

# EUROPE: A HERITAGE, A CHALLENGE, A PROMISE

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## PREFACE

Europe is a patchwork quilt, a diversity of national and regional cultures. But Europe is also a common cultural heritage. And it is a culture in the making. The creation of the European Union would not have been possible without this **common heritage** and the endeavour to have a common future. Paradoxically, Europe's specificity, its common heritage, is threatened by one of its major exponents, the ideology of modernity and modernisation. So a very important task Europe is confronted with is to be at the same time both modernising and preserving its specificity and variety. This task is the more arduous because we have, in order to fulfil it adequately, to shrug off outdated interpretations of modernity and modernisation, and to look at tensions and conflicts which are inherent to ongoing modernisation, like the increasing opposition between individual freedom and system-rationality. In front of ongoing modernisation and the supremacy of the ideology of modernisation or globalisation, it certainly will not be a revival of nationalism that will lead us to the Promised Land.

As we will see, the ideology of modernisation is strongly deterministic and as such it restricts political action largely to adaptation measures to a course that is largely fixed beforehand by scientific and technological developments and international market forces. The future, seen from this perspective, seems to be an ongoing economic progress, of individualisation of social life, and of increasing individualism and liberty.

Nevertheless, present collective representations of the world we live in, including the ideology of modernisation, are time-worn and they can lead us easily, in several respects, in the wrong direction. We have to reflect about the possibility to develop other types of collective representations which can guide our future-oriented actions.

To prepare the ground for this, we have to analyse Europe's specificity or 'identity', its common heritage and its diversity. We have to discuss the major concepts we need in order to understand the nature of this heritage and the sources of Europe's variety: civilisation, culture, collective identity and specificity. We have to analyse the common core of Europe and its diversity on still another level: the collective representations of our societies as they emerge from the ongoing debates in political life. Again, we see, on a different level, a common core and diversity, both within the European nation-states and on the level of the European Union. Here the common core seems to be the ideology of modernisation and the diversity is connected with the different types of adaptation and resistance, both individualist and collectivist ones. But also this diversity of reactions exhibits more or less the same pattern in the different European nation-states.

This situation is certainly not an unavoidable fate, it is a **challenge**. We have to develop representations of a future in which the coming society is not considered to be the product of deterministic forces, but instead as something that can be brought about with the increasing potentialities of the means that we have at our disposal. A future that is dependent on the political choices that are based on a substantial understanding of the world we live in, not on myths and delusions.

Approached in this way, the future can be for us, and the coming generations, a **promise**. A promise that we will live in an open, modernising world that respects our common heritage, our cultural diversity and that is able to recreate itself in an ever continuing process.

Writing this book, I could rely on critical comments on a first draft of this book, or on specific chapters, of former colleagues of the Faculty of Social Sciences of the Erasmus University in Rotterdam: dr. Leo d'Anjou, dr. L. Cachet, dr. Dick Houtman, and Prof. dr, Bram Steijn. I thank them for their candid remarks. Moreover, I also wish to express my gratitude to drs. Santo Koesobjono, Dr. Laurent van der Maesen (Director of the European Foundation on Social Quality in Amsterdam), Mr. Stephen C. Mills (former secretary-general of the International Social Science Council in Paris), whose contribution also enhanced considerably my use of the English language, Prof. Em. Dr. A.L. Mok (University of Antwerp) and dr. Christiane Villain-Gandossi (CNRS-Université de Provence). Christiane's influence is reflected by the many articles we wrote together on Europe and on collective representations.

To my grandchildren Sjoerd, Rik, Marlotte, Bram and Stijn, Europeans in the making.

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## CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Since the last two decades, we have almost daily been informed by the mass media that globalisation marches on and that we have to accept this development as inevitable. In most cases the media reproduce statements of politicians, presidents of the boards of multinationals, economists and bankers, who state that we have to adjust ourselves to this inevitable global development. The general tone of such statements is optimistic, reassuring and uncritical. The future will be one of progress. We are marching towards a better future. There is one important condition: we have to remove all constraints that the development of these global markets encounters. Of course, this will produce temporary turbulences, but by adapting our societies to this development, all of us will finally be better off. One very important question is almost never raised in a serious manner in relation to this vision on the future: what will be the main characteristics of the societies in which the future generations live? Is that future determined by the driving forces in our time? Or do we have, nevertheless, some important choices on hands, choices, which can have an impact on the future? Assuming that we can make choices that create our future to a certain extent, then we need (collective) representations of the ways of life in the future, representations which guide our choices in an ongoing process of democratic decision-making.

The development of global markets is in itself part of our reality. It is a process that started at the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, with Europe as its centre. At the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, most of the economic exchanges are not yet taking place within this open and global economy, but are part of national and regional markets. Nevertheless, globalisation is certainly expanding rapidly.

Although globalisation itself is a real process, the concept of globalisation also refers to a powerful modern ideology. It is a shared or collective representation that 'explains' the mechanisms of economic and social change and, moreover, the direction of these developments. This ideology of globalisation has deep roots in the history of the West, but it became the dominant way of thinking in economic and political thought since the eighties of the last century. It is now presented in many political and economic debates as the only rational way of looking at our world: there is no alternative.

Europe and the European Union not only have to deal with this globalisation, and even more so with the ideology of globalisation, but also with the rise of anti-individualist and even anti-democratic tendencies which are, partly at least, a reaction against important changes in modern societies. The message of the ideology of globalisation is 'the unavoidable adaptation of society to the exigencies of the process of globalisation'. This message does not present us, I repeat, with a model of the (future) society, in which Europe's specificity has its proper place. Society, in this idea of progress, seems to be, on the one hand, a

residue, §a 'traditional' leftover of the process of modernisation, that does not hinder the march of globalisation and, on the other hand, lead to 'more of the same': individualism, mobility, individual achievement and reward, a rising standard of living - that is more opportunities for consumption and individual liberties. Nothing is said about the nature of the social relations, of the democratic quality of life, of the opportunities to make collective choices that forge, to a certain extent, our common future. Nothing comes to the fore that pertains to new and persistent risks, including important political risks that the processes of modernisation may harbour.

In this ideological 'universalistic' culture, old and new ghosts emerge which show their not always attractive faces. With this remark I refer to the rising tide of claims of the leaders of certain social groups for respect of their ethnic, religious or cultural identities. The problem here is not the claims for the right to be different, claims that can be associated in several cases with an opposition to the standardising effects of globalisation. The less attractive, sometimes even hideous, side is represented by claims for respect of exclusive collective identities and for claims to have a share of the state's collective means on that basis. In the ideological monoculture of the present society, the debates on the multi-ethnic, multicultural and multi-religious society produce a model of society that is fundamentally anti-individualist and anti-democratic. It is a type of society in which the citizen, who participates in the process of political decision-making to contribute to the common good, largely disappears as a conscious individual.

This book represents an approach that can be considered as a *cultural* one. The ideology of globalisation is a specific way of looking at the reality around us, and of adopting and implementing strategies of control and of adaptation. Both globalisation and the ideology of globalisation - or of modernity - have important consequences on European societies. These impacts arouse several important questions with respect to the cultural specificity of the European nations, its regions, its different types of minorities and, finally, of Europe itself. Such questions come to the fore when Turkey's membership of the European Union is being discussed. More important than this is the question where the European nations and the EU stand in relation with the surrounding world, the United Nations included. Moreover, many persons are worried about the future of their collective identity, hence the rise of the claims of different types of groups which want to protect their (assumed) collective identity.

The latter types of reactions were also rather frequent in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, discussions in which the inevitable disappearance of traditional society in front of the process of modernity were discussed, or the necessities to conserve at least part of the traditional heritage. In our time, we are confronted with the same type of discussions and with similar ways of (collective) behaviour in relation to 'tradition' versus 'modernity', albeit that now these discussions are even more confused than in the past, among other things as a consequence of the rise of 'post-modern' thinking.

This introduction to the problems of globalisation and its consequences starts with the discussion about some general and central concepts which we need in

order to build up the main arguments. So in chapter II I deal with the difficult twin concepts of civilisation and culture, two concepts that have a strategic position in debates about the universalising effects of modernity or globalisation. This is followed by a discussion of another strategic concept: the concept of collective identity in relation to its use and abuse in many discussions about the place of specific collective identities in our modern societies.

In chapter IV I continue the analysis by turning to the concepts of progress, development and cultural change. Attention is paid to the deep roots of modernity in European history, an analysis that deconstructs the classic division between 'tradition' and 'modernity' and, moreover between 'modernity' and 'post modernity'. The rationalisation of the world that started in Europe has resulted in three ongoing oppositions and tensions that continue to accompany it, between rationalisation and historicism, between liberty and determinism and between reason and sentiment.

In the following chapter V, I turn to the analysis of the culture of Europe and of the cultures of Europe in which different collective representations are distinguished, representations which cannot be integrated into a harmonious vision on the culture of Europe. Nevertheless, it is possible to delineate Europe's cultural specificity. Several questions are raised in this connection in chapter: can we speak of a European identity? Which are the relationships between Europe's specificity and several national and regional cultural and institutional specificities? These questions are treated at some length in chapter VI.

In the next chapter VII, I analyse the collective representations which one can distinguish when looking at the different ways in which the concept of 'Society' and its future is discussed in political life and in the social sciences. I begin with looking backwards to different views on economic and social development. I refer to the opposition against unplanned change before World War II, the acceptance of the idea of planned change and, finally, the increasing opposition to policies which try to regulate the markets to a certain degree. In chapter VIII, we look at the different collective representations, or models of change in our time, representations which we encounter in political debates, both on the level of the European Union and that of the European nation-states. We can distinguish seven different perspectives: 1. the market society; 2. the welfare society and its strongly modified version: the paradigm of social exclusion; 3. the multicultural society in different appearances. In chapter IX we continue with: 4. the risk society, 5. the security society, 6. the conservative society and, finally, 7. the fundamentalist society. All of these models can be seen as different types of adaptation to globalisation, except for the fundamentalist society. The latter envisages in many cases a future in which the tensions that are produced by modernisation have definitely been overcome. These seven collective images are described and briefly evaluated.

This presentation is followed by an inventory of the reactions in our societies against the process of modernisation (chapter X). I distinguish four collectivist reactions. The most vehement reaction is the universalistic fundamentalist one that rejects any adaptation to modernisation, except for the use of important elements

of western technology, such as information technology, weaponry and organisation. The final goal of universalistic fundamentalists is to overthrow the existing world order. Particularistic fundamentalist movements have more restricted goals, such as the secession of their region with its assumed ethnic identity. We can also distinguish as a collective reaction the retreat on collective identities. That is an adaptation to modern life that does not offer, according to those who seek refuge within a collective identity, enough opportunities to express feelings of belongingness and community. Finally we encounter identity movements, which react to the (assumed) gradual disappearance and dilution of a collective identity, such as we encounter in nationalist movements.

On the individualist level of reactions I distinguish five types: the search for identity, the revolt against formal (rational) rules, the flight into virtual worlds, immoderate egoistic behaviour and, finally, the pursuit of a hedonist way of life.

These types of reactions can be considered as different answers, as I will show, to the tensions which are inherent to the process of modernisation/globalisation between rationalism and historicism, between liberty and determinism, and between reason and sentiment.

In addition to these reactions, there is a tenth important type that is both individualistic and collectivistic: the search for an alter-globalisation, together with the protection of the global environment. These ten types of reactions are presented as 'pure' types. Observing social movements today, we encounter several 'mixed' types in which one type of reaction predominates.

This analysis of different types of reactions to modernity and modernisation leads us to the debate on the role of ideals, values and norms in our changing social life. This debate started in relation to the presentation of the concept-European Constitution in the second half of 2004 and ended rather abruptly with the rejection of this concept-constitution in May 2006 by the French and the Dutch voters. The debate started with the idea of some political leaders that values can be an important binding-force in an ongoing modernisation process. In chapter XI this subject will be treated in relation with, among others, our preceding analysis of the nature of the European culture(s).

In chapter XII, several strings of the preceding analyses come together. I assess the results of the analyses of collective representations in relation to the development of Europe and, more specifically, the European Union. I observe that Europe in terms of its specificity is absent in the dominant perspective on development, the ideology of globalisation. The collective representations, which I distinguish on the national level, as the bases of national reactions and policies, do not present perspectives on national development within the context of the European Union. Moreover, the ideology of globalisation on which European policies are based, does not include a perspective on the future of Europe in terms of its specificity –its common core- and its social and cultural diversity. Between the fragmented national level in terms of collective representations of the future and the global ideology of change, there seems to be both an *ideological void* and a curious reluctance to discuss its (possible) consequences for the future of Europe.

This in spite of the fact that the interdependence between different parts of Europe is continuously increasing.

The European Union did not yet succeed to start the debate about the perspective on Europe's future in other terms than adaptation to globalisation. The European Union did not yet develop one or several perspectives on a common future in which Europe's cultural and social specificity and diversity play an important role in the creation of a new society, that is based on reflection and on coherent political choices which 'make' the future in other terms than only adaptation, for 'better or for worse', to international market-conditions.

The main problems and choices before us are, following this line of thought, connected with the insufficiencies of the collective representations in political and social life today, with the dangers of the emergence of several types of collective identities which are irreconcilable to democracy, with the coming of a European citizenship, with the quality of political and intellectual leadership, with strategies to reduce undesirable effects of the modernisation/globalisation ideology, and with the necessity to learn for democracy, mutual understanding and peace.

My analysis of collective representations in relation with the European Union's future and with the future of Europe at large will show that the European citizen still has a long way to go. As such, my analysis can also be regarded as an invitation to join forces in order to build a *Europe of citizens*, after the successful achievements of the EU during the –historically very brief - period of the last fifty years.





## CHAPTER II: CIVILISATION AND CULTURE

### The concepts of civilisation and culture: a difficult couple

Often the twin-concepts of civilisation and culture are used without elucidating their meaning in a sufficient way. Everyday we hear statements about the European 'culture' or 'civilisation', the 'culture' of different nations, the 'cultures' of migrants with their non-European origins, or the 'multicultural' society. As we will see, the sloppy use of these concepts may conceal political endeavours which are far from innocent. The task before us is to analyse these key concepts, together with some kindred concepts. This is not an easy task and those who adhere to the concept of culture as an all-embracing way of life with a unique collective identity or 'Volksgeist', will perhaps say that such an effort at elucidation will always end in a failure. This may be so, but nevertheless we want to know why this should be the case.

#### **The concept of civilisation**

According to Fernand Braudel, the word 'civilisation' appears in the French language in the 18<sup>th</sup> century as a neologism. It is derived from 'civilisé', 'civiliser' (16<sup>th</sup> century), to denote the passage to a civilised era.<sup>1</sup> From the very beginning the use in Europe of the concept of civilisation was marked by national differences.<sup>2</sup> The concept of civilisation refers to the idea that a civilisation is a culture that is 'higher' or more 'advanced' than other cultures. A civilisation is, in this way of thinking, not only a highly developed culture, but also the 'highest' civilisation, standing at the apex of human evolution. This idea of being the top of the evolution does not exclude the existence of other civilisations on earth. This is evident in the evolutionary scale developed in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century by Morgan in his *Ancient Society*.<sup>3</sup> Morgan stated that human development must

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<sup>1</sup> Fernand Braudel, *Grammaire des civilisations*. Paris: Flammarion, 1987, p.33.

<sup>2</sup> N. Elias, *Ueber den Prozess der Zivilisation. Soziogenetische and psychogenetisch Untersuchungen*. Basel : Haus zum Falken, 1939. See also : J. Berting, 'European ,Social Transformations and European Culture', in: M. Doornbos and S. Kaviraj, eds., *Dynamics of State Formation. India and Europe Compared*. NewDelhi/Thousand Oaks/London: Sage Publications, 1997, chapter 16.

<sup>3</sup> L.H. Morgan, *Ancient Society*, London, 1877.

pass through three stages of progress, called savagery, barbarism and civilisation. The invention of pottery marks the passage from savagery to barbarism and the invention of writing marks the passage to the stage of civilisation. This implies that we can speak about civilisations in plural, although it is evident that in this way of thinking European civilisation remains at the apex of the evolutionary development. In a certain way this type of thinking continues with the idea that 'globalisation means "Westernisation", which (it is believed) is a necessary condition for economic growth'.<sup>4</sup>

Another use of the concept of civilisation is to refer to the specific way of life in large cities as civilisation. This notion is already present in the works of Ibn Khaldun in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. He speaks about 'Omran', which means urbanism, a term that has for him the same meaning as 'Hadarah' or civilisation.<sup>5</sup> Civilisation refers to the urban way of life as complex and heterogeneous. All over the world, the way of life in cities has many things in common. As the population of the world is more and more concentrated in very large cities, we could say that civilisation as an urban way of life is developing rapidly as a global civilisation. In 1950 30 percent of the world population lived in urban areas. The UN forecasts an increase to 50 percent by 2005. In 1950, six of the ten largest cities were in the US or Europe. By 2015, none of the top ten will be.<sup>6</sup>

This signification of the concept of civilisation is very far removed from one of the meanings given to this concept by Braudel when he refers to civilisation as the 'common, good,' that is the use of fire, writing, arithmetic, the domestication of plants and animals, all those inventions, which cannot be attached to a specific origin. They 'have become the common possession of *the civilisation*'.<sup>7</sup>

Braudel uses the concept civilisation in still another way, as the coming of a *global civilisation since* the end of the 15th century (but this is not yet a reality). When we go back in time, Braudel says, humanity was divided into different planets, each with its own specific civilisation or culture, with its originalities and its fundamental choices.<sup>8</sup> We can say that, when we speak today about globalisation, it is this global civilisation that is expanding in our world. Such a view is contested by those who regard civilisations as the largest cultural units that can be discerned on our globe. So Huntington argues that we can distinguish

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<sup>4</sup> R. A. Shweder, 'Rethinking the Object of Anthropology (and Ending Up Where Kroeber and Kluckhohn Began)', in: *Items & Issues of the Social Science Council*, Vol. 1, no.11, Summer 2000, p.7.

<sup>5</sup> See Ibrahim Madkour, 'La civilisation, le mot et l'idée'. In : Mourad Wahba, Ed., *Philosophy & Civilisation. Proceedings of the First Afro-Asian Philosophy Conference, 13<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> March, 1978*, Cairo, p.1.

<sup>6</sup> See the Map : *Voices of the World*, produced by the National Geographic Maps for the National Geographic Society. Washington D.C , August 1999, 'The Ascent of Cities and The Birth of the Global Village'.

<sup>7</sup> F. Braudel, *o.c.*, p.38

<sup>8</sup> F. Braudel, *Civilisation matérielle et capitalisme.(XVe-XVIIIe siècle)*, tome 1. Paris : Librairie Colin, 1967, p. 435.

between seven civilisations. Our future will be characterised, according to him, by an ongoing struggle for dominance between them.<sup>9</sup>

The concept of civilisation is also used as a simple synonym of the concept of culture. This does not yet close our list of the meanings given to the concept of civilisation. In a more restricted way the bourgeoisie in Germany applied this concept in the 19<sup>th</sup> century to refer to the refined, courteous behaviour of the nobility. The concept referred, according to the bourgeois society, to superficial social phenomena, which had to be contrasted with Kultur, a concept that referred to the real things of value, to Beauty, Truth and Good. 'Kultur' can be acquired by Bildung. Used in this way, it is evident that the German concept of Kultur was seen by the bourgeois as being of a higher order than that of civilisation. Finally we mention Oswald Spengler, who used the concept of civilisation in his *Der Untergang des Abendlandes* to refer to cultures that are becoming decadent.

### **The concept of culture.**

We have seen that it is not always possible to make a clear distinction between the concepts of civilisation and of culture. In some cases the two concepts are treated as synonyms and sometimes civilisations are defined as a specific category of cultures (Huntington, Spengler).

The concept of culture is often used in the social sciences in an all-inclusive way. More than a century ago, Tylor defined culture as 'that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society'.<sup>10</sup> Culture refers to all human

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<sup>9</sup> S. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of the World Order*.

New York: Simon & Shuster, 1996. Huntington rejects the idea of ongoing convergence (the globalisation thesis). Instead of this he states that the future world order will be based on the existence of seven, or perhaps eight civilisations, which are presented by him as the most embracing cultural units of humanity. As he defines these civilisations as collective identities, which regulate the behaviours of those who are comprised within them, the future will inevitably be full of tensions and conflicts. The European civilisation –that is Europe and the United States of America- has to prepare itself for this new battle. After the dissolution of the USSR it is not a victorious liberalism and the end of history that will prevail, but the clash of civilisations. Managers and politicians will always organise their actions on the basis of their own civilisation, in which mutual understanding and trust is more easily attained than in inter-civilisation relations. Huntington is elevating the concept of cultural identity to its most extreme heights, without succeeding in showing that 'civilisations' can indeed be seen as the all-embracing and all-inclusive entities in which all other cultural differences play a secondary role and which exclude any possibility for inter- or trans-civilisation understanding. In fact, his objective seems to be primarily to prepare the battle of the European civilisation with the Arab world and, in a different way, with the Chinese civilisation.

<sup>10</sup> E.B. Tylor, *Primitive Culture*. London, 1891.

activities, which are learned, not instinctive, and which are transmitted from generation to generation through various learning processes. Culture also includes, in most of this type of definitions, the material products of human activities, the material culture. It is evident that when culture is defined in this way, there exist no human groups without culture, taken in this general sense.

There are, however, other types of general definitions of culture, which emphasise the plurality of cultures. See, e.g. the following definition in which culture is defined as 'a way of thinking, feeling, believing. It is the knowledge stored up (in memories of men, in books and objects)' as Kluckhohn remarks.<sup>11</sup> In this definition culture does not refer to behaviour itself and its products. Culture is 'covert culture'; it is 'inside us' as a consequence of belonging to a specific group or society. Seen in this way, culture is 'one facet of human life. It is that part which is learned by people as the result of belonging to some particular group, and it is that part which is shared with others'.<sup>12</sup> This definition implies *cultural relativism*, as different groups and societies have developed different ways of thinking, feeling and believing.

The general concept of culture is an abstraction. That is not the case with the concept of 'a culture', defined by Kluckhohn as 'a historically derived system of explicit and implicit design for living that tends to be shared by all or specially designed members of a group'.<sup>13</sup> This precaution is also evident in the definition that he gives at the end of his analysis: 'Culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behavior acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups, including their embodiments in artefacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e., historically derived and selected) ideas and specially their attached values; culture systems may, on the one hand, be considered as products of action, on the other as conditioning influences upon further action'.<sup>14</sup> 'Man is one, cultures are many'.<sup>15</sup>

In these definitions of culture as a way of thinking, feeling and believing, Kluckhohn is careful *not* to define a culture as a closed system. He speaks about a design for living that tends to be shared, which is a facet of human life. Moreover, culture consists out of patterns, but he does not refer to a culture as a pattern.

Some definitions of a culture may be much more imperative, such as the definition of a culture as 'the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one category of people from another'.<sup>16</sup> One important step further is the definition of a culture as a *culture pattern*, as a totality in which all of the elements have their meaning as part of this pattern, characterised by a specific pivotal ethos. This is the way Ruth Benedict

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<sup>11</sup> C. Kluckhohn, 'The concept of culture'. In : C. Kluckhohn, *Culture and Behavior*. New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1962, p. 25.

<sup>12</sup> C. Kluckhohn, *o.c.*, p. 25.

<sup>13</sup> C. Kluckhohn, *o.c.*, p. 56.

<sup>14</sup> C. Kluckhohn, *o.c.*, p.73.

<sup>15</sup> C. Kluckhohn, *o.c.*, p.71.

<sup>16</sup> G. Hofstede, cited by R. C. Lewis, *When Cultures Collide. Managing successful across cultures*. London: Nicholas Brealey Publishing, 1996, 1996, p. 25.

approached cultures in her well-known and influential *Patterns of Culture*.<sup>17</sup> Here we witness the influence of the German school of cultural history and of the Gestalt theory in psychology, which emphasised the fact that the way we perceive an element in a configuration or Gestalt, is determined by this *Gestalt*. In the same vein we encounter this way of thinking in many approaches in which societies and groups are seen as social systems, which are characterised by a specific cultural system. This is the case in the functionalist approach. The cultural system legitimises a society's normative order, says Parsons. 'Legitimation systems define the reasons for members' rights and for the prohibitions incumbent upon them'.<sup>18</sup> We encounter the same holistic approach to culture in a recent formulation by Shweder: 'By "culture" I mean community-specific ideas about what is true, good, beautiful and efficient. To be "cultural" those ideas about truth, goodness, beauty and efficiency must be socially inherited and customary; and they must be actually constitutive of different ways of life'.<sup>19</sup> Here culture is seen as 'an informing spirit' of a whole way of life. This conception comes very close to Herder's 'Volksgeist'.

This idealist approach can be contrasted with a materialist approach, in which culture is seen as the product of a whole social order, 'as the direct or indirect product of an order primarily constituted by other social activities',<sup>20</sup> as Williams says. He observes a convergence between these two approaches culture. In this convergent approach, there is an 'emphasis on cultural practices as (though now among others) constitutive. But instead of the 'informing spirit' which was held to constitute all other activities, it sees culture as the signifying system through which necessarily (though among other means) a social order is communicated, reproduced, experienced and explored'.<sup>21</sup>

Related to this way of thinking, but more dynamic, is the approach of Bauman, who sees culture as the perpetual effort to overcome this dichotomy between spirit and matter. 'Creativity and dependence are two indispensable aspects of human existence, not only conditioning, but reinforcing each other; they cannot be transcended conclusively – they overcome their own antinomy only by re-creating it and re-building the setting from which it is generated. The agony of culture is therefore doomed to eternal continuation; by the same token, man, since endowed with the capacity of culture, is doomed to explore, to be dissatisfied with his world, to destroy and to create'.<sup>22</sup> For him, culture is the only facet of the human condition and of life in which knowledge of the human reality and the human interest in self-perfection merge into one. Culture is, in this perspective, the *creation of meaning* and stands in a sharp opposition to the idea of culture as ready-made, to be handed over to a next generation. 'Culture is, therefore',

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<sup>17</sup> R. Benedict, *Patterns of Culture*. Boston:Houghton Mifflin, 1934 .

<sup>18</sup> T. Parsons, *Societies. Evolutionary and comparative perspectives*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1966, p. 11.

<sup>19</sup> R.A. Shweder, *o.c.*, p.7.

<sup>20</sup> R. Williams, *Culture*. Fontana Paperbacks, 1981, p.12.

<sup>21</sup> R. Williams, *o.c.*, p.13.

<sup>22</sup> Z.Bauman, *Culture as Praxis*. London and Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1973, p. 57.

Bauman says, 'the natural enemy of alienation. It constantly questions the self-appointed wisdom, serenity and authority of the Real.'<sup>23</sup>

This view seems radically opposed to the idea of Daniel Bell that there is a widening disjunction in the post-industrial society between the social structure (the economy, technology, and occupational system) and the culture (as the symbolic expression of meanings). According to Bell, each of these two is ruled by a different axial principle. 'The social structure is rooted in functional rationality and efficiency, the culture in the antinomian justification of the enhancement of the self'.<sup>24</sup> This disjunction is the consequence of capitalism, which destroyed the Protestant ethic by 'zealously promoting a hedonist way of life'. It is somewhat curious to see that some values, such as (functional) rationality and efficiency, are excluded from 'culture'. Anyhow, Bell's point of view demonstrates that the cohesiveness or the integration of a culture is a question of degree, especially within very large systems. However, following Bauman's position, we could conclude that in modern societies massive alienation must prevail, because of the relative lack in the social structure of opportunities for re-creation.

#### **A brief comment on the concepts of civilisation and culture.**

What can we learn from the preceding analysis of the concepts of civilisation and of culture? Can we say that it is evident that there are many civilisations and many cultures? That after the impact of the Occidental civilisation on the world, after a period of ongoing Westernisation, we are now aware that our world consists out of several cultures? That seems to be a far too simple position. In the first place the existing civilisations are certainly not immutable and closed systems. They are changing in several respects, albeit that in this process important cultural differences are not necessarily waning. Secondly, when we leave aside the idea of civilisation as a common good (in one of the meanings given by Braudel), it can be remarked that there is a civilisation in the making in the sense of a specific way of life in large cities, all over the world. This process goes hand in hand with the coming of a global civilisation in the wake of the development of global markets and the rise of modern information systems. One could say that this is ongoing Westernisation. It is certainly true that this process started in the West, but in our era it is also dependent upon technical and economic developments in the non-western world, which have an impact elsewhere, also on the Western civilisation. Some will probably remark that this type of civilisation concerns in the first place a *new* global, cosmopolitan elite, with only scant roots in their cultures of origin. This is a point that has to be considered seriously, although we can observe that many persons, outside this 'global elite', are touched by this global development. Is it really a necessary condition of a global civilisation to include the majority of

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<sup>23</sup> Z.Bauman, *o.c.*, p. 176.

<sup>24</sup> D.Bell, *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society. A Venture in Social Forecasting*. New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1976 (1973), p. 477.

the population of the world? Moreover, it is quite conceivable to be imbued both by this global civilisation and by a more specific civilisation or culture. Most of us belong to regional cultures and national cultures at the same time, without experiencing tensions and feelings of alienation because of these multiple social and cultural ties. Why should it be otherwise when we are, in a certain respect, included in a still larger cultural unit?

An important observation can be made pertaining to the boundaries of civilisations and cultures. In our time the debate on the opposition between universality and specificity is still very vigorous. This debate is closely linked to another opposition, namely between collectivism and individualism. As it was the case in Europe in 18<sup>th</sup> century, those who strongly emphasise the importance of cultural specificity and collectivism seem to think and act in defence of existing cultural differences. Hence their attachment to concepts of culture or civilisation as integrated systems which determine all acts of those who 'belong' to such a cultural system. By doing so, they tend to efface the uniqueness of the personalities and their liberties, who become only an element of the system, without real individual choices. It implies also, in most cases, that what exists is good. From this follows that there is no need for economic and social transformations, for Human Rights, no need for democratic rights for everyone.

My analysis of the concepts of civilisation and of culture shows, however, that it is quite possible to treat cultural systems as open systems. Moreover, it is not necessary to imply that they are perfectly integrated and that they determine totally the behaviour of all of the members of a society. This point is certainly of extreme importance when we speak about civilisation as major cultural units. All such cultural mega-systems comprise many national, regional and local cultures which have in most cases a common core, but which may also be very different from one another, with customs and habits which are incommensurable. On the other hand, regions belonging to different neighbouring civilisations may have many characteristics in common, as is, e.g., the case with the populations which live on both sides of the Mediterranean. Finally, those who stress cultures and civilisations as closed, specific systems also tend to neglect processes of change. They present cultures as immutable in time and space. Preferences for a specific concept of culture or civilisation are, as we will see, connected with specific perspectives on and political preferences for, 'Europe' and its future.

### **Culture as a multilevel concept**

In the preceding sections of this chapter the concept of culture refers in most cases to large entities, such as nations or clusters of nations (e.g. Europe), to ethnic groups living on a specific territory (e.g. the Basque), or to regions (e.g. the Mediterranean culture or a region within a nation-state). In all those cases the concept implies that such cultures are the result of long historical processes that created specific differences between human groups with respect to ways of living, languages, beliefs, convictions and myths, and the organisation of their major institutions. Seen in this way, culture is not only something with deep historical



roots, but also a specific figuration that endures, that is continuously recreated by coming generations without losing its specific character.

In most discussions about culture, this concept is used in this manner. This is in a certain way demonstrated by the preceding definitions of this concept. Nevertheless, it seems also necessary to draw our attention to some other uses of the concept of culture. So we can encounter, especially in relation with discussions about globalisation, the idea of an 'international culture', or a European culture, in many cases with the meaning of an international culture in the making. The coming of such an international culture is propelled by changing economic relations. So Gellner states that the rise of a European society requires 'the members of such a society (to) be able to communicate in speech and writing, in a formal, precise, context-free manner – in other words they must be educated, literate and capable of orderly, standardised presentation of messages. The consequence of this is the necessity of universal literacy and education, and a cultural homogeneity'. A modern society is 'literate, mobile, formally equal with a merely fluid, continuous, so to speak atomised inequality and with shared, homogeneous, literacy-carried, and school-incalculated culture'.<sup>25</sup>

In the 19<sup>th</sup> and in the largest part of the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries the national states, emphasising the importance of national culture, provided the framework for socio-economic development. But ongoing processes of modernisation have now made these frameworks obsolete in certain respects. The changing socio-economic structure of Europe and the coming of a European state thus imply important changes on the cultural level: the making of a European culture.

This concept of a European culture refers to something new, emerging in the present stage of modernisation. Such a view on an emerging culture cannot be restricted to Europe only, because the prerequisites as described by Gellner do not halt at the border of 'Europe'. In some respects a global culture could be in the making in which large corporations, non-governmental organisations, and many international networks are implied. In this respect I can also refer to the rise of something like an international youth culture (music, literature, international travelling,, changing attitudes towards work and family, etc.), and new types of public, partly related to this youth culture, which are very perceptive to contributions of non-European cultural expressions. This is something like an exotic counter-current. Perhaps this interest is the expression of a rising global conscience. As such, it illustrates a conscience that the European culture, or cultures, is part of a system of global cultural exchanges. In a certain way, it has always been, but this fact has been masked by the impact of the European dominance over the world in the past. Anyhow, this orientation illustrates well the narrow-mindedness of conceptions which conceive of cultures as closed, self-sufficient systems.

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<sup>25</sup> Ernest Gellner, *Culture, Identity and Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987, p.15.

Discussing briefly the concept of international culture, we placed ourselves on a 'higher' level than in the preceding sections of this chapter. We can also descend to a 'lower' level, because we are often confronted with concepts like 'the culture of a corporation', 'the culture of a university', 'the culture of the countryside', 'the culture of the mining-industry', etc. Most often, the concept is on this level used in a rather loose way, without much attention to the larger culture in which it is embedded. The concept is often used to indicate an organisation's (pretended) specificity in a world in which it is important to be remarked. Especially for international corporations, operating in competitive markets, it is very important to have a visible corporate identity that marks them off from similar corporations. This culture of an organisation also has an inward meaning, as it can be used to incite the employees concerned to instil a sentiment of belongingness and to be proud of the organisation's achievements.

In some cases, the references to the culture of an organisation may be rather negative. That is the case when 'culture' is made responsible for the lack of an organisation's adaptation to changing outside conditions. In those cases one can hear the remarks that an organisation's culture is reluctant to change, that the ingrained habits of working block necessary innovations and that, consequently, a sharp and 'revolutionary' change of the organisation's cultural course is unavoidable.



## CHAPTER III: COLLECTIVE IDENTITIES

### Collective identity

The concept of collective identity is a very tricky one. A main source of much confusion is the fact that the concept is used both to refer to real and assumed characteristics of groups or nations (the outside view), and to the ways members of groups and nations define themselves as being different from other collectivities (the inside-view).

We must keep in mind that the use of the concept of identity in relation with collective entities, such as ethnic groups, nations, regions and religious communities, is rather recent. The *International Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, published in 1968, only refers to the concept of personal and psychosocial identity. Erikson defines the individual identity as a subjective sense of a continuous existence and a coherent memory. To this he adds that the concept of psychosocial identity is even more evasive, because it comprises at the same time subjective and objective characteristics and individual and social ones.<sup>26</sup>

This concept of collective identity has come to the fore during the last twenty-five years, replacing concepts with a dubious character, such as 'race' or 'racial groups' by 'ethnic groups' and ethnicity. Ethnic identity is, following the definition of Roosens: 'a feeling of belonging and continuity-in-being (staying the same person through time) resulting from an act of self-ascription and/or ascription by others to a group of people who claim both common ancestry and a common cultural tradition'.<sup>27</sup> Here we observe already an opposition to the concept of religious identity, as most religious identities are not connected with a claim to common ancestry and connect belonging to the collectivity with a different set of criteria, such as the acceptance of a specific body of ethical and moral religious rules and religious beliefs and often, but not necessarily, with the acceptance of a religious mission to accomplish.

