP, who seem to be the only ones passionately defending the European project.

The downgrading of Sturgeon's attempt to engage negotiations with the EU to an internal "British issue"—Donald Tusk and most heads of states refused to talk to her—is the best example of how deeply the EU's representatives overlooked the key message of the Brexit vote: that the citizens, and not nation states, are sovereign. The framing of Brexit as a British problem is misleading. The idea of the European Union's founding fathers was to build a democracy beyond nations.

The Scottish case proves what the French sociologist Pierre Rosanvallon last April dubbed "the lie on which the European Union was built". Speaking in Warsaw, he argued that we are all paying a high price for that founding lie, anchored in the treaty of Maastricht, that the EU is a union of states and of citizens. Citizens do not have much say in the EU, despite the fact that—no matter how often states claim otherwise—citizens are sovereign. There is no state-independent citizenship of the EU—not for Englishers, not for Scots, not for anybody: the union of citizens is a fallacy. As a result, British voters were hostages of the British government and the Tories' Eurosceptic wing. Now that the UK is leaving, Brits will lose their citizenship of the EU. The result is not national pride, but a rush for Irish passports.

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Brexit is just another example of today's Animal Farm EU, where some citizens are more equal than others, above all Germans, who have benefited most from the single market and the euro without sharing. Or even the Dutch, who believe they alone have the right to vote over the EU's Ukraine policy. A political project can never function like this and politics is what Europe lacks most.

The treaties of the Levellers and the Putney Debates of 1647 elaborated on this concept of equal liberty, insisting that, within a political entity, all citizens must be treated equally in front of the law. The EU does not offer this.

The next European project must make a compelling offer to all European citizens, one that goes beyond nation-state affiliation. It must be based on the principle that all European citizens have political equality: in elections, before the law and in taxes. Cicero called this *ius aequum*. A government for the people and by the people. A nation state is not the only frame for a democracy.

It is what the EU's founding fathers had in mind in postwar Europe: a real post-national democracy, with the autochthon, or tribal, European regions—Catalonia, Scotland, Moravia, Bavaria, Auvergne, Silesia or Brabant—as constitutional holders, to prevent the big nation states dominating the others, as Walter Hallstein, the first European president of the European commission, said in his inaugural speech in Rome in 1964.

The challenge is to define this European democracy and its parliamentary institutions, which, in contrast to the current trilogy of European council, commission and parliament, must be built on a real division of power: a legislative body that controls an executive body.

That such ideas sound like heresy in Brussels indicates just how far the EU has strayed from English political thinkers such as John Locke, Edmund Burke or Adam Smith. All were masterminds of modern parliamentary liberalism, and none could have imagined what appears self-evident in today's EU: that a people can be governed by a single market, that deregulation is the goal and that anyone who proposes social controls of markets is a dangerous Marxist radical. The question now is how to organise a Schumpeterian “constructive destruction” of the EU. Whenever in history sovereign citizens have embarked together on a political project, they have founded a republic based on that principle of political equality. This should be the vision and mission for Europe in the 21st century: The European Republic.



Photo: C. Butzmann

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Her latest book “Warum Europa eine Republik werden muss! Eine politische Utopie” (Why Europe Needs to Become a Republic! A Political Utopia) was published in April 2016.

Then And Now

Manuel Barroso started his term in office as President of the European Commission by addressing the first Berlin Conference of A Soul for Europe in 2004 by declaring that it was time to build Europe on its culture, not just its economics. There was an unparalleled sense of optimism then. The expansion to 25 Member States at that time had been accomplished with only a disunited Cyprus under a cloud. Even the Balkans had calmed down and Turkey was a serious contender for joining in. The huge new European Parliament building in Brussels was nearing completion and was a statement of confidence in supra-national democracy. Seven years after the Euro's creation, it was a leading world currency outperforming most others. Trade and employment was going nicely and even Africa was thinking Europe might be a more interesting partner than China.

Ten years later, the scene could hardly be more different. Two sides of the Mediterranean are disasters, challenging all the values of European tolerance, civilised governance and safe haven. The economies and politics of the Northern Mediterranean have not been more fragile since the 1970s. The countries of the old Eastern bloc, so happy for their citizens to settle in Western countries as the visa barriers came down, are now resisting becoming importers rather than exporters of people, prey to fears of outsiders just like island England. Racism and aggressive nationalism stalk Europe again as worries about jobs and incomes show no sign of going away. The post-war generation grows old and fretful. The thirty-somethings resent how much work it takes to make a living. The young are angry at the mismanagement by their parents and grandparents. The Euro totters.

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Worst of all, the idiocy of British Conservative leaders in allowing and then losing a referendum is leading to the first break in Membership since the Union was created. Whether that break is by all, half or three-quarters of the British state matters a great deal to its pro-European population as its 200-year-old stability crumbles. The threat to the EU, though, is that "Brexit" gives hope to other nationalist parties to follow suit. Germany tries to hold everything together, but its economic orthodoxy and propensity to sound patronising wins it few friends and only grudging thanks. France looks uncertain and resentful. Russia gloats.

What Should We Do?

Perhaps the one thing that the Southern Left, Northern and Middle Right are likely to agree on is that the EU has been a disappointment, seeming to benefit infrastructure and institutions but too rarely making people believe it is helping them as individuals. Europe's structures of governance are too complicated, too inflexible and too easy for large nations and corporations to bully. However, that is also true of the United Nations, surely just as much in need of reform, yet nobody (except the demagogue now in charge of the Philippines) would seriously advocate leaving it.

There are four European inter-governmental organisations, each with their own historical reason for existence, strengths and flaws. Two (the EU and European Central Bank) are rich and resented. Two (the Council of Europe and Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe) are impoverished, respected, but largely ignored. It is the two latter, though, that stand up for individuals against states and officials. They should be championed by the press and cheered by citizens. Instead, governments do all they can to undermine their authority and the media sideline their success while lampooning their pronouncements.

The post-WWII and post-Berlin Wall structures need reinventing. They do not need demolishing immediately because that would be too disruptive and would jettison too much that is important (though not always popular). Instead they should be superseded by a new organisation that can place the rights and interests of the individual at its heart, recognising that it is only to enhance the lives of individuals and the planet itself that government should exist in the first place. While this body is being developed there should be a moratorium on changes in membership or function for the old ones.

What Should The New Thing Be?

There is one old forum that carries the affection of historians and is not sullied by subsequent mistakes—the Congress of Europe, which in 1948 gave birth to the European Cultural Foundation and the Council of Europe. The Congress should take over, becoming an umbrella body that can subsume the other four and, like UEFA, include all the land and sea from the Atlantic Ridge to the Bering Strait. It should have a constitution which substantially shifts the balance of power away from territorial states.

Its authority should come from a College of five institutions, each representing a different aspect of democratic reality—the first, a directly elected Assembly for which candidates could only state their political views and expertise, not their country or political party; the second, a College of Cities and Local Authorities; the third, a College of Regional Assemblies (those with cultural identity but not UN status); the fourth, a Conference of Nation States; and the fifth, a Parliament of Universities. Each of the five would elect members to the College of the Congress itself, which would govern human rights, constitutions, banks, business, environmental protection, education and security. Legislation would require the approval of the Assembly plus two of the other colleges.

Like It?

Surely it is worth proposing? Importantly, though, its invention should be the work of citizens, not national governments even if they, and their Parliaments, will have to submit to it sooner rather than later—target date for its establishment, the centenary of the League of Nations in 2020.



Photo: Anna Scholiers

Simon Mundy is a cultural policy adviser, poet, novelist, festival and organisation director, and broadcaster, who, for the last three decades, has operated in Wales, London and Brussels. However he will now be found in the far north of Scotland fighting to remain a European. He has written more than 20 books (including poetry and novels); current projects include a libretto, a volume of stories and a biography. He has chaired or been a board member of many arts organisations, was a co-founder of Culture Action Europe, and has acted as an adviser to UNESCO, the Council of Europe, the European Cultural Foundation, the International Music Council and many more. Simon Mundy has broadcast on BBC Radio for over 40 years and written on the arts for most of Britain's major newspapers. He is Acting Vice-President of the Writers for Peace Committee of PEN International, member of the "A Soul for Europe" initiative's strategy group and a Permanent Fellow of Felix Meritis Foundation, Amsterdam.

What to do? Do it!

VOLKER HASSEMER

8 SEPTEMBER 2016

We must break the habit of treating Europeans—and the ideas they develop about Europe in their respective cities, regions and homelands—like badly behaved children. The people of Europe are the foundation of Europe; they are the motivation and aspiration behind the grand idea of a European Union.

Art and culture show us the way; they grow from grass roots or they don't exist at all. They are different in every location; they are curious and headstrong. Only by means of their obstinacy do art and culture make sense for our common interests as a whole.

Indeed, this is the reason why the affable catchphrase “unity in diversity” is so much more complicated and exhausting than it seems upon first glance. And yet, no one wants unity in uniformity.

Let us act accordingly! Let us work to turn Europe back on its feet. The catchphrase of re-starting the European Union from the basis of culture—which is often quoted in a celebratory but inconsequential way—would thus gain an explosive strength. It would become a mission, a political task. At that point, the insignificance of the EU Commissioner of Culture would become a disgrace—to name just one small example.