In the following analysis I will emphasise the use of the concept of collective identity that is based on an inside-view. Under certain circumstances I will use the

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<sup>26</sup> E.H. Erikson, 'Identity, psychosocial'. In : D.L. Sills, ed., *International Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*. The Macmillan Company & The Free Press, 1968, Volume 7, p.61.

<sup>27</sup> E. Roosens, 'Ethnicity as a creation : some theoretical reflections'. In : K. von Benda-Beckmann and M. Verkuyten, eds., *Nationalism, ethnicity and cultural identity*. Utrecht University, 199, p.30.

concept in terms of the outside-view. When this is the case, it will be stated explicitly.

Another major problem that is connected with the use of the concept of collective identity is the observation that members of a group or community may consider their collective identity as a reality. As such they demonstrate a way of holistic thinking, which is generally very strong in fundamentalist movements, as we will see in chapter VIII.3.

Ideas about collective identities are part and parcel of collective representations. We organise the world around us mentally with the help of one or more collective representations. The ideas about our collective identities –and those of the Others– define our place within this more embracing collective representation of the society, and even of the world, we live in.

When I speak of an identity as based on an inside-view, I start with the observation that each idea of a collective identity is always based on distinctions between ‘us’ and the ‘Others’. What do we mean when we speak about collective identities? Collective identities are strongly tied to the concept of collective representation. Collective identities: ‘are the means whereby people define a sense of themselves and others through using different markers, such as cultural features. Identities refer to what people conceive themselves to be, to which collectivities they belong’.<sup>28</sup> Collective identity refers to the ways a group sees itself as different –but also as similar– in comparison to other groups. Collective identity is anchored in the consciousness of the members of a group.

We could, indeed, speak about group consciousness in the sense of a consciousness of belonging to a social class, a religious group, a nation, an ethnic group, a professional group etc. But let us stretch the concept not too much. Collective identity in the sense we use it here is strongly determined by the habitus, the tendencies acquired by the members of a group before coming of age. The members of the group have been ‘invaded’ by the culture of their group before competing structures, except for biological conditions, were present. This is what Freud called ‘the primacy principle’. Later collective identities, especially after growing up, have been grafted on the former, such as professional identities or collective identities related to voluntary associations, which are joined as adults. Habitus plays also a role on this level, because the tendencies acquired in the first period of the life of an individual tend to influence the selection processes later on, such as those related to preferences for certain artistic and professional activities.

Collective identity means that the members of a group have an *awareness of certain differences* that exist between them and those who do not belong to that group. So the concept of collective identity refers to imageries about social and cultural characteristics, habits and physical appearances of the Other and, consequently, of the self. This awareness of differences –real or imaginary– is connected with a *consciousness of belonging* to that group and of *exclusion* of

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<sup>28</sup> K. von Benda-Beckmann and M. Verkuyten, ‘Introduction: cultural identity and development in Europe’. In: K. von Benda-Beckmann and M. Verkuyten eds., *o.c.*, 1995, p.17.

those who do not belong. This awareness of differences and this sense of belonging may be very weak and in that case the idea of opposition to the Other may be totally absent. In many cases, however, the collective identity goes together with the *idea of opposition*: the types of behaviour and the values and norms of the Other are incommensurable with 'our' characteristics as group members. This opposition is often expressed in a *stereotypical way*. Such stereotypes about the Other are part of the inside-view of the members of a group, but they represent, in fact, paradoxically, an outside-view on the Other. Those collective stereotypes are often far removed from the self-images of the groups that are 'described' by those stereotypes. Collective stereotypes are 'frozen' images of the Other, which are not susceptible to change when confronted with facts about the Other which are contradictory to the stereotype. Especially national stereotypes show a *stubborn resistance to change* and are to a high degree *demonstrations of ignorance*. The situation is often even more complicated when members of different groups interact with each other and opposed stereotypes collide.

It follows from what I said that collective identities are far from value-free. The Other is not only different, but also inferior in one or more respects. This *sense of superiority vis-à-vis* the Other is often strong in closed communities or societies. We can learn from many cultural anthropological studies that many 'primitive' tribes, now and in the past, consider themselves to be the centre of the world and often refer to themselves with a concept that signifies: 'we, the human beings'. An important implication of this is that the members of neighbouring tribes are not considered to be fully human. The Other has different habits and customs and speaks often a different language. In small societies, characterised by a common life-style, the individual is almost completely determined by that culture. Dumont observes that the relativistic thought, which recognises that behind the customs, the ideas, the behaviour and the symbols of the Other a human being is hidden, who in spite of the many evident differences has many characteristics in common with us, is something that is slow to develop in human history, as is the individualist way of thinking. 'In the traditional holism humanity merges with *our* society, the strangers are devaluated as, at best, imperfect beings – for the rest, all types of patriotism, even the modern variants, are coloured by this sentiment'.<sup>29</sup> *Ethnocentrism* and *xenophobia* accompany the holistic thought.

Collective identities are a *source of holistic thinking*, a way of thinking in which groups (nations, peoples, social classes, etc.) are regarded as real entities, which are considered to be more than the sum of their parts. They are *unique configurations with a specific spirit*. In many cases groups with a strong collective identity have a strong *consciousness of their past*. Such a past is generally a *mixture of facts and myths*. The collective identity of a group has, seen from the inside, a *collective level* – the group can be characterised by its identity, which is manifested by the allegiances and behaviour of its members. It has also an *individualistic level* – a member defines his own identity, partially or sometimes

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<sup>29</sup> L. Dumont, *Essais sur l'individualisme. Une perspective anthropologique sur l'idéologie moderne*. Paris : Editions du Seuil, 1983, p. 119.

totally, in relation to his belongingness to the group. In other words, the collective identity implies the feeling of the members of the group of *attachment* to it. They have *feelings of solidarity* with their group. In fact, the sense of being different as a member from non-members is enhanced by the use of stereotypes about the Other. In this way these stereotypes are functional for the cohesion of the in-group. Their use demonstrates an *emotional and affective commitment* to the group. In this context we should not forget that the bearers of a collective identity in many cases show a strong need to exteriorise their (collective) emotions and attachments by *rituals, symbols and commemorations of events that have marked the community*. Pareto dedicates to this need, in his analysis of the residues of group life, the totality of the third category of residues, called the 'need to manifest his sentiments by exterior acts'.<sup>30</sup> This need can manifest itself also in the destruction of objects that symbolise the Other as an opponent. So the Taliban of Afghanistan started in 2000 the destruction of many, sometimes very ancient, statues of Buddha, because these symbols of Buddhism were considered to divert the attention of the people of Afghanistan from the only true religion as manifested in the Koran. Iconoclasm is a favourite activity in periods of revolutionary change as is demonstrated by the iconoclasm of the symbols of the Catholic Church during the Reformation, the destruction of Chinese cultural heritage during the 'Cultural Revolution' and the destruction of socialist symbols after the downfall of the Soviet Empire. The need to exteriorise attachments is also demonstrated by the showing in public life of symbols of one's allegiance, such as the cross, the chador (the veil of Muslim women), the national colours, etc.

The concept of collective identity is also related to the *idea of totality*, not only in the sense of the holistic conception to which I referred earlier, but also in the sense that the group, especially when it concerns large entities such as nations, encompasses and dominates all other differences within the group. This conception of totality may be related in some instances to the conviction of the members of a group – a nation, a religious community, a political party etc.- that *their life-chances are strongly or even exclusively dependent upon the achievements of the group to which they belong*. Sometimes, the idea of collective identity may go together with *the idea of a mission*, the idea that the group to which one belongs has played an important role in the development of the world, that it is the bearer of new values or that it has the mission to restore old values in a world that is corrupted by 'materialism', that it is chosen to accomplish the will of God or that its role is the liberation of the oppressed.

Collective identities necessarily make distinctions between insiders and outsiders. Nevertheless, some of the outsiders may be considered by the members of a group as potential members and they may try to convert them. Inside the group some members are leaders, other members are followers and still other members may be marginal. Depending on the nature of the collective identity and on the specific interactions with the social environment, a collective identity can be

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<sup>30</sup> V. Pareto, *Traité de sociologie générale*. (Œuvres complètes, Vol. XI, edited by G. Busino). Genève : Librairie Droz, 1968 (1917-1919, 2 vol.), §§ 1089-1112.

relatively open or closed. When the group is in conflict with other groups in a struggle for scarce means, such as 'souls to be saved' or potential members to contribute to their cause and not to the goals of a competitor, the dividing-lines between 'us' and 'them' are drawn in a rigid way.

Another possibility is that a collective identity is imposed on a certain category of individuals. That is the case when persons are seen by the insiders, according to their criteria for selection, as (reluctant) members, because of their 'racial' or religious heritage. But it is also possible that a group (a society) forces certain of its members to comply with a specific identity in spite of the fact that many of them do not have the aspiration to be defined by that imposed false identity. Such was the case in Nazi-Germany, where a rigid and closed identity from which no escape was possible, was imposed on persons with a (partial) Jewish origin. In this way imposition of rigid dividing-lines between 'them' and 'us' were the opening of a process that did lead to a total exclusion from public life, even from life at all.

### **Open and closed collective identities**

Every collective identity implies, I repeat, that a distinction is made between outsiders and insiders, between 'them' and 'us'. In most cases this distinction does not necessarily mean an opposition. It may simply be that the Others speak a different dialect or language, or prefer kinds of food that we abhor, and drink wine instead of 'our' beer. But even when the distinction goes deeper, in the sense I elaborated earlier in this text, the collective identity can be relatively open. We can participate in circles and groups with different collective identities without experiencing problems. As such, most of us have developed in democratic societies personalities with multiple identities. Of course, there are groups with collective identities that do not accept certain categories of outsiders, or accept them only after a long training or initiation rites ('rites de passage'). This does not mean that the members of such relatively closed circles or communities do not participate in other groups and do not contribute to the political, cultural and social life of the society in which they are embedded. Nevertheless, some types of collective identities are constructed in such a way that the members of groups, which share these identities, may provoke serious problems in a democratic society, because they act against fundamental principles of a democratic order, such as the respect for the individual freedom of all citizens.

In which cases are groups with a specific *closed* identity likely to create problems in a democratic society? Problematic collective identities in an open society will have the following main characteristics:

- The members of the group (religious community, ethnic group, minority culture etc.) *hypostatise* their identity, that is, they treat it as a real entity with an internal structure that separates it sharply from other cultural entities (*cultural realism*).



- They present their collective identity as a *collectivity that determines totally, or at least to a very high degree*, all groups and individuals that are considered to be part of this identity. They have a *collectivistic way of thinking or a catascopic approach*. A catascopic approach is one in which the most encompassing entity –here the collective identity- is in the forefront, and from this vantage-point one is looking down upon the smaller units, which are comprised within it. Moreover, the position of the smaller units on their lower level is interpreted as being a *function* of the higher level, that is, all their characteristics are derived from the higher level.
- The members of the closed collective identity *neglect in a systematic way the social and cultural changes of our times*. It is as if the hypostatisation or reification of the collective identity forbids the analysis of historical developments. Only one interpretation of the past is accepted, an interpretation that is considered to be functional for the group and that legitimises its existence.
- The individuals and groups, which are considered to belong to the collectivity with the closed identity, are *imprisoned* within this framework. They do not have choices, which are not a function of this collective identity.

Such a way of organising social and cultural life can be destructive for the society in which groups with these identities develop, as can be illustrated by many historical and present-day examples. The differences with the ‘Others’ are, when one follows this type of reasoning, unbridgeable and unchangeable. There is no common denominator. The closed collective identities are incommensurable with other identities, be they open or closed. Hence, a free circulation of ideas and arts, an ongoing dialogue between representatives of different collective identities, such as religions, cultures or ethnic groups, do not make any sense within this perspective.

The rise of fundamentalist movements, being religious ones or not, as reactions to modernisation, exemplify this role of closed collective identities. I will return to this theme in chapter VII.3, when I discuss the collective representation of modern society as a multicultural one.

### **The spirit of the people (‘the ‘Volksgeist’)**

Modern, open societies are multicultural ones and this multiculturalism has often enriched society in the past and it still does. The newcomers in the modern societies develop in most cases ‘multicultural personalities’ in which the cultural or ethnic background of their country of origin is only one of their points of reference. As such, they were and are not really different from the majority of the population.

However, the present discussions about multicultural societies focus on a type of society that is multicultural in a different sense: the coming society is envisaged as one in which ‘culture’, ‘ethnicity’ and ‘foreign lifestyles’ are seen as durable, distinct elements in the national landscape. This change necessitates, it is argued by some, an accommodation of the national institutions to this new situation. This need

for adaptation is based on the idea that all cultures are equal and have, consequently, the right to be there as *collectivities*. In such discussions the idea of collective identity plays a major role. In fact, with this debate we are resuming the old debate between historicism and universalism that started in the 18<sup>th</sup> century when Johann Gotfried Herder coined the concept of 'Volksgeist' in opposition to the ideas of the Enlightenment, emphasising in this way the uniqueness of each culture. Universal concepts, such as Reality and Truth do not exist; all norms and ideas originate within a specific cultural context upon which they are dependent. They can only be understood within this specific context. Here we are confronted with radical opposition of historicist thinking to the rational and universal tenets of the Enlightenment.<sup>31</sup> This concept of *Volksgeist* did have a strong impact on the development of Europe, more specifically on the relationships between France and Germany, as the concept implied a radical different relationship between individuals and their society and state. Today we could translate this concept of *Volksgeist* with the concept of the *collective identity* of a people, a concept that emerged in the political debates and in the social sciences since the beginning of the eighties of the last century.

In a modern society it is perhaps feasible, but certainly not acceptable for most of its citizens, to organise the major institutions on the basis of this type of collective identity. It would lead to a type of *Apartheid*, a situation that runs counter to the idea of cultural exchanges and cultural enrichment. I have given my arguments against this solution in the preceding section. However, when the *concept of a relatively open collective identity* is used, a modern society can certainly be a multicultural one when it avoids in its policies some nasty pitfalls in dealing with the claims of some groups to have *specific rights as collectivities*, which would curtail the fundamental rights of individuals and, moreover, those of the other members of the society. This is the case when official policies commit *the fallacy of the wrong level*.

With this concept I want to indicate that during debates about the multicultural society, groups (e.g. ethnic minorities) are treated as realities with a specific collective identity to which individuals are subordinated, instead of conceptualising groups as gatherings of individuals, who define themselves as belonging to a group with a specific identity. In a modern society each individual has normally different opportunities to belong to several groups with different identities. This problem is a very tricky one, so I will try to elucidate it at some length.

Many collective identities may coexist and persons belonging to groups with different identities do not experience specific difficulties in social life because of that. On the contrary, in many cases the fact that one belongs to several groups with different identities and having as such a multiple identity, enriches life and provides many cultural and intellectual stimuli.

A second prescription is the need to be aware of *the role of the double distortion in intercultural relations*. In intercultural relations double distortions are

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<sup>31</sup> J.G. Herder, *Ideen zu einer Philosophie der Menschheit*, 1784; id., *Une autre philosophie de l'histoire*, 1774.

unavoidable when we agree with the observation that all members of a nation or cultural unit whatsoever do not perceive reality as it really is, but always filtered and interpreted by collective representations. These collective representations are not just a pair of glasses that can be changed at will, because they are deeply anchored, as I said earlier, in the habitus of the members of the group. It is evident that in intercultural relations all the parties concerned have their own ways of looking at reality and of judging on the basis of their respective identities. In intercultural exchanges, both within a nation-state comprising units with different cultural traditions or between collectivities belonging to different nation-states, this distortion operates. Information supplied by both parties is reinterpreted and in most cases, does not have a perceptible influence on the distorted view on 'the Other'. On both sides the parties concerned may cherish the idea that they have a 'true' picture of the Other and that the 'Other' is seeing them in false or distorted way. The problem is in many cases that one or both parties are really convinced that their collective representations of the 'Other' have a high validity. Even collective stereotypes may not be recognised as such by those who apply them to the 'Other': in their view the stereotypes about the other are not considered as stereotypes, but as accurate descriptions of the 'Other'. In a particular relation between two groups or cultures, this distortion may be strongly out of balance. To give an example: the collective stereotypes of Europeans about the Arab world are analysed by researchers with much fervour, both by Europeans and Arabs. But the other way round is quite different: an almost complete absence of studies of Arab stereotypes about the European world. Is this an effect of modernisation, as the European world is more 'modernised' than the Arab one? In the European world there are more persons with 'multiple identities', who understand the mechanisms of distortion and who are willing, at a conscious level, to change their images of the 'Other', while this is much less the case on the Arab side, where researchers are willing to study the distorted views of the 'Other' about *their* world, just to prove that their own views on the European or western world are 'distortion-free'? This situation is likely to be the result of the fact that several European nations have been colonisers and their distorted views on the Other must be the result of this because they had to find 'good reasons' for their exploitation<sup>32</sup>, while the ex-colonised do not have valid reasons for a distorted view. So *the latter* see reality as it really is. Here a parallel can be discerned with the Marxist view that states that only the proletariat, as the victim of capitalist oppression, can see through the veil of bourgeois ideology and so perceive the world as it really is, while the bourgeois can only have a distorted view of reality, handicapped as they are by bourgeois ideology and, of course, by their economic interests.

Looking at the interrelations between groups with different collective representations about themselves and the Other, we can distinguish between three different types of intercultural relations:

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<sup>32</sup> See, e.g., 'Polémiques sur l'histoire coloniale'. *Manière de voir* 58. Paris : *Le Monde diplomatique*, Juillet-Août, 2001.

A. Both groups are aware of the fact that their collective representations necessarily must produce a distorted view of the Other, and vice versa and that, consequently, an open discussion may elucidate several problems that arise in intercultural exchanges. It is not required that all members are characterised by this sense of relativity. It may be sufficient when elites, sustained by a part of the members of the groups, are convinced that there is a double distortion, but that this distortion need not be an impediment to reciprocal learning processes;

B. One of the groups is aware that its collective representation implies a distorted view on the other and on one's own position, while the other party is convinced that the distortion is only one-sided. Such a situation is described for the relationship between the European and Arab world. In such a situation the party that thinks and states that only 'the Other' has a distorted view, will try to convince the other party that their perspective on the Arab world is strongly distorted. Of course, the former party will not always accept the idea that there is only a one-sided distortion on one side and not on the other;

C. The most difficult situation arises when both parties are convinced that they have a valid collective representation of the Other and of its own position and that, consequently, the Other has a false collective representation of the outside world and its place within it. In this situation the parties concerned will not show a tendency to be concerned with the inside view of the Other for its own sake;

The cases B and C will be often present in relations between different nations. Within a modern, multicultural society they are not absent, but there will often be a tendency, in intercultural relations, towards the first case (A). We do not mean to say that in this case all the participants of the groups will have the same tendency to look at the other as a (potential) partner and citizen. But as we will see later on in this book, the social and cultural changes within most European countries tend to produce, although not in equal shares within the groups concerned, persons with a relatively open mind vis-à-vis the 'Other'. This category of persons will have a relatively high potentiality to learn about the Other in intercultural relations.

### **Use and abuse of collective identities**

When I refer to the concepts of collective identity, cultural identity, national identity or ethnic identity, I must be very careful to indicate on which level I am operating: the individual or the collective one. Moreover, I must be extremely cautious not to fall into the trap of the fallacy of the wrong level. So I must emphasise that such a thing as a collective identity does not exist on the collective level as a characteristic of a collectivity that determines as such the characteristics of persons who say that they belong to that collectivity or who are considered by others to belong to it. A collective identity is only present when the members of a group claim to share a common identity. But as this common identity is only a construction at a conscious level of a number of individuals, no claims can be derived from it that other persons, who do not share this common definition of identity, but who are considered by the members (and perhaps also by non-members) to belong to this group because they have certain characteristics which are included in their idea of

collective identity, should share their common definition of their (ethnic) identity. Moreover, the fact that groups claim a collective identity can never be used by outsiders to put persons, who do not belong, but who have one or more characteristics in common with persons claiming a specific identity, into the same basket.

Collective identities can in several cases also be regarded as inventions or constructions of individuals who use this concept as an important element of their strategies to reach certain goals and advantages for a specific category of individuals, either by pointing out that they should be treated with a certain preference (positive discrimination) in comparison to more privileged categories or by trying to exclude people from a common market of opportunities. The use of collective identity signifies in most cases that a rational debate is avoided in national intercultural group relations, because the idea of 'ethnic identity' – which is only a specific way to bring to the fore one's 'cultural specificity' - seems to be 'sacred' in a world where many persons are convinced that cultural differences should be protected. They seem to be unaware of the fact that most traditional distinctions are, historically speaking, rather recent inventions. In this context Bayart speaks about 'la bêtise identitaire' and states that the cultural argument is always 'un ersatz de démonstration'.<sup>33</sup>

It follows from what I said that the concept of collective identity is a very slippery one that must be used very carefully. Moreover, claims of social groups to respect their collective identity must be analysed critically. An important problem is raised by those groups which claim a specific closed collectivist identity. As such they consider themselves in most cases as a collectivity that is morally superior to the outside world that has to adapt to their exigencies. Such claims are not easily to reconcile – or sometimes not at all - with the basic principles of a democratic society. In fact, persons who claim specific rights because they pretend to belong to a group with a collective identity, act in a way that is opposed to the democratic principle of the primacy of the individual. They claim certain privileges and rights on the basis of ascription- their belonging to a specific group - which stands in opposition to the individualist principle of achievement or merit that prevails in a modern society. So the claim to respect one's collective identity often goes together with claims to obtain certain rights and scarce means as a member of the specific group or community that claims such a collective identity. In this way the link between individual achievement and reward could be weakened when those collective claims are accepted as valid arguments in a democratic society.

In a democratic society such collectivistic claims are normally restrained by the political process. But in several cases, groups with a closed collective identity have succeeded to conquer the political power and to install a political regime that is based on their idea of a closed collective identity. Such was the case in Nazi-Germany in which the 'racially pure' were elevated to a higher status than the 'racially impure'. The same mechanism operated in the Soviet Union and in other communist systems, based on the distinction between the 'true believers' and the

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<sup>33</sup> J-F.Bayart, *L'illusion identitaire*. Paris : Fayard, 1996, p.26.

'outcasts'. Again we witness this mechanism under the fundamentalist Muslim regimes in Iran and until recently in Afghanistan, where the distinction is based on a specific interpretation of Islam. In all those cases persons obtain rights and privileges on the basis of their conformity, or are excluded when they refuse to conform or when they are considered by the ruling class to be 'undesirable elements' on other grounds. All this means a profound disregard for individual capacities and for the principle of individual merit.

But also in a democracy these collectivistic ways of thinking are not without negative effects. This becomes evident in the discussions about the so-called 'multicultural society' (see chapter VII) and in policies related to this. Based on ideas about collective identities of (allochthonous) minorities, there is a tendency in our democratic societies to except, among other things, the unequal position of women in comparison to men, polygamy, the toleration of the practice of excision of girls and the application of unjustified positive discrimination.

What I said does not imply that all types of collective claims are related to collectivist identities of the type we described. In many cases collective actions are part and parcel of the democratic processes. This is the case when workers protest against the proposed shutdown of their enterprise, when students and staff members of universities oppose envisaged curtailments of universities' resources by the government, or when women demonstrate in favour of the application of the principle of equal pay for equal jobs for both men and women. In those cases the collective action is based on like interests of the individuals concerned. It has nothing to do with the claims of groups with (closed) collective identities.



## CHAPTER IV: PROGRESS, DEVELOPMENT AND CULTURAL CHANGE

### **The roots of Europe's modernity**

In the preceding chapter I have discussed the concepts of culture, civilisation and collective identity. Such an introduction is a preparatory step towards a dynamic analysis of processes of economic, social, cultural and political change. One of the main goals is, as I said earlier, to arrive at a better understanding of the relations between processes of technological and economic change on the one hand, and processes of social and cultural change on the other. In our days this discussion is strongly connected with ideas about globalisation.

In most studies about societal development, one is confronted with distinctions between periods and types of society which are referred to as 'traditional' or 'pre-modern' society, 'modern' society and 'post-modern' society. In many cases these different types of society are placed on a linear time-axis: 'traditional' societies develop under certain circumstances in the direction of a 'modern' society, 'modern' societies – or industrial societies – become 'post-industrial' or 'post-modern'. Almost needless to say that such a distinction between types of society, although often used, contributes little to our understanding of the world we live in today. Already the reference to societies as being 'post' indicates that a clear collective representation of something like a post-modern society is lacking. Anyhow, when one is speaking about globalisation as the most important characteristic of our time, then the age of post-modernity seems to be still far away.

I start with a brief discussion of Europe's specificity by highlighting Europe as the cradle of a universal technological and rational culture. This specificity of the European continent must be regarded as the origin of the far-reaching transformations to which we refer nowadays as 'globalisation'. Europe can be characterised by a 'technological orientation' which has deep roots in its past. An important factor for this early rise of a technological orientation is connected with the desecration or profanation of nature in the Judeo-Christian religions. This thesis of the desecration of nature as a necessary condition for the rise of the modern pursuit of technical progress seems to be generally accepted by theologians, according to Van der Pot.<sup>34</sup> This thesis stems from the observation that in the Judeo-Christian religions God is seen to be on the side of the humans in the struggle between men and nature. This observation is related to the idea that

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<sup>34</sup> J.H.J. van der Pot, *Die Bewertung des technischen Fortschritts. Eine systematische Uebersicht der Theorien*. Assen/Maastricht: Van Gorcum, 1985, Band I, p.37.



God created the world – thus the world itself is *not* God and hence is not considered to be sacred –and to the idea that God created human beings in his own image and elevated them above all other creatures, giving them the right, so to speak, to intervene in the course of events on earth. In contrast to most other religious systems, the Judeo-Christian beliefs do not include inhibitions on the control of nature by people. According to Max Weber, Christianity inherited the hostility against mystical thinking from Judaism. This absence of inhibitions opened the road to important economic achievements, for mystical ideas put a heavy constraint on the rationalisation of economic life.<sup>35</sup> With the emergence of ascetic Protestantism this disenchantment of the world was complete. The indifference toward the ‘natural’ order was coupled with a lack of disdain for activities, which were directed at practical utility. This was certainly not the case in many other belief systems.

On the basis of a systematic analysis of many theological, historical and sociological sources, Van der Pot concludes that Christianity had a significant impact on the origin of the modern push towards technological change through its desecration of nature, its contribution to a hopeful attitude toward the future, and its positive judgement of work that is oriented toward practical utility. These elements had significant effects on technological developments in the West, long before the Industrial Revolution. As early as in the thirteenth century a first ‘industrial revolution’ took place. Many of the technological innovations that were applied at that time, such as the water-mill, came from outside Western Europe. Western Europeans showed a keen judgement of their opportunities to implement those innovations. The major force behind this was not necessity, but the idea that human beings are creatures of God and must not be humiliated by continuing to perform monotonous labour when this can be avoided. Technology is seen to act as a provider of the liberation of human beings from labour, and to contribute to the reduction of their dependency on natural contingencies.<sup>36</sup>

Religious and political diversities within Europe also created conditions that have contributed to the emergence of modern science and technology since the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The ongoing struggle between the Roman Catholic Church and the secular powers within Europe, and the fact that neither Church nor State succeeded in definitely imposing their will on the other, resulted in a demarcation between the secular and the religious powers (as in the Concordat of Worms in 1122) that facilitated the development of a rational type of control by the State. The emergence of modern bureaucracy, as described by Weber, contributed in the course of Western history to the formal separation between the religious and secular powers and to the disenchantment of the world in Western Europe. Moreover, religious wars, connected with the rise of Protestantism, undermined the religious monopoly of the Roman Catholic Church, and consequently gradually

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<sup>35</sup> M. Weber, *Wirtschaftsgeschichte : Abriss der Universalen Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte*. S. von Hellman & M. Palyi, eds, Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1923, p.307.

<sup>36</sup> J.H.J. van der Pot, *o.c.*, p.64.

liberated modern science and technology from the theological control of the Roman Catholic Church, especially in modernising nations, such as England and the Netherlands, in the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

I do not have the intention to give a complete account of the long chain of events that led to the rise of modern science. This is done in a masterly way by Dijksterhuis.<sup>37</sup> Modern science emerged between 1543, when Copernicus published his *De Revolutionibus Orbium Coelestium*, and 1687 when Newton published his *Philosophiae Naturalis Principia Mathematica*. This period witnessed a remarkable progress in human knowledge and opportunities, changed significantly the dominant view of life, and set the course of the natural sciences for the centuries to come. Modern natural science was based on a mechanistic image of material processes. The world was not conceived of as a complex machine designed by the Creator, but as a system of processes that can be understood by applying the concepts of mechanics: physics and mathematics of energy and forces.

Only the West experienced the development of such a conception of science, which was based on both rationality (especially mathematics) and systematic observation (especially controlled experiments).<sup>38</sup> Essentially, therefore, the combination of the understanding of the material world as comprising mechanistic phenomena and the social and cultural processes I referred to earlier, led to the advent of the technological culture we are living in today, in the West and in most other parts of the world.

I referred to the ongoing struggles between the Church and the State in the history of Europe. This struggle between the *civitas terrena* and the *civitas coelesta* has contributed to the birth of the modern state. A class of trained jurists emerged, a class of servants to the king that did not ground law on the Bible, and in accordance with the clergy, but that gradually developed a system of formal rules, applicable in the management of the State's affairs. The administration of the modern state is based on a competent and efficient administration that shuns particularistic and personal decisions. This type of administration has facilitated the separation between the Church and the State and has been the model, not only for the management of the affairs of the state, especially of the army and the navy, but also for economic management. The genesis of modern capitalism, another specificity of the West, is connected with this development.

I have also to refer to another specific trait of the West that has played a major role in its history. This is the genesis of ideological thinking. This type of thinking was already present during the Renaissance as the intellectual contestation against the monolithic thinking of the Catholic Church. It appears with the rise of the individual as a being that is emancipated from traditional bonds. With

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<sup>37</sup> E.J. Dijksterhuis, *De mechanisering van het wereldbeeld*. Amsterdam: Meulenhoff, 1960.

<sup>38</sup> M. Weber, 'Vorbemerkung zu den Gesammelten Aufsätzen zur Religions Soziologie'. In: M. Weber, *Soziologie – Weltgeschichtliche Analysen. Politik*. Stuttgart: Kröner Verlag, 1968, p. 340.

Protestantism that destroyed the unity of Christian thinking, and, later on, with the weakening of religiosity, the Enlightenment prepared ideological thinking while searching for scientific truth. A long debate started with the growing awareness that knowledge and observations are dependent on the culture of the observers and on the place they occupy within it. If this is true, then how can we find objective truth? Many solutions have been proposed for this problem by Marx, Lukàcs, Durkheim, Mannheim, Freud, Pareto and many others. This problem of the relativity of thinking, especially about economic, social and cultural developments, could lead to the conclusion that it is impossible to make a valid distinction between, 'higher' and 'lower' cultures or between collective representations, that are 'acceptable' and those that are not.

### **The ongoing rationalisation of the world**

The rise of the modern state can be characterised by the coming of bureaucratic rule based on rational-legal authority. This development concerns most state-affairs, including the navy and the army.<sup>39</sup> As we know, this development remained not restricted to the modern state as such. Gradually this type of rational management was applied in economic life in large organisations, such as the Dutch East Indies Company (V.O.C.) in 1602.

This rationalisation was considered by Weber as one of the most important developments in the history of the West, a development that has its origin in *specific* political and societal conditions, as we have seen. It is a process of standardisation and of increasing, systematic interrelationships. Since the 17<sup>th</sup> century, scientific and technological developments become increasingly closely intertwined with this rationalisation, both in the governance of modern states as in the large-scale production-organisations.

Today this close link between rationalisation and science is verbalised by the term scientific management. Modernisation is, in this perspective, in the first place the ongoing process of rationalisation of large-scale authority structures. However, the rationalisation process implies much more. Rationalisation pertains to the organisation of human interactions: increasingly men are submitted to the rules of rational types of organisation: as workers, as citizens and as consumers. Gradually those functional-rational types of organisation replace traditional or pre- industrial types of organisation, because in most cases the rational types of organisation are more efficient and more efficacious. One important effect of this march of rational

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<sup>39</sup> A good example of this development is the reorganisation of the fleet of the United Provinces by the admiral Michiel Adriaanszoon de Ruyter in the second half of the 17th century. He can be considered as a 'modern man', as a real manager of a rational organisation. See: J. Berting, 'Les opérations militaires en Méditerranée des flottes de combat des Provinces Unies sous le commandement de l'amiral Michiel Adriaanszoon de Ruyter'. In : *Stations navales et navigations organisées en Méditerranée*. Actes du colloque de Toulon des 12, 13 et 14 septembre 2002. Ollioules : Les Editions de la Nerthe, 2004, pp.299-312.

organisation of society is the individualisation of social life.<sup>40</sup> Under modern circumstances a decreasing number of persons are being 'pre-programmed' by a traditional way of life that determines to a high degree their future at birth. In a modern society most persons face opportunities for choices which are very strategic for the course of their future life.

*Modernisation is:*

- a) The process of rationalisation of the state's agencies (bureaucracies) and of the production of commodities and services.
- b) The adaptation of society and its major institutions to this process of rationalisation, increasing individualisation, increasing social and spatial mobility, increasing occupational mobility, an increasing higher level of education and urbanisation.
- c) The distribution of the many products (commodities, services) which are produced by the rational organisations and their influence on the attitudes and behaviour of the consumers.

As such, the concept of modernisation refers to real changes which are taking place in our world. Its first component refers in our time to the process of globalisation. Globalisation is a process of economic and social change that started some centuries ago in the West, but that accelerated considerably during the last forty years. Globalisation refers to the extension of markets and concomitant changes in the organisation of banking and the production and distribution of commodities. It is the ongoing march of system- rationality. Globalisation implies also the growth of international migration towards the wealthy regions. Moreover, the internationalisation of an important segment of economic activities goes together with decreasing opportunities of the European nation-states to influence these developments efficiently on the national level. The construction of the European Union can be understood as a major response to globalisation. The European Union facilitates the development of important internal markets, which can compete more effectively with other major world markets, such as those of the USA, Japan and Southeast Asia. Moreover, the EU is also a vehicle to organise important investments, the costs of which may be too heavy on the national level, such as investments in the development of new technologies and innovating scientific programs.

Its second component refers to the continuing adjustment of social life to the exigencies of this globalisation. Workers have to comply with the system-rationality of the organisations; the citizens have to conform to the rules of bureaucratic agencies and the consumers to the rules of the markets. And the

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<sup>40</sup> Rationalisation is to a certain degree dependent on individualisation and individualism. Once on its way, it also strengthens individualism. But this has its limits, as we will see later on.

educational systems have to adapt to the ever changing demands of the labour markets.

The third component has to do with the impact of the products and services of economic development on the life-styles of populations. The rationalisation of the world can also be regarded as a process of disenchantment. But we could say that as consumers we are increasingly confronted with products which introduce elements of modern enchantment: DVDs with games of adventure, of war, of dreams about future and past worlds, organised voyages to romantic places or to sites of adventure....

These three components of modernisation did not develop synchronically. The adaptation of workers to rationalised working conditions took a very long time and so did the adaptation of society to the dynamics of modern organisation. The third component became important once the majority of the population disposed of free time and revenues that were high enough to buy products and services that were beyond the subsistence-level. It is evident that outside the western world this modernisation does not follow the same trends as in the West, many products being available in societies in which the first two components of modernisation have barely advanced. Under such circumstances the products of modern production can have devastating impacts, as we witness daily on television: the use of modern technology, including advanced weapons, in societies which are only 'modern' in this latter aspect.

This globalisation as a real development must be distinguished from the ideology of globalisation. This ideology is a collective representation of globalisation processes that provides an 'explanation' of what is going on. This collective representation indicates the prime movers of this process and their 'inevitable' impact on economic organisations, on labor markets, on educational systems, on the organisation of society and on the role of national governments.<sup>41</sup>

This ideology of globalisation states that societies have no other choice than to adapt to the exigencies of the technological and economic changes. It does not give us other indications about the nature of the evolving societies in other terms than this adaptation.

Let us start with the representation of industrial society by Saint-Simon (1760-1825). Already in the very beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Saint-Simon was convinced that the progress of industrialism would have a far-reaching and overwhelmingly positive impact on society. 'In final analysis, it is in industry that all the real forces of society can be found', he remarked. The social order that is adapted to the requirements of industry and its technical development is the best order of society, in which scientists, technicians and managers have a decisive position.

In this model, two main forces determine the development of society:

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<sup>41</sup> This collective representation is also known as 'technological imperialism', as 'the (post-), 'the industrial convergence thesis', 'the logic of industrialism' and 'technological functionalism'.

1. The march of rationality, resulting from the inquiring human mind that follows the rules of the positivist – logico-empirical – science while analysing the physical and social world in the pursuit of truth. Moreover, this leads also to the development of new technologies, being – partly at least – applications of the growth of knowledge.
2. The open international large-scale markets, which urge industry to adopt quickly the best available technology in the production processes. Failing to do so by an enterprise or branch of industry results in a quick deterioration of their international competitive position.

The logic of this model implies that social and cultural life can only adapt to this determinist development. This is not seen as a disadvantage by those who adhere to this model. The march of rationality and rationalisation of economic life will push society towards a better future: a higher level of welfare, a lower degree of social inequality –the remaining inequality being based on differences between individual levels of achievement – and a strong professionalisation of the work force as a consequence of the strong need for highly qualified staff in a science- and ‘high-tech’ based organisation of production of services.

The role of the state in all this is to adapt the educational systems and the research systems to the needs of these developments. The state is, moreover, considered to play a major role in redistribution processes of the national wealth. This function of the state tends to contribute to the reduction of class conflicts – as those conflicts hamper an efficient and effective production of goods and services – and enhances the capacity of the citizens to participate in the consumers’ market.

This collective representation of technical-economic change implies the adaptation of social life to technological changes and the enlargements of the international markets. ‘Culture’, including collective representations of a future that could, partly at least, be the result of human choice, does not play any strategic role in this. Hence an almost exclusive emphasis is given to economic life and to political decisions that are considered to remove social impediments to such a development. It follows from what I have said about this model of development that it cannot provide a foundation for ‘Europe’ or the enlargement of the European Union in other terms than those of market forces. Where could we find, following this line of thought, the criteria which define Europe’s cultural specificity and its specific role in the processes of social change?

This model of development in which science and technology play a strategic role, has been repeated with certain variations from the beginning up to the present day. In our time this model of development is generally known as ‘the industrial convergence thesis’, very aptly presented by Kerr.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> C. Kerr, *The Future of Industrial Societies. Convergence or Continuing Diversity?* Cambridge, Mass., and London: Harvard University Press, 1983.

This 'industrial convergence thesis' is still a powerful collective representation of the development in its contemporary variants. Basically the idea is that economic growth, propelled by science and technology, and globalisation of markets, brings about a gradual and unilinear evolution towards a more open society as a consequence of the fact that economic organisations have to adapt to the changing economic conditions in several ways. To those changes the educational systems have to respond, as most other organisations and institutions of society. Here we will not analyse the sequence of adaptations, which are continuously provoked by changing market conditions. In line with the position of Saint-Simon it can be said that in this collective perspective, the adaptation of society to the changing economic conditions produces a society with the following characteristics: (a) increasing individual occupational and social mobility together with a growing equality of educational opportunities; (b) a fading away of differences based on traditional class differences and life-styles; (c) a concomitant growth of the middle classes as a consequence of the increasing demand for highly skilled and professional workers; and (d) consequently a decrease of collective types of antagonism, especially of class struggle. The exigencies of economic development generate, in this perspective on societal change, eventually the same type of social order everywhere, based on a new division of labour to which everybody contributes according to his or her talents and skills and receives remuneration according to the (market) value of this contribution. In this perspective on development the evolving society is essentially a meritocracy.

### **Rationalism and historicism**

This march of rational thinking and of the rational organisation of important domains of social life had – and still has – a strong impact on the occidental societies. Especially since the rise of industrial society, we can observe counter-currents which reject the idea of a linear development of society in terms of progress. Instead they emphasise that each society is the product of a long historical process, that there is an evolution of the social institutions of each society and that every culture must be considered as a configuration with a specific collective identity. Hence, the universalistic approach of the natural sciences is not applicable on social phenomena. In contradistinction to the unilinear conception of time of the Enlightenment, they adopt a circular conception: societies and their institutions are born, develop and decline. Each society or culture has its own specificity. In the rationalist approach society is the product of fundamentally rational actors who managed to escape from the traditionalist and religious ways of thinking. Historicism rejects this individualistic approach. The individual is in the first place a product of his culture and of its social institutions. Its dominant way of thinking is collectivistic or holistic.

Our description of this opposition between the two approaches is certainly rather crude, but we will return to it later on in the chapters IX and X.<sup>43</sup>

This fundamental opposition between those two ways of looking at societal development never faded away. In our time it is even invigorated by those social groups which claim their right to their collective identity, often in relation to debates about the insertion of allochthonous minorities in western societies.

In connection with this distinction we have to remark that the rationalist and individualist approach makes a clear distinction between 'modern societies' and 'traditional societies'. Modernity implies a rupture with the past. It is the coming of a *new type* of society. The historicist approach emphasises continuity between the past and the future of the evolving societies.<sup>44</sup>

### **Liberty and determinism**

Let us leave aside for a moment this opposition between rationalism and historicism and let us concentrate on the promises of the Enlightenment: the emancipation from traditional and religious thinking would open up the road towards an individualist future, full of liberties and abundance. Science and modern technologies, grounded in reason, create new social conditions that can be considered in terms of progress in comparison with the past. But this optimistic perspective is confronted with an enormous problem, because the organisation of the State by means of a rational bureaucracy, followed by the rational organisation of production, create rational systems that are so effective that they gradually replace other ways of management and production. Workers and citizens are

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<sup>43</sup> As important founders of the first approach, we refer to Montesquieu, Turgot, Voltaire, Condorcet, Marx and Saint-Simon. Connected with the second approach are Vico, Herder, Burke and, at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, Nietzsche, Spengler and Benedict. G.Vico, *Principes d'une science nouvelle* (1725, 1730, 1744). J.-G. Herder, o.c., 1784. Oswald Spengler (1880-1936) rejected the idea of progress. His works represent a 'dramatic break with the premises of the eighteenth-century Enlightenment. His historicism and antirationalism carried the tradition of German romanticism to its ultimate conclusions; he called his work a 'German philosophy'. (K. von Klemperer, 'Oswald Spengler', in: D. L. Sills, ed. *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*. New York: The Macmillan Company & The Free Press, 1968, p. 128 ff. His best known work is: *Der Untergang des Abendlandes* (1920)). R.Benedict, *Patterns of Culture*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1934. P.A. Sorokin, *Social and Cultural Dynamics* (4 tomes). Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Bedminster Press, 1937-1941

<sup>44</sup> In the sociological literature this discontinuity between the past and the modern society is often referred to by using opposed concepts: status-contract, 'Gemeinschaft – Gesellschaft' (F. Tönnies), division du travail mécanique – division du travail organique (E. Durkheim), folk society-urban society (R. Redfield), ascription – achievement (R. Linton), rational-legal and traditional authority (M. Weber). Weber's third type of authority, charismatic authority, does not disappear with the coming of modernity).



confronted by those rationally organised systems –bureaucracies – to the rational or ‘logical’ rules of which they have to comply.

The individuals, confronted with these systems, have no real choices. They have to adapt to the system or to leave. But leaving is not a real option because the worker will be confronted with the same conditions elsewhere. Following this way of reasoning, it is evident that the ongoing scientific and technological developments also force the rational organisations themselves to adapt to the exigencies following from the necessity to apply innovations in an open market. Both management and the workers have to adapt to the changing organisational conditions, because every technological change is accompanied, according to this rationalist way of thinking, by only one type of organisation that is, at a certain moment, the most efficient and effective one.

As I explained above, the adaptation does not end here as it is evident that also the educational system has, in many respects, to adapt to the changing requirements of the production of commodities and services. Also family life experiences these developments: changing working-hours, the need of the workers to be ‘flexible’ and ‘mobile’. Moreover, the state’s bureaucracies have a growing impact on the political system and on the citizens. Political decisions are closely connected with bureaucratic institutions. A consequence of this is that many citizens do not understand the ‘logics’ of these decisions, being based on the rationality of these bureaucratic systems. This development leads to a growing alienation of workers and citizens in relation to their work and to the political system. But alienation is the opposite of autonomy or liberty. The great expectations of the Enlightenment were not realised in these important domains. Nevertheless, we can observe that the standard of living has augmented considerably in the advanced societies, that scientific development has a positive impact on man – an increase of the expectation of life and a reduction of physical sufferings - and that social justice is more firmly installed in social life than in the past.

Moreover, modern man has many more choices to make in order to organise his life, being liberated from many traditional and religious constraints. Class differences are becoming weaker, advanced studies are, in principle, accessible to everyone, freedom of expression is firmly anchored in our society, and we have much more free time on our hands than in the past....This is incontestable so. But there is also a rising consciousness that we are finally trapped by society’s institutions in our working-life, that our dependence on bureaucratic decisions is increasing in the political domain, that growing individualisation has as a major consequence that many persons feel themselves isolated or rejected by society, that the markets offer us too many products and services between which it is often almost impossible to make a rational choice. Not only are we confronted with these choices as such, but modern publicity is a never ending bombardment with information that tries to seduce us to spend our resources in a way that defies rational choice. Finally, there is a growing awareness that several consequences of our way of life can be considered as negative in still another way: the rationalisation of life did not contribute to a decrease of war and terrorism. Science

and technology contributed to a considerable rise of risks in this respect. They have also created new types of risks, resulting from our modern way of production, such as the pollution of the ecosystem.

### **Reason and sentiment**

An important consequence of the development of the rational society, based on science and technology, is the increasing separation between, on the one hand, reason – cognitive life – and rational activities, and affective and sentimental life on the other. Historically, science has its roots in religion, but by emancipating from the religious interpretation of the world, it substituted this interpretation by a cognitive and intellectual one. Its main objective is to understand the world by developing models and theories which can explain observable phenomena. It is based on the primacy of reason and observation. But while developing a rational explication or interpretation of our world and intervening in social life by the creation of rational systems – bureaucracies, large enterprises – it has at the same time disenchanted our world. Science cannot answer questions pertaining to the meaning of life – the transcendental questions – and to individual and collective sentiments which are connected with the relations between ‘me’, ‘us’ and the ‘others’.

It is certainly true that the great ideologies of the 19<sup>th</sup> century did give answers to important questions pertaining to the future of our society. Liberalism, socialism, and communism, all of them based on the primacy of science and technology in societal development, presented us with an ‘inevitable’ future in which the major societal problems of society would have been overcome or resolved: the end of poverty, the end of class struggle, the end of tyranny, the end of alienation, meaning a strong increase of individual liberties and of meaningful participation in social life. We all know that there exist important differences between those ideologies. Communism, as a collectivist way of thinking, does not present us with the same interpretation of the relationships between individuals, and between the major institutions and individuals, as liberalism. This important difference could astonish us in view of the techno-scientific determinism that they have in common. Nevertheless, arrived at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we know that communism has not fulfilled its promises and that liberalism and socialism led to a society that has many advantages in comparison with the conditions of life at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, but that some important problems are still there. One of these problems, to which I referred already, is the alienation of workers and citizens who are ‘encapsulated’ within rational systems. Another problem is the strong increase of egoistic individualism in our societies, producing a degradation of the common good. The market penetrates deeper and deeper into social life and

as such reduces the important role of solidarity. Still another problem is the fact that we do not have any longer at our disposal collective representations of our common future. From the past we learnt to distrust the promises of ideologies. Today we still have one surviving ideology: neo-liberalism, an ideology that has large parts of the leading circles of the advanced societies in its grip. But this ideology is not capable to give us a collective representation of a future in which we will have overcome the above-mentioned problem of alienation and of the organisation of a hyper-individualistic society. Neo-liberalism as an ideology cannot (longer) inspire the large masses which are entangled in the bureaucratic structures of society. It cannot answer questions about meaning. Why are we in this world? What is our destiny? The disenchanted world, product of the long march of rationalisation, cannot give meaningful answers to this type of questions. One could say that the churches still exist and that it is their primary task to be engaged in elucidating those questions. But the process of rationalisation has also influenced the churches. Most churches have become institutions in which intellectual thinking with its emphasis on the coherence of rules and prescriptions is dominant. In this sense the occidental churches have been disenchanted and do not offer much room for the expression of emotions and affections, for spontaneous sentiments, for the desire to be touched by the sacred. The churches have become 'cold' in a rational, cold world. Gradually many persons lose their interest in religion preached in formal institutions, not always because they have become non-believers, but because the churches do not any longer satisfy their 'non-rational' desires or needs. The churches resemble too much the other societal institutions with their formal rules, with their prescriptions which are considered by most persons to be of little use, being not linked to the 'true values' of life. The reactions to this separation between reason and sentiment are manifold in our modern society. We can refer in this context to the retreat on collective –ethnic or religious - identities, the rise of the many fundamentalist movements, the growth of Gnostic movements with their emphasis on the search for the sacred in oneself (e.g. New Age movements), the rise of alter-globalisation networks and the flight into the virtual worlds offered by the information society. I will elaborate upon the major reactions to this process of rationalisation in chapter IX.

## CHAPTER V: EUROPEAN CULTURE – CULTURES OF EUROPE

An analysis of political and intellectual documents about cooperation in Europe and of academic works on ‘European culture’ or ‘European civilisation’ shows us that at least five conceptions of ‘European culture’ can be distinguished, between which important differences can be noted. As can be expected on the basis of our preceding analysis of collective representations, these different conceptions, although partially overlapping, cannot be integrated into one all-embracing conception of European culture or civilisation. Also our preceding discussion of the concepts of ‘civilisation’ and ‘culture’ points in the same direction. This conclusion does not imply that it is impossible to create some order in this rather chaotic situation. The concept of Europe refers in the following analysis not specifically to the European Union, but to ‘Europe at large’, the European continent. As we will see, the definition of the European continent may vary within the different perspectives on ‘Europe’ which my analysis brings to the fore. Moreover, I do not include in this approach the idea of a European civilisation that accompanies the process of economic globalisation since the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

### **European culture in plural**

We can distinguish between the following conceptions of ‘European culture’:

- I. *Europe as a common ‘European heritage’ with a specific cultural identity*

This conception of European culture is laid out in many political documents. Here I refer in the first place to the concluding document of the Vienna meeting of the Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) in 1986 and to some more recent documents of the OSCE. The concluding document states that efforts should be made to identify the common elements of a European cultural heritage. It is, one could say, rather amusing to read that this common heritage still has to be identified. Without any doubt, this common heritage that

the participants of this conference had in mind consisted out of noble elements, not the black pages of European history.

Nevertheless, the results of such an identification of the major elements of the common European heritage are already available. Bochmann concludes after a thorough analysis, that at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century this concept of the European heritage was 'complete' and that in our time there is a general consensus that the following components, at least with respect to Europe's most positive realisations, should be acknowledged:

- a) *A common cultural and spiritual heritage derived from Greco-Roman Antiquity, Christianity, the Renaissance and its Humanism, the political thinking of the Enlightenment and the French Revolution, and all types of socialism.*
- b) *A rich and dynamic material culture that has been extended to the other continents.*
- c) *A specific conception of the individual expressed by the existence of, and respect for, a legality that guarantees human rights and the liberty of the individual.*
- d) *A plurality of states with different political orders, which are condemned to live together in one way or another.*
- e) *Respect for peoples, states and nations outside Europe.*<sup>45</sup>

All those components of the common cultural heritage of Europe are included in the Final Act of Helsinki of 1975 and the documents of the following conferences of the CSCE and OSCE. European culture, defined in this way, seems to be, in the first place, a construction with political objectives. If it is seen as 'a way of thinking, feeling, believing and as knowledge stored up in the memories of men, in books and objects' (Kluckhohn); it is first and foremost an effort to think in this way by an (international) political elite.

Not everybody will agree with all of the elements of this cultural heritage. The last two points are, as elements of our heritage, rather questionable. Other elements could be included in this cultural heritage, such as the positive attitude towards the application of technological innovations and of rational management in economic life and in the administration of national states. Moreover, why should we omit to include the black pages in European history, such as the

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<sup>45</sup>Klaus Bochmann, 'L'idée d'Europe jusqu'au XX<sup>e</sup> siècle'. In : C. Villain-Gandossi et al, eds, *The concept de l'Europe dans le processus de la CSCE*. Tübingen : Günther Narr Verlag, 1990, p.62-63.

Inquisition, the slave-trade, the Holocaust and the recent ethnic cleansing in south-eastern Europe?<sup>46</sup>

## II. *Europe as a totality of 'national cultures'*

In the political documents, such as the Final Act of Helsinki, we find also the conception of Europe as a totality of 'national cultures'. In this perspective each

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<sup>46</sup> I like to accentuate that this European civilisation or culture that has influenced the world deeply, especially after 15<sup>th</sup> century, has its roots in, and borrowed from, different other cultures or civilisations: Judaism, the Greek culture, the Roman culture, the Indian and Arab culture areas, the Germanic world. Moreover, the great cultural changes were never only national innovations. The Enlightenment had its roots in France, but also in Scotland, England, Germany, the Low Countries, in fact in most European countries. An important precursor of the ideas of the Enlightenment wrote his contributions in the Dutch Republic, in that time the only place in Europe where it was possible to write and to publish such heretic ideas: Baruch de Spinoza, a Sephardic Jew and a Dutchman, expelled from his religious community in Amsterdam. It was this republic that was the product of an eighty year revolt against the Spanish oppressors, a revolt in which the individual right to one's own conscience played a central role. René Descartes (1596-1650), French philosopher, mathematician and physicist, lived in the Dutch Republic from 1629 until 1649. He died in Stockholm. Humanism too had many roots in different regions of Europe. Erasmus (1469-1536), the great humanist, was born in Rotterdam, but it is better to consider him as a real *European*. Comenius (1592-1670) was a Czech humanist, who defended the Reformation and laid the foundation for a renewed pedagogy. All the regions of Europe contributed to the development of modern science: the Italians Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1510) and Galileo Galilei (1564-1642); the Pole Nicolas Copernicus (1473-1542); the Dane Tycho Brahe (1546-1601); the Irishman Robert Boyle (1627-1691); the Dutchman Christiaan Huygens (1629-1695); the Englishman Isaac Newton (1642-1727); the German Gottfried Leibnitz (1646-1716). And so we can go on, in the domain of the modern natural sciences, in philosophy, in the arts, in architecture, in economics and in the social and the human sciences. It is evident that several cultural expressions are rather dependent upon the culture in which they arise and that language differences have an impact on the distribution of literary products. The fact that a large part of the production in the minor languages is not known to those persons who only speak the languages of one of the three 'civilisations', does not imply that such a production does not exist, as is frequently assumed. The cultural expression in the visual arts, such as a painting, photography, cinematography, architecture, have often a specific national cultural colouring. Nevertheless, it is easy to see that the international component predominates, as currents in the arts are never secluded within the narrow confines of one national culture, not even when it is a European 'civilisation'. It is the essence of real cultural expressions that they break through established frameworks, such as the nation-states, that they try to overcome what *is* and that they imagine new worlds. A culture that looks back on its past achievements only, is becoming ossified, is losing its character as a civilisation.

national culture is considered to have a distinct cultural identity, an identity that can be enriched by mutual cultural exchanges. These exchanges have to respect the originality of each culture and, should, at the same time, reinforce the conscience of common values among the participants.<sup>47</sup> The participant states are encouraged to extend the scope of international bilateral exchanges. Such exchanges will contribute to an increase of mutual understanding and trust between the nations. In this concept of culture the emphasis is on artistic, intellectual and scientific exchanges. The concept of 'national culture' is not further elaborated, perhaps to avoid some tricky political problems. Does this concept of culture imply that the persons, who will participate in these processes of exchange, are exponents of their 'national cultures', that they are considered to express their 'national Volksgeist' and that artists and intellectuals with an international or universalistic orientation are likely to be excluded? This conception of Europe as a totality of European cultures raises the following important question: What makes these national cultures 'European'? The text of the Final Act of Helsinki and the documents that were the result of later conferences neither elaborate the concept of Europe as an agglomeration of national cultures, nor do they specify the contents of those European cultures. No reference is made to the relations between national cultures and regional cultures or cultures of minorities, which are living on the territory of the nation-states concerned. This seems still to be politically too controversial in view of the claims of some (cross-border) minorities within the nation-states, such as the Basque minority in Spain and France.

### III. *Europe as a modern culture in the making*

Unlike the preceding concepts, the concept of Europe as a culture in the making emphasises the dynamics of the 'European culture' in relation to contemporary modernisation processes. It refers to the evolution of a European culture and identity resulting from the interplay between socio-economic and cultural changes (including the cultural elements I referred to earlier). This concept of Europe, present in political documents such as The Final Act of Helsinki, should not come as a surprise, as it fits nicely the model of development that is dominant in most political and economic thinking about Europe, as we will see in chapter VII.

In the past, industrialisation has often been described as a process in which traditional bonds and cultures are replaced by a new social order, based on rationality, individualism and liberty. The emerging industrial society (*Gesellschaft*) stands in opposition to the traditional community (*Gemeinschaft*). The evolving social order was interpreted in terms of social progress, of development towards a better society in which people's positions are based on their personal qualifications and achievements and on their place within the new

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<sup>47</sup> *Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe. Final Act of Helsinki, 1975, p. 249.*

division of labour, determined by ability and remuneration according to the market value of their contributions. Such a development was thought to be contingent on the rise of an industrial society in which economic growth was linked to industrial production, propelled by science and technology. It was also contingent on the development of open, worldwide markets and on the adequate use of individual talents (human capital). Until the Second World War this development was related to the rise and consolidation of the nation-state. According to the adherents of this model, a common European culture is a necessary requirement for ensuring the transition of the European society into a (post-) industrial one. We explained the need for this European culture by referring to the statements of Gellner, in chapter II.<sup>48</sup>

In the 19<sup>th</sup> and the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries the nation states, emphasising the importance of national culture, provided the framework for socio-economic development. But ongoing processes of modernisation have now made these frameworks obsolete in certain respects. The changing socio-economic structure of Europe and the coming of a European state thus imply important changes on the cultural level: the making of a European culture.

What will be the consequences of this development? Does this imply that the national cultures will be weakened, just as in the preceding period the 'traditional cultures' within the confines of the nation-states were marginalised? What will be the place of Europe's cultural heritage within this modern European culture? Or is it better to speak about the European civilisation in this context?

#### IV. *European culture as a totality of cultures.*

In the political documents concerning Europe there are some strong reasons to speak about European culture as consisting out of a grouping together of national cultures. Such a concept of the European culture emphasises the political convention to respect the national frontiers and the rule of non-interference with a nation's internal policies. In our analysis we are not restricted by this type of political considerations. The coming of the European Union and its gradual development changes the position of the nation-states and this has its effects on the cultures of Europe. The concept of European culture as a totality of cultures is a wider concept than that of the European culture as a whole of national cultures. It includes the minority cultures that survived in certain respects the standardising forces of the area of nation-building and of the establishment of national frontiers. Indeed, the coming of the European Union and the breakdown of the Soviet Empire is accompanied by a revival in Europe of those 'pre-industrial cultures', of the concomitant regionalism that cuts across national borders and of claims to national autonomy, based on ethnicity.

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<sup>48</sup> Ernest Gellner, *o.c.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987, p.15.



## V. European 'culture areas'

My analysis of the concept of culture and of the different 'levels' of European culture would not be complete without a reference to the observation that systematic research does reveal the existence of ancient, but still pertinent cultural dividing-lines, which the preceding concepts of culture do not take into account. According to Delmas, one of these dividing-lines separates north-western and eastern European countries from each other in several cultural respects. The second line runs between the Mediterranean and Byzantine countries of Europe. We can thus distinguish between cultural families or culture areas: the North-western, the Slavic and the Mediterranean.<sup>49</sup>

Scardigli remarks that the technical-economic development of Europe is accompanied by ongoing cultural diversity, even by a reinforcement of cultural distinctions between areas, produced by an increasing confrontation between values and practices. The cultural differences between northern Europe (Scandinavia, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Flanders, Luxembourg and Germany) on the one hand, and the Mediterranean world (south, west and central France, Italy, Spain, Portugal, and Greece) on the other, are considerable with respect to women's autonomy, the role of sociability, satisfaction with life, faith in one's fellow-men and trust in technological development. Those persistent differences go hand in hand with a marked convergence between the European countries with respect to the way economic resources are spent in the households.<sup>50</sup>

What has been said accentuates the fact that for a very long period cultural Europe is both unity and diversity. In an interview in *L'Express*, Jean Guilaine, specialist of the Neolithic period in Europe, states that between 2500 and 2200 BC, during a period of two or three centuries, one finds everywhere in Europe the same weapons, the same ornaments, the same famous bell-shaped drinking-vessels which are decorated in the same style. From the North to the South, he says, from the Atlantic to the Balkans, a totality of common cultural traits transcends the regional specificities. This seems not to be the result of migration. It is more likely that it is a style, a common behaviour, adopted by the elites of the continent. This is perhaps the first unity of Europe. 'Dawning Europe was double-faced: it was at the same time crumbled to regional identities and showed a 'supra-cultural' totality that remains one of the big enigmas of the prehistory'.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> C. Delmas, *La civilisation européenne*. Paris : Presses Universitaires de France, 1980 (Que sais-je ? no.1872), pp. 9-22.

<sup>50</sup> V. Scardigli, *L'Europe des modes de vie*. Paris : Editions du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1988, p.115.

<sup>51</sup> Jean Guilaine, 'L'Europe n'est pas née en Europe'. *L'Express*, no. 2609, 5-11 juillet 2000, p.22: 'L'Europe naissante avait donc un double visage: à la fois d'un émiettement en identités régionales et celui d'un ensemble "supraculturel" qui reste l'une des grandes énigmes de la préhistoire'.

### **Is a synthesis possible?**

Confronted with these concepts of European culture and of the culture of Europe, we clearly see that a problem arises from the fact that, on the one hand, Europe is considered to be a cultural kernel with a specificity or 'identity' that distinguishes it from 'not Europe' and, on the other hand, a Europe as a plurality of cultures and as a collection of cultural 'identities'. The political task before us is, indeed, to reconcile what seems to be irreconcilable. While executing this task, we should avoid some dangerous pitfalls. We must not confound European pluralism with the representation of Europe as a whole of national cultures. My analysis shows that such a representation is shallow in comparison to what is shown by the five concepts of European culture. Moreover, we should not confound the culture of Europe with its historical cultural kernel. Finally, we should exclude the idea that there is a possibility to arrive at a consensus concerning Europe's culture, which includes the five before-mentioned perspectives. The thought to arrive at such a type of an all-inclusive consensus is a dangerous illusion, especially because it starts from the wrong idea that it is possible to delimit culture by looking at the past, forgetting that culture is always a process in which the past is continuously reinterpreted from the perspective of the reality in which we are now living.

I want to emphasise that it is preferable to consider the concept of culture is a dynamic one, open towards the future, always a culture in the making that will never be finished and that never can be based on a complete consensus of the 'Europeans'. Nevertheless, the solutions that have been developed in the past in order to overcome major antagonisms within Europe should be safeguarded and put to the fore in the European dialogue.

The cohesion or integration of the European Union is not dependent on European culture, interpreted as a monolithic whole that comprises economic, social, political and juridical Europe. Such a concept of European culture can never be used to decide about questions of inclusion or exclusion of those nation-states that are not (yet) included in the Union. Nevertheless, it should be envisaged to formulate a statute of values and principles, based on Europe's specificity. Such a statute can be very useful in the future debates on the enlargement of Europe and in debates about the future cultural politics of the European Union.



## CHAPTER VI: THE SPECIFICITY AND IDENTITY OF EUROPE

We can make a distinction between collective identities, which are based on an inside-view and those views which can be seen as outside-views on Europe, on the European Union, on European nations and on other important entities. The inside-view refers to the ways the members of a group see themselves as different in comparison to other groups. It is as such a representation that all, or most, members of a group have in common. As distinct from this, the outside view is the product of the analysis of one or more persons, who try to find out the specific characteristics of an entity, such as 'Europe'. The persons who try to do so may be outsiders – e.g. non-Europeans-, but in many cases they are members of the collective entity that is being analysed, who think that systematic inside-views are lacking or that important elements of the specific character of 'Europe', the 'European Union', or other important collectivities, are missing in public debates.

I will follow both paths. When I refer to Europe's *specificity*, I have the outside view in mind. The concept of collective identity will be reserved for inside-views on Europe, on the European Union and its constituent parts.

### **Europe's specificity as seen in some major reports and books**

The concept of specificity refers in this case to characteristics of a group, a culture, a nation, a region or a religion, which are considered to be different from those of other persons or groups. This 'specificity' may be the characteristics as such, or the specificity of a system of relations or of a figuration of elements. The latter meaning comes to the fore when we use the concept of culture pattern. The use of the concept of specificity always implies some type of comparison with other units, which are in one or several respects different from the culture or nation whose specificity is highlighted. Very often, however, such comparisons are implicit. Discussions about Europe's identity or specificity are often confined to an enumeration of the main elements of Europe's cultural heritage or to a description of its present unique character as a result of a long historical process, without reference to a systematic comparative analysis. Such is the case in the documents of the Conferences for Security and Co-operation in Europe

(CSCE)<sup>52</sup> and the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). In the concluding document of the Vienna meeting of the CSCE in 1986 it is stated that efforts should be made to identify the common elements of a European cultural heritage. The document refers to common elements in the values and traditions of the participating states, which can be useful in developing their relationships.

In a rather recent publication of the European Commission on European Identity, this European identity is often referred to in terms of its specificity. In the preface of this publication Jean-Claude Thebault, Forward Studies Director of the EC, says that one can discern three constituent poles of European identity. 'First Europe is steeped in humanism and all the values that make up its heritage today. The second is European diversity: even if the construction of the Community seems to be a harmonisation process, this harmonisation is just a necessary step towards the realisation of a European market-place which should allow underlying diversity to flourish. Diversity is truly Europe's richness. Finally, universalism is a European value and an obligation. At a time when Europe is sometimes tempted by the idea of becoming a "fortress Europe", this founding principle has to be constantly remembered and revived'.<sup>53</sup>

It can be observed that identity appears to be two-sided: on the one hand it is memory, and heritage, and on the other hand voluntarism and a project to be achieved. It is evident that this European identity is not something that is already in the minds of the 'Europeans', but something that has to be created in the process of the making of the European Union by combining a selection of elements from the past with objectives for the future.

Serge Bernstein poses the same question: 'Does a European identity exist?'. It must be clearly stated that Bernstein, and other authors in this context, have in mind not the EU, but 'Europe at large'. According to Bernstein, the construction of Europe suffers from an identity-problem. There is no European state and neither a well-defined territory. On the cultural level it is difficult to discern a unity in the sense of common behaviour and representations that characterise the society. He sees the multiplicity of languages as the main obstacle to the development of a European cultural identity. Finally, the representation of history as a factor of the foundation of national identity does not exist on the European level. There is no European history that is distinct from the histories of the countries that are part of Europe.

In spite of this Bernstein concludes that there are, nevertheless, roots for a European identity: the convergence of nearby and parallel evolutions of the

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<sup>52</sup> *Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe. Final Act of Helsinki*, 1975, p.205.

<sup>53</sup> T. Jansen, ed., *Reflections on a European Identity*. European Commission. Forward Studies Unit. Working papers, 1999. This publication contains the contributions to the conference "Carrefour Européen des sciences et de la culture", that took place in Coimbra (1996). See also: C. Villain-Gandossi, éd., *L'Europe à la recherche de son identité*. Paris: Editions de CTHS, 2002.

European countries since two centuries: the Enlightenment, revolutionary movements, the creation of the modern state, the industrial revolution, the founding of liberal democratic regimes, the opposition against the authoritarian or fascist states, the long economic expansion after World War II together with the creation of Welfare States, the participation in a common defence system (NATO), the same type of identity crises of the younger generation... In spite of variants between the countries, which should not be underestimated, their common experiences brings them together, while at the same time they deepen the differences with the Third World, the former socialist countries and even with the USA.<sup>54</sup> Berstein seems to emphasise Western Europe's specificity and neglects the discussion of the meaning of all this in the context of the enlargement of the EU. Nevertheless, Berstein gives us a good example of an important element that is often ignored in discussions. Indeed, we do not know where Europe's specificity ends. In some contributions the specificity of Europe seems to be in the first place that of the European Union and the enlargement of Europe is, among other things, discussed in terms of respect for the Human Rights. But those rights, being 'universal', can only be a valid measure for Europe's specificity when they are judged in terms of their effective protection and implementation in the nation-states concerned. Before the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 Eastern Europe was often not included in this search for specificity. Nevertheless, when Europe's specificity is seen as the result of a long historical process, then Europe's specificity, as formulated in the preceding pages, pertains also to those regions, or it does not to all of them and in that case some regions should be excluded from 'Europe'. Or, if this is considered to be not desirable, then the construction of the European identity in terms of its specificity has to be revised in order to include the latter in a 'Greater Europe'.

Edgar Morin stresses, when he speaks about the cultural identity of Europe, that the originality of the European culture is the fact that it has been, and still is, the ongoing producer and product of a whirlpool of interactions and interferences between many dialogues that have created both alliances and oppositions: religion/reason; belief/doubt; mythical thinking/critical thinking; empiricism/rationalism; existence/idea; particularism/universalism; to question/to reconstruct: philosophy/science; humanist culture/scientific culture; old/new; tradition/revolution; individual/group; immanence/transcendence; 'hamletian' orientation /promethean orientation; 'don-quichottism'/'sancho-pancism'. Morin continues with the remark that the dialogue is a characteristic of most cultures, but that those dialogues are more or less enclosed by a belt of dogmas and prohibitions that slackens, brakes and controls. Europe's cultural specificity is, in contradistinction to this, first and foremost its continuity and intensity of its dialogues, in which not one of its constituent parts neither crushes

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<sup>54</sup> S. Berstein, 'Existe-t-il une identité européenne ?'. In : P. Tronquoy, ed., *L'Europe en perspective*. Cahiers français, no. 298, pp. 98-99.

or exterminates the others, nor succeeds in imposing a suffocating and lasting hegemony.<sup>55</sup>

Most of those who comment on the cultural identity of Europe emphasise its diversity, its pluralism and its contradictions on the level of its main values. Duroselle regards Europe as a civilisation in which the diversity and the contradiction is pushed much further than elsewhere in the world. Diversity and contradiction are inherent characteristics of each of our nations and it can be said, that these are the only characteristics that they have in common.<sup>56</sup>

For Kundera the specificity of European identity can be found in the autonomy of its 'spirit', the diversity of European thinking, which he opposes to everything that threatens it: centralisation, standardisation, uniformity, rationalisation and bureaucratisation, that is to all efforts of those who try to master it.<sup>57</sup> In the same vein Finkielkraut says that: 'Europe is a certain idea of culture, which can be best defined by the words autonomy of the spirit'.<sup>58</sup>

The question must be raised whether it suffices to base European cultural identity on the autonomy of its spirit in opposition to the forces which try to control it. We have seen that Morin, in contradistinction to this position, emphasises the importance of oppositions and contradictions as the hallmark of Europe's identity. Before him, Dennis de Rougemont showed us that we can observe in the development of Europe different and opposed trends: the birth, in the autonomous Greek city-states, of dialogue, unique solidarity, reason and the sense of measure, the critical spirit and Socratic tolerance. To this he opposes the birth of an other Europe, in imperial Rome, a Europe of dictatorship, of collectivist and standardising regimentation, of the 'Raison d'Etat' that is generally opposed to reason, and of the exclusion of opponents.<sup>59</sup> Rougemont concludes that for him the specificity of the European identity resides in the Greek sense of measure, the Roman sense of law, the Germanic sense of the community of free men and the Celtic sense of the spiritual adventure and the Christian claims for justice and equality.<sup>60</sup>

Europe is the continuing effort to reconcile opposite ways of thinking, such as the Enlightenment and Romanticism<sup>61</sup>, and different cultures such as that of the

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<sup>55</sup> E. Morin, *Penser l'Europe*. Paris : Gallimard, 1990 (1987), pp.147ff.