Translated from the original German by The Hagedorn Group

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Photo: Hermann Willers

Volker Hassemer is co-founder of “A Soul for Europe” and President of the Board of Management of the “A Soul for Europe” E.E.I.G. Doctor of laws. Former Senator for Urban Development and Environmental Protection in Berlin, former Senator for Cultural Affairs. Chairman of the Managing Board of “Partner für Berlin” (1996-2002). Chairman of the Board of Stiftung Zukunft Berlin.

I believe that spending on culture should be compulsory and that investing in culture should be an EU responsibility, comparable to investment in the overall European project. If we want to build a European identity, a “Soul for Europe”, then we must better understand all the complexities of our diversity. A good example is the UK’s project called Fred@ School that is doing a good job of educating young film-goers by screening the European Parliament’s LUX film prize in schools and then encouraging online discussions among students.

We must of course always defend art and freedom of expression, so I am deeply concerned by recent developments in Poland. Public funding of the arts and culture must come with some responsibilities because we also have a duty to reach new audiences, and to build up the cultural experience and expertise of future generations. We in Germany now routinely introduce opera and classical plays with the back story to help new audiences and young people develop their own knowledge and appreciation. We also promote accessibility by bringing performances to city centres, staging events outdoors and supporting innovative cultural projects.

We need to learn from other countries to see how they approach the challenge of bringing people to culture, and culture to people. It’s a long-term goal that’s not easy to achieve quickly. Comparative studies examine things like chewing gum and washing machines, so why not do the same for culture to determine the best ways to make it easily accessible and inexpensive? In Germany, major exhibitions are subsidised by both private and public funding, but for the funding to be made available, a proportion of that has to be devoted to developing educational tools. We all need to share best practices like these, while keeping in mind that one size doesn’t fit all.

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I belong to a group of MEPs who are promoting a European Heritage Label to be awarded to especially symbolic sites—more than 100 so far—that embody our cultural and spiritual history. The reason these EU-wide projects are so important is because we Europeans need to build bridges between our national cultures so as to emphasise what we have in common.

The EP’s Committee on Culture and Education, along with the intergroup on European Tourism Development and Cultural Heritage, and the nonprofit “A Soul for Europe”, aimed at bringing an ethical, spiritual dimension to the EU, are pushing for 2018 to be designated as the European Year of Cultural Heritage.

If the European Year of Cultural Heritage becomes reality in 2018, it would be the perfect framework for carrying out a comparative study of national cultural investments, and the European Parliament’s research services could be asked to do the work. We would then have the material we need to push matters forward on the cultural front. The future of European society will largely depend also on making culture one of our prime concerns.

Extract from an article entitled “Martin Luther and the Reformation”, first published in “Beyond Visions: A policy on culture in Europe” by the European Festivals Association (EFA) and the European House for Culture, March 2016.



Photo: European Union 2016

Arne Lietz has been Member of the European Parliament since 2014, representing the region of Sachsen-Anhalt. He works on the Foreign Affairs Committee and the Development Committee. A member of the Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD) since 2008 and spokesman of several party committees, his previous positions include working as a consultant to the Mayor of Lutherstadt Wittenberg and as the European representative of the American educational organization ‘Facing History And Ourselves’. He studied in Berlin and Cape Town and holds a Master’s in Modern History.

LORENZO MARSILI

The grand-coalition has become the symbol of failed Europe. Traditional centre-left and centre-right parties, which until recently represented the vast majority of the electorate, are today obliged to join forces to keep insurgents at bay and ensure governability—barely and with increasing difficulty.

Sadly, a retreat to the fortress of the status quo will not save Europe from a postmodern re-enactment of the 1930s. Distrust towards the political establishment and towards democratic institutions is just a reaction to the spectacle of mainstream politics barricading itself to defend a political and economic system that no longer works for a majority: a broken economy in a broken democracy.

The economic and refugee crises are two key failures of our broken system. What solutions are on offer? A bribe to the authoritarian Erdoğan regime to try and keep refugees out of the EU. Austerity—and at best a few decimal points of budget “flexibility”—to address an economic disaster that has now lasted for nearly ten years with no signs of improvement.

Our continent is blocked by mutual vetoes while our governments choose to navel-gaze in the hope that problems will sort themselves out.

They won't. We are facing the storm in paper boats piloted by drunk captains. The timidity of the establishment is a recipe for disaster. The increasing feeling of political and economic exclusion of many is real—and is here to stay. It represents a generalised system failure to which no convincing response is being formulated by mainstream parties.

Let's be honest with ourselves: the centre cannot, must not, and will not hold. But to avoid ceding the resulting void to the racists and reactionaries we need to open a space for a third alternative—simultaneously against the policies of the establishment thus far and against resurgent nationalism and xenophobia.

Will we manage to set sail before hitting the rocks? As every day goes by, it becomes clearer than ever that only a pan-European mutiny will set the course straight.



Photo: European Alternatives

Lorenzo Marsili is the co-founder and Director of European Alternatives. He is the initiator and current spokesperson of the European Initiative for Media Pluralism, an international campaign demanding better protection for media pluralism and freedom at European level. A long-time student of China, he initiated a multi-year arts exchange programme between cultural innovators in China, Brazil and Europe, *Transnational Dialogues*. He has previously worked in setting up *Transeuropa Festival* and was founding editor of *Naked Punch* magazine. He has degrees in philosophy, sociology, and Chinese studies, and is an active commentator and public speaker. He tweets @l_marsili.

A Soul for Europe – Education is Key

JO LEINEN

15 SEPTEMBER 2016

Culture does not know manmade borders. It has been “European” long before the “European integration” started after the Second World War with the European Coal and Steel Community in 1952. Whoever has the possibility to travel overseas can easily recognize from the distance that—despite all its diversity—Europe has a common cultural fundament and has a way of living that can serve as a basis for political unification.

However, not everyone has the opportunity to travel to other continents, and artists and scientists, while being great multipliers, are not the majority of the population. So, how can we raise awareness for the common European cultural and scientific heritage and thus strengthen the European identity of citizens? The cultural sector can play a big role itself, by making Europe a topic in literature, music and visual arts and not least by initiatives like “A Soul for Europe”. The European institutions should support cross-border cooperation of artists as well as cultural events and festivities. Yet all these measures will fall short, if there is no paradigm shift in national education policies.

In contrast to the majority of people, national politics historically perceive and use culture as a source of national pride and identity. This is also reflected in the curricula in schools and universities. Often, culture and education are under the responsibility of the same ministry in national and regional governments. Students learn about the great achievements of their compatriots, while the greater picture and the fact that many of those achievements could only take place in a pan-European cultural space are largely ignored. There is nothing wrong in teaching national history. We all live in communities and we want to know how our home-city was founded or which famous inventors, artists or statesmen were born in our region or country. A problem exists, however, when cultural achievements are used to differentiate one people or country from another and in the worst case to prove the own (perceived) supremacy. Sometimes, the nationalities of historic personalities are even disputed. Instead, the potential of culture as a uniting factor should be used by widening the scope of the curricula.

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Education and culture policies are national (or in federal states regional) competences and there is no reason to change that. However, if the many speeches about our common European values, history and destiny are more than lip services—should students not learn about them? In school you hear about Europe in the context of war and conflict and at best—in a purely technical manner—in politics class, when students are confronted with the functioning of the EU’s political system. While it is important to know how the system works, being able to name the EU institutions is hardly enough to form an emotional bond with Europe and to define oneself as part of a European community of citizens based on common values and solidarity.

To win the hearts of the young generation—and therefore Europe’s future—a common educational basis is indispensable. The governments of the Member States, represented by the ministers responsible for education and culture, should draft a pan-European curriculum, which would complement the national and regional curricula. Focusing on what unites us, European achievements in arts, social and human rights, society and science should be taught as well as the implications of historic events in the wider European context. This could be done by establishing a new subject of “European studies”, entailing all of the mentioned aspects from culture to politics. Alternatively, the content could be incorporated horizontally in existing subjects like arts, literature, history and social science. “Education is key”—not only for everyone’s personal future, but as well for the future of Europe.



Photo: Jo Leinen

Jo Leinen has been a Member of the European Parliament since 1999. He is currently the Chairman of the EP Delegation for the relations with China. He was Chair of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety 2009–2012 and Chair of the Committee on Constitutional Affairs 2004–2009. Since 2011, he has been serving as President of the European Movement International. Before becoming an MEP, he was Member of the Committee of the Regions 1995–1999 and Minister of the Environment for the federal state of Saarland 1985–1994. Jo Leinen is Honorary President of the Union of European Federalists (UEF). He studied law and economics.

Isn't it amazing how easy it is to find a volcano upon which to dance a reckless jig? The current eruption is a vile mixture of nationalism, contempt for politics, xenophobia, intolerance, anxiety and a vague sense of being overburdened. And yet so many people are acting as if the stage has not been set, as if nothing has happened. Have we forgotten all the admonitory words describing the insidious and outwardly haphazard nature of the catastrophes of the 20th century? Have we come to a moment we thought we'd never reach again? Have we attained a state of denial in which we act as if everything is as it ever was?

How wonderful that we don't have to invent anything anew. We already have a peace project, an Enlightenment project, a tolerance project and an equality project. It is called Europe. Born on the continent of the Enlightenment after centuries of carnage with the firm conviction that peace and mutual understanding are goals that will always unite us. Indeed, we have grown accustomed to peace, a certain level of prosperity, a free press and pluralism—and this has led us to see our good fortune as self-explanatory, as a sure thing that's here to stay. This attitude is palpable everywhere. At this point, however, it is imperative that we become aware of the fact that these achievements face grave dangers posed by all kinds of well-networked profiteers, by our own level of satiation and, last but not least, by a mindset of apolitical detachment.

How quiet it has become in the corridors of public authorities, in schools, on the streets, at universities. How little we hear spoken of Europe in these places! And who is speaking with—rather than about—our partners in Hungary, Austria and Poland? Who is speaking to those frightened Danes and oblivious English before it's too late? And who, for example, actually takes young people seriously—many of whom are highly qualified yet still unemployed? These are people for whom we must work to defend a life lived amidst peace and freedom of thought. We must speak with them; not in a preachy or reproving way on the blessings of agricultural subsidies, but instead with the passion and courage to engage in a differentiated view of a world resonating with hate-speech slogans.

For many people, Europe is a promise. But on the continent itself? Here we see an increasingly misinformed lethargy alongside fears stoked by particular vested interests. Those of us who know the value of freedom, an open society and a state under the rule of law must stand in opposition to this lethargy and these fears. And we must do so knowing that there will be criticism and that we will not always share the same opinion, but that we are nevertheless willing to forge ahead on a path to democratic unity that was launched over sixty years ago. One of Rainer Werner Fassbinder's early and most memorable films is "Fear Eats the Soul", and indeed this is the way things work with fear and scare tactics. Fear is a dangerous and insidious poison that can have tremendous consequences. The first thing it does is paralyse its prey. Generating fear has always been a means by which authoritarian despots achieve their goal of exclusion. We must take fears and concerns seriously while at the same time resisting their power to capture our minds. It is up to us to defend our fragile world.

Translated from the original German by The Hagedorn Group



Photo: A. Pein

Prof. Martin Rennert was elected president of the Berlin University of the Arts in 2006. He was born in New York in 1954 and studied classical guitar in Vienna and Graz, Austria; as well as in Granada, Spain. In 1985, he was appointed professor for guitar at the Hochschule der Künste Berlin, and from 1989 to 1995 served as Dean of the College of Music at the UdK Berlin. From 1995 to 1997, Prof. Rennert was president of the European League of Institutes of the Arts (ELIA), based in Amsterdam, Netherlands. Since being named president of the Berlin University of the Arts, he has also served as deputy chairperson of the Landeskonferenz der Rektoren und Präsidenten der Universitäten und Hochschulen des Landes Berlin (LKRP), an organization that brings together all the University presidents in Berlin. He is also the spokesperson for the higher education institutions in the arts at LKRP. In addition to these responsibilities, President Rennert serves in an advisory capacity for the European Union on questions of cultural policy and arts education, especially in regard to issues relating to the growth of the Union. He has advised ministries of culture and science of several European and non-European nations, and beginning in 2007 has been a member of the Advisory Board (“Beirat”) of the Zurich (Switzerland) University of the Arts.

Since 2011, President Rennert has also sat on the Broadcasting Council for the public broadcaster Rundfunk Berlin-Brandenburg (ARD), serving as its deputy chairperson since 2014; additionally, he is deputy chairperson of the Telemedienausschuss of the ARD, and a member of the Program Advisory Committee of ARTE Geie.

Europe's future and the safety of Europeans lie without doubt in the European Union. It is a community of Europeans in which all European peoples acknowledge their shared roots—Greek democracy, the culture and moral-creating spirit of the Bible, Roman Law, the Enlightenment, human rights and humanism.

Europe's soul: Europe's spirit. In every European country, the European quality of human relationship has this as its source.

However, there are also major differences which not even violence can change. These differences might be those in nature, for example. In the north, the winter is long, the days of darkness are long and the days spent behind closed doors, at home perhaps, are longer than in the south where the heat can only be tolerated by sitting in the shade or spending the long tepid evenings drinking outdoors with friends. From these differences, the relationship to nature, to human relations, to the world of faith, to society and to work proves itself different, even the organisation of the work is different, economics and authorities operate differently, social customs are different. History also brought different experiences everywhere. There are European countries in which revolutionary traditions are alive, where everyone freely expresses their opinion and trades freely. In other countries, acceptance of authority is natural because from experience that is the only way to survive and that's where the mentality has for centuries been shaped by the fight for survival. The feeling of security which the people need is generated differently everywhere you go. Even the same religion functions differently in different, even neighbouring, countries.

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In one word, the mentalities are different. A political system can change overnight, but the mentality of a people never does or only would after decades or centuries. Important in the emergence of a mentality are the natural conditions, the world of faith and the history. All of these shape the relationship of people with each other and with the world. Simply deciding to change a mentality is a fool's errand. It will only have the appearance of success in the short-term. So it is pointless to question why, for example, in the countries of the former Soviet sphere of interest, the desire of the people both to take on responsibility for decisions that affect their own lives and to not surrender themselves to the whims of a, perhaps even authoritarian, force which sees itself as the creator of order, why this desire is so much less than in the countries where co-determination and responsibility have been tradition and practice for several centuries. Despite this, this is the way populist forces in almost every European country try to cover over unresolved problems by creating the concept of an enemy. Since everyone likes to pass the blame onto others rather than themselves and likes to find others responsible for their own failures, it is great cause for concern that the image of having an enemy to vilify always appears in society. This can be someone representing another race, followers of a different religion or a different country, a leading person or group or a neighbour from the other side of the road who you know by name. The important thing is that he is visible, is alive, can be found close by and can be punished, unlike the devil in hell so far away.

What or who is the soul of Europe? Giotto, Michelangelo, Rembrandt? Shakespeare, Dante, Goethe? Bach, Mozart, Beethoven? Tolstoy, Chekhov, Kafka? Picasso, Bartók, Eisenstein, Fellini, Bergman? Or is it the Roman soldiers of the infanticide in Bethlehem, the initiators of the Inquisition or of Auschwitz? Europe's soul is that of a person who fights for security and acceptance, for an acceptable future. The soul of a person, who expects energising joy, tangible results, a small victory or encouragement.

American films are always about winners, like the folk tales. Honest European films held in high esteem are always about losers, they tell stories about failed insurrections, about the victims of history, of relationships that end badly, stolen bikes, destitute pensioners, defeated people—we suffer with them. The soul of the European Union will only then be reborn, only then become the soul of us all, once the European Union can provide a real, achievable future

vision which takes differences into consideration. A vision which means security, work, food on the table, modern education, a high-quality health system, a functioning and cooperating economy, protection and a common appearance that everyone is accountable for. A vision which is not invented by the technocrats of power, but by the people who know what it means to suffer.

European citizens think they can create if they just have the exact information, can vote without manipulation and can choose from the options available. It is an illusion to think that European citizens would do something for Europe if they did not feel or know that this is something good or important to them personally, or that they are needed and their work appreciated. It is nice that the beautiful side of European differences is expressed at festivals for a day or a week, but it is an illusion to think that political interests and power struggles are influenced by such encounters. On the contrary, they often serve as a facade for political interests.

The fact is that Europe's soul can be found in its understanding of being different, in its totality of personal will. Here, however, a force is required through which all of this will is kept in balance, is reconciled with others and is inspired.

Personally, I am involved in filmmaking and need the skills of many people to create a film. I need the work and ideas of the cinematographer, the actors, the costume and decoration designers, the sound engineer, the make-up artist, etc. When I'm picking out talented and skilled specialists, each of them will have a number of good ideas that they would want to push through so that his talent can also be seen on the screen. But often, many good ideas are conflicting, they turn on each other and amass into a negative energy, and from this initial collaboration results a battle of special interests. It is my job that the self-fulfilling, negative energy of this battle between talented visions becomes a positive force, but in such a way that everyone feels well and talented.

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To my knowledge, mediators have also been employed by courts of law in recent times to help opposing parties reach an agreement before their issue even comes to litigation.

In the reawakening of Europe's soul, it is not talented citizens who are missing, but the spirit of calm and wise, long-term thinkers who have a sense for and understanding of the real questions, the decisions and suggestions which bring together rather than separate the different souls of Europe. Because without this, Europe's soul will degenerate, fly off and Europe will slide down until nothing remains but, as I said a few years ago, a great big museum in which Japanese, Chinese and American tourists can take photos of famous ruins, from the Acropolis to Auschwitz.

Translated from the original German by John Neilan



Photo: István Szabó

István Szabó is a film director and Oscar winner (*"Mephisto"*, 1981). His films include *"Confidence"* (1980), *"Colonel Redl"* (1985), *"Hanussen"* (1988), *"Sunshine"* (1999), *"Taking Sides"* (2001) and *"Being Julia"* (2004). A visiting professor at film schools in London, Berlin, Vienna, he writes screenplays and has directed operas.

The focus on economic policy issues has for a very long time pushed culture, as the basis of the European idea, into the background of public consciousness. Yet a European identity does not evolve through the growth of the European market, but through the development and awareness of common values.

Europe is more than the combined gross national products of its Member States. Indeed, despite many decades of political and military confrontation, Europe has never ceased to exist as a single cultural area. But our goal cannot be a Europe which seeks uniformity; instead, what we must aim for is a Europe united in its diversity, forging a common destiny. The European Union is ultimately the outcome of a historic learning process. The changed political situation and the return of the countries of Central, Eastern and Southern Europe have also refocused attention on the cultural dimension of the European integration project. There is a growing conviction that Europe's political, economic and social integration cannot be successful in the long term unless Europe grasps that it is a cultural community. The awareness of the cultural dimension must be heightened—this is the message now being sent out in speeches on Europe everywhere, notwithstanding all the differences between the European countries and nations, whose diversity is the real characteristic of their unity.