<sup>56</sup> J.B. Duroselle, *L'idée de l'Europe dans l'histoire*. Paris : Denoël, 1965, p.9.

<sup>57</sup> M. Kundera, 'The Tragedy of Central Europe', *New York Review of Books*, April 26, 1984, p.33.

<sup>58</sup> A. Finkielkraut, 'What is Europe?', *New York Review of Books*, December 5, 1985.

<sup>59</sup> D. de Rougemont, *Sur l'état de l'union de l'Europe. Rapport au peuple européen*. Editions Stock, 1979, p.20.

<sup>60</sup> D. de Rougemont, *o.c.*, p.22.

<sup>61</sup> R.H. Foerster, *Geschichte einer politischen Idee*. München: Nymphenberger Verlagshandlung, 1976, p.221: „Aufklärung und Romantik, das Rationale and das Irrationale, das Geometrische und das Phantastische – es sind zwei Fäden, aus völlig unterschiedlichem Material gesponnen. Aber an einer bestimmten Stelle sind sie miteinander verknotet. Dieser Knotenpunkt ist die Französische Revolution. Sie

natural sciences and that of the social sciences and the humanities.<sup>62</sup> This leads us back to the central role of *dialogue* in European development. It is true that the history of Europe shows many examples of tragedies, which had their origin in a refusal of this principle. Nevertheless, we have learnt, as Europeans, in a long historical process, that new ideas result from the clash of opposite ways of thinking and that behind the political systems and ideologies, it is finally the dignity of the individual persons that is of paramount importance. European identity is anchored in the dialogue. The reflections on the human rights and their development, products of the efforts to overcome ancient and repeated conflicts, bear witness of this.<sup>63</sup>

This type of search for European identity can be seen as efforts of intellectuals and policy-makers to incite European populations to reflect on what it means to be a European.

An other question should be raised in this context: do the United States of America belong to 'Europe' in the sense of its specificity? Most characteristics mentioned in the construction of European identity also pertain to the USA. And indeed, Samuel Huntington, in his *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of the World Order*, refers to Europe and the USA when he speaks about the European Civilisation.<sup>64</sup> However, the fact that the USA is the most important world power that endows itself with the mission not only to protect democracy, but also the export it to other regions of the world, such as the Arab region, produces a sharp difference with the European region, especially with respect to the role of international dialogue.

The search for a (or the) European identity is, *in the first place*, far from being systematically comparative in time and in space, as is illustrated by the preceding pages.

In the *second* place, there seems to be another serious flaw in this search for identity. In the preceding pages I spoke about Europe's identity in terms of its specificity. I shifted to the concept of European cultural identity while discussing the ideas of Morin, Duroselle, Finkielkraut, Kundera, Rougemont, Foerster and Lepenies. But such a shift diverts the attention from other European specificities, which may be connected with its political, social and economic institutions. In this respect I can refer to the development of the European welfare states and to its specific ways of organising the production of commodities and services. Very often in the discussions on Europe's *cultural* identity, Europe as the birthplace of a universal technological culture is not mentioned. And yet, the rise of a technological culture was primarily a European development that played an

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sollte das Europäische Staatensystem der Aufklärungszeit vernichten.“

<sup>62</sup> W. Lepenies, *Die drei Kulturen. Soziologie zwischen Literatur und Wissenschaft*. München/Wien :Hauser Verlag, 1985.

<sup>63</sup> J. Berting, 'Identité culturelle de la « Grande Europe »'. In : C.Villain-Gandossi et al, eds *Le concept de l'Europe dans le processus de la CSCE*. Tübingen : Gunter Narr, 1990, p.48.

<sup>64</sup> S. Huntington, *o.c.* New York: Simon & Shuster, 1996.



important role in the formation of our modern consciousness, as I already mentioned in chapter IV.<sup>65</sup>

In the *third* place, we have to be aware of the fact that constructions concerning the specificity of Europe are made by such persons as historians, sociologists and politicians. They are predominantly based on historical sources. These constructions of Europe's specificity or of Europe's identity resemble in certain ways the studies on national characters which have fallen in disrepute since the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The studies on the national character of nations or peoples are in most cases based on an outside-view. The observer places himself in the position of the outsider and, looking at a nation or people as a whole, tries to characterise it, to indicate which are its most central elements, its 'Spirit' or 'Volksgeist', or its 'ethos'. As the observer has to select from a wealth of data to characterise a nation or people, he is strongly dependent on his own frame of reference and the categorisations that are implied by this. He is observing the other nation or people through his cultural looking-glass. Hence, when two or more observers are describing independently from each other the same nation or people, the resulting 'national characters' may show large differences in several respects. These differences pertain both to the description itself of the shared habits or culture and to the interpretation of the nature of the specific characteristics. The same processes play a role when the description of the specificity of Europe is at stake: the construction of the specificity of Europe's identity is an outside-view, which does not give much information about how the Europeans themselves, from different national and regional vantage-points, experience 'Europe', or the European Union, in relation with their national, regional, religious and ethnic collective identities and ties. What about *their* collective representations of the world, and more specifically of Europe? What about their awareness and consciousness of the meaning of Europe? What do we learn about *their* ideas of European identity in relation with other types of identity? Nevertheless, it seems to be worthwhile to present a rough sketch of Europe's specificity, which may be useful in discussions about Europe and the EU.

### **A systematic outline of Europe's specificity, especially in relation to the European Union**

Until well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century the question about what could be considered Europe's (cultural) specificity was not so difficult to answer, as 'we' considered ourselves, especially when we were citizens of a 'great nation', as the

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<sup>65</sup> J. Berting, *o.c.* In: M. Doornbos and S. Kaviraj, eds, *Dynamics of State Formation India and Europe Compared*. Indo-Dutch Studies on Development Alternatives, 19. New Delhi: Thousand Oaks/London: Sage Publications, 1997, pp.425ff.

harbingers of 'civilisation' to the 'uncivilised' world, each nation having its specific brand of 'White man's burden'.

This period is largely behind us, although it still lingers on in many negative and even racist stereotypes about those who are outside the European 'civilisation'. Once the Europeans entered the age of the construction of the European Union, the task to distinguish between 'us', as Europeans, and the non-Europeans became a difficult challenge. What do we have in common, as members the European Union? What do we have in common as Europeans? Where does 'Europe' end?

My analysis of the five concepts of European culture is already a demonstration of the different answers that are given to the first question. Those who emphasise Europe's common cultural heritage are, of course, analysing Europe's history in search for cultural traits that the different parts of Europe have in common. Which processes and major events in the past have shaped 'Europe' as we know it today? It is also possible to scrutinise the history of the European continent in order to find and to explain cultural differences between different parts of Europe, such as nations and major regions? In that case we are primarily interested in historical processes that resulted in the cultural differences, as we know them in modern times. Here we are confronted with two different approaches, which need not produce the same results. On the one hand we have the types of analysis that are based on an 'inside-view'. In that case those who are inhabitants of a nation-state or region formulate their specificity, their 'identity', mostly in terms of a comparison with 'outsiders'. They express their uniqueness, the specificity of the spirit of their people ('Volksgeist'). On the other hand the analysis of cultural differences can be based on an 'outside-view': the observer tries to find the most characteristic cultural traits of the inhabitants of the European nations and regions. Many studies about national characters are examples of this approach. 'Europe as a totality of (national) cultures' and 'The culture areas of Europe' fall into this category of analysis. Knowledge about differences between the peoples of Europe is very important in a period in which intensive contacts between members of different nations and areas necessarily increase rapidly. This implies the necessity to go beyond the stereotypical images of the Other and to learn in which respects real differences exist between members of different nations, differences which can produce misunderstandings and conflicts, but which can also generate ideas of complementarity. I have stressed the fact that 'culture' in a general sense is 'covert culture'; it is 'inside us' as a consequence of belonging to a specific social group or society. This implies that we are often not aware of the specificity of *our* behaviour in our relations with foreigners (and *vice versa*). Systematic research has in many cases unveiled the significance of this covert culture, e.g. in organisations in which members with different national origins work together.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> See, e.g. P. D'Iribarne, *La logique de l'honneur. Gestion des entreprises et traditions nationales*. Paris : Aux Editions du Seuil, 1989; M. Maurice, F.Sellier et

We also found references to 'Europe's culture in the making', the changing European culture in the process of modernisation. Here we are confronted with a rather functional view on European culture. A modern European culture is developing as the consequence of the need to understand each other and to work and live together as Europeans. This is a forward-looking approach. This view on European culture does not necessarily imply a break with the past. It refers to the cultural heritage of Europe as long as it fits into the dynamic vision of Europe's modernisation. Moreover, this perspective on Europe's cultural development does not necessarily mean the disappearance of 'culture' in the other meanings that I presented. They may more or less coexist. The European culture in the making characterises the modern international European elites and international networks, while other groups will often have a tendency to emphasise the significance of a fundamental European cultural core and of differences between Europe's cultural identities as the result of a long historical process.

Finally, 'becoming' is more important than 'being' in 'Europe as a modern culture in the making' and in 'European culture as a totality of cultures'. But while in the former the unity of Europe's *coming* culture is important, in the latter this unity is only important as long as it provides opportunities for free, innovative cultural expressions.

What is Europe's specificity in contrast with non-Europe? Although the answers to our first question do already throw some light on the second one, I will elaborate a little further the answer to the latter. The third and the fourth perspectives on 'European culture' are not giving acceptable answers for those who are in search for the *European* identity. In the third perspective the European culture in the making is dynamic and expanding to non-European regions, as a modern type of European civilisation. In the fourth perspective those questions seem to be of little relevance, as in a 'Europe' of (inter-)national social movements and global networks the difference between 'us' as Europeans and the 'Others' should in most cases fade away.

This is not the case in the first and the second perspective, where the quest for the European specificity or identity plays a central role on different levels. I referred already to a construction of a common European cultural core in chapter IV. Starting from this brief sketch I venture to refer to Europe's specificity as follows:

1. The specificity of the Christian religion in relation with nature, interpreted as being non-magical and non-sacral. This has given the opportunity to technical and technological developments to control nature.

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J.J. Silvestre, *Politique d'éducation et organisation industrielle en France et Allemagne*. Paris :Presses Universitaires de France, 1982 ; D.Gallie, *In Search of the Working Class. Automation and social integration within the capitalist enterprise*. Cambridge, London, New York, Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1978.

2. The struggle between *civitas terrena* and *civitas coelesta* has engendered the separation between the authority of the Church and of the State. An important consequence of this separation is the coming of a professional class of trained jurists that has elaborated a rational juridical system as an instrument for management by the princes.
3. The coming of the nation-state, related to the rational management by bureaucracies.
4. The application of rational management in economic life, especially since the 17<sup>th</sup> century, with the birth of modern capitalism.
5. The strong increase of relativism especially since the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century and the rise of ideologies since the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.
6. The rise of individualism as an ideology and as a social reality, as a product of the religious struggle for the primacy of the individual's conscience and, later on, reinforced by the ongoing process of modernisation. This individualism is connected with the birth of Human Rights, another contribution of the European culture, sometimes severely criticised because of this link with 'individualism'.
7. The consolidation, never definitive, of a specific system of values, resulting from the specific history of Europe with its fierce antagonisms, its struggles and its solutions, often acquired after murderous conflicts. This system of values implies political decision-making based on democratic procedures in public life.

It can be observed that Europe's specificity includes a specific system of values, a system that must not be regarded as an immutable heritage, but as a necessary condition for an ongoing dialogue. From this analysis I can derive the following values:

1. Respect for the individual as such and for his autonomy and liberties. These individual liberties are inseparable from the moral responsibility of each incumbent of these liberties.
2. Acceptance of pluralism on the level of life-styles and value-differences, based on the respect for the Other and for the rules of democracy. This implies opposition to, and in some cases even the rejection of, individuals and groups which try to curtail the autonomy and liberties of opponents.
3. Social solidarity, especially with the deprived, the socially excluded, the victims of totalitarian systems. Social solidarity implies the acceptance of a system of social justice for all.
4. Equality of opportunities in education and in working-life.
5. Participation of the citizens in political decision-making on all levels of public life;
6. Acceptance of the idea that social changes are not determined by forces that cannot be controlled. Human choices create society. Society is always 'ameliorative' or 'perfectible'.
7. Acceptance of the continuous dialogue between groups and societies, which are opposing each other because of basic principles that seem to be

irreconcilable. This implies the acceptance of the important role of Reason and the humanistic values in public life.<sup>67</sup>

A discussion on the nature of Europe's culture, its specificity and its values must be followed by an analysis of ideas about collective identities. In the modern nation-states several groups claim a respect for their cultural identity. These claims lead to political proposals to organise society in a multicultural way. What do these proposals and discussions imply for the European Union? This is necessarily a multilevel debate, as the national accommodations between different cultural units – or the absence of them- have its counterpart in the relations between the European society on the one hand and the nations, regions, etc. on the other. I will broach this important question in the next section.

### **European collective identity based on an inside-view**

#### *The collective identity of nation-states*

The analysis of the different dimensions of collective identities has paved our way to the next question: is it possible to speak about a European identity which is founded on an inside-view? When we speak about the nation-states of Europe, it is evident that they claim specific national identities which distinguish them from other European nations, especially from their neighbours. Many of the aforementioned elements of collective identities are applicable to nations. There is an awareness of differences (e.g. language, way of life, degree of economic wealth), there is a sense of belongingness, a sense of continuity in time which is, partly at least, based on myths about the origins of the peoples concerned and on the rise of their nation-state. There are also ideas about oppositions to and allegiances with other nations and, of course, a lot of the conversations about the

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<sup>67</sup> In 1957, during a conference held by the College of Europe and the University of Pennsylvania with the objective to define the basic values of the occidental civilisation, six principal items were agreed upon (see C. Delmas, *o.c.* Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1980, p.1. Mentioned are : 1) respect for the intrinsic value of the individual as such, a value that transcends all absolute conceptions of the State ; 2) liberty is inseparable from moral responsibility, which presupposes a higher law regardless of the name that is given to it; 3) liberty is inseparable from human solidarity and from the duty to open progressively to everyone the road to material and spiritual commodities; 4) the occidental civilisation is the 'civilisation of the dialogue', which implies the free discussion of all opinions and respect for the Other as such. The essential element is not to convince the Other, but being able to confront ideas; 5) these values are not the exclusive propriety of the West; they can express themselves via different cultures; 6) it is necessary to re-examine unremittingly the adaptation of those values to historical situations in order to understand how they maintain their irreducible core under changing historical conditions'.(translation JB). Items 5 and 6 can be considered as recommendations to implement the basic Western values 'politically'.

Others are phrased in stereotypical language. Moreover, there may be a feeling of superiority that expresses itself in terms of pride to belong to a nation that has achieved great things and defends carefully its basic principles.

The importance of those different criteria is not unchangeable. In certain periods some elements of the national identity come stronger to the fore, e.g. during international soccer-matches and many other international sporting happenings. In our time the idea of the nation-state having a mission to fulfil is put less in evidence than in the 19<sup>th</sup> and the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, when several European countries presented themselves as the bearers of an international civilisation process and, somewhat later on, as the executors of 'inevitable historical changes', leading to a new world order. In a more moderate way, this feeling of having a mission to fulfil as a nation did not yet disappear totally from the European political scene, as I have shown earlier.

There is also a collective memory of the nation's past, which is commemorated by official feasts and solemn meetings and by statues of founders of the nation or other persons who play an important role in the national myths. There may be festive days during which the national history does not stand on the foreground, but during which the emotional attachment to the nation can be demonstrated. An example of this is the Queen's birthday in the Netherlands, which has become a national feast in which not so much the allegiance to the throne is accentuated as the liberty of the people to express its 'unity in diversity'. Other national events may accentuate the specificity of its institutions, such as the yearly opening of the Parliament by the Queen in the United Kingdom and in the Netherlands and similar rituals in many other nations of Europe.

The symbols of the nation, such as the national flag and the national anthem, arouse in many persons feelings of pride and emotion. Many people avow to be emotionally stirred when listening to, or singing the national anthem.

Without any doubt, seen from the inside perspective, nations can be characterised by a collective identity. Smith remarks that this national identity is fundamentally multidimensional.<sup>68</sup> This multidimensionality allows for the attachment of different other collective identities. This does not mean that the totality of persons who belong formally to a nation do share this national identity. Neither does it imply that the population is 'inhabited' only by this national identity. This type of national identity is not a 'Volksgeist', a national spirit that excludes the understanding of the national culture by all those who do not belong to it.<sup>69</sup> Most citizens of a nation have several identities, which are related to regional origin, religion, political allegiance, gender, ethnic descent, professional group, etc. This plurality of identities does not imply the absence of

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<sup>68</sup> A.D. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*. Penguin Books, 1991 ,pp.20-21:A nation is a named human population, 'sharing a historical territory, common memories and myths of origin, a mass, standardized public culture, a common economy and territorial mobility, and common legal rights and duties for all members of the collectivity'.

<sup>69</sup> See, e.g. J. G. Herder, *o.c.*, 1784; *id.*, *o.c.*, 1774.

a hierarchy between them. They exist in the minds of the people, but they are in most cases not the same for different individuals and groups. Generally, only in specific cases does the cohabitation of several identities in one person lead to tension and conflicts.

*European collective identity*

Starting from the ‘inside perspective’, is it possible to speak of a European collective identity? Let us apply the criteria that we mentioned above to reply to this question. Of course, I will leave out the criteria, which are connected with the outside-view. The inside-view of European identity is primarily related to the European ‘continent’ with its vague borders in the East and the South-East. In some cases the European identity will refer to an inside-view on the European Union.

**Table I**

Criteria of a European Collective Identity		
	Criteria for identity	Evaluation
1.	Awareness of differences between Europe and the outside world	There is an awareness of a European territory, but there is no consensus about its frontiers. There is certainly an awareness of the European Union in relation with some other parts of ‘Europe’
2.	A consciousness of belonging to ‘Europe’	Most people are certainly conscious of belonging to Europe and especially to the European Union.
3.	Feelings of attachment to Europe	In comparison with attachments to nation, region, or home town: weak
4.	Solidarity with Europe	Weak and ambiguous. Seems to be declining for Europe and the European Union
5.	Opposition and exclusion	Inside opposition between nations and regions seems to be stronger than opposition between Europe or the European Union and the outside world. Nevertheless, the increase of migration from non-European nations kindles feelings of opposition and of exclusion in some parts of the autochthonous populations concerned. These feelings seem to enhance primarily national feelings, not so much ‘European feelings’.

		Nevertheless, the war on Iraq by the USA contributed to a heightened awareness of the 'Otherness' of the USA in comparison with the EU.
6.	Feelings of superiority as Europeans	Not easy to discern. Ethnocentrism and xenophobia fit national frames, not a European one
7.	Stereotypical thinking about non-Europeans	Absent as a characteristic of an opposition between Europe and Non-Europe. There are, however, commonalities in the national stereotypes about Non- Europeans of the different European nations.
8.	Emotional commitment to Europe	Weak or absent
9.	Life-chances dependent upon the achievements of the European Union or of 'Europe'	Ambiguous. A feeble political commitment can be an indicator of a low priority <b>or</b> of a feeling of political powerlessness and alienation
10.	Ideas about Europe as a totality, as a unique configuration with a specific 'European spirit' (European 'Volksgeist')	Not very prominent in the population at large, both with respect to Europe and the European Union. Europe's specificity is in most cases interpreted in terms of one's national specificity (e.g. French republican values)
11.	Ideas about a specific European mission in order to construct the future	Almost absent. The idea of the necessity to construct a social and cultural Europe does not raise enthusiasm. Such a Europe is not yet in the minds of most Europeans
12.	Rituals, symbols and commemorations; collective memories	Some symbols, such as the flag of the EU. No rituals and commemorations. Anyhow, the existing symbols do not arouse feeling of inclusion and pride. In European settings, almost always national sentiments prevail. An exception can be made for the commemoration of D-day, June 6, 1944, that has become an event to accentuate Europe's unity and its power of reconciliation.

My conclusion must be, after the inspection of the inside-criteria for the detection of a European identity, that this identity is rather weak, certainly in



comparison with other collective identities, such as national, regional, religious and ethnic identities. This conclusion does not come as a surprise. The coming of the European Union seems to strengthen in several ways the national identities, at least for the time being, and to raise hopes for more regional autonomy, based on ancient or reconstructed cultural dividing-lines. All this is not so astonishing, as the 'Europeans', as citizens of the European Union, have not yet achieved much in acting together, in front of common problems. This may change gradually in the future. At this moment, when we compare our collective European identity as citizens of the EU with the collective identity of the citizens of the United States of America, it is evident that this is quite different from the feelings of pride and solidarity of the citizens of the American citizens.

Reif concludes in his analysis of cultural convergence and cultural diversity as factors in European identity, 'that this identity is made up of a multiplicity of local identities, and it may be just as important to accept without fear the identity of others as to recognize one's own identity'.<sup>70</sup> And Schwan states that we do not have to recognise something new in the ethnic-cultural multiplicity of Europe. Now we have to reflect on what Europe has always been'.<sup>71</sup>

#### *Collective identity, opposition and exclusion*

If it is true that a collective identity needs the 'Other' in order to organise its self-image, then it is perhaps not to deplore that Europeans have a weak collective identity as Europeans. Europe, as the cradle of a universalistic, humanist, rationalist and individualistic culture, has during many centuries been convinced of its leading role in the world, in spite of its internal differences and oppositions. As such a much diversified self-image developed in contradistinction to 'the rest of the world'. Especially in the 20<sup>th</sup> century the European nations have become very conscious of the fact that such a collective attitude is no longer tenable. In the past, oppositions between 'Europe' and invaders, or between European invaders in non-European regions, have contributed to a first awareness of being European. Christiane Villain-Gandossi points out that in the chronicle of the battle of Poitiers (732), one finds for the first time a report on a manifestation of a consciousness of Europe as an entity. In 767 Isidore the Young called the army of Charles Martel 'the army of the Europeans'. This battle against the Arab invasions is the battle of the Christians against the Muslims.<sup>72</sup> But after this battle, the European warriors go home,

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<sup>70</sup> K. Reif, 'Cultural Convergence and Cultural Diversity as Factors in European Identity'. In: S. Garcia, ed., *European Identity and the Search for Legitimacy*. London/New York: Pinter Publishers, 1992, p. 151.

<sup>71</sup> G. Schwan, 'Anerkennungen ethnisch-kultureller Vielfalt als Herausforderung europäischer Gesellschaften'. In: M. Delgado und M. Lutz-Bachmann, *Herausforderung Europa. Wege zu einer europäischen Identität*. München: Verlag C.H. Beck, 1995, p.187 (translation JB).

<sup>72</sup> C. Villain-Gandossi, 'Identités et altérités de l'Europe jusqu'au XVe siècle'. In : La cohabitation culturelle en Europe, *Hermès*, no.23-24, pp.185-194.

certainly not with a European identity, but as members of the tribes from which they were recruited.

Cardini is convinced that Europe has developed a consciousness of its modern identity in opposition to Islam, although certainly not exclusively. In fact, Islam has been the most important common threat for the European continent. Islam has been, according to him, one of the determining negative factors of the European consciousness. The repeated attacks of the Muslims against Europe, real or imagined, between the 7th and the 10th centuries, and later on between the 14th and 18th centuries have been the 'violent midwife' of Europe.<sup>73</sup> At the end of his analysis of the relationship between 'Europe and Islam', Cardini evokes the new wave of the Islam, referring to the migration of Muslims in our time. This 'third wave' enlarges the territory of *dar al-Islam* (the territory where large numbers of persons know the Law of the Koran) and confronts a strong Europe. This Europe is nevertheless not homogeneous in economic and social respects, and uncertain with respect to its cultural identity. According to Cardini, Europe finds itself in a delicate stage of redefinition of itself. Europe will be what Europeans will be capable of making it. 'Will this be a Europe in which every day the number of citizens or immigrants, who follow the law of the Prophet, increases?'<sup>74</sup>

Huntington, in his *The Clash of Civilizations*, to which I referred already, makes of differences and oppositions between civilizations the cornerstone of his idea that the coming world-order will be one in which the major civilisations or cultures face each other as mutually exclusive unities. Although peaceful co-existence may be possible, it is more likely that there will be, according to him, an ongoing struggle for dominance, especially between the Arab or Muslim civilisation and the European one (Europe and the USA). Europe must prepare itself for this struggle by becoming aware of its cultural identity. His idea of civilisation is a very artificial construction that does not stand the test of a critical analysis.

My analysis led to the conclusion that the sentiment of belonging to Europe is weak in European populations at large, in comparison with the sentiments of belonging to a nation, to a region, to a religious community or to an ethnic group. Moreover, my search for the specificity of Europe showed us that there is certainly no consensus among those who try to construct a European identity on the basis of its past and/or on its specific 'spirit'. This is not to say that all those activities to construct a European identity are useless. They are not, as long as we keep in mind that those efforts imply the search for collective representations that can guide us towards the future of Europe.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> and in the major part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the future of European nation-states was present in major ideological movements, such as different

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<sup>73</sup> F. Cardini, *Europe et Islam. Histoire d'un malentendu*. Paris : Editions du Seuil, 2000, p. 13.

<sup>74</sup> F. Cardini, *o.c.* p. 304 : 'Et c'est une Europe où croît chaque jour le nombre des citoyens ou immigrés qui suivent la loi du Prophète'.

brands of liberalism, socialism, communism and Christian-democratic political view-points. Out of the political oppositions and allegiances between those ideological movements in front of the ongoing techno-economic changes, emerged the major political decisions that constructed the future.

#### *Lukewarm Europeans?*

By now, the major collective representations of the future seem to fade away and the future of Europe seems to be tied to the ongoing reinforcement of the global market relations to which European societies can only adapt themselves without having real choices.

In front of this the search for a European identity, it seems to be of little importance when Europe only tries to emphasise its 'essence' or 'specificity', without elucidating in which ways this specificity can play an important role in the making of Europe.

We have seen that the outside-view of European identity (its specificity), in which European identities are constructed by intellectuals and politicians, does not match with my analysis that is based on the inside-view. It will be an important task to narrow this gap between these two approaches. This task can only be successful when 'European' intellectuals succeed in the construction of a collective representation of the future of Europe, in which selected elements of its specificity play a pivotal role. This could be the case when Europe's specificity is presented as a cluster of ideas, which guide the constructing of Europe as an open system, capable of 'absorbing', under specific conditions, neighbouring societies. This is already an important point with respect to the enlargement of the European Union in May 1, 2004, but it will be still more important in relation with the inclusion of other populations or nations, as the case of Turkey illustrates. Another important point in this respect is, indeed, the ongoing inclusion of migrants, coming from non-European regions.

A new collective representation of Europe in relation with the (enlarged) EU will not arouse much enthusiasm when it is restricted to technical questions of enlargement and inclusion. Mobilising collective representations of Europe should include major ideas about the choices before us for a social and cultural Europe, for a reconstruction of urban life, for 'a good life' of the future generations and for the role of Europe in the international community. They should also include clear ideas about a European identity in the making that has inherent capacities to surmount oppositions between Europe's constituent parts. Such a project will take a long time, but it is extremely important for the ongoing development of Europe, which is by now threatened by feelings of powerlessness and alienation among major parts of its populations.

#### *Some further remarks on Europe's cultural diversities*

Until now, I have spoken about the specificity of Europe and the European Union and about Europe's collective identity. Moreover, I have shown that several perspectives on the nature of European culture coexist. However, this analysis has to be completed with some remarks about how Europeans see each

other, especially in terms of, in most cases, stereotypical differences. This is a vast subject and the literature is abundant. So I will restrict myself to some remarks pertaining to some dividing-lines which play, to a certain extent, a role in the construction of the EU: those between the culture areas of Europe, between nations and between regions.

#### *Culture areas*

Before paying some attention to the question how European nations see each other, it is also worthwhile to look at other dividing-lines in Europe, which may group some nations and parts of nations together in one way and other nations in a different way. In this context we may think about language families – Germanic, Roman, Slavic- and linguistic areas which are characterised by specific features of speech.

Those language families largely coincide with cultural families or culture areas: the North-western, the Slavic and the Mediterranean, according to Claude Delmas to whom we referred in chapter IV.<sup>75</sup> Jean Cuisenier divides Europe in his *Ethnologie de l'Europe* in eight linguistic and ethnic areas: the Germanic, the Scandinavian, the Roman, the Slavic, the Hellenic/Lithuanian, the Basque/Lapp, the Finno-Ugrian and the Turkish one.<sup>76</sup> He shows that in the history of Europe such differences correlated with different types of behaviour, such as in the style of colonising peoples outside Europe: the Latin model and the Germanic model.<sup>77</sup>

Another approach is offered by Emmanuel Todd, who tried to link the dominant family-structures to preferences for ideological systems and to the degree of stability of their political systems. This approach groups together England, Denmark, the greater part of the Netherlands and of Brittany, characterised by the 'absolute nuclear family', the greater parts of Spain and of France, Poland, a part of Northern Italy, and Southern Italy and Sicily, Greece and Rumania ('nuclear egalitarian family'), Germany, Scotland, Ireland, Belgium, Norway, Sweden, Austria, parts of Southern France and Northern Spain, Switzerland, the Czech Republic ('the authoritarian family') and all the remaining countries are characterised by the exogamous communitarian family.<sup>78</sup> The 'goodness of fit' that he demonstrated is less convincing after the fall of the Soviet Empire, but his analysis could still be useful to understand some political differences within the 'European Family'. In this respect I refer to the role of trust and confidence that is more pronounced in nations, which are characterised by the 'absolute nuclear family' than in nations in which other family types predominate. This phenomenon may be related to the fact that the

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<sup>75</sup> Claude Delmas, *o.c.*, 1980.

<sup>76</sup> Jean Cuisenier, *L'ethnologie de l'Europe*. Paris : Presses Universitaires de France, 1990, (Que sais-je ?, no.2564).

<sup>77</sup> Jean Cuisenier, *o.c.*, p.86ff.

<sup>78</sup> E. Todd, *La troisième planète. Structures familiales et systèmes idéologiques*. Paris : Editions du Seuil, 1983.

members of the absolute nuclear families have to be strongly individualistic in relation with their social environment, while the members of the other types find themselves embedded in a family structure with more solidarity or in one in which the social control of the family is much stronger. The members of the absolute nuclear families have, consequently, a greater need to establish, as individuals, relations with other persons, especially under circumstances of uncertainty and precariousness. Trust plays an important role when there is a deficit of knowledge and predictability. When the reactions of others are highly predictable, there is no need for trust and confidence.<sup>79</sup> It is an interesting hypothesis to analyse the link between the susceptibility of the absolute nuclear families for the Calvinist religion with its heavy emphasis on individual responsibility and a high tolerance for uncertainty. This brings us directly to the famous thesis of Max Weber concerning the connection between the rise of modern capitalism and the Protestant Ethic.<sup>80</sup> This emphasis on individual autonomy and responsibility is also related to the organisation of social life, as is shown by the important role of voluntary organisations in public life, which link the individual to other individuals and which function as intermediate organisations between the individual and the state.

The digging for the deep historical roots to explain differences between European regions is perhaps not very profitable in a general way. Nevertheless, I think that it is useful to draw attention to those differences, which can play a positive or negative role in the international relations within the EU and in the relations between the EU and its outside world. Knowledge of the role of trust and confidence is certainly among those important elements, especially in relation with the Arab and Muslim world.

An element that is related to the preceding one is the attitudes of citizens towards their state, which seem in some cases to be imbued with distrust, while in other countries trust in the state is rather high. These differences may be related to experiences in the past, such a long domination by foreign powers, or by types of very centralised rule in which the opportunities for individual initiatives are low, or a long history of weak and unstable types of government. These different types of attitudes towards the state can play an important role vis-à-vis the attitudes towards a European confederation or federation. There is not a one-to-one relation between a positive attitude towards one's own state and a certain readiness to accept supra-national arrangements. Especially the small nations with a positive orientation towards their own state may fear to be

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<sup>79</sup> I will not continue this analysis. See F. Fukuyama, *Trust. The Social Virtues and the Creation of Prosperity*. London: H. Hamilton, 1995; Christiane Villain-Gandossi, 'Le rôle de la confiance dans les relations Nord-Sud en Méditerranée'. In : Ch. Villain-Gandossi et al, eds, *Méditerranée, Mer Ouverte*. Malta : International Foundation, 1997, Tome II, pp. 815-827 ; A. Petitat, 'Confiance, incertitude et Altérité' In : C. Contantopoulou, ed., *Altérité, mythes et réalités*. Paris : L'Harmattan, 1999, pp.62-70.

<sup>80</sup> Max Weber, *Die Protestantische Ethik und der Geist des Kapitalismus*. München und Hamburg: Siebenstern Taschenbuch Verlag, 1965 (first edition :1905).

dominated by an international structure that does not fit their conception of the 'good state'. This can be the case when one or more nation-states push themselves to the front with the arguments that they are 'great nations', that they have a long history of dealing with international problems and that they are culturally and linguistically more eminent than others. Such type of talk, which is in fact a type of collectivist thinking – 'I have more right to be a leader, because I belong to a 'great nation'- is especially repugnant for those populations with are imbedded in a strong individualistic tradition.

Another item asks for our attention, also related to the preceding items. This item concerns the attitudes towards leadership and the interpretation of the role of hierarchies in economic, social and political life. In this respect important differences exists between European regions and such differences can have a perceptible impact on the relations between partners in the EU.<sup>81</sup>

#### *National differences*

With the rise of the nation-states in the 18<sup>th</sup> century the question what are the main differences between our nation and other nations in Europe becomes an important one. It is in this period that the national identities are created, as remarks Anne-Marie Thiesse.<sup>82</sup> The ideology of the nation is based on the idea that it consists of all the persons who belong to a community at large. The nation is the people or the 'Volk'. The links between them are not based on being subordinated to the same sovereign or on the adherence to the same religion. Its existence as a people is independent from the vicissitudes of dynastic and military history. 'To belong to a nation means being the heir to a common and indivisible patrimony, to be aware of this and to venerate it'.<sup>83</sup> The creation of the national identity starts with the identification of the ancestors of the nation and their heroic exploits. Such ancestors must have virtues and other characteristics that make them eligible to represent the glorious past and national cohesion. The selection of such ancestors, or even their invention as such, goes hand in hand with a long list of other symbolic and material elements, which represent each nation that aspires to be one, such as – in most cases - a common language, national cultural monuments, a national anthem and flag and other national emblems, such as a lion, a bear or an eagle, national celebrations of major historical events, a specific national mentality or character, specific elements in the life-style, such as drinking and eating habits, preferences for certain sports, specific folkloristic elements (traditional costumes, traditional dances and melodies), a national literature and a specific pictorial style. This list can be extended without great difficulties.

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<sup>81</sup> See as an example : Philippe d'Iribarne, o.c. Paris : Aux Editions du Seuil, 1989.

<sup>82</sup> Anne-Marie Thiesse, *La création des identités nationales. Europe XVIIIe – XXe siècle*. Paris : Editions du Seuil, 1999.

<sup>83</sup> Anne-Marie Thiesse, o.c., p. 12 : 'Appartenir à la nation, c'est être un des héritiers de ce patrimoine commun et indivisible, le connaître et le révéler'.