The strength of European culture lies in its differences: it is not what is 'typically European' that finds recognition and admiration throughout the world, but the diversity that Europe has produced in its national and regional cultures: in music, in art, in literature, and in its languages.

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But the strength of European culture is also based on its capacity to integrate: language and culture are very often not confined to a group or geographical area. That is why it is difficult to associate the 'European culture' directly with a distinct geographical, historical, political, religious or cultural entity called 'Europe'.

European cultural policy should promote the opportunities for all identities to express themselves, and to foster closer relations through mutual understanding and respect. In a world dominated by the market economy, Europe and its institutions should nurture and support the consistent development of European regional cultures; minority cultures must not be squeezed out or dominated in economic terms.

At the same time, however, the task is also to create and promote overarching structures which facilitate a European culture on a broader scale. That is why European cultural policy must, by its very nature, have an integrating effect. It must create frames of reference and enable European culture to have an impact on the wider world.

In radiating out to this wider world, European culture must convey something of the specific situation in which it developed, which can only be encountered in Europe. Or to quote Thomas Mann: Europe is "the opposite of provincial narrow-mindedness, boorish egoism, a nationalistic lack of sophistication, and ignorance".

The EU's approach is to support all facets of creative endeavour—exchange, cooperation, broadening experience, and promoting intercultural dialogue in Europe. What this means in practice, in every case, is dialogue between people.

Europe's great opportunity in the coming years does not lie in its socio-cultural unity and homogeneity but in facilitating cultural diversity. This means that a European cultural policy, if it is to be successful, must find a pragmatic response to the cultural developments taking place in the modern industrial society and to the cultural policy challenges posed by the European integration process and those caused by the integration of refugees.

However, the real challenge facing cultural policy at European level must be the intellectual and emotional safeguarding of plurality, tolerance, freedom and democracy. This is the core area of political, historical and cultural development whose importance cannot be overstated.

We all have a vision of a better and more peaceful world. Culture can contribute in many different ways to giving this vision form and content—in other words, to its artistic expression.

Finally, a message for all those who are critical of culture: it is true that culture can be challenging, for it has sharp edges and corners. Culture deals with the past, records the present and gives voice to longings and nostalgia. This is not always comfortable, and may provoke criticism among those affected by it. Certainly, without culture, life might well be easier, more comfortable and less problematical—but it would also be infinitely poorer!



Photo: A Soul for Europe,
www.seesaw-foto.com 2015

Doris Pack was Member of the European Parliament from 1989 to 2014 and Chair of the Committee on Culture and Education 2009–2014. From 1974–83 and 1985–89, she was Member of Deutscher Bundestag and from 1981–83 and 1985–89 member of the Parliamentary Assembly of the CoE and of the WEU Assembly. She was Member of the EP Delegation for Relations with South-East Europe, is Chair of the Franco-German Foundation for Cultural Cooperation and Co-chair of the “A Soul for Europe” Advisory Board.

Question: *Art has always acted internationally. Music and painting, photography and film, dance and architecture—even literature—are ideal ways of communication among people and cultures. At the same time, art is headstrong. Arts differ from country to country, from region to region, and they can be incompatible. Accordingly, the Europeans' ideas about the future of the continent are characterized by cultural divergences. Shall the cultural discourse also highlight the Europeans' unfamiliarity with each other, and in which way?*

Wim Wenders: Let's think positively! Looking at this "unfamiliarity" among Europeans, one must clearly state that historically, we have never been more familiar with each other than now, in the early 21st century. Even if obsolete ideas, borders, walls and limitations are coming back, and even if old concepts as "national identity" are reanimated, the fact is: Europeans, and especially a great part of contemporary European youth, are already living in a European network—socially, but certainly culturally. They know more about each other's music, movies, literature, comic strips, newspapers, art fairs, exhibitions, festivals, food, cars, bicycles, fashion, regions, drinks, idiosyncrasies, you name it, than ever. In my book, the cultural discourse should be building on what is already there! It doesn't have to start from scratch. Let's not even try to convince yesterday's ideologists about the absolute necessity of going on with the European idea. Let's have that discourse with those who need to make Europe their home continent in the future: its youth. Their future can only be European, and they know that better than the populist Anti-Europeans who will disappear again in their own black hole. Building on the cultural familiarity that is already there and communicating the losses that come with the old ideas of nations (and the borders that come with it), that is the discourse to be held.

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A "big point" in that discourse should be: those "reanimated nations" are incapable to withstand the global pressure. They will cave in and will not protect their citizens from a global onslaught, while Europe can do this under its friendly roof! The discourse is: let past ideas not dictate the future, which does belong to a generation that Europe has already won over, but needs to activate. This generation's "familiarity" with Europe is Europe's biggest asset! They are past all divergences, so to speak, and therefore take Europe for granted, which is a drawback. They are the ones who have to make the discourse you are talking about their own.

Question: *From your perspective as a filmmaker and German citizen, how do you think the arts can contribute to bringing to the citizens' minds that they are not mere spectators in Europe, but the ones responsible for its advancement?*

Wim Wenders: That can only be done, in my book, by making these citizens realize that what they take for granted today might soon be a privilege, or possibly gone.

It always helps, I feel, to look at such things from another perspective, not just today's urgencies. So if we project ourselves ten years into the future, we can compare the Europe that would be handicapped and reduced by today's nationalists and populists to the Europe that grows in its soul, and deepens its understanding by adhering more and more to a creative and cultural realm, not just to financial and bureaucratic regulations.

Question: *What can the national governments of the EU do to make visible the diverse relations of their citizens and the entire country with Europe? Would making these relations the basis of the respective national European policy be the right strategy to revive a Europe from the bottom-up?*

Wim Wenders: "Reviving from the bottom up" is the right direction, as opposed to "reviving from above". So my (very serious) question is therefore: are national governments in fact the right institutions to propagate the diverse relations of its citizens to Europe? How could that become a "basis" of (hopefully) positive messaging and interaction? I feel the danger of backfiring is too big, as it will rather feel like "coming from above", which in today's general dissatisfaction with "politics" is not the right approach any more.

But what could be considered as coming from “the bottom”, not from the **brain**, so to speak, but rather from the **stomach** of Europe?! In my opinion, people tend to listen more to local institutions, like to their city or their region, or have a more positive reaction to churches (Yes! The Pope, for instance, just mentioned Europe in a much more emotional way than any politician I heard lately), or to their football clubs (for whom Europe is the gold standard), or to their cultural institutions, like museums or festivals, or to their favourite airlines, or to bloggers or to websites or to social networks. Let’s start putting Europe into the hands of its users and not leave it up to politicians or governments! They have fucked it up too much to now be in charge to fix it. Of course, they need to be involved. But the great gesture needed right now is to put responsibilities into other hands! Not only responsibilities, but also budgets! Let youth organisations run with the European idea and give them funds to do it. Let football clubs accept their part in the European idea. Let museums and festivals (of the arts, of music, of films, of architecture, of literature, of operas) show their audience that their future is under a European roof. In every big city there are schools for multi-lingual and multi-cultural children. These are the Europeans of tomorrow. The European project is embedded in a million small institutions and details. Let them shine! And please: let politics (and politicians) appear more modestly and not just say that Europe belongs to its citizens but prove it.

Questions by “A Soul for Europe”



Photo: Peter Lindbergh 2015

Wim Wenders was born in Düsseldorf, Germany, in 1945. He studied medicine and philosophy before moving to Paris in 1966 to study painting. A year later, he enrolled at the newly founded University of Television and Film (HFF) Munich and graduated as a director in 1971. Wim Wenders is founding member and, since 1996, president of the European Film Academy. As a filmmaker, he has been honoured with countless awards including the Golden Palm for *PARIS, TEXAS* (1984); the Director’s Prize in Cannes for *WINGS OF DESIRE* (1987); the Golden Lion in Venice for *THE STATE OF THINGS* (1982); and the Silver Bear for *THE MILLION DOLLAR HOTEL* (2000) at the Berlin International Film Festival. His documentary films *THE SALT OF THE EARTH* (2014), *PINA* (2011) and *BUENA VISTA SOCIAL CLUB* (1999) have all been nominated for an Oscar. His most recent film is *THE BEAUTIFUL DAYS OF ARANJUEZ* (2016), an adaptation of a stage play by Peter Handke shot in 3D.

The result of the June 23 UK referendum on EU membership has opened a Pandora's box: membership is no longer forever, European integration is reversible, everything is possible. Any proposal for how the EU, its soon to be 27 member states, and its citizens should respond to this watershed vote needs to take this turning point into account. Ideas have to be bold; action has to be courageous.

With intra-European diplomacy abounding in the aftermath of the British vote to leave the EU, it is worth noting what the French, German, and Polish foreign ministers declared on August 28: a "more flexible European Union" should take full advantage of the EU treaty framework to respond to varying levels of ambition among its members. That's a fair starting point but falls far short of the challenges Europe is facing, both domestic and external.

So let's expand their thinking. The objective should be not just the EU but Europe as a whole. And the mission should be flexibility not only within the treaties but also through a new structure in which European integration can be organized. Flexible integration should no longer be the last resort if all countries cannot agree; rather, it would become the organizing principle of a Europe that aims for an ever-closer union without prescribing a particular way of uniform, simultaneous integration.

It's time for a pan-European union that encompasses all of the continent's sovereign countries at different levels of integration.

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The most basic integration level would be about rights and democracy as currently embodied in the Council of Europe. Its 47 members have all signed the European Convention on Human Rights. Fusing this body's work in the name of 800 million Europeans with the EU's own rights mechanisms would give human rights and democracy promotion a much-needed lift. It would also offer a chance to reset EU relations with Russia: negotiating with Moscow to stay in would be a way to mend fences, while Russia's refusal to remain would be a clear sign that the country does not share basic European values.

The next level of integration would be economic, as currently enshrined in the EU's single market and its association with the European Economic Area (which includes the EU members plus Iceland, Liechtenstein, and Norway) and Switzerland. Here, a revision should put in place mechanisms that aim to increase EU members' economic competitiveness and social cohesion, while introducing an emergency brake on the free movement of people that is applicable to all members, not just one. With such reforms, this level of integration is what the UK would presumably want to keep, as it would allow the country access to the single market while providing some opt-outs on specific policies.

Higher levels of integration would include the monetary integration of the eurozone, political-internal integration based on the Schengen passport-free area, and, possibly, new (and much-needed) security and defense integration. These higher echelons of integration begin with their current memberships and a clearly defined set of accession rules for aspirant countries. However, entering them represents an enhancement of a country's membership status rather than an enlargement of the union as a whole.

There would be no general obligation for member states to advance to a certain level of membership, and there would be a time lag for governments declaring their wish to reduce their country's integration level. In addition, affiliation with a membership level would be valid only for, say, ten to fifteen years before it had to be renewed.

Offering explicit levels of membership rather than the current implicit variations would enable all member states to choose a degree of integration that better fits their preferences. It would also considerably improve the prospects for countries in Southeastern and Eastern Europe (including Turkey) or even the South Caucasus to advance within the pan-European union rather than outside it. Under the current system, it is difficult for these countries to know when they would be good enough to join or—even if they do fulfill all technical criteria—whether a political hurdle would be erected in one or other member state.

Framing European integration around different levels in one big organization has other major benefits. Any future changes to membership status—moves up or down the integration ladder—would be politically less disruptive than under the current system. Such changes would not threaten the overall cohesion of the union. Indeed, making membership time bound would enhance internal control as no country could take its association with one level of integration for granted. Instead, each state would have to prove to its peers that it upholds the rules and values that it has subscribed to. This system of checks and balances would more than compensate for the loss of cohesion resulting from allowing for more flexibility.

By promoting subsidiarity, the system would moreover ease separatist as well as populist pressures. Should certain regions still want to become independent, they would not pull the whole union into crisis, because their continued memberships could be secured more easily. Finally, a reorganization would give Europe the positive boost needed to overcome its political and economic crisis, while at the same time providing a constructive framework to address the treaty changes necessary to stabilize the eurozone.

The response to the UK's Leave vote should be a Congress of Europe institutionalizing a Europe whole and free. This pan-European union would be built with new internal mechanisms to distribute responsibilities among all levels of government. Such an act, brought about by the shock of a close British vote as well as the millions of disillusioned voters and frustrated protesters throughout the continent, would go a long way to meeting Europe's current challenges.

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Photo: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace

Cornelius Adebahr is a political analyst and entrepreneur who has just returned to Berlin, Germany, and Europe after living in Iran and the United States for five years. Which means that he experienced Europe from the outside, while following – both personally and professionally – recent developments on the Old Continent, from the debt drama to the migration crisis, with the soul of a European. He has worked with political institutions and think tanks both within the EU and in accession countries as well as in Washington, DC; he has written about, and taught courses on European foreign policy; and he likes to engage citizens in how they can shape their future.

As someone safely tucked into in my 'Third Age', when I voted on June 23rd in the UK's now infamous Brexit referendum I felt an enormous sense of responsibility towards my children and grand-children, and the legacy I'd be leaving behind for them. These include a set of multi-faceted challenges the like of which my generation never had to consider for the first half of our lives. Not just climate change and the growing and largely consequential humanitarian refugee crisis, but also an entirely new social fault-line, one that's defined by the co-existing issues of an aging population and youth unemployment. So, the Leave vote left me deeply ashamed, not just of my country, but of my own 'failed' generation. The result itself didn't entirely surprise me. In the final weeks of the campaign I was aware of a growing sense of anxiety. It was as if all of my country's most negative elements had combined to create a result which, three months later, I still consider a catastrophe—on a magnitude that may not become fully evident for another decade. The Leave campaign disgracefully exploited a vast well of ignorance that had been allowed to develop over a number of years regarding the purpose and organisation of the EU. We allowed a Monty Python parody of Europe to become commonplace, and did little or nothing to correct it. Little wonder it was aging comedians like John Cleese who campaigned for Britain to leave Europe!

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Both their, and the Sun newspaper's version of Brussels went all but unchallenged. The fault lies not so much with the people who were duped into voting Leave, but with people like myself and others in politics and the media, who for decades failed to pay sufficient attention to correcting the jokes and lies, and the misapprehensions that necessarily resulted from them. As is now clear, the crucial difference that emerged was between those who believed in a bright future for Europe if we could only be allowed to grow and prosper together; and those who sought the security of some form of Merrie England—a past that never, in truth, existed.

Over time I'm convinced it's the split between the young and old that's likely to prove the most serious. We have a growing problem of pensions. Young people feel themselves to be supporting an ever-aging population—that's already a fault line. Then there's unacceptable levels of youth unemployment, and the disillusionment that necessarily accompanies it. Once you add the new and highly visible generational split created by Brexit, the situation has the potential to become very, very serious.

And then again, nobody could blame the Scots if they decided they had no reason to share England's moment of lunacy—why should they? Their own vote was very clear, and historically Scotland has always had stronger ties to Europe than England, being particularly close to France. As to my own Party, I don't think the current leadership of the Labour Party ever had their heart in in the European Project. At the minimum I think they felt conflicted—irrationally conflicted—and it was their unconvincing performance that did much of the damage, particularly in the Labour heartlands. I will go to my grave convinced that, had David Miliband won the Labour leadership contest six years ago, this would not have happened. He was a committed European, and I'm convinced the result would have been very different had he been Labour's leader.

On the other hand, Northern Ireland's 56% to 44% victory for Remain was one of the few glimmers of good news. It's likely that Europe's politicians will invoke some sort of sensible fudge in order to allow 'freedom of movement' within the island of Ireland but also, I would guess, between the island of Ireland and the rest of the UK. I'd very much welcome that. It cannot be in the interest of the Republic or its northern neighbour to create any form of 'hard border'—the costs alone would be prohibitive, and in the end 'who is going to pay for it'?

As Ireland's Digital Champion, I've witnessed at first-hand the importance of the Digital Single Market and the significant opportunities it brings in helping people and communities to develop the skills and competences which are increasingly essential to any nation seeking a successful 21st century future.

An opinion poll carried out by Red C for 'European Movement Ireland' in 2015 showed that 84% of those living in the Republic believe membership of the EU has greatly benefitted the country. As someone who spends a portion of every week in both places, I can attest to the fact that what's good for Ireland is also good for Britain.

To me 'Brexit' is just a word—as yet it has no tangible meaning beyond a cry of pain from thirteen million British people who felt sufficiently ill-informed and left behind to opt to go 'back to the future'. But of course we can't, life as with all things will inexorably move on. Politically, a great deal is likely to change in Europe over the next couple of years, possibly enough to encourage a re-consideration, within the EU as much as the UK, of the extraordinary damage that will unquestionably result if the broad vision of a united, prosperous and peaceful Europe is clumsily allowed to unravel.



Photo: David Puttnam

Lord Puttnam of Queensgate, CBE, spent 30 years as an independent producer of award-winning films before retiring from film production in 1998 to focus on his work in public policy as it relates to education, the environment, and the creative and communications industries. He was awarded a CBE in 1982, a knighthood in 1995, and was appointed to the House of Lords in 1997. Among many other positions, David Puttnam was President of UNICEF UK from 2002 to 2009, Chancellor of the Open University from 2006 to 2013, Chair of both the National Museum of Photography, Film and Television and the National Film and Television School, and Chairman of the Joint Parliamentary Committee on the Draft Communications Bill in 2002 as well as the Climate Change Bill in 2007. In 2016 he was appointed as International Ambassador for WWF. He tweets @DPuttnam.

It was a Russian artist who used clear words to describe how a weakened Europe can find a way out of its current crisis: “Everyone thinks of changing the world, but no one thinks of changing himself”, as Leo Tolstoy reminds us. It is not the refugees who are a threat to Europe, but those movements within Europe which “flee” democracy, which base their arguments on fear and let their socio-Christian capacities waste away with calls for fences, limits and camps. I’m not fearful of the flow of refugees, but of the readily visible lack of empathy, helpfulness, yes, even soul. This is not a specifically European problem, however, but a global, centuries-old one.