What is important in this process of construction of national identities is that it emphasises strongly the differences between 'our' nation and other nations. Once this process of the creation of national identities started in Scotland and in England, it was followed by the same processes in other European nations. As Anne-Marie Thiesse rightly remarks in the beginning of her book: 'Nothing is more international than the creation of national identities'. This is an important paradox, according to her, because the irreducible singularity of each national identity has been the pretext for bloody confrontations.<sup>84</sup>

The creation of a national identity is a process of inclusion and exclusion of characteristics in which, in most cases, the national differences with other nations are strongly exaggerated and certain (supposed) traits of the other nations are ridiculed. The rise of the nation-state is in most Western European countries accompanied by the spreading of the ideas of the Enlightenment. The search for national identities can also be seen as a reaction to the universalistic and individualist tenets of this way of interpreting the world.

This search for national identities, emphasising differences between nations and neglecting the search for commonalities, is difficult to reconcile with the idea of a European identity, as in this period the national identities were primarily formulated as closed and exclusive identities, leaving as such no room for the rise of a European identity. The task of the construction of national identities was first and foremost to define the national specificity in contradistinction to those nations with which nations were competing for international military and commercial power. This task had two sides. One side had to do with shrugging off the 'wrong' cultural heritage (such as the Greco-Roman heritage in the Celtic and Germanic areas) and the discovery of the 'authentic' roots. The other side is the formation of the national identity itself, an identity that must clearly delineate 'us' from 'them'. This second side is often accompanied with a depreciation of (assumed) characteristics of the Other, a depreciation that accentuates at the same time 'our' values and habits. The creation of national identities is in this respect also an international enterprise: without images about the Other such a construction is really handicapped. This is perhaps also one of the important reasons why collective stereotypes about the Other are highly resistant to change in spite of objective information that should enfeeble the (negative) image of the Other. Changing 'our' image of the Other implies at the same time changing 'our' national identity.

It is quite clear that our self-definitions implied in the construction of our national identity have their alter ego's in the collective stereotypes of the Other. The national identity with which a nation presents itself to the outside world generally emphasises national unity and cohesiveness. Behind this 'official façade', a lot of diversity may exist, as Braudel observes with respect to France, referring to two underlying large civilisations with their own linguistic kingdoms, the 'civilisation d'oïl' that has been victorious and the 'civilisation d'oc' for which destiny has reserved an almost colonial situation. 'The North

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<sup>84</sup> Anne-Marie Thiesse, *o.c.*, p.11.

crushes the South with its material success'.<sup>85</sup> And he continues: 'Normally, what happens in the North will not happen in the same way in the South, and vice-versa: the civilisation (the way of being born, of living, loving, marrying, thinking, believing, laughing, eating, dressing, constructing the houses and organising the fields, of behaving toward the other) is almost never the same from the Nordic *oui* to the meridian *oui*, from the *oil* to the *oc*. There has been, there is and there will always be, in the South, an 'other' France'.<sup>86</sup>

Strong, closed national identities may hinder the development of the EU. But in spite of some xenophobic political parties, such as led by LePen in France, Bossi in Northern Italy, Haider in Austria, De Winter in Flanders, the nationalist feelings are generally not that exclusive. It is quite possible to cherish one's own nation and at the same time be a supporter of the EU, because one is conscious of the fact that in an age of globalisation several important problems can be handled more effectively and sometimes only, by the institutions of the EU. The major dangers for the future of the EU are perhaps not the nationalist movements, but the claims of some of the nations of the EU to their 'natural' leadership, which they primarily base on their role in the past, as nation-states. Such nations, as France, the United Kingdom and Germany, show a tendency to accept the further development of EU only when it is modelled after their own national institutions. Such national policies inevitably lead to tensions between the self-proclaimed leaders and are, moreover, viewed with suspicion by the other nations within the EU.

#### *How regions see each other*

In many discussions about the construction of the European Union the theme 'How nations see each other' prevails. This is understandable in view of the fact that the nation-states are the main actors in this process. Nevertheless, it is not without importance to give some attention to the perspectives of major parts of Europe on the 'Other', not in terms of nations, peoples and states, but as in terms of the Other, living in the North-western, the Southern and the Eastern regions. Often the peoples living in such a major regions are lumped together by those who are living in another region. Moreover, during the process of the construction of the EU, these regional differences seem to become more important in the eyes of the populations concerned.

We must not forget that since the beginning of the EU the North-western countries have dominated the scene. From the six founding countries, only Italy was a southern country. In 1973 the United Kingdom, Denmark and Ireland

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<sup>85</sup> Fernand Braudel, *L'Identité de la France*. Paris: Editions Arthaud, 1986, p. 72.

<sup>86</sup> Fernand Braudel, *o.c.*(1986), p.73: 'D'ordinaire, ce qui se passe au Nord ne se passera pas de même manière au Sud, et vice-versa : la civilisation (façon de naître, de vivre, d'aimer, de se marier, de penser, de croire, de rire, de se nourrir, de se vêtir, de bâtir ses maisons et de grouper ses champs, de se comporter les uns vis-à-vis des autres) n'est presque jamais la même du *oui* nordique au *oui* méridional, de l'*oil* à l'*oc*. Il y a eu, il y a encore, il y aura toujours, vers le sud, une « autre » France'.



joined the EU, which implied a stronger emphasis on the North-western region. In 1981 Greece joined the EU, followed by Spain and Portugal in 1985. This strengthened the South-western component considerably. The wave of joiners in 1994 (Austria, Sweden and Finland) reinforced the Northern component of the EU, while the last wave (May 1, 2004) implied a shift into the eastern direction.

The history of the creation of the EU had as an important consequence the location of the major European institutions in North-western Europe (Brussels, Luxembourg and Strasbourg) and in French-speaking countries. Seen from the Southern and Eastern regions, the North-western region still dominates, not necessarily politically, but certainly organisationally. And who speaks about an organisational domination, speaks about cultural domination, as the types of organisation installed in the North-western, French speaking region, are certainly not 'culture-free'. With this remark I do not refer to the impact of the language, but primarily to the ways of procedural handling of cases, to the dominant conception of the organisational hierarchy and to the concomitant ways of distribution of responsibilities and, more generally, the organisation of working-relationships. This cultural dominance clashes already with the working-habits and organisational conceptions of the other North-western countries, but is perhaps more difficult to understand and to digest for those who are at a greater distance from these bureaucratic-political centres.

We referred already to Braudel's remark, speaking about France, that what happens in the North will not happen in the same way in the South, and vice-versa. 'There has been, there is and there will always be, in the South, an 'other' France'. What can be said about the difference between Southern and Northern France, pertains certainly the differences between Southern Europe and North-western Europe

#### *North-South*

Most countries have an image of 'their' South and 'their' North that contains persistent and mostly long-established ideas, even in relatively small countries and in spite of many occasions to meet each other. No wonder that these images are, in certain respects, projected on the South and the North of Europe and that they are not changing, even in a time of mass tourism and of mass media. Most people seem to cling to their collective stereotypes. Their direct experiences with the Other do not change these fundamentally. Their function is in the first place to structure their observations, observations which are extremely selective as they are guided by the pre-established collective images. Even worse, many tourists in this age of mass tourism do not leave their cultural cocoon and do not expose themselves to intercultural challenges, as we can see when we observe their behaviour in the Southern mass tourist destinations: they come for a sea with a nice temperature, for the sun, and in many cases also for sex and combine this with the *Bier und Bratwurst* and the *fish and chips* of their home countries, to which are added dishes that have become international contributions from the South, such as pizza, paella, and tapas.

Until now, the tourist movement from the South to the North is far less important than the yearly Germanic transhumance, but we think that a major increase of a North-western oriented tourism would not change most of the existing stereotypes and prejudices.

There are no clear and distinct dividing-lines between the North and the South. Several important criteria enter these types of mental maps and it depends on the prevalence of the criteria selected where the North ends and the South begins. There is the difference between the Germanic culture area and the Latin one. This difference can be related to the impact of the Roman Empire, but the frontiers have shifted since then as a consequence of the invasions of Germanic tribes into the Latin world. As a consequence of this we can observe that the Northern part of France is 'North' and the Southern part is included in the 'South'.

There is also the divide between the Protestant and the Catholic regions, a divide that separates the North and the South in a different way, leaving a much larger part of Europe as belonging to the South. This difference goes together with several behavioural differentials. To give one example: in regions which are influenced by Calvinism much emphasis is laid on the truth of what is said, it is frowned upon when a speaker is gesticulating. His words must convince as such. It is the contents of his message that counts, and nonverbal acts are looked upon with some suspicion. One can imagine that such a way of behaving can produce misunderstandings in international contexts in which the Latin way is dominant.

I can also point to the fact that the rise of capitalism and, later on, of industrialisation (and modernisation) started in the North-western countries (the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Germany) and that there is a selective affinity with some important values of Calvinism, such as individualism, punctuality, discipline, parsimony, deferred gratification, rational organisation, together with a strong tendency to impose rational frameworks on reality, and to regard work as both a duty and a vocation.

This process of modernisation marched South and is in several respects still marching South, in the wake of the further development of the EU, which implies a further rationalisation of the markets, especially in the rather traditional agrarian sector. This process implies that the 'South' is gradually transforming and converges with the main orientation of the 'North'.

#### *Deeply rooted images of the Other: their political importance*

My analysis has shown, I hope, the importance of deeply rooted differences in the ways Europeans, variously located in the European space, look at each other. These differences can have important consequences for the relationships between representatives of different nation-states and different regions. We are becoming aware of the fact that in the ways they define their relations with the other nations and regions and develop proposals for Europe's future, they are projecting their own national and regional visions on the whole of Europe. We have given some examples of this tendency. Everybody has at his disposal

specific frames of reference from which he looks at, and interprets, the world around him, frames of reference the specific national and regional characteristics of which are not easily understandable for someone who is not embedded in them. Historical analysis reveals the deep roots and the persistency of such ways of looking at other nations, ways of looking which in many cases reveal much more about the observer than about the observed. Only an open-minded international discussion of those national and regional specificities can lead to a growing awareness of the ways in which they restrict our perspective on the world around us. The representatives of the smaller nations have in this respect an advantage above the representatives of the middle-sized nations of Europe, who are having dreams about their national missions and their European leadership and in some cases see the European Union primarily as an opportunity to increase the power of their nation-states.

## CHAPTER VII: COLLECTIVE REPRESENTATIONS OF EUROPEAN SOCIETIES (I)

### Collective representations

We cannot understand relations between individuals and groups (societies) without taking into account the role of collective representations and collective identities. The importance of these representations came already to the fore in the preceding chapters. We need those concepts when we turn to the inside view on social life: in which ways do different social groups perceive their (social) environment and their place in it? What types of interpretation do they give to events, such as encounters with persons and groups with ways of life that differ from theirs? The concepts of collective representation and collective identity are closely related. I define collective representations as shared mental images which persons and collective entities have about the (social) reality they live in, but also about social worlds with which they do not have an immediate experience. Collective representations are mental maps of the social scene about which Jodelet says: 'It is a socially developed and shared type of knowledge. This knowledge has a practical meaning and contributes to the construction of a common reality of a social unity'.<sup>87</sup>

That is not to say, however, that those groups and persons with specific collective representations are always fully aware of seeing the world through these collective representations. Collective representations may be, according to them, *the images of social reality as it really is*. Those who do not share their view on social life are simply erring, according to them. Such a type of collective representation is in the minds of those persons who state that modern society is nothing more than a totality of market relations, or those who think that modern society is basically a system of exploitation of workers by a capitalist class. In those cases the collective representation is also a *conviction* or

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<sup>87</sup> D. Jodelet, 'Représentations sociales: un domaine en expansion'. In: D. Jodelet, éd., *Les représentations sociales*. Paris : Presses Universitaires de France, 1989, p.36 (translation JB).

a *belief*. It may be so self-evident to those who cherish the collective representation that they reject vehemently the idea that a different and equally 'valid' interpretation of reality may be possible.

Although the cognitive character of collective representations is prevalent, this does not mean that a collective representation is only that. As follows from what I said earlier, that there is also an *evaluative element*. Participants in social life may be convinced that their collective representation is true and that the collective images of the Other are false. Moreover, collective representations may be judged to be 'good', that is to say that they are in line with the collective goals of members of a specific group or, in many cases, to be 'bad' when one is referring to the collective representations of opponents.

Collective representations are very functional for a given social entity. When I say this, I do not mean to say that collective representations do not pose problems in intergroup relations. They do and they often have a serious, even nasty character. In fact, the analysis of such intergroup problems is one of the central themes of this contribution. Nevertheless, the functionality of collective representations for group life is evident. Collective representations are, in the first place, means by which persons and groups orient themselves in an otherwise extremely complex and incomprehensible world. They give indications *about who we are and who are the others*. They offer a grip on a world that otherwise would not be understandable.

Collective representations are connected with an awareness of differences between categories of human beings - differences that may be much more refined than the distinction between 'them' and 'us' - and of course of differences between animals and material objects. They give indications about what should be done and what not, and they orient our feelings of belongingness. They are certainly also the source of oppositions between one's own identity and those of the others, the outsiders. Moreover, they are connected with feelings of commitment and solidarity. Collective representations are tied to codes of inclusion and exclusion, to distinctions between 'pure' and 'impure', between 'savage' and 'civilised', between 'natural products' and 'processed products'. They are burdened with metaphors and symbols.<sup>88</sup> Following the notion of culture as 'covert'<sup>89</sup>, it becomes evident that group members are not *fully conscious* of the nature of their collective representations. When we question group members, we can get descriptions about how they see themselves as similar to and different from other groups, the Others. Such descriptions leave out many things of which they are not aware. Here it is useful to introduce the concept of *habitus*, as introduced with a specific meaning by Bourdieu. The concept seems to be rather similar to the concept of state of mind or mentality ('état psychique') as used by Pareto: a basic tendency in the members of a group

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<sup>88</sup> In this context: see V. Jankélévitch, *Le pur et l'impur*. Paris: Flammarion, 1960.

<sup>89</sup> The concept of covert culture refers to the observation that 'culture' is 'inside' us, as a consequence of belonging to a specific group or society. See the section on 'The concept of culture' in this book.

or subgroup, produced by biological motives in combination with growing up under specific social, economic and cultural conditions, such as the family structure, the language which structures, by imposing categories, the ways we perceive the outside world. This 'état psychique' is very stable and almost unchangeable.<sup>90</sup> Bourdieu's concept of habitus comes very near to the preceding one. He states that the collectivity is deposited in each individual in the form of durable dispositions, as mental structures.<sup>91</sup> *Habitus* is a concept referring to modes of conduct, taste, feelings, which predominate among members of a particular group. It refers to acquired tendencies as a member of a specific group or culture, tendencies, which for the persons concerned are largely unconscious.<sup>92</sup>

Collective representations are, as we said earlier, mental maps, systematic ways of perceiving the outside (social) world. Collective representations are as such conscious constructions. People, when asked, can report about the way they 'see' the outside world. This does not mean that the members of a group are always conscious of the fact that they see reality through a collective representation, as I said already. They may think that the way they perceive reality *is reality as it is*. But also when they are aware of the fact that their collective representations are not pictures of reality (in the sense of 'Abbildung'), they will not be aware in which ways their habitus, acquired as members of their specific culture, determines their way of looking at the world around them, of interpreting the ways of life of other groups. Here a comparison with language may be clarifying. When we speak a language, especially our mother tongue, we are barely aware of its syntax and grammar. Even less will we be aware of the specific ways in which our language structures our thinking by imposing categories and making distinctions which are far from being universal. When I make a distinction between collective representations, pertaining partly at least, to the conscious level and habitus, belonging to the unconscious level, we must keep in mind that the demarcation-line between the two levels is not rigid. Changing social conditions, especially increasing contact

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<sup>90</sup> V. Pareto, *o.c.*, chapter VI.

<sup>91</sup> P. Bourdieu, *Questions de sociologie*. Paris :Editions de Minuit, 1984.

<sup>92</sup> Habitus seems also akin the concept of basic personality structure, as elaborated by Kardiner and Linton. This concept is related to the effort to apply to cultures a psychoanalytic approach in combination with the analysis of the role played by social factors in determining psychological phenomena. Kardiner and Linton state that the basic personality structure 'represents the constellation of personality characteristics which would be congenial with the total range of institutions comprised within a given culture'.(A. Kardiner, *The Individual and His Society*. 1939, chapter IV). As such it includes techniques of thinking, or idea constellations; the security system of the individual; super-ego formation and attitudes to supernatural beings. 'In general, it represents that which differentiates the personalities of members of two different cultural communities'.(O. Klineberg, *Social Psychology*. New York: Henry Holt & Company, 1950,p. 498).

with members of the other groups, the outsiders, may raise the level of awareness of habitus as a hidden side of group life.

It follows from what I have said, that the collective representations of our *society*, as interpretations of its basic characteristics, of its dynamics, of the possibilities and opportunities to influence its future, must be considered as *ideologies*.

### **Collective representations of Europe**

#### *Looking backwards*

In chapter IV on 'Progress, development and cultural change', I discussed the roots of Europe's modernity. Before presenting the different collective representations of the European societies – and of European society – we have to go back again to the past in order to understand better – I hope – some of our present problems in relation with the further development of our societies and of the European society.

We must not forget that during a very long period the European nation-states with their relatively rational bureaucracies have dominated the European scene. International relations were in the first place the responsibility of the sovereigns and their ambassadors, that is to say, of elites that could act without bothering too much about the populations that inhabited their territories. The task of these elites in the domain of international relations was the management of problems between the states with respect to security, peace and economic exchanges.

It is evident that in order to fulfil this task, these elites needed collective representations or models with which they could evaluate their behaviour and that of other parties engaged in the process of negotiation. So the international relations between the European states and their populations are interpreted in terms of 'the equilibrium between the states', 'the balance of power', 'the European concert' and, more recently, 'the Common European Home'. These collective representations show us that attention is directed at international relations and that, by doing so, the unities concerned (nations, states, the peoples living within the context of the nation-states) are treated as quasi-unchangeable.

In this line of thought, concepts like the culture of Europe and the collective identity of Europe only had a minor role to play. Most references to culture and identity were related to the specificity of the nation-states.<sup>93</sup> Looking at what is

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<sup>93</sup> In this image of societal development, the progressive elites in France and England, the most influential cradles of the Enlightenment, define themselves as the harbingers of a new order. This not only touches the European region, but 'Humanity' as such. Starting with the most advanced nations, Europe will shine over

going on in the European political arena, it is quite evident that it is a huge task to shrug off this way of thinking about Europe in front of the forces of global change.

The advent of the modern nation-state in the 17<sup>th</sup> century and of the industrial society in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was accompanied by intensive reflections on the nature of socio-economic developments and on the type of society that was in the making. Leading intellectual thinkers developed systematic representations or models of the future of European societies. In several instances these representations were adopted and reinterpreted by important political and social groups and became, in this way, collective representations of development. Especially the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century were characterised by struggles, often very violent, between the adherents to different models of societal development. Some of these models of development presented mutually exclusive types of a future society, emphasising a break

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the whole world. We see that after the French Revolution, the Napoleonic era is a large-scale effort to impose this modern order on the European peoples. Nevertheless, in this development the *concept of Europe* as an entity with specific identity, is not yet emerging. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, especially during the second half, most references to culture and identity were focused on the nation, not on 'Europe'. Moreover, the collective representations were generally forward looking, not looking backwards to what Europe had been as a Christian unity. At the pinnacle of evolutionism it was a matter of course for the powerful nations of Europe to present themselves as the most developed social and cultural systems of humankind. The analysis of the genesis of the concepts of culture and civilisation by Elias brings the national differences between France, England and Germany to the fore. Elias concludes that the construction of national consciousness, as reflected by those to nations, is not the same everywhere in Europe.

He points out that the concept of European civilisation refers to a continuous movement. According to Elias, this process gradually effaces the differences between peoples of Europe; it accentuates what all people have in common or should have in common. This concept expresses the conscience of the well-established nations that have experienced a long period of expansion (such as France and England). In contrast to this, the German conception of *culture* emphasises differences, the specific character of a nation, and its specific cultural products. This conception of culture highlights a nation's specificity. (N. Elias, *o.c.*, p. 4). To this we can add that the French and English conceptions of civilisation, paradoxically, also stress the specificity of these two nations, albeit that this specificity is masked by the idea of universality. French universalism emphasises universal values, the human rights and the rights of the citizen, the French language and cultural expressions in the arts and sciences. English universalism is above all connected with methods and techniques that push societies forward. Both nations have their common grounds in the basic principles of the Enlightenment to which we already referred, and connected these principles with the ideas of evolution in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Both regarded themselves as nations that had the enormous task to civilise the world, a mission that was not absent in the perspective of other European colonising peoples, such as the Dutch, the Spaniards and the Portuguese.



between the past that had to be overcome in the process of modernisation. Other collective representations harked back to the past and tried to restore, under new social and political conditions, valuable elements that were threatened by the individualisation of social life, such as the communal life-styles. Still other representations can be considered as efforts to 'integrate' elements of preceding models in a new one in order to compensate for their manifest drawbacks or failings. It is the period of great turmoil of conflicting ideologies, such as various types of liberalism, socialism, communism, conservatism and fascism. Here we will not reproduce the outlines of these major collective representations, but restrict ourselves to a few of them, which are still important in order to understand the present political and social situation.

It can be observed that 'Europe' as such is almost never present in these collective representations of change. The collective representations, which we discuss in this and the next chapters, are 'European', but as they are based on the silent agreement that Europe, or its most important nations, is the centre of a worldwide process of modernisation, they neglect to look back at Europe in other ways. Nevertheless, the changing reactions of non-European regions to this process of modernisation force us to ponder about the 'universal' character of the globalisation. At the same time we have to reflect on our own specificity vis-à-vis the 'outside' world. What is the use of the construction of a European society when we cannot demarcate its 'specificity' from other types of modern societies, such as the United States of America, and when we do not have at our disposal the means to create a European society in which its specificity is in certain respects protected and in which we have collective choices before us to create new opportunities for coming generations?

Since the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, 'Europe' as a unity is conceived of in political terms, as a number of nation-states, not as a totality that is based on a common culture and on a conscience of the populations concerned to belong to a unity that surpasses the nation-state. The Congress of Vienna in 1815 reinforced this way of looking at Europe. As Davies remarks: 'The spirit of the settlement, therefore, was more than conservative: it actually put the clock back'.<sup>94</sup> After the Napoleonic epoch Saint-Simon and Thierry formulated a proposal to reorganise Europe. Their presentation of Europe is essentially that of an organisation of nation-states, in which France and England – the only 'free' nations of Europe according to them – and perhaps, later on, Germany after becoming a nation-state, will guarantee political stability to the peoples of this continent. The political role of other countries or nations is absent in this proposal in which Europe does not seem as having a cultural identity as such. If there is a binding force between the nations of Europe, it will be the development of an industrial society that is based on rational management. In

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<sup>94</sup> N. Davies, *Europe. A History*. Oxford/New York : Oxford University Press, 1996, p.762.

Saint-Simon's words: 'The philosophy of the last century has been revolutionary. That of the 19<sup>th</sup> century must be based on organisation'.<sup>95</sup>

The 19th century witnesses the development of the industrial societies, but also the rising tide of nationalism and the appearance of ideologies which 'explain' the future of the industrial nations. A new science develops, sociology, which has as its main mission the elucidation of the laws of development of modern nations, the explanation of their genesis, their specific nature and their future.

The second half of this century is also marked by the ideas of social Darwinism and evolutionism, a way of thinking that places struggles and conflicts between men and societies in the very core of economic, social and cultural development and that legitimises the dominant role of the most advanced nations of Europe.

It is important to note that in this configuration of ideas and developments no place is left for 'Europe' except, perhaps, for a collective representation of Occidental Europe as the highest expression of human evolution.<sup>96</sup>

In chapter IV we discussed the idea of modernity in relation with the rise of the industrial society. In the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the coming of the Post-Industrial Society certainly led to revisions of this model of development, but did not change it fundamentally. As an example we refer to the influential works of Daniel Bell. Bell, who published his 'The End of Ideology. On the Exhaustion of Political Ideas in the Fifties'<sup>97</sup> in 1960 - an analysis that had a strong impact on political thinking, not only in the USA but also in Western Europe - stated that the collective representations of the coming society have lost their attractiveness in modern democratic societies. This weakening of the attractiveness of the collective representations or ideologies is related, according to Bell, to the gradual transformation of the industrial society into a post-industrial one, that is to say a society in which the industrial sector and manual labour are becoming increasingly less important in comparison with non-manual labour, especially in the domain of the services. As he explains at length in his 'The Coming of Post-Industrial Society'<sup>98</sup>, the primary developmental variable in the post-industrial society is theoretical knowledge: 'the primacy of empiricism and the codification of knowledge into abstract systems of symbols that, as in any axiomatic system, can be used to illuminate many different and varied areas of experience'.<sup>99</sup> Post-industrial society is, according to Bell, organised around knowledge, for the purpose of innovation and change.

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<sup>95</sup> M. le Comte de Saint-Simon et A. Thierry, *De la réorganisation de la société européenne ou de la nécessité et les moyens de rassembler les peuples de l'Europe en un seul corps politique en conservant à chacun son indépendance nationale* (1814). Lausanne : Centre de recherches européennes, 1967, p.23 : 'Si la philosophie du siècle dernier a été révolutionnaire, celle du 19<sup>e</sup> siècle doit être organisatrice'.

<sup>96</sup> For this analysis I make use of my article : 'The goals of development in developed countries'. In: *Goals of Development*. Paris:Unesco, 1988, chapter 7.

<sup>97</sup> D. Bell, *The End of Ideology. On the Exhaustion of Political Ideas in the Fifties*. New York: The Free Press/London: Collier-Macmillan Ltd, 1962 (1960).

<sup>98</sup> D. Bell, *o.c.*, 1976 (1973).

<sup>99</sup> D. Bell, *o.c.*, p.20.

It is a society in which the majority of the population manipulates ‘symbols’. This characterises many of the simple jobs. But Bell explains also that the coming of the post-industrial society is accompanied by a strong increase of highly qualified jobs (engineers, medical doctors, scientific jobs in laboratories, managers, etc.). The societal transformation is above all characterised by the strong increase of theoretical knowledge, the central axis of economy and of society. Thanks to the basic theoretical knowledge we are capable, more than in the past, to plan and control the technological, economic and social developments. This in turn gives rise to new social relationships and new structures, which have to be managed politically. Changing theoretical knowledge changes the economy and especially occupational structures. This affects both the political system, which regulates the distribution of power and conflicting demands of different groups, and finally, the cultural system. This development requires, according to Bell, a stronger need for planning and consequently a more central role for the political system. The regulation of the relationships between technological experts or technocrats in the economic system and the politicians becomes urgent in the meritocratic post-industrial society.

Bell’s analysis is, in fact, a clever reformulation of the industrial convergence thesis. In this coming post-industrial society the population does not need ideologies anymore, because society is now capable to resolve its economic and social problems in a *rational way*. Nevertheless, the post-industrial society is not a well-integrated whole. According to Bell, there is a widening disjunction between the social structure (economy, technology and occupational structure) and the culture (as the symbolic expression of meanings). Bell states that each of these two is ruled by a different axial principle. ‘The social structure is rooted in functional rationality and efficiency, the culture in the antinomian justification of the enhancement of the self’.<sup>100</sup> This disjunction is the consequence of capitalism, which destroyed the Protestant ethic by zealously promoting a hedonist life. In view of what I said about the European values, it is somewhat curious to see that some values, such as (functional) rationality and efficiency, are excluded from ‘culture’.

The (post-) industrial convergence model (or the ideology of globalisation) presents, I repeat, technological development, market forces and rationalisation as the main driving-forces of change. Those forces are presented in such a way that they are not likely to be the object of political decision-making other than the liberation of these forces from traditional and other types of constraint that hinder their free development. To understand this way of thinking, we have only to consider the nature of the advices given by the IMF, the World Bank and the OECD.

The rise to dominance of this powerful collective perspective on economic and social change has not been uncontested, as we all know. I can refer to the Marxist model of development –*capitalist society as a class society*- that shares

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<sup>100</sup> D. Bell, o.c.(1976), p.477.

many elements of the former model –such as the primary role of productive forces in development and the idea of industrial convergence -, but differs from it by putting class conflict and the coming of socialist society in its very core. I can also refer to the representation of societal development as a *rational society*, the foundation of which has been laid, as I said in chapter IV, by Max Weber who made explicit the role of Occidental rational management and its ensuing disenchantment of the world. In this context I cannot omit to refer to the *reformist perspective on societal change*, an influential model of society that rejected the point of view that tensions and conflicts are part and parcel of economic and social change. In the (post-) industrial convergence perspective disruptions of the existing social order are regarded as unavoidable consequences of industrial development, as the consequences of the tensions caused by a temporary lack of adaptation of individuals and their social institutions to the exigencies of industrial or post-industrial development. In the Marxist model, the alienation of the individual is seen as the very essence of the capitalist mode of production, a condition that can only be superseded by the revolutionary process leading to a socialist order. The discontinuity between the old and the new social orders is emphasised.

Both models of development are contested by the reformist perspective on societal change in which the disruptive consequences of industrial development are regarded as a major ailment of industrial development and in which class struggle is seen as an abnormal phenomenon resulting from a lack of social integration, not as the crux of the process of change.

This model is presented by the works of Emile Durkheim (1858-1917), the founder of French academic sociology. In Durkheim's conception of social life, individuals can realise themselves thanks to the increasing division of labour which allows them to develop their individual talents. But individualism and individual freedom are in Durkheim's view always connected with the conception of society as a moral order. The individual is 'free' in some respects because he is part of that moral order.<sup>101</sup> So Durkheim's individualism is diametrically opposed to the liberal conception that states that individuals are primarily motivated by self-interest to establish contractual relationships and that social life emerges from those individual interactions. In contradistinction to this conception, Durkheim pointed out that human beings are embedded in a collective consciousness, which embraces concepts about the nature of the social order and of the relationships between men, a consciousness that is the product of a long historical process.<sup>102</sup>

The industrial development of society, especially when the pace of change is high has, as Durkheim observed in his time, disruptive consequences for society, because the processes of differentiation within the social division of labour

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<sup>101</sup> E. Durkheim, *Division of Labor in Society*. New York: The Free Press, 1947.

<sup>102</sup> This concept of 'collective consciousness' is elaborated in several of Durkheim's works. See, for example, his *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*. New York: The Free Press, 1965.

brought about by this industrial development, destroy the basis of social solidarity. Industrial development gives rise to an anomic division of labour, a pathological condition of society that arises when the processes of differentiation are not sufficiently counteracted by forces in society that co-ordinate or integrate social processes within a well-balanced social order.

Different social groups or classes within the context of a division of labour having an anomic character are no longer bound by generally accepted norms, which regulate the limits to the goals people strive for and the expectations concerning the remuneration for their contributions to society. In a moral society, based on organic solidarity, those limitations contribute to the well-being of the individuals.

However, this pathological condition of society, caused by industrial development, may be remedied or prevented by a better organisation of societal relationships, a goal to which both professional organisations and the state have to contribute in concerted action. Moreover, this development is also dependent on the population's consciousness of the basically moral nature of society. Education has to contribute to this goal by giving the members of society a deeper understanding of the nature of society as a phenomenon *sui generis* and of the dependency of every individual on this order. This model had an important impact on social-democratic thinking about society in terms of integration. Modern variants of this model are still discernable in social policies today.

Since the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a very important theme in the discussions about societal development has been the rising tide of individualism and the concomitant decline of communal life. Increasingly the modern citizen and worker is disengaged from the traditional ties of local communities and finds himself in new situations in which he has to develop new skills in order to organise his life. We have seen that in *the (post-) industrial convergence thesis* this development is evaluated in a positive sense, both for the evolving society and for the individual. The individual makes his own choices with respect to the type of education, the selection of a position on the labour market and the choice of a career, where to live and how to organise his private life. In the *reformist perspective on societal change*, industrial development is also considered in terms of progress in comparison with the preceding stage: the individual has much better opportunities to exploit his talents and skills and has a higher level of autonomy. An important condition is, as we have seen, that pathological developments are avoided. This is possible by keeping in mind that society is a moral order and that social policies must be directed at the enhancement of social integration. This social integration is an integration of the industrial order that is of a higher order than that of the preceding stage of evolution, because it is based on *organic solidarity* that is a solidarity based on the integration of *the specificity* of the parts –professional groups and individuals– in the division of social labour.

The social changes that accompanied the rise of the industrial society were not seen in such a positive way by everyone. Some other collective representations

emerged, which harked back to the past and tried to conserve or to reconstruct what was disappearing or had disappeared in the march towards the future. In those approaches the negative effects of modernisation were emphasised and the rise of individualism was evaluated negatively. The individualisation of society and increasing individualism was associated with disintegration and the rise of uprooted, 'dangerous' classes, which were considered to be a threat to the established order. This led to the idea of the need of *social integration* as a remedy. Integration was conceived of as a sentiment of consensus, of shared convictions and opinions, of respect for the authorities and satisfaction with modest rewards, and of dislike and fear for moral deviations. Altogether, integration was seen as a compilation of habits and attitudes that encouraged people to reproduce the existing relations of authority and ways of remuneration.

It is evident that the concept of integration in this way of thought refers to moral integration and that differentiation is primarily a question of socio-structural changes. At the same time, the concept of integration refers seldom, in this context, to society at large. In most cases integration or a lack of integration refers to social conditions in certain parts of society. With respect to disintegration, the concept is linked with the concept of 'social problem': some urban quarters, some regions or some branches of industry are considered by policy-makers and sociologists to be not 'enough integrated' or to be 'disintegrated' and to be as such sources of violence and of insecurity. The industrial development uproots many workers, who are forced to leave their traditional surroundings in villages and cohesive urban quarters. Hence the idea of the rise of 'dangerous classes'. The negative side of individual freedom produced by the liberation from traditional constraints is discovered, as far as it concerns 'the Other'.<sup>103</sup> It is against this opposition between the idea of the negative individualism of 'society' and the positive values of 'community', that Durkheim proposed a new synthesis between the individual and his society, anchored in an organic solidarity.

It is important to note this opposition between the two perspectives on modern individualism, because the political thinking of our time is far from being emancipated from this cleavage between, on the one side, the 'good' society, consisting out of free men who are capable to organise their life and that of their family and, on the other side, the 'bad' society consisting out of individuals who must be integrated into coherent social frameworks in order to have an opportunity to give sense to their life. Social policies that are directed at the creation of socially cohesive neighbourhoods are considered, in this way of thinking, as the royal road in the struggle against the criminality of the 'new dangerous classes', often the product of modern international migration, that inhabit 'the difficult urban areas'. In this ideology, those classes are in search of community.

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<sup>103</sup> See F. Tönnies, *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft*, 1887 ; F. LePlay, *Les ouvriers européens*, 1855.

This way of thinking is a curious combination of the liberal model and the reformist one and leads to a new type of class society: one class consists of persons who are capable to cope with the evolution of modern society, the other class being the drop-outs who do not have these coping abilities and who need, because of that, an integrated social environment in which social control protects them against social deviance. This is a dangerous political illusion, as we will see later on in this book.

#### Reactions to unplanned change in Western Europe

After World War I, the European democracies were confronted with the rise of totalitarian political systems and an increasing restiveness among parts of their populations. Faced with the consequences of unplanned change of economic liberalism, it was quite obvious that policies had to be initiated in order to combat the negative consequences of societal developments which made large groups of people economically too vulnerable and rendered many of them susceptible to totalitarian ideologies and other anti-democratic ideas.

These developments compelled governments and democratic political parties to design strategies in order to counter these undesirable developments and to strengthen the democratic quality of society. The inter-war period saw the further rise of socio-economic rights, originating from the idea of social justice based on the fundamental equality of all citizens. These rights guaranteed minimum standards of living to everybody. However, the implementation of social and economic rights and the level of the provision of goods and services are highly dependent on a society's economic development. So the efforts to realise more social equality and social justice were seriously hampered by the great depression. Although the theoretical and the political foundations were laid in the inter-war period, the real construction of the welfare state did not start until after the Second World War. The same can be said of projects to reorganise economic life so that the workers would have a greater influence on decision-making within their occupational life. In this period, government came to play a more important role in resolving major social and economic problems with which democratic societies were confronted. The idea of planning – regulation – by governmental agencies in order to achieve selected goals became gradually accepted, in the areas of housing, education and the construction of major economic infrastructures. Nevertheless, there was no change in the basic characteristics of capitalism which consisted of market-oriented production of goods and services, a largely private ownership of the means of production and – in line with this – limited governmental control over economic life.

Publications which provided a theoretical analysis of the major changes in Europe during this period are less abundant than in the preceding period. In economics there are the influential macro-economic works of J.M. Keynes,

which provided an important foundation for the development of economic policies by the governments of Western democratic societies. Directly related to the development of the welfare state was the Beveridge Report on social insurance and allied services, which provided a model for an integrated development of the social services.<sup>104</sup> Karl Mannheim published his *Mensch und Gesellschaft im Zeitalter des Umbaus* in 1935 and a revised and considerably enlarged English version (*Man and Society in an Age of Reconstruction*) in 1940.<sup>105</sup> In this and other publications Mannheim presented a profound analysis of the social changes which were transforming the developed European countries. Mannheim pointed out the most important dangers for democracy of unguided social transformation, such as the transformation of the elites and the changing relationships between elites and masses; the replacement of *substantial rationality* by *functional or instrumental* rationality and the rise of irrationalism as a consequence of these changes. Behaviour is functionally rational when a series of actions is organised 'in such a way that it leads to a previously defined goal, every element in this series of actions receiving a functional position and rôle'.<sup>106</sup> Functional rationality implies calculability when viewed from the standpoint of an observer or a third party seeking to adjust himself to it.

This functional rationality is contrasted by Mannheim with substantial rationality. This is an act of thought which reveals intelligent insight into the interrelations of events in a given situation. Substantial rationality has to do with an understanding of the (selection of) objectives, while functional rationality pertains to the calculability to reach goals without reflecting on the question why those goals are selected and not other ones. Both rationalities have as their counterpart irrationality. Functional irrational are acts which break through a specific functional ordering. We can speak about substantial irrationality when the 'insight' is based on a false understanding (e.g. racist theories) or when acts are not based on reflection at all (such as those that are based on drives, impulses, wishes and feelings, both conscious and unconscious).<sup>107</sup> When we speak about a 'rationalised' industry or administration, we refer to functional rationality. In large-scale organisations a high degree of functional rationality is accompanied by a lack of substantial rationality among the majority of members, such as soldiers, workers and civil servants. They often accomplish their task without having a clear idea about its relationship to the organisation's final goals. This development has led to a growing distance between the elite and the masses, according to Mannheim, and to an increasing susceptibility of the masses to the appeal of leaders: 'as the individual becomes increasingly accustomed to being led by others and gradually gives up his own interpretation

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<sup>104</sup> W.H. Beveridge, *Report on Social Insurance and Allied Services*. London: HMSO, 1942. *Full Employment in a Free Society*. London: HMSO, 1944.

<sup>105</sup> Karl Mannheim, *Man and Society in an Age of Reconstruction*. *Studies in Modern Social Structure*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, Ltd, 1940.

<sup>106</sup> K. Mannheim, *o.c.*, p.53.

<sup>107</sup> K. Mannheim, *o.c.*, p.53.



of events for those which others give him'.<sup>108</sup> And this implies that people can be misled easily by political leaders, as was clearly illustrated in Mannheim's time by the adherence of the masses to fascist leaders and their doctrines. Mannheim's answer to this problem is, as is well known, planning for freedom. 'Once we have realised that the popularity of determinism is bound to decrease in view of the number of social controls which will fall into our hands, it soon becomes obvious that nowadays we cannot take a fatalistic view of our destiny or reject the thought of planning'.<sup>109</sup> The development of an active and managing attitude is necessary, an attitude which is reflected, as Mannheim remarks, in a corresponding frame of mind: the functionalist type of thought in the social sphere. Planning is the deliberate regulation and intelligent mastery of the relationships between institutions and objects.

The problem we are confronted with is the combination of democratic responsibility with rational planning. Planning for freedom is planning in a well-organised society which we ourselves have chosen, as citizens. Fair and democratic planning does not involve the surrender of freedom, according to Mannheim who, moreover, points out in which ways unplanned processes entail lack of freedom. His conception of planning is one that guarantees the existence of essential forms of freedom through planning itself. Mannheim's analysis and proposals indicated a number of important goals for democratic developed societies, goals connected with the reconstruction of social institutions and the transformation of man by education for freedom in society. His analysis and his main strategy are clearly related to the reformist perspective on society and so are the main strategies connected with the development of the welfare state.

During the inter-war period the idea of planning as an instrument of democratic societies to realise societal goals was hesitantly accepted by policy-makers and applied in a piecemeal way. On the theoretical level Mannheim presented planning as a major instrument of democratic society to survive as such and to enhance the quality of democratic decision-making.

After World War II the European societies had to recover from the wounds inflicted by the war, to reconstruct their economies and to adapt themselves to changed international relations. The first ventures in international European cooperation were launched (e.g. the creation of the Benelux, followed by the EC). The models of development adhered to were congruent with the goals of economic growth and with achieving well-ordered, internal social structures: the (post-) industrial convergence perspective as the model of economic development in combination with social policies which were based on variants of the reformist perspective. The idea of planning was widely accepted, both in relation with planned economic restructuring and with the setting-up of welfare state institutions.

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<sup>108</sup> K. Mannheim, o.c.,p.59.

<sup>109</sup> K. Mannheim, o.c.,p.240.

Until well into the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the dominant attitude towards development was optimistic. Faith in the benevolent long-term social consequences of industrialisation was considerable in the Western industrialised countries and this faith was not restricted to the ruling elites. Moreover, I note a strong belief in the opportunities provided by science, including the social sciences, to contribute to the solution of the major social problems and to the development of a harmonious and more equitable society. The main goals of government policies were derived from this general perspective on development current in advanced societies, even though there were also important differences between countries concerning the degree of acceptance of planning instruments and the range and intensity of social services to be achieved. I do not have the intention to describe and analyse at length the major social and economic changes up to the beginning of the 21st century. In this chapter and the following chapters my emphasis is in the first place on collective representations of societal changes. I note that at the end of the sixties and the beginning of the seventies there are some marked changes in the attitudes of the populations which, partly at least, refuse to conform to the exigencies of economic life and require changes in the organisation of working relations. Moreover, there are the first signs of a growing pessimism with respect to the benefits of technological and scientific development.<sup>110</sup>

#### Increasing criticism of the main perspectives on development: conflict and malleability

At the same time it is clearly demonstrated by the protests of the younger generations that grew up after the Second World War, that they were not willing to accept the existing economic, social and political conditions as such. Further economic growth was assured, according to them, and time had come to liberate oneself from many of the social constraints which the older generations had accepted as part of the normal human condition. Nevertheless, also the first warnings against a too optimistic view on economic development came on the scene. The Report to the Club of Rome on *The Limits to Growth* warned against the depletion of non-renewable resources on a world-scale.<sup>111</sup> This report caused considerable disquiet amongst a wide audience..

In the Western democracies there was, in combination with those developments, also a strong opposition against the collective representation of societal development as 'harmonious'. The tenets of the reformist model were rejected by a major part of the younger generations and the pivotal role of conflict in the process of social change was 'rediscovered'. In political life there were discussions about the replacement of the 'harmony-model' by the 'conflict-

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<sup>110</sup> See : J. Galtung, 'The future: a forgotten dimension'. In; H. Ornauer, H.Wiberg , A. Sicinsky and J. Galtung, eds., *Images of the World in the Year 2000*. The Hague/Paris/Atlantic Highlands: N.J. Mouton/Humanities Press, 1976, pp. 62ff.

<sup>111</sup> D.L. Meadows, *The Limits to Growth. A Report to the Club of Rome. Project on the ,Predicament of Mankind*. New York; Universe Books, 1972.

model' and the type of negotiations within production-organisations and universities, between political parties and between labour unions and employers' organisations were often based on the latter model. A theoretical study that put conflict back in the analysis of social change, harking back to Marx – without being a Marxist analysis – is Dahrendorf's *Class and Class Conflict in Industrial Society*.<sup>112</sup> In this study he argues against the idea that societal conflicts are avoidable, as is assumed in the combination of industrialism *cum* reformism. In contradistinction to this he states, following Marx, that conflict is immanent within the social order. He does not accept Marx's interpretation of class struggle as being based on the ownership of the means of production, but states that conflicts spring from power and authority relations which inevitably accompany every type of social organisation. In his model of society opposition exists in the major social institutions between those who occupy positions which are invested with power and authority and those who have no power. In modern industrial society, there are several types of opposition in the different institutional areas such as political life, production-organisations and mass media, between those who rule and those who do not. One of Dahrendorf's most important observations is that industrial development is connected, not with an increasing polarisation between capital and labour, but with major oppositions between ruling elites and non-elites in the different institutional domains, oppositions which tend to criss-cross. According to Dahrendorf, 'it was, in particular, the institutionalisation of the two great social forces of mobility and equality that has steered class structures and conflicts in directions unforeseen by Marx'.<sup>113</sup> Nevertheless, in this same period there is certainly also a revival of interest in collective representations in which emphasis is laid on the growing opposition between the ruling class and those who are ruled. The main theme is that the (functionally) rational organisation of production, of society and its members produce an irrational society. Its massive production is destructive for the free development of human needs and faculties. In such a society, based on technological domination and co-ordination, the forces opposing the system are reconciled, defeated or refuted 'in the name of the historical prospects of freedom from toil and domination', as Herbert Marcuse remarked.<sup>114</sup>

In this period we also witness, especially in Europe, the development of collective societal representations in which (collective) choices and the voluntary shaping of social life take a dominant place. This development stands in a clear-cut opposition to the deterministic bases of the major currents of thought about societal change. In political life, especially on the social-liberal left wing, the idea of the malleability of social life became popular. In the present stage of development in which there is no longer a scarcity of commodities and of new

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<sup>112</sup> R. Dahrendorf, *Class and Class Conflict in Industrial Society*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, Ltd, 1959 (first German edition: 1957).

<sup>113</sup> R. Dahrendorf, *o.c.*, p.57.

<sup>114</sup> See: Herbert Marcuse, *One-Dimensional Man. The Ideology of Industrial Society*. London: Sphere Books, 1968 (first ed. 1964).

technologies, societies are now in a position that they can escape from the older deterministic patterns, it was argued. We are now able to choose our future, as Gershuny stated in his *After Industrial Society?. The Emerging Self-service Economy*.<sup>115</sup>

In 1968 Etzioni published his *Active Society* in which he suggests 'a synthesis of the collectivistic approach, which in effect focuses on ongoing processes and change, and a voluntaristic-cybernetic approach, largely concerned with guided processes and change'.<sup>116</sup> His analysis concentrates on the relationships between elites and non-elites. An active society is typically characterised as high in control (cybernetic capacities and power) and high in consensus formation. The elites select between alternative policies, issue signals to the non-elites and respond adequately to feedback information. The active society is an ideal-type and as such a design that might be the result of democratic planning. This model may be applicable to relatively small and homogeneous societies, where consensus formation is in principle possible. It is illusory to imagine the formation of the European Union in such terms, or the present post-industrial societies.

Another important model that emphasises the role of societal choice, was developed by Touraine during the 1970s. Touraine rejects the models of development which include ongoing processes and states that 'Society is a drama; neither situation nor intention but social action and social relationships'.<sup>117</sup> Increasingly, modern democratic societies are producing their own transformations as a consequence of the struggle between social movements to determine the direction of societal development according to their design. Modern society is produced by the contest between classes and social movements 'for control of society'. In this approach, social movements maintain goals as part of their 'historicity' and in function of their image of a (new) cultural orientation. As Touraine states: '...when we reach the highest level of historicity, where society is self-reproducing, the evolutionist image is replaced by another way of understanding, by the idea that society is a system capable of producing and generating its own normative orientations instead of receiving them from a transcendental order or movement which we call God, Mind or History'.<sup>118</sup> These ideas were expressed in this way when in the European societies social movements came to the fore with a strong vehemence, movements that stressed strongly the malleability of social life. In this context

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<sup>115</sup> J. Gershuny, *After Industrial Society? The Emerging Self-service Economy*. London and Basingstoke: The Macmillan Press, 1978, p. 3ff.

<sup>116</sup> A. Etzioni, *The Active Society. A Theory of Societal and Political Processes*. New York/London: The Free Press/Collier-Macmillan, 1968; id., 'Toward a Macro-sociology'. In: J.C. McKinney and E.A. Tiryakian, eds, *Theoretical Sociology. Perspectives and Developments*. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts/Meredith Corporation, 1970, p.76.

<sup>117</sup> Alain Touraine, *La voix et le regard*. Paris : Editions du Seuil, 1978, p. 9.

<sup>118</sup> A. Touraine, *o.c.* .passim.

we give another citation that expresses this mood. In 1967 Leach said in the Reith Lecture of that year: ‘All of us need to understand that God, Nature, or Chance or Evolution, or the Course of History or whatever you like to call it, cannot be trusted anymore. We simply must take charge of our own fate. We must somehow see to it that the decisions about long-term consequences are taken by men who understand what they are doing and not by bewildered amateurs. And it could be so. Change need not always be something that happens to us; it could be something which we choose to bring about’.<sup>119</sup>

This confidence in the malleability of society did, as we know, not endure in political life during the 1980s and thereafter. Thatcherism was a brutal return to the belief in the infallibility of the market to which social life has to adapt itself. When Touraine published his *Critique de la modernité* in 1992, he seemed to be less optimistic concerning the role of social movements in the processes of societal change, but he retained the central idea of the ‘historicity’ of social changes. For him, ongoing modernisation goes together with a fragmentation of human experience. Human experience disintegrates into four separate areas: Eros, consumption, enterprise and state, only connected, in a deficient way, by technology. Technology –seen as instrumental rationality- is a connecting element, but it is far from being a connecting principle in spite of the fact that technology is often presented as such, especially in the ideology of technological determinism.<sup>120</sup> If that would be the case, technology would determine the occupational division of labour and even the social division of labour. Touraine insists that the development of society is in the first place dependent upon the ideas people have about the arrangement of their future society, upon the collective representations of societal groups about the nature of society. In this perspective the future social conditions are strongly dependent upon the struggle between social movements with different collective representations about their future.<sup>121</sup>

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<sup>119</sup> E.R. Leach, *A Runaway World?* (Reith Lecture 1967). London/ Oxford University Press, 1967, p.6.

<sup>120</sup> A. Touraine, *Critique de la modernité*. Paris : Fayard, 1992, p. 172.

<sup>121</sup> In the light of our preceding analysis, we can only agree with Giddens’s conclusion: ‘In explaining social change no single and sovereign mechanism can be specified that will unlock the mysteries of human social development reducing them to a unitary formula, or that will account for the major transmissions between societal types in such way either’. The present task of sociologists is the ‘destruction of a whole range of theories of social change, particularly those of an evolutionary type and for a reconstruction of the nature of power as inherent in the constitution of social life’. He adds that the deconstruction of theories of social change will show that some of the most cherished notions of social theory – including those of ‘historical materialism’ – cannot be realised. (A. Giddens, *The Constitution of Society. Outline of a Theory of Structuration*. Berkeley/Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1984, p.243 and 229. Touraine is convinced that ‘The sociologist today has to find his way amidst the ruins of functionalism, economism

A fundamental contribution to the problem of choice and of malleability of society is also presented by Jürgen Habermas, who is generally regarded as an exponent of the 'critical' theory, that has as main task; (a) to expose, in a historical-sociological interpretation, the basis of contradictions of capitalist society, for example the contradiction between individual freedom as a basic value and the actual conditions prevailing in society; and (b) to anticipate coming developments and to provide a moral justification for the efforts to change the direction of social change. Moreover, critical theory has to specify its own relation with the praxis in which it roots itself (the problem of the relationship between knowledge and interest). All this is necessary in order: (a) to counter the conception of society as a universe of self-propelling, productive control and science and technology as the instruments which contribute to this process; and (b) to expound the technical possibility for individuals to escape from alienation and achieve the freedom to determine their own destinies. Habermas developed his theory of communicative action. Communicative action is symbolic action, set by Habermas against systems of purposive-rational action. It is governed by binding consensual norms, which define reciprocal expectations about behaviour and is related to such 'goals' as emancipation, individuation, and the extension of communication that is free from domination.<sup>122</sup>

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and evolutionism'.(A. Touraine, *La voix et le regard*. Paris : Editions du Seuil, 1978.) And Boudon says that the underlying programme of the theories of social change 'appear to a large extent...to be a failure' (R. Boudon, *La place du désordre. Critique des théories du changement social* .Paris : Presses Universitaires de France, 1984, p.191)His analysis leads him to the conclusion that all theories of social change, which pretend to be able to reduce the processes of social transformation to dominant factors (such as 'dependency', 'extension of the market', 'cultural changes', 'class struggle', 'characteristics of political organisations', and 'the removal of bottle-necks') have to be dismissed as inadequate'.(R. Boudon, *o.c.*,p.184).

<sup>122</sup> Jürgen Habermas, *Theorie des kommunikativen Handelns, Vols. I & II*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1981; *Toward a Rational Society*. London: Heinemann, 1971, especially Chapter VI 'Technology and Science as Ideology', pp.11ff. I also find emphasis on societal choice, although less voluntaristic than in the approaches of Touraine and Habermas, and in the works of Eisenstadt. The latter tries to combine elements of Marxism, symbolic interactionism and neo-evolutionism. The main task is the identification of tensions between the social division of labour and the types of acceptance of the social order. His analysis 'focuses on the transformative propensities of social systems, perceiving such propensities not as external or random events but as major aspects of the social order'. In this context Eisenstadt emphasised the divergences within the general development towards modernity. These divergences are related to processes of structural differentiation and the different combinations of cultural codes and orientation that are possible within a society. In his words: 'Thus, the preceding analysis stresses the relative

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openness of both institutionalisation of social and cultural models and processes of change. Given this openness, different aspects of social systems may in apparently similar situations be combined in different ways; in apparently similar situations of change there may emerge different patterns of winning coalitions, each leading to unique constellations of major components of the macro- sociological order'.(S.N. Eisenstadt, *Revolution and the Transformation of Societies*. New York/London: The Free Press/Collier-Macmillan, 1978, p.156

## CHAPTER VIII: COLLECTIVE REPRESENTATIONS OF EUROPEAN SOCIETIES (II)

When I introduced the different ways of looking at 'Europe's culture', we were confronting different ways in which inhabitants of Europe imagine the culture of Europe or the cultures of Europe. In fact we were dealing with different collective representations of Europe. Some of those representations emphasise what Europeans have in common – the cultural core of Europe – while others accentuate Europe's cultural diversity. Most people show a tendency to regard European culture as something that is rather static, as something that has to be preserved against the forces of modernity, not as something dynamic in the process of societal development. We have seen that the culture of modernisation – Europe as a culture in the making – is an exception, but here we can observe that this collective representation often stresses the assumed opposition between modernity and culture, as culture seems to belong to 'tradition', something that will be overcome in the process of modernisation. We are almost never confronted with ideas which reject the rigid opposition between conservation and modernity, analysing the ways in which 'culture' plays a role in facilitating processes of change.

One very important consequence of this opposition between conservation (tradition) and modernity in a period that only one collective representation of modernity prevails - the neo-liberal ideology of modernisation – is an almost complete absence of thinking about collective choices which could alter our common future. There are, as we all know, many worries about our future which are expressed by several social movements, but these do not formulate their objectives in relation with (collective) representations in which the future is presented in a coherent way.

In order to substantiate this point, we will analyse the different ways in which collective representations play a role in *political life*, both on the level of the nation-states and on the European level. As such I will distinguish between the following collective representations: 1. the market society; 2. the welfare society and the concept of social exclusion; 3. the multicultural society; 4. the risk society and the security society; 5. the conservative society and 6. the fundamentalist society.

These representations of society will be related to some important changes within European societies and to the development of European society. The fact that I discuss briefly several 'models' of the future society, models which cannot be integrated into one coherent perspective, points directly at the major problem the EU and its member-states are confronted with: globalisation, interpreted in



terms of the (post-) industrial convergence perspective (or the ideology of globalisation), cannot be reacted upon with the help of a consistent societal model of development that goes beyond a scenario of adaptation, as I will try to explain in this and in the next chapter. Instead, there is a very fragmented view of the future of western democracies. Hence, there is no systematic (European) defence of national, regional and European diversity against the forces of modernisation, as we will see later on.

To this I can add that it would be very nearsighted to look at the development of the EU only in terms of adaptation of national societies to international economic changes. A more active role is to look at the development of a *European society*, based on political choices in order to structure, to a certain degree, the social and cultural future of the EU in a way that goes beyond the mechanistic role of adaptation.

The choices that have to be made to construct social Europe are certainly not something that has to be left to political elites and to the projects of rational bureaucracies alone. These choices must really be endorsed by well-informed European citizens, engaged in a democratic process in which the options for different goals and their consequences are widely explained and commented. This implies that this process must be accompanied by the contributions of persons who take their time to ponder about this future and who are able to explain which types of choices can be made and why some choices have to be avoided because they are fundamentally incompatible with the basic values on which the European civilisation is grounded. These choices pertain to questions concerning the nature of European society. Some types of future scenarios may be attractive to some interest groups, but very dangerous in the long-run for our future liberty, such as the choice for a certain type of a multicultural or multi-ethnic Europe, based on the acceptance of the principle of the rights of collectivities with specific collective identities. Acceptance of such a principle will lead to a fragmented Europe and the downfall of democracy and of individual freedom.

### **1. The market society.**

In the collective representation of the market society the behaviour of the members of society is based on their self-interests, on the calculation of the rewards which result from their personal investments. Is this model of the market applicable in other domains than in economic life?

At the end of the 70s important technological changes and the increasing globalisation of many markets led to important adjustments in the production organisations and hence in the organisation of labour and labour relations. In this period in which there was an ample labour supply, even of highly skilled professionals, the remaining vestiges of social policy within companies were largely abandoned in name of the efficiency principle: now the worker's qualifications had to fit exactly the task requirements, which had been laid down

by management. He, who did not have the qualifications which fitted exactly the job description, was not hired and the persons who were occupying a job but who were not totally living up to the changing standards of their tasks were fired. The number of short-term labour contracts increased, especially within the younger generation (younger than 30 years). The new employee had to be 'flexible.' Since then, this trend has not changed substantially.

However, this is not all. Modern organisations are developing, as a consequence of technological-organisational change, a hierarchical structure that is less steep than in the preceding periods. The number of layers in the hierarchy is reduced at the cost of middle levels. This implies a reduction of opportunities for advancement (less vertical intragenerational mobility). Tasks are often becoming more complex, but opportunities of the workers to influence the handling of these tasks and task-relations are decreasing at the same time, while educational requirements rise. The employee is considered to adapt to the changing requirements of his organisation, he must be achievement-oriented and be sensitive to rewards, especially in financial terms. This latter requirement is difficult to reconcile with the fact that it becomes increasingly difficult to ascertain objectively the nature of individual contributions. Moreover, there is no possibility to arrive at a consensus about the links between achievements and their remuneration. Given this emphasis on financial remuneration, it is puzzling, indeed, that it seems to be largely ignored by management that financial rewards do not produce durable motivational effects.

Man-power selection is also changing in this period. It is true that formal educational requirements are still important, but together with knowledge and accumulated experience socio-normative qualifications come to the fore, such as communicative abilities, flexibility, and resistance to stress. When an organisation's capacity to commit workers to the organisation's goals is weak, when the organic solidarity, based on mutual dependencies has been eroded, then the requirement to conform to the organisation's rules becomes more important in the selection of workers. When workers have no longer a sense of solidarity and loyalty to a system in which their position is no longer based on specific abilities and where underemployment of a person's achieved (formal) qualities seems to become the general rule, then socio-normative requirements are introduced as an alternative to the former types of attachments to the organisation. It is evident that such an attachment must be weak under present working-conditions.

These changes are, to a certain extent, understandable in economic life. But in the present stage of societal development the (global) market is also presented as the model of society in general that governs – or should govern – the actions of the individual as a citizen. This is a highly implausible model for society as a *social* one. The market is there to obtain services and to exchange products, but it does not create social connections, it does not build stable social networks; it does not result in durable social structures. In a typical market relation the parties, once the transaction is concluded, go their own way. The market does not have a perspective on a future that is different from the present market conditions.

Although the market and the market relations which go with it are very useful, it would be a gross error to think that all social relations can be expressed in terms of market relationships. The market cannot give answers to our questions concerning our social origins, our identity as an individual and as a group member, even less to questions pertaining to our collective and individual destiny. The market is governed by 'abstract, universal, rational principles based on the utilitarian criterion of the greatest good for the greatest number' and stands as such, as Fiske states, besides other relational models, found in varying degrees in all societies: *communal sharing* (caring, kindness, altruism, selfless generosity. Protecting intimate personal relationships); *authority ranking* (what the Supreme Being commands is right. Obedience to the will of superiors) and, finally, *equality matching* (fairness as a strict equality, equal treatment, and balanced reciprocity).<sup>123</sup> Much research has shown that the market principle, in contradistinction to a widespread belief, is far less broadly and effectively applicable than it is assumed to be by many persons today.<sup>124</sup> Even the market cannot function without taking into consideration the fact that work and working relations are essential elements of the market economy as sources of life-satisfaction and self-respect of individual workers and citizens. Modern society has to develop mechanisms that counteract the strong tendency in economic decision-making to regard workers as costs that must be reduced on the basis of rational calculus (and that in spite of the slogan of management that 'human capital' is the most important production factor). This is only one example - although not a minor one- of the urgent need to regulate the relationships between the (global) market and society. It will be evident that a European Union has a stronger position than the individual nation-states to develop strategies to influence the course of societal development as not only driven by the forces of the market. This is already clearly visible in the measures to protect the physical environment. It should also be visible in matters that concern the quality of social life in terms of the social and cultural environment.

My conclusion is that the idea of a society that is based on the model of the market-place is not realistic and certainly not desirable as the foundation of national and European policies. The individualistic *do ut des* principle is too shallow for the organisation of social life. Moreover, in front of globalisation collectivist or communal tendencies are not gradually disappearing. Everywhere we see the rise of new and old identity claims.

## 2. The welfare society and the concept of social exclusion

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<sup>123</sup> Alan Page Fiske, *Structures of Social Life. The Four Elementary Forms of Human Relations*. New York: The Free Press/ Toronto: Collier Macmillan Canada/ New York etc.: Maxwell Macmillan International, 1991, p.46ff.

<sup>124</sup> Robert E. Lane, *The Market Experience*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.

### *The welfare society*

After World War II the western democracies rapidly developed the welfare state. This development was strongly supported by the large majority of the populations and benefited from the increasing economic wealth that characterised the period in which the welfare state-institutions were founded and extended. The essence of the welfare state is, in Wilensky's formulation, 'government-protected minimum standards of income, nutrition, health, housing, and education, assured to every citizen as a political right, not as charity'.<sup>125</sup> Its very core is an institutional complex of specialised societal services, guaranteed and supported by the government, but operating in society in direct interaction with different categories of clients. As such the welfare state maintains a welfare society.<sup>126</sup>

Between the nation-states in (Western) Europe many important diversities could - and can - be observed with respect to the organisation of the welfare institutions, the level of public spending and the ideological basis of the welfare system, but the general line of development is rather similar. The welfare state offered a collective representation of a better future for all, anchored in social solidarity. Its development was facilitated by economic growth, but at the same time it stimulated economic life by a rising level of consumers' spending and by reducing social restiveness of the working-classes. The welfare state can be regarded as an expression of social justice and, at the same time, as a major adjustment of democratic society to the exigencies of economic development

Since the end of the 70s democratic support for the welfare state is shrinking rapidly in the wake of decreasing economic growth, the steeply rising level of unemployment and the manifestation of new types of poverty which can be seen, partly at least, as a negative consequence of the individualisation of society. In this period political debates start on the 'stagnant welfare state', the 'welfare state in crisis' and the 'far too expensive welfare state'.<sup>127</sup> Some argue that the welfare state has to be dismantled because it has too many perverse effects, especially among the unemployed, who are not willing - it is argued - to accept jobs that are paid on the minimum level. Others hold the opinion that the costs of the welfare state should be considerably reduced. No plans are developed to restructure the welfare state in line with the changed and changing economic and social conditions of social life. However, we must not forget that there still remains a considerable support for the welfare state institutions.

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<sup>125</sup> H. Wilensky, *The Welfare State and Equality. Structural and ideological roots of public expenditures*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1975, p.1.

<sup>126</sup> J.A.A. van Doorn, 'De verzorgingsmaatschappij in de praktijk'. In: J.A.A. van Doorn et al., *De stagnerende verzorgingsstaat*. Meppel/Amsterdam: Boom, 1978, p.17.

<sup>127</sup> See, e.g., P. Rosanvallon, *La crise de l'Etat-Providence*. Paris : Editions du Seuil, 1981.

These political discussions about the negative economic and moral effects of the welfare state had a negative effect on the perspective of a coming 'Social Europe'. Nation-states with rather generous welfare systems were afraid that a Social Europe would imply the introduction of a reduced or minimal European welfare state, a vision that would be in line with the present interpretation of the ideology of globalisation. For the moment, there are no policies that are connected with the idea of the introduction of a European welfare state. Member-states muddle through with this dull image of the present welfare state.

Which are the main forces that have undesirable consequences for social life? Social policies have to be based on a good understanding of the major causes of social problems. To give an example: It is largely insufficient to counter the rising tide of criminality and vandalism, especially in urban zones, only with more repression, sometimes accompanied with slogans as 'zero tolerance', as long as the factors that produce undesirable social circumstances are not taken into account with adequate policy measures. Nevertheless, looking at the way in which such problems are handled in the European nations, it is easy to see that the political awareness of the real causes of such problems is rather low. During decennia most policies have been almost ineffective in combating the sources of the growth of negative social circumstances.<sup>128</sup>

In the context of my analysis I will refrain from giving a detailed description of the major economic and social changes that transformed the rich western democracies during the last fifty years. These changes are well known. The coming of the post-industrial society was accompanied by important changes in the structure of the labour market: the growth of the tertiary sector in which the production of services is concentrated. This development was made possible by the ongoing automation of industrial production and by the rise of modern information systems. The middle classes expanded and many new opportunities for individual advancement in working-life were created. The debate about the coming of the post-industrial society and about the rise of the 'information society' concealed to a certain degree that the dominant mode of production is still a capitalist one. The ongoing economic growth and the expanding welfare state's services contributed to the idea, held by the majority of the population, that in the present stage of capitalist development the protection of workers against major economic and social contingencies and risks, based on social and economic rights, was assured. Social and economic inequalities decreased, opportunities for advanced learning and for advancement in occupational life increased. The major characteristics of the capitalist class society seemed to fade away.

In the eighties, however, the ongoing automation and informatisation produced a reduction of opportunities for employment, which is now reinforced by a stronger internationalisation and globalisation of the economy. Sharp

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<sup>128</sup> J. Berting and C. Villain-Gandossi, 'Urban Transformations, The French Debate and Social Quality'. In: W. Beck et al., *Social Quality: A Vision for Europe*. The Hague/London/Boston: Kluwer Law International, 2001, Chapter 11, p.173ff.

international competition and the increasing danger of speculative take-overs of companies forced management to take deep-cutting measures in order to reconstruct their organisation. The central concepts in this context were –and to a certain extent still are– 'reengineering', 'downsizing' and 'lean production'. The OECD emphasised the urgency of the reinforcement of the market, of deregulation, of an increase of flexibility of working hours and salary-costs and of a revision of the laws which pertain to workers' rights. These laws are considered to constrain too strongly management's initiatives. The OECD also put forward that an increase of income-inequalities is desirable, because it is deemed necessary to reinforce the relation between individual achievement and rewards: social allowances have to be reduced in order to stimulate the unemployed to accept lowly-paid jobs. Such a strategy would in the long run reduce unemployment and social exclusion. However, these policies raised the vulnerability of the working population. This led to a growing sense of insecurity and uncertainty, not only among workers who have part-time jobs and short-time contracts, but also among those with relatively stable jobs. As Roustang remarks with respect to France: 'There is a general disappointment. The feeling of insecurity with respect to the job is very widespread and dissatisfaction pertaining to working-conditions and working-relationships is rather general. Everybody feels the duty to give much without receiving much in return'.<sup>129</sup>

This uncertainty, especially among the poor and the socially excluded without stable social ties, may create a culture of precariousness, an adaptation by informal and often illegal or criminal means to the exigencies of social life. This rather pessimistic view is not only a psychological effect of social and economic exclusion, but is also related to important changes in the labour market, which touch society's broad middle classes. Remember that especially the broad middle classes could be characterised by their awareness that social advance or improvement is increasingly dependent on *individual* achievements. This consciousness comprises the conviction that in this emerging individualistic achievement-oriented society persons with 'capacities' and 'talents' have the opportunity to change their social position in a positive way. Those who are really making efforts to achieve better results than others, advance in social life, especially in their professional life.

The individualistic achievement-orientation contains as a central idea the conviction that there is a direct connection in economic life between 'investments' in terms of individual initiatives and risk-taking, based on systematic analyses, on education and experiences on the one hand, and 'rewards' in terms of income, social prestige, influence and power, on the other. Success in one's working-life is predominantly dependent, in this view, on the rational utilisation of opportunities.

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<sup>129</sup> G. Roustang et al., *Vers un nouveau contrat social*. Paris : Desclée de Brouwer, 1996, p.27: 'C'est la déception générale. Le sentiment d'insécurité pour son emploi est très tendu et l'insatisfaction à l'égard des conditions et des relations de travail assez générale. Chacun a le sentiment de devoir donner beaucoup sans contrepartie'.

There seems no longer to be a common and positive image of (post-) industrial society. The wide-spread consciousness of this society as being an individualistic achievement society declines rapidly.

#### *The concept of social exclusion*

The steep rise of the number of unemployed workers and of 'disabled persons' - those persons, who were considered no longer to fit the requirements of their 'restructured' jobs - led to an awareness of social exclusion as a major social problem of our society. The question was raised whether this process of exclusion would lead to a deep and durable cleavage within modern society.

On the political level, the debate on 'social exclusion' has become quite popular, notwithstanding the incredible vagueness of the concept. The concept as such is not a new one. It was already used in the beginning of the last century. Weber used this concept to refer to a universal process (in the sense that it is not specific to a determinate historical period). Exclusion is a process in which members of a group restrict competition by closing the door to social and economic opportunities for those who are 'different' in one or several respects, such as race, language, religion, local or social origin, ethnicity.<sup>130</sup> Although it is evident that social exclusion in our society includes this 'universal' process, the modern discussion of social exclusion refers to something more comprehensive and, at the same time, more specific to the present social and economic developments. It may be, as Paugam states, 'That exclusion is henceforth the paradigm with which our society becomes aware of itself and its dysfunctioning, and reaches, sometimes urgently and in a state of confusion, for the solutions with respect to problems which are torturing the collectivity',<sup>131</sup>

The shift to a 'social exclusion paradigm' may be explained by the fact that the category comprising the excluded individuals is very heterogeneous and unstable: (long-term) unemployed with very different occupational backgrounds, those who are qualified as unfit to work under the present market conditions, young persons who leave the educational system but who fail to find a job in spite of good educational qualifications, unskilled members of various ethnic minorities, those who are retiring from their professional life at a rather early age etc. However, many persons who belong to this category of socially excluded do find jobs after some time, while others join the ranks of the socially excluded for good. It is very evident that the socially excluded are not a class in the sense that

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<sup>130</sup> See M. Weber, *Soziologie. Weltgeschichtliche Analysen. Politik* (Stuttgart, Alfred Kröner Verlag, 1968), pp. 63ff.: 'Mit wachsender Zahl der Konkurrenten im Verhältnis zum Erwerbsspielraum wächst hier das Interesse der an der Konkurrenz Beteiligten, diese irgendwie einzuschränken'.