It was an Englishman, William Shakespeare, who, as co-author of a play about “Evil May Day”, had the protagonist, Thomas Morus, Mayor of London in 1517, give a fiery speech against xenophobia. It was aimed at Huguenots fleeing France and Flanders for London in the early 16th century. At the time, these refugees were being accused of kidnapping English women and usurping English culture. On Easter Sunday, 1517, the situation escalated: Many of the French were attacked and lynched. Only the strong intervention of the King ended this revolt, with its leaders being executed. William Shakespeare understood the historical classification of “Evil May Day” as a clear call to respect the human rights of everyone. In *The Guardian*, Chris Bryant recently wrote that Shakespeare in the Brexit debate (you’ll recall...) would most definitely have shown “his love for Europe and a dislike of rampant nationalism”.

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It was a German, Martin Luther, who, also in 1517, published his 95 theses in Wittenberg and in doing so demanded the right for people to be recognised and allowed to live as free individuals. Klaus-Rüdiger Mai sees in Luther’s action a “Foundation of Europe” that radiates into the present. And it was the artist family of Lucas and Lucas Cranach (and the printing press...) without whom Luther’s message would not have spread so rapidly.

It’s no coincidence that again and again minor and major protagonists from the worlds of art and culture are involved in the creation of an inquisitive, searching and free Europe, be that now or (unknowingly) 500 years ago. Today too, we still have to fight repeatedly for the rights of the weak, which we see in Europe just as much as we do in the rest of the world. However, today we can recognise, thanks to libraries, museums, cinemas, thanks to works of art, books, films and thanks to databases, what enormous advances have been achieved in the past hundreds of years in respect to human civil rights, equality, education, health and welfare. Thus the swan song so popular nowadays to a democratic and civilised Europe is clearly inappropriate; too strong are our democracies, too strong the illuminating and inquisitive forces of our cultural landscape.

Strong above all else is the desire of many of Europe’s citizens to solve problems differently, faster, more humanely, more honestly and more pragmatically (than sometimes politics is able to...) by recollecting their material and intellectual wealth, their pragmatism and a historically influenced and living sense of responsibility. This wish comes from within, from the soul. The soul of Europe is its many million citizens. And since it’s impossible to look into the soul of each and every person, an ingenious catalyst and filter called Culture helps to us get to know, understand and above all bring together Europe with all its languages, passions, peculiarities, faults, corners, scents, pitfalls, subtleties and feuds. Unimaginable is a Europe without printing presses, books, libraries, museums, concert halls, churches and cinemas. Culture, much like education and science, is more equipped today as a “soft power” than anything else to help our civil society to learn and maintain responsibility, define values and discover empathy and soulfulness.

As the dream of a Europe not just of economic relations, but unified in diversity, becomes more real in civil society, culture as an agent plays a significant role and needs to continue to do so in the future. This means appreciating, nurturing and financing culture. This means linking culture early on both with the education of children and adolescents and with science. In the same way that libraries are “spaces of discovery”, cinemas, concert halls, galleries

and museums are also spaces in which our society can find its bearings through art. To this end, ongoing and greater support of cultural networks, events, rooms, venues, market places and discussion forums is necessary because: In what is now a very digital global community, you can be heard, seen and read, but are you understood? Culture helps us understand the world. And that's what keeps us together.

Translated from the original German by John Neilan



Photo: Ali Ghandtschi, Berlinale 2015

Dieter Kosslick – *Since May 2001 the creative direction and management of the Berlin International Film Festival have been the responsibility of Dieter Kosslick. Born in Pforzheim in 1948, Dieter Kosslick studied Communication, Politics and Education in Munich. He moved to Hamburg in 1979 to work as speechwriter and office administrator for the First Mayor Hans Ulrich Klose and later as press spokesman for the “women’s equality” unit. He left this position in 1982 to work as a journalist for the magazine “konkret”. A year later, he became involved in film funding, firstly as managing director of Hamburg’s cultural film fund (Hamburg Film Office). In 1988 he became managing director of the city’s economic film fund (Hamburg Film Fund). The same year, he was a co-founder of EFDO (European Film Distribution Office) and became the president of this European organisation, a post he held until EFDO’s dissolution in 1996. In 1992 he took over the barely one year-old Filmstiftung NRW as executive director. During his nine years in office North-Rhine-Westphalia became the leading German film site and established itself internationally as an important film region. In July 2000 the Land of Berlin and the Federal Government of Germany appointed Dieter Kosslick director of Germany’s prestigious Berlin International Film Festival in 2001. He took up his new position in the capital as head of the Berlinale on May 1, 2001. Dieter Kosslick has received many honours and awards for the diverse ways in which he has promoted film and culture.*

The European Union: When Diversity Trumps Unity

STEVE GREEN

25 OCTOBER 2016
UPDATED IN JANUARY 2017

The result of the referendum in the UK in June 2016 on European Union membership has opened a Pandora's Box of soul searching. A bubble has been burst; it is an open day for critical analysis. The European Union is facing its worst crisis since, well, since never. There is a perfect storm of Brexit, migration, political stasis, distrust in elites, economic stagnation, the rise of populism and nationalism. A European Union where diversity trumps unity. It has put a damper on celebrations of the 60th anniversary of the Treaty of Rome.

It has triggered calls that "culture" is the solution to the problems facing the European Union. Yet so many of these calls seem simply assertions, wishful thinking or disguised lobbying for the arts sector. They seem little different to the calls made 10 years ago, or 5 years ago. The old adage comes to mind: we can't solve problems using the same methods and thinking we used to get here.

What seems to be missing from many of the debates and in articles calling for this cultural drive is any analysis of audience; a strange omission given the importance now attached in the arts world to the focus on audience and its development.

Who voted for Brexit? Roughly the same people who vote for Viktor Orbán in Hungary with his call, along with Jarosław Kaczyński in Poland for a "counter-cultural revolution" in the European Union. The same people who voted for the far-right candidate in Austria's presidential election in December. There are many other examples. They are the same people who voted for Trump in the USA. They are the same people who will vote in 2017 for le Pen in France or Wilders in the Netherlands. In each case the specific target of their votes will be different from that in the UK with its peculiar relationship with the EU. The question of EU membership is less at risk in EU27 but the opposition to the perceived and actual policies of the "mainstream" EU and national politicians and the "establishment" is the same.

Who are they? What are, in the language of arts management, the "target groups"? They can be defined at two levels: in demographic terms and in terms of values. The demographic analysis is clear with two distinct groups: older, lower levels of education, living in rural and smaller towns with low migration, skilled and unskilled working class: lumped together under the rather derogatory term "the left behind". These are coupled with the more prosperous, relatively successful conservative (small c) nationalists often again in areas with few migrants.

A values analysis of these seemingly disparate groups, and of those who oppose them, comes up with three categories which apply throughout society and across countries. This sociological approach finds three groupings. "Settlers": who value highly security, certainty, roots and stability; "Prospectors" who value success and display and "Pioneers", who are supportive of expressive individualism and cultural equality.

This values analysis also poses a question to those who call for the European Union to be revived based on values. Whose values? The Settlers'?

It does not take much thought to notice that the main audiences for the arts across Europe fall into the prospector/pioneer categories, and do not fall into the "left behind" demographic. Many surveys of arts audiences confirm this. It is here that calls for a "bottom up" cultural, arts, led regeneration of the dream of the European Union run into a roadblock. The people who hold the nationalistic and populist views about the EU do not go to the arts events. Those who do attend are already overwhelmingly comfortable with a cosmopolitan liberal international outlook.

So how does culture restore trust and faith in the European Union project if according to polls, real and opinion, around half of the population of the European Union are more than unhappy (understatement) and don't go to arts events?

This is not a single, temporary, one off crisis but a deep wound. Those who hold those views cannot be dismissed or even worse ridiculed as "deplorables". There are some within that group who are racist and xenophobic, but not all by any means. Politicians may get the headlines but we can't ignore the millions who are increasingly voting for them.

There is increasing awareness that "business as usual is not good enough"; it not the time to call for "new narratives" which come up with minor variations of the current narrative. Another old adage: when you are in a hole, stop digging. If around half the members of the club are no longer supportive then a change of policies, not presentation, not tinkering, is needed.

So can “culture” or “values” be the magic solution to the European Union’s problems?

Let’s break down some of the topics which are seen to be the cause of the crisis. This means looking at the core values of the Settlers. We know who they are and where they are likely to live. What are their probable concerns? The Settlers demographic can be seen from another perspective. They are on the lower rungs of Maslow’s hierarchy of needs. Security and safety are still not secured for them; indeed they are seen as under threat. Yet culture, the arts, is often placed at the upper levels: when self-actualisation is in play. This brings us neatly to two topics: migration and economic stability.

The economics are clear: the benefits of rapid globalisation have not “trickled down” to the left behind as the neo-liberal economists forecast and politicians of both the centre-right and centre-left promised. Austerity programmes have damaged their prospects and threaten their pensions and welfare. As a whole the European Union’s economy is not doing too badly. Not well but not as bad as 2008. But it is uneven, very uneven; both between and within countries as inequality increases. The cry “the EU has 7% of the world’s population, 25% of its wealth and 50% of its welfare spending” is a success story and not an excuse to cut the egalitarian social approach. That brings out two opening questions:

- Can culture change the economic culture of the majority of political parties in the European Union?
- Can culture bring about a more balanced economic distribution in the European Union from those who have benefitted from the euro and those who have not?