<sup>131</sup> S. Paugam, 'La constitution d'un paradigme'. In : S. Paugam, ed., *L'exclusion. L'état des savoirs*. Paris :Editions La Découverte, 1996, p.7.

the excluded persons have a common interest and could try, as a collectivity, to improve their situation.

The problem of social exclusion is connected with the ongoing individualisation of society that erodes the possibilities for social support of many of those who are excluded from economic life. The shift to the 'social exclusion paradigm' seems to be related to the fact that the traditional class structure has become very fluid and that class-antagonisms which characterised an earlier period, have largely vanished. This is not to say that social inequality disappeared. The technological-organisational changes we are now witnessing are accompanied by a very strong dominance of the ideology of the market, by the idea that only a free market is, in the long run, a good remedy against social exclusion and against many other social problems. Social exclusion exists because society is too rigid. More flexibility of working-time and of salary-costs, increasing inequality with respect to remunerations to provide more incentives to workers and reduction of the expenditures of the social welfare system will produce a sound, normal equilibrium. Society has to adapt itself to the 'iron laws' of the market. Hence ongoing reengineering of enterprises, lean production, McDonaldisation, increasing numbers of part-time jobs, of intermediate working-contracts, under-utilisation of workers' qualifications, an increasing emphasis on 'social' qualifications of workers, i.e. their ability to be 'flexible' and to disregard, when necessary, their social ties.

So the shift to the 'social exclusion paradigm' is not only related to the changing character of the class society, but also to this one-sided market-oriented way of observing the world: discussing the position of the socially excluded and making propositions about the possibilities to reinsert them in economic life and/or to reintegrate them in social life, shows your concern with the disadvantaged while, at the same time, you avoid the analysis of the processes which go on to produce the socially excluded. The latter analysis, however, is urgent because the social position of the category of socially excluded persons is quite different from that of the marginal groups during the first stages of the development of industrial society. One can state that in this preceding period the marginal groups were those that had not yet been included in modern society. They were the rearguard of traditional society that was gradually absorbed by the industrial system and, in a later period, by the Welfare State. In contradistinction to this, the 'new' social excluded we are discussing now, are mostly persons who abide to the tenets of modern social and economic life, but who are nevertheless ousted from active participation as a consequence of massive reengineering of economic life in response to globalisation and the rise of the information- and service industry.

The emphasis on social exclusion not only means, in many cases, a political disregard *for the processes that produce exclusion*, but also a *not taking into account of social exclusion's consequences*, such as a growing feeling of insecurity, among those who are still gainfully employed and have labour-contracts which are not limited in time, that is, the large majority of all workers, and among the students who are preparing themselves for occupational life.



Although it is important to know the volume, the social composition and the stability of the category of socially excluded, we also have the task to analyse the ways in which the socially excluded are produced and in which ways this social phenomenon has an impact on social life (e.g. sense of uncertainty and vulnerability of the employed, a decreasing degree of commitment to education).

Social exclusion must be approached as a *process* and as a *relative* phenomenon: there are different degrees and types of social exclusion and, related to this, unequal opportunities to combat those types of exclusion. The discussion about social exclusion often refers to a) the fact that many persons are excluded from the labour-market and b) the observation that many of the excluded lack durable social ties as a consequence of society's lack of integration or cohesiveness. Society is strongly individualised and an important consequence of this is that an individual who loses his job is not (enough) backed up by other social institutional groups and networks.

Statistical data show that working-conditions are becoming increasingly less attractive, especially in the lower ranks and for younger workers (up to 30 years) and women: short-term labour contracts, part-time jobs, shorter working-weeks and consequently less pay, no opportunities for advancement or for learning on the job, jobs with almost no autonomy and which are filled by overqualified workers. The number of these jobs is absolutely and relatively increasing, creating a category of workers who, although working, are often living on or below the subsistence level. Their life is precarious and even more so when they lose their uncertain jobs. It is unlikely that they will be able to accumulate financial reserves.

Exclusion risks are unequally distributed in our society. Moreover, those who are at the end of the exclusion-path clearly feel that the political system does not have a real grip on the processes which lead to exclusion. At the same time, they are not themselves capable to develop a coherent representation of (European) society, which could transform this category into a political force. Instead, parts of the socially excluded tend to follow political leaders who propagate a type of 'protection' by social exclusion of immigrants and political refugees and by the closure of the national system. Despite globalisation of the market-economy, we find a waning of international solidarity of the working-classes.

We witness a process of social fragmentation of society and a growing inequality of the distribution of precarious events. These developments arouse strong feelings of vulnerability, uncertainty and even anxiety, reinforced by the observation that there is no longer a good correspondence between individual achievements and the distribution of rewards. This stands in a sharp contrast to the situation some decades ago, when the growth of economy and the expansion of education and of middle and higher level jobs stimulated, as we remarked earlier, an optimistic perspective. Now we are confronted with a high level of unemployment, social exclusion and the creation of new jobs that neither offer stability nor opportunities for advancement. Moreover, the state's agencies strengthen these developments by adopting the same type of market-oriented policies as the private production organisations or by handing over state-services

to the market. The social security systems offer less protection than before. This change hits very hard those individuals who are at the very end of the social exclusion trajectory.

The important question to put forward, then, is: 'How do people under these new circumstances cope with these problems? Which types of individual and collective reactions and strategies can we distinguish? And on which social and cultural conditions are these reactions and strategies dependent? In which ways do they affect social life?' (e.g. fanaticism, illusion, isolation, revolt, criminality {or 'innovation'}, social exclusion of minorities, racism, segregation).

The relationship between market and society is disturbed, because a strong market-oriented policy does not recognise that the market as a model of society is too shallow. Market processes engender (social) exclusion and a lack of recognition of each person's specific value and need for prestige and esteem. Society must also contain societal institutions which protect individuals against the negative effects of the unlimited application of the market principle in all spheres of social life. The middle class has become very vulnerable and it is the task of the state and the political system to mould, in a democratic process, new societal relations and to 're-socialise' economic life. This is a *European task*, for obvious reasons that are related to globalisation. The market principle is very valuable, but it is not applicable in every domain. The application of the market principle does not always lead to effective production (e.g. not in fundamental research), and reduces the quality of services in some other domains while providing those services sometimes even at higher cost than the non-profit services they replaced.

The ongoing development of the (post-) industrial society has put us in a situation in which the old principles of the traditional and the industrial society have, partly at least, lost their validity. They have to be reformulated, to be re-gauged or, perhaps, to be replaced by new basic principles. There are at least three interdependent basic principles which have to be reevaluated.

The *first principle* pertains to individual achievement. The ways in which the production of goods and services is organised nowadays offers not enough opportunity and space to fulfil the need within the population for the accentuation of individual specificity and social recognition. It will be necessary to enlarge the concept of individual achievement by changing both the concept of labour and the ideas about rewards which are in economic life almost exclusively formulated in financial terms. In this way, some room can be created to fill the need for social recognition of at least a part of those who are socially excluded. The social costs of exclusion are very high for both society at large and for the excluded persons. A reduction of these social and financial costs can be arrived at by making the frontiers between society and the market more flexible in order to create new types of "occupations". Work as -also- a social activity has to be reinvented.

The *second principle* refers to social protection and security. The risk concept at the base of our social insurance system has largely worn out, as I will explain in the next chapter. Massive cuts in the system's expenditures cannot solve the

problems. In fact they increase them. The new social security paradigm has to protect against inequitable outcomes of exchange processes which are, of course, related to the individualistic achievement principle.

The *third principle* is that of social commitment, the opportunity to belong to, and to be committed to, a (part of a) social order that is considered to be so worthwhile that one is, in principle, prepared to make a sacrifice, if necessary. The necessity to reformulate the basic principles of social life follows from the observation that the relatively transparent image of the (post-) industrial society as an individualistic achievement society falls to pieces once it is critically contrasted with the social contradictions which social and economic developments harbour.

Several of those contradictions and tensions have been described in the preceding pages. Most people have acquired an acute sense of the vicissitudes of life under the present socio-economic conditions and of the fact that several rights they enjoyed as workers have been eroded instead of being reinforced and elaborated, as would have been the normal path in a democratic society. Being a citizen and at the same time being subject to opaque and uncontrollable decisions in working-life, is very hard to understand and difficult to accept. This increasing opposition between the citizen and the worker undermines democratic life in a society in which the opportunities for effective collective action in economic life have diminished as a consequence of the rise of a 'middle class' society in which, after an optimistic period, opportunities for individual advancement in working-life have become less available. This impact on the quality of democratic life within the nation-states has important consequences for the relationship between the European citizen and the EU, as we will see later on.

I will not elaborate upon this contradiction that is linked to the processes of economic and social exclusion, to the increasing tensions between the individualistic achievement principle and the need principle that is based on solidarity, and to the lessening possibility to apply the individualistic achievement principle in relation to equitable remunerations. One could answer to this type of analysis that it is, indeed, true that we are confronted with many social and economic problems as a consequence of rapid technological developments and the enlargement of the international market, but that, finally, most people will be better off when political life does not interfere with the mechanisms of the free market. However, international comparative analyses show that the quality of political decisions is important for social life. The consequences of a free market are not just there to be accepted for better or for worse. Intelligent social policies can influence the balance between 'better' and 'worse' in a democratically acceptable direction.

### **3. The multicultural society**

The ideology of globalisation implies that much of the world's cultural diversity

will gradually be reduced by the enlargement of economic markets and the extension of a common life-style that accompanies this process. Although I can refer to many developments which sustain this statement, it is also observable that many persons and groups defend their specific identities energetically. The idea that with the coming of the European Union the nation-states are receding as the major organising frame of reference seems to stimulate the rise of claims for the recognition of different types of cultural specificity of several groups. Another source of growing diversity is the increasing number of immigrants from non-European countries. Generally they have cultural and religious backgrounds and life-styles which differ markedly in several respects from the autochthonous population.

As the economic and social integration of many of those migrants and their children stagnated during the last twenty years or so in most western democracies, political and intellectual debates started about the desirability and opportunities to adapt present society to this new situation. How can society be organised in such a way that it can handle these 'new' cultural, religious and ethnic diversities? As political pressure on the migrants to assimilate to the institutions and culture of the receiving society could be interpreted as a lack of respect for their collective identity, other types of integration or insertion are often proposed. In this line of thought both representatives of the migrants and of the dominant culture argue that society should move into the direction of a *multicultural* or even *multi-ethnic* one.<sup>132</sup> It is interesting to note that in this perspective on societal development the relationships of accommodation between groups with *different collective identities* are accentuated. The evident fact that modern society has not only to deal with this problem, but that it is at the same time caught up in a process of technological and economic changes and is participating in the integration of the European Union, is in most cases totally left out of consideration in these debates. And this notwithstanding the fact that many of the problems of the immigrants spring from the confrontation of migrants with a traditional and –in most cases- agrarian background with western and urban life-styles. The new immigrants experience a double culture shock: most of them move from agrarian and often stagnant regions to urban regions and they move at the same time from one culture area to another.

The present debates on the multicultural society tend to mask the necessity of a public debate on the organisation of modern society in face of the (ideology of) globalisation. It is considered to be 'politically correct' to assume that immigrants from non-European regions, such as Muslims from Arab countries,

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<sup>132</sup> A multicultural society is a democratic society in which all persons with different cultural, religious and ethnic backgrounds have equal rights to organize their personal life, as individuals and as members of collectivities, in accordance with the basic principles of democracy. As such, the nations of the EU are multicultural societies. A multi-ethnic society is one that is organized on the basis of collectivities (ethnic-religious groups). It is a collectivist society in which the individual exists primarily as a member of one of the main collectivities.

can be integrated in the western democracies on the same terms as was, and is, the case with migrants from occidental countries. Nevertheless, the tide seems to be changing in the EU: there is a growing awareness in the population that several migrants and their spokesmen are trying to adapt democratic societies to their exigencies. Such adaptations imply a change of the basic rules of democracy and need to be discussed in a real dialogue.

It can be said that *European societies have always been multicultural in their history*, as is witnessed by the important migrations that took place in several historical periods. But in our time the concept is used in another sense, often as a synonym of the concept of multi-ethnic society. In this way of thinking, even groups with *closed collective identities* are depicted as entities, which have their place in society on equal terms with the 'dominant' culture, in spite of differences which flout the basic rights of individuals to determine themselves their future as *individuals*, not as members of a collectivity in which they are enclosed. We are not only thinking about the collective claims which come out of the Muslim migration during the last decades, but also about the claims of regions, which are rediscovering their 'traditional identity'. We wish to emphasise that many collective claims can be honoured in a democratic society, but not such claims, which imply a new human bondage in closed collective identities. Will Europe be able to defuse the time-bomb of closed collective identities and of fundamentalist movements?

#### *Departure-points of the debate on the multicultural society*

The debates on the multicultural society are generally based on the following principles or departure points:

1. All cultures are equal. It is impossible to distinguish between 'higher' and 'lower' cultures. Hence, the autochthonous populations of European nation states are not more 'civilised' than persons with a different cultural background.
2. Persons, coming from other cultures have the right to be acknowledged as different and to be respected on that basis in spite of values, norms and behaviour which differ from ours.
3. When persons and groups with an allochthonous background claim a specific cultural, religious or ethnic identity, then society must respect those claims and create opportunities for them to organise their life on the basis of their collective identity.
4. Generally, society has to adapt itself to the requirements which follow from the preceding three principles.

The thesis that all cultures are equal is connected with *cultural relativism*. Cultural relativism can be seen as a reaction to the thesis that cultures are *not* equal. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century and in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup>, European thinking was imbued by social and cultural evolutionism that had as a basic premise that the societies and cultures in this world could be placed on different steps of the

evolution ladder. In this way of thought the western cultures represented the highest level of evolution and had, consequently, the 'right to civilise' persons who belonged to 'lower' cultures. Connected with this evolutionism are the racist theories that 'explain' the assumed inequality of cultures by the different genetic heritages of the 'lower' and 'higher' peoples. Especially after World War II both theses were strongly criticised as scientifically invalid and untenable and as ethically unacceptable.

The thesis that all cultures are equal is easily sustainable in daily life when one speaks about cultures which are not present in 'our' society. The situation is much more difficult to handle when a society is confronted with categories of persons with different cultural backgrounds, who migrated rather recently to another society. Such categories of persons, coming from non-European regions have, of course, a cultural background that differs from the receiving society. But do they have their own 'culture'? It is easy to see that they will never reflect the richness of their culture of origin. Their 'culture' is generally a selection of culture traits, a reconstruction of their culture of origin, emphasising those traits which underline the differences between 'them' and 'us'. In a modern democracy immigrants have the right to organise their life in line with their ideas of identity. Once they are citizens of their new country, they have the same rights as all other citizens on the condition that they respect, as part of their citizenship, the fundamental rules on which democracy is based. Can they claim an equal position for 'their' culture in comparison to the so-called dominant culture? Here we must emphasise that 'culture' is never a complete whole, something that one 'possesses' or by which one is 'possessed'. Culture is dynamic and open-ended, part and parcel of the way we express ourselves, as I explained in chapter II. Immigrants, and their children even more so, undergo gradually the influences of their new cultural and social surroundings. They also contribute to their host society with specific cultural elements of their culture of origin. The claim for an equal position of 'their' culture – in holistic terms - in comparison to the culture of the receiving country is, certainly under the conditions of modern (urban) life, unrealistic and in fact, superfluous. Of course, this statement leaves unhindered the importance of the above-mentioned second departure-point.

The situation changes dramatically when persons on the basis of their religious or ethnic allegiances not only claim a specific collective identity, but also want to organise themselves as a specific closed community. Such an objective is as such not problematic as long as it based on a conscious choice of *individuals* for such a life-style or way of life within European democracies. Such choices can often be realised without great problems on the basis of the rules which govern democratic life. These choices produce unavoidable distinctions between 'us', members of our community, and them, the outsiders. Most groups, while making such distinctions, retain in varying degrees, an openness to the outside world. Most members are not only participating in these groups, but are at the same time members of other types of associations or communities. However, the objectives of some groups go further than this. We can observe the rise of groups

with rigid and closed collective identities, based on a collectivist or holistic conception of their culture or religion. In chapter III I discussed amply the nature of such collective identities, so there is no need to repeat this issue again. Such groups tend to reject the departure-points of the debate on the multicultural society, as in their perspective religions and cultures are fundamentally unequal and the differences between 'us' and 'them' are seen as unbridgeable and unchangeable. Society is not composed out of individuals who have an unalienable right to decide for themselves how to organise their life. Individuals are there to adapt themselves to the requirements of their closed and rigid collective identities.

From what I have said about this type of collective identity it follows that is not desirable that a real democracy changes in such a way that the adaptation to the collectivist requirements of such groups can be realised. Modern democracy is based on the primacy of the individual, as follows from our analysis of Europe's specificity.

*Democracy and the multicultural society.*

The relationship between the idea of a multicultural society and modern democracy is not an easy one, as follows from what I have said in the preceding pages. Nevertheless, in our type of society the idea of a multicultural society, conceived of as a democratic society in which all religious and ethnic groups have equal rights, has been realised. In the European Union we can observe different variants of this realisation, variants which are related to the specific history of each nation.

The fact that the debate on the multicultural society continues, implies that the present model of this society is not enough adapted to the needs of several groups. Indeed, it cannot incorporate smoothly the idea that different social groups or segments of society are equal as *collective identities*, that every person must *idealiter* belong to such a group with a collective identity and that the scarce means within the society (subventions, educational facilities etc.) must be distributed according to the relative size of the constituent collective entities. This is a society in which every group is secluded within its own small world, *idealiter* without intermarriages, without cultural exchanges....<sup>133</sup>

Here it must be emphasised that such a type of multicultural society is not really compatible with the principles on which a democratic society is based. An example: In the Netherlands the political system was since the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century founded on the obedience of the voters to their political and

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<sup>133</sup> This is a society that resembles the period of religious 'Verzuiling' ('pillarisation': denominational segregation) in the Netherlands until the 1970's (and still going strong in many domains, such as education and health services, care for the elderly). The Dutch model of segregation inspired the politics of Apartheid in South Africa. Hendrik Verwoerd, born in Amsterdam, studied at the Calvinist University of Amsterdam, became the leader of the Nationalist Party in South Africa and was the prime minister in 1958.

religious leaders, who entertained a policy of accommodation with the other political elites.<sup>134</sup> The system broke down when the voters no longer followed the orders of their political elites and became themselves responsible citizens, who shed this paternalistic way of governing. It can be said that these politics of accommodation had a positive effect on the transition of the Dutch society to modernity, as this type of organisation of political and social life cut across class-lines and as such it weakened class-antagonisms.

The idea of such a collectivistic type of multicultural society is an attack on the very basis of modern democracy as it imposes on every individual a collective identity that is determined by birth and by origin. It opens the road to ethnic and religious political entrepreneurs, who claim rights for their own groups as such and who are not interested in the common good. Links with ethnic-religious networks of mafias are not excluded. Taguieff remarks in a recent analysis that multiculturalism, set up in political life, 'is essentially the occupation of the social space by ethnic groups and the legalisation of fragmentation, leaving the leadership to the entrepreneurs of 'community' and of 'collective identity''.<sup>135</sup>

Such a society is an attack on individual freedom, on freedom of conscience, on freedom of association and certainly on freedom of speech and of the press. It dismisses the concept of democracy as a common association, in which the citizens cooperate for the advancement of the common good. The multicultural society not only destroys this participative democracy as a common enterprise of the moderate nationalists, it even means the end of the market model of democracy, the individualistic minimal variant of democracy. It is a society in which the democratic deficit is enormous. It restricts the citizen severely, who has in such a political context only very limited means to influence the political manipulations of the petty oligarchies and their policies of accommodation.

Confronted with the increasing problems which characterise, especially in large urban zones, the relationships between different religious and ethnic groups, the model of the multicultural society offers, in the eyes of policy-makers, certain advantages. It tries to delegate certain responsibilities to ethnic or religious leadership within the local context. This type of multicultural society as a communitarian construct harbours major dangers: it is anti-democratic in its consequences, it reduces the common good to a configuration of ethnic or religious 'common goods', it is an attack on the liberties of the individual, it leads to narrow-minded types of leadership, in most cases of a very authoritarian character, based on exclusive collective identity, and it will aggravate the educational and economic inequalities within our societies. Upheavals in cities

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<sup>134</sup> See: A. Lijphart, *The Politics of Accommodation: pluralism and democracy in the Netherlands*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1968.

<sup>135</sup> Pierre-André Taguieff, *Résister au bougisme. Démocratie forte contre mondialisation techno- marchande*. Paris : Fondation du 2 mars, Mille et Une Nuits, 2001, p.48 : 'le multiculturalisme, érigé en politique, consiste pour l'essentiel à réethniciser l'espace social, et à en légaliser la fragmentation, à en abandonner la gestion aux dirigeants, communautaires ou identitaires'.



like Bradford in the UK show quite clearly the overwhelmingly negative social consequences of this communitarian model. The right to be different as a collectivity has reinforced social exclusion, according to a recent report. The retreat to collective identities has very negative effects on the children, especially on their educational level. Moreover, we witness an ethnic or religious cleansing, as Whites, Indians and Sikhs fly from the quarters in which Muslim are dominant. A society based on Apartheid is evolving.<sup>136</sup> This is a serious warning for all those who argue that the model of the multicultural society – in the sense of a multi-ethnic and multi-religious society based on collective identities – is a good solution for our societies. Not only they turn a blind eye to the basic values on which Europe is grounded (individual liberty, the role of the citizen in democracy, the rejection of the primacy of collectivism etc.), but they also propagate a model that has already proven to be catastrophic in those situations where it has been installed.

Also in this case of the multicultural model of society I have to conclude that this approach to societal problems, emphasising the need to accommodate groups with different cultural and religious background within the context of modern society, fails to realise its major goals. This failure is related to the systematic neglect of a thorough analysis of the forces of modernity. A modern society is much more than only a system of relationships between (communal) groups. It fails also with respect to the task to a) instil respect in the population for cultural and religious diversity and b) develop types of behaviour in society which take advantage of this cultural diversity that go further than folkloristic and culinary expressions. It fails to develop an *ongoing dialogue* between different groups or communities. Instead of this we perceive the danger of a society falling into the trap of a new variant of Apartheid.

Anyhow, it is not likely that we can return to such a type of society, as modern societies are much too complex and dynamic to fit into a societal organisation that is based on collectivities and their collective identities. I have argued that cultures cannot be understood without an 'inside view' approach, without the analysis of collective representations, collective stereotypes and collective types of awareness and consciousness. Following this line of thought we have to remark that we can only speak about a culture in a collectivist way when an analysis of the contents of a culture shows us that there exists, inside a specific culture, a perfect consensus concerning the dominant collective representation and of the place that cultural elements –e.g. sub-cultures- have within it. Such a situation would imply, in other words, a *perfect nesting* of all units in the dominant cultural mould.

But in a modern, complex society, how could all these different collective identities be nested within one mould? How to combine national identities, religious identities, regional identities, tribal identities, ethnic identities, gender identities, life-style identities, professional identities, cultural identities and,

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<sup>136</sup> Jean-Lichel Demetz, 'Angleterre: les banlieues de l'apartheid'. In : *L'Express*, no. 2613, semaine du 2 au 8 août, 2001, pp.32-33.

perhaps, identities based on different ideas of civilisation? Many of those 'identities' are connected with different criteria or yardsticks in order to distinguish between 'us' and the 'other'. It seems really impossible to whip all this variety into one collectivist shape without sacrificing some of the basic values of a democratic society.

*Democratic societies and the specific role of multiple identities in it*

#### [An increasing interdependence in social life](#)

The collectivist multicultural society that I described in the preceding pages is not in line with the general development of modern democracies. The process of modernisation creates within and between modern societies in Europe a growing interdependence that creates a growing awareness of the 'Other', especially of ethnic allochthonous minorities, as groups which are gradually included in our 'we-image'. As such our societies are becoming multicultural in another way than in the past when religious and historically longstanding linguistic and regional dividing-lines played a major role (which they continue to play under present circumstances, but in a much less pronounced way).

In our type of society, there is a lot of vertical and horizontal social and cultural mobility, which dilutes the dividing-lines between groups in certain respects. So it becomes very difficult to represent our society as a collection of groups with different cultural identities to which individuals can be allotted on a one-to-one basis. This state of affairs does not exclude that some groups have a stronger tendency to shield themselves from major influences of the outside world than other entities. This is often the case with parts of allochthonous groups coming from traditional rural areas and which are confronted with a double culture shock when settling in large urban centres. They experience a shock as a consequence of the confrontation with another culture *and* a shock produced by the transition from a rural area to the life in modern cities, as I already remarked earlier.

Modernity implies also, certainly in large urban agglomerations, that many persons, in growing numbers, have intermediate positions between groups with different collective identities. Groups can certainly have collective and antagonistic representations about each other, but those antagonistic representations need not be the source of deep dividing-lines and violent oppositions. In a modern society most people are member of several groups and identify with several and different reference groups. This implies in most cases that there is not a superimposition of oppositions and that many people have allegiances that cross-cut social and cultural cleavages. They may belong to a certain group or social category that stands in opposition to another group A, but at the same time they are attached to a social group that has a non-antagonistic view on A and regards this group, maybe, as an ally. Here a comparison can be made with the longstanding discussion on class-antagonism. People may belong to a certain 'class' as workers and as such they have certain interests in common that stand in opposition to the interests of other classes, such as those of the

entrepreneurial class. But at the same time they may belong to a religious congregation and meet entrepreneurs on the local level as fellow-believers. As consumers they have interests that differ from their interests as workers. As citizens their political interests are not a direct expression of their class position. Their family networks and their networks of friends are mostly, in a modern society, rather heterogeneous. All this produces a social structure in which, once an overt conflict arises between two groups, intermediate groups and persons intervene, which have an interest in resolving the conflict by peaceful means, e.g. by trying to convince the conflicting parties to accept a compromise.<sup>137</sup>

#### The dynamic side of intercultural relations

This observation implies that we have also to face the dynamic side of intercultural relations, which are tortured by the double distortion and by discussions in which groups with collective identities are treated as 'real' phenomena, instead of considering references to groups as shorthand descriptions of collections of individuals with common and like interests who may claim, for political reasons, a collective identity as the *real* thing. It is very likely that a strategy that is based on the assumption that a group and its identity are realities, reinforces directly the orientations, attitudes and behaviour of those who 'belong' to that group. The groups with different collective identities and collective representations are engaged in a political struggle in which groups try to occupy, with those cultural means, the political domain, or at least to find a specific niche in it, by supplanting or by strongly modifying other ones. Fortunately, not all groups which enter the political arena have a conception of the social world as a collection of closed systems. If this would be the case, intercultural relations would not leave much room for mutual understanding and compromises. The political process would lead to a 'balkanisation' of society. However, groups that define their position in a 'realistic' way, that is to say that they make the error of misplaced concreteness, tend to have a closed or exclusive definition of their collective identity and the leaders and many of their followers have a rather closed mind. Having a closed mind implies that they have a high tendency to reject ideas which are not part of their own belief system. They have a relatively narrow, future-oriented time perspective. The world one lives in or the situation one is in at a particular moment is a threatening one. Authority is seen as absolute and people are accepted or rejected according to their agreement or disagreement with this authority.<sup>138</sup> When a collectivity has a closed character, that is to say that it is defined as such by people with a closed mind who adhere to such a conception, the strategy of the groups with such an identity is related to opposition to all those who are not considered as true believers.

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<sup>137</sup> L. Coser, *The Functions of Social Conflict.*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1968, especially the chapters III-V

<sup>138</sup> See M. Rokeach, *The Open and the Closed Mind.* Basic Books, New York, 1960, 55-56.

Such a strategy of opposition is related to exclusion, to persecution and even annihilation of the others in those cases in which they have opportunities to do so. It also goes together with an emphasis on cohesion, on protection of the collective identity and on the 'tradition' of the group as defined by the group's leaders. It is evident that in this way of reasoning the individual is a product of the collective identity or will be 'produced' as such in the near future by the exigencies of the belief system of the group. Such a collective identity and the strategies based on it, imply a strong inequality between the insiders, the 'pure' or 'elected', and the outsiders, the 'impure' and rejected. Strategies based on closed identities must in many cases end in a disaster, because they are grounded on struggle, on domination, on indoctrination and on conversion. They are not based on respect for the Other, on individual choice, on openness to the Other, on a broad time perspective in which inclusion in the larger society is envisaged as the main strategy. In such a situation groups, including nations, with democratic values will not be able to pursue a strategy of inclusion and of compromise in front of such a strategy that is based on the idea of fundamental inequality in combination with the idea of absolute superiority.

For those who follow a strategy that is the opposite of this closed one, society is heterogeneous and pluralistic and this is seen as a great achievement of an open society. This is an achievement that has to be safeguarded. Their strategy is not based on *a priori* opposition, but on cooperation with other groups (or nations when we deal with international relations). The Other is not seen as an object of social exclusion or only as a means to an end, but as a (potential) partner, a friend or an ally. The Other is not seen as determined by his membership of and commitment to groups with a specific collective identity, but as a person with a potentiality for individual choice. Authority and obedience are not the fundamentals of social life, nor cohesion, but the potentiality for learning and for finding peaceful solutions for the problems with which one is confronted.

The important question that follows from the description of these two strategies, presented as ideal types in the Weberian sense is: what happens when groups with those opposing strategies meet during their quest for dominance or freedom? During conflicts many persons who normally adhere to the tenets of the open strategy will shift into the direction of closed thinking, a shift that is in certain respects understandable in situations of war, but which is nevertheless a shift that aggravates the conflict and reduces the likelihood of peaceful resolutions of the conflict. Almost daily we witness the workings of this mechanism, leading to the escalation of conflicts in many parts of the world. However, in the latter case, when during a situation of conflict the persons who adhere normally to the open strategy shift into the direction of the closed view, the Other will not be a generalised outsider, but a *specific opponent* that is attacking the democratic way of life. When the conflict is resolved, the prevailing strategy will be again the open one.

In chapter IX I introduce *the fundamentalist society*. Such a society is one in which a group imposes a collectivist, closed identity on all of its members.



## CHAPTER IX: COLLECTIVE REPRESENTATIONS OF EUROPEAN SOCIETIES (III)

### 1. The risk society and the security society

Modern society can also be approached as a 'risk society'. I will present this approach at some length – at least in comparison to the model of the market society - to describe both its origin and its present relevance. The risk model of society is based on concepts as precaution, prevention and protection and is, one could say, a 'negative' model, although it should be observed that effective policies against risks imply specific economic, social and cultural conditions.

The concept of risk is a very strategic and central one as major technological, economic and social changes are accompanied by many risks. This we can read daily in our newspapers and see when watching television. There are the mad cows and the pigs that suffer from foot and mouth disease. They risk contaminating the whole European area and necessitating quick and effective measures of the European Union to halt this plague. Oil tankers lose their cargo, devastating our beaches. These accidents demonstrate that the control of oil traffic is still far from adequate. International transports of nuclear waste are contested with much vigour by militant groups that have a very different conception of risk than most of the political and scientific authorities. The reactions to such risks reveal that in our societies there exists no consensus about the nature of such risks and about their level of 'acceptability'. Another important development is that scientific development leads in some cases to the erosion of some risks. So the debate about social security has certain links with the fact that, as a consequence both of biomedical research and of changing behaviour patterns among the population, the risk concept that underlies the social security system is losing its pivotal role.

The emphasis in most debates about 'modern' risks is put on technological-organisational risks. In this chapter, I will not neglect those risks, but I will also consider the possibilities to use ideas about risks to develop a perspective on social and economic exclusion that differs in many respects from the preceding analyses of this subject. Consequently, also policy-measures will be influenced by this change of perspective on social problems. Beck states in his *Risikogesellschaft*, that the problem of industrial society is to distribute the produced wealth both *unequally* and *legitimately*. With the rise of the risk society the main societal problem changes according to him: How is it possible 'to prevent, to neutralise, to dramatise, to canalise or to restrict the risks and dangers which are systematically produced as side-effects of modern production

in such a way that modernisation is neither impeded, nor the limits of the acceptable are being transgressed'.<sup>139</sup>

Beck is primarily referring to important technical risks, such as nuclear pollution, risks which are not connected with a *specific* social class. Giddens takes with respect to modern risks a different stand. In the classical analysis of modernisation, as in those of Marx and Durkheim, the ongoing industrialisation produces many social perturbations, but those can be mastered and the future is one of social progress. Weber was in this respect rather pessimistic, as he saw the rise of the industrial society as linked to the development of bureaucratic systems and hence with a loss of individual autonomy and creativity. Giddens sees the risk society related to the development of technological and organisational changes which lead to the destruction of the physical environment, to totalitarian systems and to an increasing concentration of military power and technology.<sup>140</sup> This development goes together with a growing awareness in modern societies that, although societies are the product of our own collective actions, we find ourselves in a situation in which science, and rational behaviour in general, cannot really solve the main problems we encounter. Trust in science and in expert knowledge is declining and there is a growing sense of being threatened by many risks, that is, of the possibility of being the victim of one's own collective behaviour or of the behaviour of policy-makers who take decisions on the base of the idea that some level of risk-taking is acceptable, decisions that concern risks to which they are not exposed themselves. An example of this is the case of the 'sang contaminé' (contaminated blood) that was judged by a court in France some years ago. Such developments feed public and scientific debates on the role of security, trust, confidence and risk in our society.

In the analysis of risks in French society, more attention is given to the relation between risks and social inequality than in the preceding analyses. So Theys emphasises in *La société vulnérable* that the vulnerability of interdependent systems measures their capacity to function smoothly by absorbing external perturbations, even the most unpredictable ones. Vulnerability has to do with direct or indirect dependency and with a lack of autonomy, with opacity, insecurity, fragility, a weak capacity to adapt to unpredictable events, a high potentiality for losses (e.g. of accumulated wealth), a weak capacity to recover after a catastrophe etc.).<sup>141</sup> According to Theys, we are still far removed from a 'culture du risque', that is a culture that is able to overcome its rigidities, its values, its attitudes and its phobias. 'It may be that our main future vulnerability

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<sup>139</sup> U. Beck, *Risikogesellschaft. Auf dem Wege in eine andere Moderne*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1986, p.26.

<sup>140</sup> A. Giddens, *The Consequences of Modernity*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991, p. 7ff.

<sup>141</sup> J. Theys et al., *o.c. Paris* : 1987, p. 21ff. See also, on the general theory of risks: L. Faugères and Ch. Villain-Gandossi (eds), *Le risque et la crise* . Malta: Foundation for International Studies, 1990 and L. Faugères and Ch. Villain-Gandossi (eds), *Risque, Nature et Société*. Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 1996.

is, indeed, our incapacity to invent, as other societies did, a social, adult, democratic and open culture and not only a technical culture of insecurity and catastrophes'.<sup>142</sup> A very nice invitation to policy-makers, technical specialists, social scientists and (emerging) social movements to lay the foundation of such a society. Nevertheless, in the meantime, the analysis of the interdependence of different types of risks in urban agglomerations is something that cannot wait and, indeed, is taken up in France with respect to technological and environmental risks.

In risk research most attention goes to technological and natural risks. However, most risk definitions do not exclude social risks, as follows from the following definitions. 'Risk expresses some likelihood that something harmful or undesirable will occur, and so is a joint consideration of probability and of (adverse) consequences.'<sup>143</sup> 'Risk can be estimated as some sort of product of the probability (P) of the event times the severity of the harm (H), or  $R = P \times H$ '.<sup>144</sup>

Duclos gives us a definition of risks that refers more explicitly to social phenomena. 'The risk is also', he remarks, 'a concept with "a variable social geometry": it refers to the accident, but also to stress, to the feeling of uselessness or disqualification which may follow from the process that is supposed to avoid the accident. The concept also implies the weight of quite a technological choice on the constraints of consumption, or on the life-style of a population. It also is not without relations with economic risks which are taken in investments and in competition'.<sup>145</sup>

The dominant approach of the problems of vulnerable urban areas is, as we have seen, one of a description of social exclusion and of deprivation. A further step was taken by the social quality approach, which tries to develop standards to evaluate and to ameliorate undesirable social situations. Both approaches do really tackle the origin of social problems, such as unemployment, immigration and maladjustment. The risk approach can have the advantage that it turns towards the sources of the problems themselves: How are different risks distributed in society? In which ways are different risks combined? Many risks are unequally distributed in society. Moreover, they combine in specific patterns.