Migration has opened up old antagonisms. To hear politicians claim their country is synonymous with a single religion is to hear the ghosts of centuries past and the wars of religion. Europe as a whole, and the European Union as a sub-set, have been multi-religious and will become increasingly so. Religions can no longer claim to be exclusive (or claim to be tolerant and act differently). There are many priests, vicars, imams and rabbis (and atheists) who work tirelessly at local level to break down barriers between religions. There are many who don’t.

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Can culture change the exclusivity nature of religions and help their followers, especially of the “majority” religions in a given area, be actively integrated with newcomers?

- Can cultural funding organisations not only support projects with newcomers but also with the majority populations to accept those newcomers? Integration is a two-way process.
- Will the European Year of Cultural Heritage in 2018 provide a cover for more exclusivity based on religion? The heritage of the European Union is not exclusively Judeo-Christian.
- Can culture pressure politicians to make a break with themselves and their own vested interests to stand up for values? There can be no room in the EPP for the likes of Orbán. Nor room for corruption at city and national level. Make a statement.

Jean Monnet did not start with culture nor probably say he would if starting again. But he did shake up the status quo and offer a radical new approach. It’s time for a renewal of that radicalism.



Steve Green is one of the 48% who voted for the UK to remain in the European Union. He also voted to remain in the 1975 referendum and will vote to re-join at some, hopefully not too distant, future. After a career in international cultural relations, Steve was the chair of the selection panel for the European Capitals of Culture.

Photo: A Soul for Europe, Boaz Arad 2014

“WHAT OUR CITIZENS NEED MUCH MORE IS THAT SOMEONE GOVERNS. THAT SOMEONE RESPONDS TO THE CHALLENGES OF OUR TIME.”

Jean-Claude Juncker, President of the European Commission

Traditionally, the purpose of the State of the Union address is to report on the condition of the nation and to set out a legislative agenda and national priorities for its citizens. It is a message from which people expect a vision of the future—at least on the other side of the Atlantic.

Its European equivalent has once again revealed that Europe is far from being a nation and that expecting it to offer any sort of vision today is quite simply a pipe dream, an utopia. Delivered as we celebrate the 500th anniversary of Thomas More’s “Utopia”, the September 2016 State of the Union address given by European President Commission Jean-Claude Juncker in the European Parliament was characterised by a singular apathy rather than any vision. It revealed his fear of being taken to task by the Member States and highlighted the level of fragmentation that exists between Member States and the general lack of enthusiasm for the European project.

The former Luxembourg Prime Minister offered us a new narrative for Europe so cautious that his calls for greater synergy and more determined European leadership took the form of questions rather than statements. Instead of the rallying cry of the statesman, we heard the tentative suggestion of the adviser. In short, he conceded the power of the initiative to the Member States, asking them to shoulder greater responsibility whilst at the same time undertaking to reduce that taken by the EU.

Jean-Claude Juncker went on to set out five new roles for the European Union, using five verbs that establish the new rhetoric of the moment and reveal the stance of a Europe turning in on itself: firstly to protect, preserve and defend, so that it can then better take responsibility by “empowering” its citizens.

In the President’s mind, the first step in the empowerment of Europe’s citizens is to enable investment at all levels. He presented investment in digital technology and communications as a first miracle recipe, with the deployment of 5G and free wireless internet access set first to “empower” and then to create jobs. It remains to be seen what the victims of the various manufacturing sites currently being closed in Europe will think of this. Perhaps the 500 billion euros worth of investment promised by the President by 2020 and the creation of a Capital Markets Union will restore the balance.

And where was culture in all this? Following the recent proposal to reform Europe’s copyright laws, the President made much of the importance of “empowering” artists and creators and protecting their works. Here once again we heard the rhetoric of “protection”. Each year the arts sectors wait with bated breath for a mention in the State of the Union address. A mention that it got this year, albeit, once again, from an economic angle. There was no recognition of the artist as someone who can act in the role of mediator, who is capable of rethinking and changing society, stimulating creation and tolerance, encouraging a critical approach in all of us, and inspiring new education models.

Which brings us to the place of young people in this “State of the Union”. The President told us that we must “invest in our young people” through the Erasmus exchange programme and the EU Youth Guarantee. He is also proposing to get 100,000 young people involved in a European Solidarity Corps designed to respond to crisis situations such as the refugee crisis by 2020. In other words, to invest in volunteering and the solidarity of young people as a way of shoring up failing policies and papering over the lack of synergy between Member States.

Apart from mobilising students, there was no mention of either education or research. In fact, the word “education” was completely absent from this State of the Union address, while the word “research” appeared just once, in relation to defence.

The writer George Steiner said that, “any definition of a post-classical civilisation must learn to count on scientific knowledge and a world of mathematical and symbolic languages... Not out of “pure utilitarianism”, but in the name of enthusiasm, intellectual vigour and moral conquest”.

The State of the Union address did not offer an enthusiastic, intellectual or morally conquering state of the nation. In fact, it actually closed by offering European citizens “less” Europe as Mr Juncker vaunted that his Commission will put forward “80% fewer legislative initiatives than over the past five years”.

We would like to be able to live in a society where experimentation, creation and utopia are held up as values in the service of our citizens and the political imagination. A model in which we would dare to invest more in education, in art and in research. A model in which we might have the courage to test new paradigms for reducing inequality, participatory democracy or housing policy. A model that would see the implementation of a fairer tax system and in which the environment would receive the attention it deserves. A model in which—why not?—we would dare to reduce the length of the working week like in Sweden, and in Thomas More’s Utopian government.

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But what did we get? A narrative devoid of vision, with no soul and no ambition yet that is intended to respond to the “challenges of our time”. Right now, what citizens desperately need is something to believe in. Let’s hope 2017 will come up with a brighter message. Let’s all work on that.

Translated from the original French by keiki communication

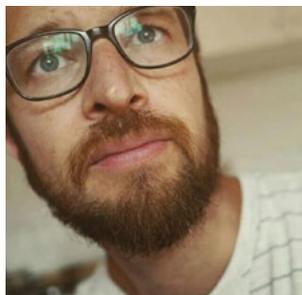


Photo: Frédéric Meseeuw

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With more than 70% of Europe's population living in urban areas, cities are playing an increasingly crucial role across the continent. Because of globalisation, cities are competing with each other to position themselves as attractive players in order to boost their local economies. With this competition comes growing responsibility for local authorities.

Culture is a key asset for the EU Urban Agenda

Culture is at the very heart of urban policy and city challenges^[1] and emerges as a successful driving force in urban strategies.^[2]

First, culture is a key element of urban attractiveness. Art creation, cultural events and museums all contribute to the compelling and unique appeal of the urban offering. To illustrate this potential we can look to Solin (Croatia) where a disused quarry has been transformed into a vibrant cultural space; or to Marseilles (France) where participatory artworks offer opportunities for empowering inhabitants and renewing local identity through co-creation with artists.

Second, culture is more than just a marketing tool. In a broader sense, culture also improves the linking of artistic creativity, craftsmanship and industrial activities and achieving global public services in cross-cutting fields such as health, education, science, tourism and urbanism. It can be illustrated in Nicosia (Cyprus), where the Pop-Up festival re-invents the city every year by blending culture, entertainment and entrepreneurship; by measuring air quality with scientists in Liverpool (England); or in the 2018 European Capital of Culture hosted in Leeuwarden (the Netherlands) where citizens are participating in an integrated approach to address poverty reduction, education and employment. Finally, by tapping into local know-how and production capabilities, inventing new trends, designing new spaces, looking to improve the quality of life, culture is a key element of innovation and sustainable urban development.^[3] It can be done simply by making creative use of public space through free software interfaces, as has been done in Barcelona (Spain); or by building a local community around the redesign of a park in Chisinau (Moldova).

In a nutshell, culture is a catalyst for differentiation, revitalisation and change in the EU Urban Agenda.

Culture also has to be considered in all its diversity. Most cities are home to a huge range of communities from different cultures and therefore have to address diverse issues. This trend is growing with the number of incoming migrants and refugees. This increases the need to provide access to culture as a means for connecting people, creating collective identity and ensuring a safe environment for everyone. One example of this can be found in Dortmund (Germany), where the Mayor's office formed a civil society and citizen interest unit to improve communication with all residents, including marginalised groups, and to foster the integration of large migrant populations. Another example is located in the suburbs of Stockholm (Sweden), where Subtopia manages a central hub for social entrepreneurship in which the migrant population of the neighbourhood are involved.

A greater say for citizens making positive urban change

To support balanced economic and social development, it is essential to engage citizens and focus on human economy.^[4] Indeed, this allows greater social inclusion and a close association between culture and civil society. It is a precondition for blending cultures and encouraging popular cultures in order to bridge the urban divide. To tackle urban challenges, modern cities are giving their residents a greater say in local policies and decisions through democratic governance.^[5] In Bologna (Italy), for example, the local administration has entered into a co-design process with citizens, social innovators, entrepreneurs, civil society organisations and knowledge institutions. The result is a 30-page

regulatory framework that introduces the principles of civic collaboration and horizontal subsidiarity. Across Italy, 165 collaboration pacts have been adopted involving more than 20,000 people. Drawing on this framework, the city of Bologna is now working on the advancement of the social, economic, political and urban transition.

Because global issues demand global answers and changes in behaviour, the involvement of civil society is essential to creating a more sustainable style of development. In the 21st century, good governance is synonymous with the engagement of citizens and an inclusive, collaborative, circular economy. In order to be broad-based and stable, urban development has to be rooted in civil initiatives. To give one example: in Totnes, a small town in the south-west of England, residents and the local authorities are exploring collectively how to be engaged in the city in a more sustainable way. They have created working groups with themes such as energy, food, business and livelihoods, health and well-being, building and housing, and inner transition. In this small town, the Transition Network and the Totnes Development Trust were born. There are now similar transition projects in 200 towns in the UK and 350 globally. The project network has published the Transition Handbook and the Transition Training Programme in order to share their successful transition model. Another example is POGON, which is the first public cultural institution based on civil-public governance in Zagreb, Croatia. This initiative is now spreading across different Croatian cities and is even crossing national borders into the South East Europe region. Such governance models offer a chance to meet the needs of local communities more effectively and to deepen democratic processes.

[1] AECID (2009) *Cities, cultures and developments: A report that marks the fifth anniversary of Agenda 21 for culture*. Committee on Culture of United Cities and Local Governments, AECID, 15 October 2009.

[2] Working group of EU member states experts on cultural and creative industries (2012) *European Agenda for Culture: Work plan for culture 2011–2014, Policy Handbook*, April 2012.

[3] UNESCO, *Global Report on Culture and Sustainable Urban Development*, http://en.unesco.org/creative-cities/sites/creative-cities/files/Concept_Note_Report_150518.pdf

[4] Laville J.L. Hart K. (2010) *The Human Economy*. Polity Press: Cambridge.

[5] Laville J.L., Young D., Eynaud P. (2015) *Civil society, The Third Sector, Social Enterprise: Governance and Democracy*. Routledge: Oxfordshire.

This article was first published in Build the City magazine in June 2016. The publication highlights 26 practice examples of new forms of engagement of civil society with local authorities—so called civic-public partnerships.

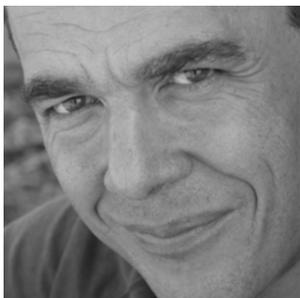


Photo: Philippe Eynaud

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More than 30 years after its creation, at an Acropolis-set meeting of the ministers of culture of the European Economic Community—the Europe of the 10 which has now developed into the EU of 28 –, it is perhaps a good idea to reflect on the history of The European Capital of Culture. I see it through the eyes of an early practitioner as I have been involved in the leadership of “Amsterdam Cultural capital of Europe 1987, A future for Ideas”.

During her visit to Amsterdam in 1985, Melina Mercouri, Greek Minister of Culture at the time, was interviewed by Dutch public television. She responded to the question “What is the idea behind the European Capital of Culture?” as follows: “The idea is to know each other better, to talk about culture and exchange. We have a cultural past and a cultural future. The whole of Europe should be united. Culture is one of the strongest potencies for peace.”

The council of ministers responsible for culture of the EU (European Community at the time) adopted Melina’s idea in their resolution of June 13, 1985.

This resolution that did open up the arena for future events (one per year) of European Capital of Culture did stipulate explicitly the wide range of activities that are foreseen under this title; from presentations of specific aspects of cultural achievements of the organising city and country to a wider European audience on the one hand, to making the local audience familiar with artistic and cultural activities from the other member states on the other hand. It is entirely the responsibility of the chosen city to develop and promote any aspect of their particular interpretation of being nominated as Cultural Capital of Europe, to put it more bluntly: it is up to the local organisers to define what Europe means, what culture should be presented and what cultural identity is to be promoted in whatever format with whom and for which audiences.

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Now, more than 30 years after the instalment of Melina’s idea in the daily practise of the EC’s cultural agenda, one can witness a growing pile of reports, studies and recommendations that do represent, if they represent anything, the divergent opinions of the aim, purpose and effectivity of the event.

I would call this the side effect of a booming city-promoting business that in the meantime familiarised itself with the awarding of the title Cultural Capital of Europe. Does this paperwork help the development of the event in cultural and European sense? Hardly. What does not help at all are pleas to bring more structure into the organisational machinery of it.

Apart from a necessary selection procedure (the existing procedure can be evaluated to make it simple and smart) one should stick to Melina’s words and the Ministers’ resolution of 1985. All attempts to uniform procedures, to include so-called experts from previous ECoCs is, looked at with the knowledge of 2016, becoming more and more out of date. Why so?

Back in 1985 the European Community were ten countries. The European Union did not exist. The discussion-making process did not include the citizens; it was a tête-à-tête among ten politicians. The introduction of European Citizenship took place at Maastricht, in 1992. The treaty of Maastricht gave birth to the European Union as well as to the acceptance of the subsidiarity principle for cultural policy (that should remain in the hands of the member states). I would say that after Maastricht the responsibility for the content, programme and organisation of ECoC no longer should be influenced by Brussels. Strangely enough, the opposite is the case. Cities and organisers should reject this tendency firmly, and even more so since the Lisbon Treaty has adopted the European citizenship as an additional entity within the European decision making process.

Since then the Commission is desperately looking for the “active citizen”. If this phenomenon does exist, it should be observable in the yearly event that pretends to present the cultural values of Europe. The most recognised European value nowadays is the European Citizenship. The ECoC therefore has no future apart from a citizens’ achievement without interference from self-propelled or appointed “bobos” from Brussels.

The identity of Europe can be found in the cities: all cities are different, the citizens that built the cities did and do take different solutions depending on the divergent historical, psychological, economic, social and cultural backgrounds. What makes Europe unique is that nothing is alike, everything different: always the same story.



Photo: A Soul for Europe, Ulf Bürschleb 2006

Steve Austen, permanent fellow of the Felix Meritis Foundation, Amsterdam, cultural entrepreneur, consultant, publicist, and member of the group of initiators of “A Soul for Europe”. He has been active in cultural life of the Netherlands and Europe since 1966 and was co-responsible for “Amsterdam—The Cultural Capital of Europe 1987”. Together with Günter Grass he co-founded the informal working body “Gulliver”. Since 1987 he has been president and lecturer of the Amsterdam-Maastricht Summer University.

How is Europe's soul faring these days? Apparently it's not doing very well. In fact, if it were in good condition, Jacques Delors would not have called on us to "give Europe a soul" and there would be no need for this whole debate. It's good that we attend to the emotional health of the superstate, but if we're going to do that, we should do so with the eyes of a professional, that is, with the eyes of an experienced shrink. In this case, a good shrink must have two key qualities: firstly, he or she must cast a sober eye on that vague, elusive and hardly measurable thing we call a soul. Secondly, once the current status of that soul has been thoroughly analysed, a good shrink must know the proper techniques required to effect positive changes in the status quo.

Step 1. Diagnosis

It would appear that Europe needs to spend some time on the couch. Otherwise we wouldn't be having this debate in the first place. Otherwise nobody would be calling to give Europe a soul. Otherwise young people in England, Scotland and Wales would have fought more valiantly and prevailed against the assault of the political living-dead. Otherwise we wouldn't be constantly asking ourselves what exactly this Europe is. Is it a single market? An environmental knight in shining armour? A peace project? Easy Jet air space?

But on the other hand, are things really so bleak? Wasn't it young Europeans who screamed the loudest when the guillotine fell in London? Here are two anecdotal examples that support this approach: prior to the vote, German comedian Jan Böhmermann tweeted links to Brexit-related pop songs under the hashtag #dontleaveyoustupidfuckers. In doing so, he immediately reached hundreds of thousands of German supporters. Across the Channel, after the results of the vote were announced, masses of young people took to the streets of London: one of the most memorable images of this protest was a photo of a young man sitting on the ground holding a sign saying "I'm not leaving". The photo promptly went viral on social media. Why does this image move us? I think it's because the protestor opened up his soul. It wasn't an intellectual decision that led him to sit there with his sign; it was far too late for that. Instead, it is the pure defiance of the soul that makes us not want to give up. The words on the sign resemble much less a political statement than the defiant pose of a man still hopelessly in love, someone who simply refuses to let go of a relationship that has long since broken down, even to the point of complete self-abandonment. This is soul. In other words, enthusiasm for the crazy project called Europe exists. In fact, it's even possible to have what we might call amorous feelings for Europe.

Step 2. Therapy

This feeling is a spark that EU shrinks can work with. It is a glow that can be rekindled. Which techniques can the elites use to get it going again? What would an experienced therapist do? First, he or she would ask the right questions so as to encourage the patient to become conscious of the solution on their own. In this case, the question could be something like: What do you want from life, dear Europeans? What do you want for your own world and for the lives of your children? What steps are necessary to achieve this? These are the questions all Europeans must ask themselves. And if the answers have something to do with Europe, then the European project will get the time it needs to develop a strong soul.

Translated from the original German by The Hagedorn Group



Photo: Florian Hoffmann

Florian Hoffmann is a Berlin-based author who advises startups and established companies on how to develop ideal cultural strategies. He has been awarded various advertising and campaigning prizes for his work. His blog (grossegedanken.de) focuses on the publication of his first novel "Der Sommer, in dem ich Europa rettete" ("The Summer I Saved Europe").

IMPRINT

The “A Soul for Europe” Conference was held on 8 and 9 November 2016 at Allianz Forum Berlin. The online debate was launched on 3 August 2016. This documentation gathers the major contributions published by 30 November 2016. The full debate with all texts and responses can be found at www.medium.com/asoulforeurope.

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