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<sup>142</sup> J.Theys et al., *o.c.* p. 35.

<sup>143</sup> S.G. Haddon, *Risk Analysis, Institutions and Public Policy*. Port Washington NY, New York City, London, Associated Faculty Press, 1984, p. 7.

<sup>144</sup> T.C. Campbell, 'Chemical Carcinogens and Human Risks Assent', in: *Federation Proceedings*, Volume 39, pp.2467-84. Cited by M. Douglas, *Risk Acceptability According to the Social Sciences*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1986, chapter 2.

<sup>145</sup> D. Duclos, *L'homme face au risque technique*. Paris, Editions l'Harmattan, 1991, p. 28: 'Le risque également est une notion à "géométrie sociale variable": il est celui de l'accident, mais aussi celui du stress ou du sentiment d'inutilité ou de déqualification que peut entraîner des processus censés éviter l'accident. Il est aussi celui qui fait peser tout un choix technologique sur les contraintes de consommation, ou les modes de vie d'une population. Il n'est pas non plus sans rapport avec les risques économiques pris dans l'investissement et la concurrence'.



A risk analysis may give us more insight into the combination of risks that is at the base of the 'vulnerable urban areas'. Life is very precarious in such zones and the vulnerability of many persons living there is high. In such a situation in which uncertainty and anxiety reign it is very difficult for the persons concerned to engage in long-term planning of their social and professional life. The risk analysis turns not only our attention to the sources of risks which are often, partly at least, outside the vulnerable urban areas and connected with the fact that political and economic elites have taken 'acceptable risks', but also to the risks produced by the interaction of negative side-effects within the neighbourhoods themselves. The analysis also takes into account the risks that are generated in vulnerable urban areas and which impinge on society at large (e.g. the feeling in such neighbourhoods that the political system does not have a grip on the problems and is not able to ameliorate their situation, together with an image of society as a jungle, may be a source of acts of terrorism). Such analyses should go together with those that are directed at the problem of the lack of trust and of confidence within certain urban districts. A policy that is not able to inspire a certain level of trust and confidence within a sensible area, will have great trouble in bringing the most important social problems nearer to a solution.

#### *The history of the risk concept*

At this point, it is certainly worthwhile to reflect on the specific historical development of the concept of risk. This concept underwent several important changes during its relatively long history. In Europe we encounter the concept for the first time in Italy, in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. It is used in connection with maritime risks (1248).<sup>146</sup> It is in Genoa that we find the first document of an insurance policy in the shipping trade. It is dated October 23, 1347. It refers to the risks that merchandises incur during their transport from Genoa to Majorca by the ship Santa Clara.<sup>147</sup> The first insurance company is founded much later, in Italy (1424). In the first period insurance policies were very differently drafted as a consequence of the personal ideas of the local underwriters and the local customs. This was, of course, a handicap in exchanges between different ports and countries. We see, in response to this situation, a regimentation of those contracts by the countries in which maritime commerce plays an important role. In 1435, James I of Aragon issued the Ordinance of Barcelona, the first legal document of insurance. This example is followed by Rouen (1500), Florence (1523), Genoa (1588), the Netherlands (1570), Spain (1566) and England

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<sup>146</sup> C. Villain-Gandossi, 'Origines du concept de risque en Occident. Les risques maritimes ou fortune de mer et leur compensation : les débuts de l'assurance maritime'. In : L. Faugères et C. Villain-Gandossi, eds, o.c. .Malta : Foundation for International Studies, 1990, p.80ff, Annexe : Attestation d'emplois au Moyen Age du terme Risque.

<sup>147</sup> C.Villain-Gandossi, 'o.c.'. In :L. Faugères et al, éd., o.c. .Malta : Foundation for International Studies, 1990, p.73.

(1574).

Although it is often said that the origin of the word risk is Italian (*risco*, derived from the Latin *rescum*, meaning 'that which cuts', or from the Latin word *rixicare*, *rixare* in Italian with the meaning of 'to quarrel, to dispute'), specialists maintain that the etymology of risk is not Italian, but Arab. In the Koran the concept of '*Rizq*' has the meaning of 'everything that Providence offers be it good or bad'. It is closely connected with the term 'eventuality' (*albur*), a word that we find in an Arab-Castilian dictionary from the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. It is God who dispenses rizq and one has to accept the good and the bad things in life without trying to understand God's motives. The important thing is to have trust and confidence in God. The concept enters into the European languages with a much more restricted meaning, connected with assurances against the dangers of the shipping trade at sea.<sup>148</sup> The religious connotation of rizq disappears. This has to do with the fact that the Christian religion already offers the idea of Providence, but not the idea of rizq that allows to inclusion of all the commercial insurances under this general term without expressing distrust in God.

It is very likely that the introduction of the idea of insurance in the West is related to a change in the collective representation of the world. The roots of modern science can be found in the introduction of probabilistic thinking in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, the first step in the development of rational scientific thinking that is emancipated from religious domination. Scientists started, in opposition to the religious orthodoxy, to develop probabilistic arguments.<sup>149</sup> It takes, however, still several centuries before we arrive at the birth of modern science, situated in the period, as I already remarked in chapter IV, between 1543, when Copernicus published his *De Revolutionibus Orbium Coelestium* and 1687, with Newton's publication of his *Naturalis Principia Mathematica*.<sup>150</sup>

The rise of this rational representation of the world had important consequences for the concept of risk, because this modern representation of the world supposes a world that is subjected to natural laws. Its order and regularity can be discovered by the application of the scientific method. In this representation of the world that is based on universal rationality, the place for uncertainty and risk seems to be rather restricted. To a certain extent this is true. Nevertheless, there is certainly a definitive place for calculable risks, which are the basis of modern insurance. In the 17<sup>th</sup> and the 18<sup>th</sup> centuries mathematics discovers certain regularities or chance patterns (e.g. in gambling), which opens

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<sup>148</sup> C. Villain-Gandossi, 'Une analyse de l'approche globale des risques'. In :P. Gabert et J.Vaudour, eds, *Risques naturels*. Paris : Editions du CTHS, 1999, p.16 ; M. de Espalza, 'Origines du concept de risque : de l'Islam à l'Occident'. In : L. Faugères et al., *o.c.*, p.65ff.

<sup>149</sup> B. Nelson, *Der Ursprung der Moderne. Vergleichende Studien zum Zivilisationsprozess*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1984 (1977), pp. 109-110.

<sup>150</sup> E.J. Dijksterhuis, *De mechanisering van het wereldbeeld*. Amsterdam: Meulenhoff, 1960, p. 317ff.

the road to calculate the probability of certain events.

This is, however, not the final stage of risk thinking as the concept of risk changes with our changing representation of the world. It is evident that the probabilistic risk concept implies that we have at our disposal a *distribution of chances*, based on arithmetical principles, such as in gambling, or on observations of the frequency of events during long periods, such as the observation of accidents. When these conditions are absent, we do not have the possibility to calculate risks. So the risk concept seems to be situated between, on the one hand, *certainty*, when the causal links of an event are scientifically established and, on the other hand, extreme uncertainty when we know that an event may occur without having at our disposal information about the distribution of chances or without having scientific knowledge that gives the exact conditions of an event. This is the case with the danger of nuclear accidents.

#### *Types of collective adaptation to dangers and risks*

I do not have the intention to present a complete analysis of the changing character of the concept of risk. I can point out that societies and individuals have to adapt to (natural) threats and that the kind of adaptation differs according to their representation of the world and the types of knowledge they have at their disposal.

Confronted with important threats and dangers the behaviour of the members of a society may be magical or symbolic. This is often the case in societies that have not at their disposal sufficient knowledge about the objective mechanisms that may produce a disaster and, more importantly, lack efficient methods to counteract the dangers and the effects of a disaster once they are confronted with it. All human societies have efficient techniques at their disposal to reach certain ends. When the degree of certainty is so high that these methods will yield the desired results, then there is no recourse to magic or rituals, as the social anthropologist Malinowski made clear, when he observed that on the Trobriand Islands: 'fishing in the inner Lagoon is done in an easy and absolutely reliable manner by the method of poisoning, yielding abundant results without danger and uncertainty'. But fishing on the shores of the open sea is dangerous and the yield varies greatly according to whether shoals of fish appear beforehand or not. 'It is most significant that in the Lagoon fishing, where man can rely completely on his knowledge and skill, magic does not exist, while in the open-sea fishing, full of danger and uncertainty, there is an extensive magical ritual to secure safety and good results'.<sup>151</sup> It is significant that also in our modern societies in situations where the uncertainty of desired outcomes is high, rituals and magic play a role, as we can also observe, e.g., in the behaviour of the players before and during soccer matches.

Also the religious interpretation of disasters still comes to the fore, as is

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<sup>151</sup> B. Malinowski, *Magic, Science and Religion*. Garden City, New York: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1955, p.30-31.

witnessed by the remark of a Dutch member of Parliament in reaction to the contamination of several farms by foot and mouth disease in March 2001, that 'This is the scourge of God in a world that only thinks in terms of material gains'. Another recent example is the reaction of the population of a village that was endangered by an eruption of the Etna in July 2001. A procession was held to implore God to bring the stream of lava to a halt.

A *second type* of adaptation to dangers and risks is related to the rising awareness that these phenomena are not the result of incomprehensible forces or the expression of the will of God, who punishes man for his disobedience to His commandments, but that they are the results of a specific convergence of natural factors. Here the concept of risk appears. In this stage the adaptation of society may only be a 'downstream' adaptation: society prepares itself to react to the consequences of a disaster or a calamity once it happens.

The *third type* of adaptation is more rigorous. It is based on the consciousness that a natural risk turns into a disaster when the social system has neglected to invest 'upstream' by putting in place types of organisation and technology that can reduce the consequences of risks, once they realise themselves. Risk, being only a *potentiality*, turns only into a disaster when society has neglected to build and to maintain defence systems. Here we enter into the domain of management policies, as an upstream approach necessitates in most cases large-scale investments. This type of adaptation can only be realised in societies in which the sense of vulnerability is high, where the solidarity between the major segments of the society is high, where the political power is sufficiently concentrated and where the means are available for this type of investment.

A *fourth type* of adaptation goes further than the preceding ones. It is based on the consciousness that social systems not only are exposed to certain risks, but that they are themselves the main source of several natural risks, such as floods, caused by uncontrolled deforestation, the rise of sea-level by the greenhouse effect, environmental pollution as an unintended and undesirable consequence of our production system and our type and level of consumption.

To this I must add that in complex societies different types of risk conceptions in different subsystems of society may constitute a major problem in the domain of risk management. This problem results from the fact that different public services that have to coordinate their actions during a catastrophe, clash with each other because their differing risk conceptions result in giving different priorities to the objectives to be achieved. This experience leads to a rising awareness that there is a need for an overarching 'science of risks' or 'cindynics'.<sup>152</sup>

Although all of the four types of adaptation imply risk management, this management attains its highest level on this fourth stage. Risk management can include policies which are directed at the *forecasting, the precaution, the prevention of risks and the protection against them*. Precaution, prevention and

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<sup>152</sup> G.-Y. Kervern, *L'Archipel du danger. Introduction aux cindyniques*. Paris : Economica, 1991.

protection are of course dependent on the forecasting or the prognostication of risks. *Precaution* refers to the totality of measures that has to be implemented in order to anticipate the realisation of an acknowledged risk *the probability of which cannot be established*, but its expected gravity being judged to be very high and unacceptable. Precaution is the domain in which confrontations between different interest groups are likely to be intense. This concept is recognised for the first time by the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1982, and developed afterwards into a real principle of international law in relation with the natural environment.<sup>153</sup> The concept of precaution emphasises our collective responsibility vis-à-vis the possibility of major damage which follows from our actions under conditions of a high level of uncertainty. *Prevention* and *protection* are two concepts which, in contradistinction to precaution, refer to calculable risks. So the concept of precaution seems to be primarily related to a conception of ‘risk as a complexity problem or opportunity, complexity conceived of as a multitude of interrelations which are mutually dependent on each other, which means that one factor cannot be interpreted separately from those others’, as Kooiman remarks.<sup>154</sup> And I can add to this that precaution is required, because we assume that these relations are mutually interdependent, while not knowing in which ways they affect each other.

#### *A plurality of views on risk*

During a long time risks were predominantly regarded as natural and technical risks. The development of science would in the long run counteract many risks in social life. The optimistic ‘logic’ of the (post-) industrial society (chapter IV) is certainly in line with this. Hence a relative neglect of many risks and of their management which lay outside this scope.<sup>155</sup>

I have noted a certain evolution in the adaptation of societies to natural risks. But the more there is a rise of our understanding of the ways we are ourselves implicated in the creation of risks, the more we become aware of the fact that risks are *social constructions* and that the way we define them is dependent upon our collective interpretation. In a society in which different collective perspectives co-exist, neither a consensus about the nature of the risks, which surround us, nor about the most efficient ways to reduce the likelihood of their becoming manifest and the reduction of their negative consequences is likely to

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<sup>153</sup> C. Villain-Gandossi, ‘Les petites communautés face aux risques naturels et anthropiques, notamment dans les sociétés insulaires tropicales’. In : C. Villain-Gandossi, éd., *Les petits systèmes isolés face aux risques naturels. L'exemple des Antilles*. Paris : Editions du CTHS, 2001, p.14. The distinction between the four domains of risk management is borrowed from an analysis of Lucien Faugères that is not yet published ( Prof. Émérite Université de Paris I, Panthéon-Sorbonne, 191 rue Saint-Jacques, 75005, Paris).

<sup>154</sup> J. Kooiman, *On Governance*. London: Sage Publications, 2003 (chapter 9).

<sup>155</sup> J. Berting, ‘Sociology, Risks and Disasters’. In: L. Faugères et C. Villain-Gandossi, éd. o.c. Paris : Publications de la Sorbonne, 1996, p.43ff.

be achieved.

This lack of consensus becomes very evident when the level of acceptance of risks is discussed in terms of 'acceptable risks' or when such a discussion is bypassed with the slogan that there is not such a thing as 'zero risk'. 'Science' cannot give the right reply in those cases, as the degree of acceptability of risks is dependent upon the way we interpret them. The more modern societies have become complex systems of subsystems, the more populations become conscious of the vulnerability of these complex interdependences. Persons and social groups which occupy different positions in society tend to have diverging views on the question of which types of risk are the most important objectives for risk reduction policies and whether a certain level of risk taking is acceptable or not.

Some of the diversity in this important area is already visible when one looks closely at the definitions of risks that we presented above. More fundamentally, the different collective representations of societal development are accompanied by different interpretations of what the major risks of development are and in which ways risk policies can reduce them. So persons who have a collective representation of society in terms of (post-) industrialism tend to argue that science and technology, together with market mechanisms will find, in due time, answers for the risk problems which are produced by technological-economic developments. The reformist perspective on societal change will emphasise the moral side of risks and the role of society as an organised body to restrain risky types of behaviour. This model accepts the need of governmental interventions in order to curb the social consequences of certain undesirable technical and economic developments. The representation of the development of a rational society will give a preference to a strictly bureaucratic, 'rational' regulation. Those who adhere to the virtues of communal life will consider a policy of 'small is beautiful' as the major solution for the major risks we are confronted with.

Several studies do give indications about these links between the position of individuals and groups within societies, the connections with specific models of development and their perspectives on risks and risk regulation. In this respect we can refer to the 'cultural theory' of Douglas and A. Wildavsky<sup>156</sup>, Schwarz and Thompson<sup>157</sup> and others.<sup>158</sup> Important in this context are also the many

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<sup>156</sup> D. Douglas and A. Wildavsky, *Risk and Culture. An essay on the selection of technological and environmental risks*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982; M. Douglas, *Risk Acceptability According to the Social Sciences*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul: 1986 1985; M. Douglas, *How Institutions Think*. Syracuse University Press, 1986.

<sup>157</sup> M. Schwarz and M. Thompson, *Divided We Stand. Redefining Politics, Technology and Social Choice*. New York etc.: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1990.

<sup>158</sup> S. Rayner, 'Disagreeing about Risk: the institutional cultures of risk management and planning for future generations'. In: S.G. Hadden, ed., *Risk Analysis, Institutions and Public Support*. Port Washington, N.Y., New York: City/London: Associated Faculty Press, 1984; J. Berting, 'Structures, actors and choices', in J.H.

studies of risks within large production organisations, which reveal that on this meso-level the occurrence of accidents is influenced by communication problems, which are produced by different evaluations of the parties concerned of situations as being risky.

#### *The European dimension of risks*

##### Does the development of the European Union change the patterns of risks?

It is certainly not necessary to repeat everything that has been said when we speak about risks within a European context. The questions that I am interested in within the European context are: a) Does the coming of the European Union go together with the rise of 'new' risks? If so, what is the nature of those risks?; b) Can risk management on a European level be more efficient, in certain cases, than on the national and local levels?

The coming of the EU does not imply that Europe is already a 'Risk Society' in the sense of Ulrich Beck. Many risks, which are produced in the process of modernisation, are already with us for a long time and the construction of the European Union can be considered to be not only an economic necessity, but also an organised political response to some major dangers, such as the rise of fascist regimes and other totalitarian systems, and war. One of the major tasks of the EU is to be very cautious and to develop policies, which reduce this and other major risks. An effective European Union can reduce certain types of risks, but it must be emphasised that the construction of a supranational system also creates new risks, which we have to take in consideration.

##### Six types of 'European risks'

I will mention six types of risks, which (may) accompany the modernisation process and the construction of the EU.

1. The gradual development of a European society goes together with a more intensive international social intertwinement and communication in daily life. This development may produce risks, which are related to misunderstanding of messages. Such misunderstandings occur within organisations in which workers with different nationalities are working together. The problem is not only the understanding of languages. It is primarily related to different perspectives on the role of the individual in the organisation or about the function of hierarchical differences. The problem is 'invisible', because it is related to the 'covert cultures' of the different categories of actors within the organisation. Needless to say that many situations can arise in which this creates risks which may lead to accidents and disasters.

The rapid developments in communication technology cannot solve these problems. Communication is primarily a process of human understanding.

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Klabbers, *On the Improvement of Competence in Dealing with Complexity, Uncertainty and Value Conflicts*. Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1989.

The increasing technical opportunities to connect with other persons in Europe at decreasing prices do not solve *the problems of understanding* between different cultural entities.<sup>159</sup> Of course, this source of these types of risks is not specific for the EU as such. Nevertheless, the increasing cooperation within the EU between people with different national backgrounds makes this type of risks more prominent in daily life.

2. A second type of risk is related to the impact of globalisation in terms of mass media. It has to do with the pollution of the social and cultural environment of the European Union. We speak about the pollution of the social and cultural environment when the behaviour of many persons in public places lacks respect for the wishes and well-being of other persons. It is often said that the changes in public behaviour of many persons, especially of pre-adolescents and adolescents, is a consequence of the noxious influence of the culture of the USA.<sup>160</sup> It is evident that many young persons are exposed every week, and during many hours, to the products of the American film and television industry and to the many products of the American information industry (CD-R, DVD). These products often show the 'American way of life' with its emphasis on the importance of individual achievement, even by using unscrupulous and aggressive means. Most of these products are demonstrations of extreme violence and as such of a total lack of respect for human beings who are not friends, not members of the 'good' tribe. Being violent seems to be 'cool' and many persons in these productions are taken as reference-models by young persons in our European society. Many of them have no idea that the American productions reflect in some respects American society, but that this way of representing the American society is extremely one-sided. By the way, the Japanese productions of the information industry are also extremely violent, even the products for small children.

It is rather superficial to think that the cultural and social pollution in our society results from 'contamination' by American culture.

The basic sources of this pollution are primarily the changing social relations in our own societies. We must look for endogenous causes instead of finding a scapegoat elsewhere. The modernisation of our society includes, as we have already seen, an ongoing individualisation and a concomitant individualism, sometimes even a hyper-individualism, an extremely egoistic orientation that denies other types of social relations than violent dominance and calculative interactions. Such a development is likely to occur in a society the social fabric of which is worn to a thread in several places. In chapter X I will say more about this in relation with a typology of reactions

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<sup>159</sup> See Dominique Wolton, *Internet et après? Une théorie critique des nouveaux médias*. Paris : Flammarion, 2000, especially chapter 5, 'Le désert européen de la communication', pp. 163ff.

<sup>160</sup> Kalle Lasa and Richard DeGrandpre, 'La toxicité de la culture nord-américaine'. *Courrier International*, n° 559, 19-25 juillet, pp. 38-39.



on modernity.

We can observe the social and cultural pollution in public places, where much behaviour is visible that shows a lack of respect for the Other, a lack of consideration for his or her needs and wishes (such as producing extremely hard noises with electronic gadgets as block-busters, by crying and yelling in a piercing way, by using the public space in ways that disturb and even endanger the Others, by the arrogant expropriation of seats in public transport, by destroying public furniture, by marking the public space everywhere with silly or insulting graffiti). Even very small children, accompanied by a parent, often utter rather constantly piercing cries to get the attention of others in public places and show other types of behaviour that annoy most persons in their surrounding. Parents often do not react by putting them in their place. Outsiders are reluctant to intervene, because they, rightly in many cases, fear the aggression of the parents who think that their children have the right to behave as they do. This defence of their own tribe by parents in spite of evident negative behaviour of their children is spreading rapidly, as is shown by the many incidents in schools and in other public institutions where the parents intervene violently, even with physical aggression, against teachers and other functionaries who dared to reprimand their off-spring.

It can be worse, as is demonstrated by the violence of hooligans and by criminal behaviour of gangs. It has been reported several times that gangs raped girls in a train or a metro and that the other passengers did not intervene to stop this outrage. The reason for this is that one cannot be sure that the other passengers will assist in the effort to end this behaviour. There is even the risk that the person, who protests will be aggressed in his turn. So many persons refrain in public places from the interventions which normally could be expected from the majority of responsible citizens.

In political life much emphasis is laid on actions against insecurity in public places and against the rising criminality among even pre-adolescents. Usually, there is a call for more policemen and for 'zero tolerance'. It is easy to understand that this is a minimal strategy in a modern society.

The risks for democracy are very high, because citizens can become motivated to engage in a 'civilisation offensive' against certain categories of persons and may become supporters of political movements with an extremely high level of intolerance. A free society can in this way quickly change into a moralising and oppressing one. This is the great risk of a society that forgets to develop democratic defences against globalisation, that is, the impact of a market model that is only based on egoistic exchanges, and that ignores other types of social ties. It may be that the EU can be more effective to counteract such negative developments than its member-states separately.

3. A third category of risks is related to ineffective control of international movements of commodities and persons. The last few years have shown us many illustrations of this type of risk. The risks of those movements may be

the result of ineffective control of transport once a specific problem is detected, such as in the cases of mad cow (bovine spongiform encephalopathy, BSE) and pigs with feet and mouth disease. These transports are not related, in most cases, with criminality. Nevertheless, in this case also it is evident that parts from cattle and sheep have been used in the preparation of ruminant food after it became known that this ruminant flour was the cause of these BSE-contaminations. In the case of oil transport we already meet borderline cases: control of defective vessels failed and criminal intentions and activities cannot be excluded.

Sometimes the risks are related to explicit criminal organisations, as in the case of drugs-traffic. There are many other criminal activities which are activated by EU-subsidies and the criminal connivance between 'producers' and 'clients'. The Neapolitan Mafia sells large quantities of 'butter', made out of an incredible mixture of disgusting products, to other countries, to be used to 'enrich' milk production. Recently *l'Express* published an article in which a large number of this type of abuse was documented.<sup>161</sup> Although the article reviewed such scandals in France, it is quite evident that they are not a French speciality and that the international European dimension plays an important role. Another example is gene manipulated food (GM Foods). The EU has already taken several important decisions in this domain in order to establish the minimum levels of GM products in food. But GM-technology not only concerns consumption. *Scientific American* reports three worries that imply important risks in this domain: 1. innocent creatures will be hurt by insecticides built into many GM crops; 2. super weeds will arise as genes that give crops the ability to withstand herbicides find their way into weeds; 3. GM crops will suddenly fail because insect pests will evolve tolerance to built-in insecticides and because weeds will evolve immunity to herbicides sprayed over fields of herbicide-tolerant GM plants.<sup>162</sup> In the same issue it is said that more than half of the foods in U.S. supermarkets contain genetically modified ingredients. The main question is: Have they proved to be safe for human consumption.

4. A fourth kind of risks is connected with changing power relations within Europe. There is an ongoing discussion on leadership of the European Union in a somewhat veiled way. It is said, at least by French and German political figure-heads, that France and Germany are the motor of the EU. It is said that this linkage is a necessity for the future of Europe, but that this linkage is in crisis since the Nice Conference of December 2001, where for the first time the absolute equality between the two partners has been changed. Now Germany has more votes than France. When Germany and France consider themselves as the motor of the development of the EU, we can ask: on

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<sup>161</sup> 'Enquête sur les scandales alimentaires'. *L'Express*, No. 2595, 29 mars- 4 avril, 2001.

<sup>162</sup> K. Brown, 'Seeds of Concern'. *Scientific American*, April 2001, p.42.

which arguments is this claim to leadership based? How do the other partners of Europe interpret European leadership? What are the opinions on this pivotal idea of the *populations* which inhabit the EU and of those that will be included in it in the future? The position of the other countries is important, especially of the smaller ones, which in many cases will perhaps accept some leadership of this coupling, but not permanently. This idea of the leadership of two nations strongly reflects the old ways of looking at international relations. It is the formula of Saint-Simon and Thierry, presented after the downfall of the Napoleonic Empire. It has the smell of dominance of two nations which consider themselves as the main cultures of Europe and which claim as such the right to dominate. Such a political development entails many risks, because it creates new types of inequalities between the nations and between the individual chances of representatives of the nations, as is witnessed by the fierce struggle of the leaders to obtain the key-positions in the European institutions.

If there is leadership, based on political and economic power, it is evident that there is not yet a leadership based on clear and eminent ideas about the future of Europe. The national and the international policies of France and Germany are just a continuation of the 'national' ones, that is: the future is interpreted in terms of *continuation* and *adaptation*. There are no indications of a leadership that demonstrates more imagination, that is able to think in a really European way, not in terms of the past centuries only. The present situation is full of risks, because the 'motor' is perhaps there, but the drivers do not really know where to go.

5. The fifth category of risks is related to the preceding one. With the development of European institutions several decisions are taken at a higher level than the nation-states. This enhances the distance between the citizen and the political system. Few citizens know what happens in Strasbourg and in Brussels and for most of them it is all too evident that they cannot influence the decisions that are taken there. The members of the European Parliament are, with a few exceptions, hardly known and when they are known it is often in relation with some scandal. There are doubts about the political and intellectual quality of those members of the European Parliament. This may be unjust, but such an image is very bad for democracy and cannot be resolved by intentions to make 'things more transparent'. The problem is much more fundamental. There is a massive alienation on the part of the populations or a totality of lukewarm attitudes towards the EU. Together with the lack of real political and intellectual leadership this situation is very dangerous because this political vacuum risks being filled by dangerous ideologies, which preach hate towards 'the Other', or a type of collective retreatism, based on ideas of closed collective identities, or a nasty combination of these two options. Related to a lack of political leadership is the risk that bureaucratic decision-making takes over. This can easily go together with rigidity and a severe lack of alertness in face of new and unexpected situations.

6. The sixth type of risk pertains to the selection of the wrong and risky political reactions and policies in face of collective claims in European society. We are confronted with dangerous and risky reactions when the claims of groups or movements with closed collective identities are treated as acceptable within a European context, forgetting by doing this that the European value-system and the European institutions are not there by 'chance', but that they are the results of long and bitter struggles. We cannot turn the clock back and start our history again because some types of collectivity refuse to accept the conditions of modern democracy and the separation between Church and State, at the same time claim the right to be accepted on equal terms because of their collective identity or 'culture'. This type of claims has ushered in too many rather confused ideas about the multicultural or the multi-ethnic society, as I explained in the preceding chapter. Finally, the major risk in the development of Europe has already been referred to several times in the preceding chapters: the fact that there are no politically implemented collective representations available, which present guidelines for the construction of Europe *in terms of choices*, made by the population of Europe as such. Representations that go beyond adaptation to the 'necessities' of the market, that elaborate the major choices to be made to build an economic, social and cultural Europe with its own, open identity, based on the major values for which Europe stands in an open-minded way.

#### The risk of political crises and upheavals

##### *A black scenario*

Since the beginning of the construction of the European Union economic development has been without severe, long-term setbacks. Political crises and upheavals have been relatively rare phenomena. The student revolt of May 1968, the first Oil crisis (1972), and even the restructuring of the national economies in the eighties and nineties of the last century, as a consequence of globalisation trends and the ensuing sharp rise of unemployment, have not resulted in major political protests.

Is this relatively favourable political climate something to be taken for granted in the future of the EU? I do not think so. Is the EU capable and prepared to take a bold stand against major political upheavals in which the basic tenets of European democracy are at stake? I am not sure that this will be the case. Even confronted with rather mild problems, the EU is divided or overreacting. In relation with the problems in ex-Yugoslavia, the EU was not able to develop its own strategy, being dependent on the military power of the USA that had its own national-military reasons to interfere in this European mine-field. The European populations were ill-informed about this question and did not oppose this military intervention. The weakness of the EU in this domain came also to the fore in relation to the war of the USA, the UK and some other European nations against Iraq.

Let us imagine a black scenario for the future. Would the EU be able to handle in an efficient way major political risks resulting from anti-democratic movements *within* the (enlarged) European Union?

I have emphasised that a major problem of the development of the EU is the absence of pluralism with respect to the perspectives on the future of the European Union. There is one dominant model of technological-economic development (Post-Industrialism and the Open Society) and a reformist model that does not indicate the societal choices that are before us.

I have pointed out that the implementation of those models is based on functional or instrumental rationality: every step is calculated as leading to previously defined goals, without taking into account the 'rationality' of the goals themselves. The ruling political, economic and bureaucratic elites, which develop and implement the strategies for those instrumentally rational organisations and systems, are not trained to think in terms of substantial rationality in order to understand the nature of the interrelationships in a given situation and the relativity of the objectives they pursue.

A major risk may arise during a prolonged economic crisis, a serious financial crisis, or as a consequence of a strong decrease in faith in the ability of political elites to create just and equitable conditions, or in the wake of serious scientific disasters (failure of control of nuclear waste, failure to control a new type of virulent disease) when it becomes evident that the assumptions of the dominant model are questionable. The ensuing social perturbation produces political 'leaders' with theories that can be marked as substantially irrational. We have seen the rise of such theories in different historical periods, accompanied by very negative political behaviour (witch hunting, treating minorities as scape-goats, racist policies, etc.). Elites which are imbued by instrumental rationality and populations, which have not been educated in terms of substantial rationality, may be rather defenceless in front of irrational ideologies. Such irrational theories can be rather coherent. A good example of such a substantially irrational 'theory' is Samuel Huntington's *The Clash of Civilisations and the Remaking of the World Order*<sup>163</sup>, a book to which I already referred in Chapter II.

There is no easy solution for this (latent) problem. It is urgent that large-scale efforts are undertaken to augment the level of critical rationality in higher education. Moreover, these efforts must be accompanied by programs in the mass media, which inform the populations about the dangers of substantial irrationality and correct political thinking (that implies in fact being substantially irrational).

It may be useful to take also in consideration the many interactive games (CD-R, Game-boys etc.) that flood the market and that occupy the attention of most young people from the age of four. Most of these games are totally 'functionally rational': the goals are set and the game only demands actions in order to reach stated goals. Moreover, the games are mostly very aggressive and instil no respect for the dignity of the human being: the player becomes a serial killer who

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<sup>163</sup> S. Huntington, *o.c.*, 1996.

has, in many cases, the advantage of reincarnation, an advantage that is denied to the opponents. There are some exceptions to this type of games, but they are relatively scarce.

There may also be a rising tide of aggressive nationalism that tears to pieces the unity of the Union, together with the outburst of wars and ethnic cleansing (a 'Yugoslavian' scenario). Under such circumstances it could be very useful when the European Union has a strong European military intervention force at its disposal.

The black scenario can also contain violent social turmoil and the search for scapegoats which will likely be allochthonous minorities. Such a reaction is possible when parts of the middle classes are dispossessed by negative economic developments.

My examples in this section are placed in a 'black scenario' in which an economic crisis and inadequate political strategies shatter the postulates of the instrumental rationality of the dominant model of development. Important risks may be generated without such a major breakdown. I will give some examples. There is the possibility of major social upheavals when the European political system continues to neglect to go beyond the mere adjustment of social life to technological-economic rationality ([post-] industrialism and the open society).

Alongside social risks, there are also cultural risks, which may be generated or aggravated by clumsy political management. One of the major cultural risks is connected with the ideology of cultural relativism, which states that all cultures are equal and that all cultural expressions have the same value. To a certain extent such a statement is acceptable. We do not have at our disposal universally accepted yardsticks to gauge the value of different cultures. But seen from a specific culture or culture area the question is quite different. Within a culture it is certainly not true that all expressions are considered to be culturally equal. If that would be the case, this would be the total democratisation of all cultural expressions, a thesis that is not likely to be accepted by most citizens (except, perhaps, during a very brief moment during the student revolt of 1968 and even then it was only accepted by a minority). As I explained in chapter II, it is very difficult to make explicit what we mean when we use the concept of culture. Nevertheless, it is possible to point out a cultural specificity, resulting from a long historical process, a specificity that includes basic principles and solutions for the regulation of major conflicts. Other cultures have their own principles and ways of regulation of their conflicts and basic tensions. The situation changes dramatically when groups of persons, coming from another culture, establish themselves on the territory of an 'other culture', as is the case with the present immigration to Europe. Cultural relativism is under those circumstances a very bad guide, because there is no real cultural equality. European culture, defined in terms of its specificity, is without any doubt much more flexible and offers much more room for cultural diversity than other cultures, certainly in comparison with Arab culture. But this flexibility does not go so far that it is possible to speak about a real 'multicultural' society and even less about a 'multi-ethnic' society. Why not? The answer is rather simple: it is not acceptable

that minorities with characteristics which are incompatible with the host culture, request that the host culture adapts itself to *their* rules, forsaking its own specificity. It must be very transparent that all individuals have the right to organise their lives according to their own wishes and desires within the context of the modern *Rechtsstaat*. Nevertheless, the fuzzy debates on the multicultural society seem to provoke reactions among minorities that imply that there is no need to adjust themselves in certain fundamental respects to the basic principles of European society. A misguided cultural relativism is in this way confronted with a cultural or religious absolutism that criticises the ‘corrupted’ way of life of ‘Europeans’ and even states that freedom of speech should be limited in those cases that important social groups (read: minorities) are ‘attacked’.

The risk model is gaining in importance in a society in which the citizens seem to have a decreasing tolerance against personal ill-luck, disasters and calamities. The risk model presents a scenario in which policies are developed against insecurity. Such a scenario can have important side-effects. A policy that is based on the slogan ‘zero tolerance’ can easily lead to a curtailment of individual liberties. This perspective on society shares an important drawback with the preceding ones: it does not make explicit the nature of social and cultural relations in the emerging (European) society. Finally, the rise of international terrorism and the development of different policies to counteract terrorist’s threats necessitate an independent European answer.

## **2. The security society**

The collective representation of *the security society* resembles in many respects the preceding one. The main goal in the security society is also the reduction of risks. But while in the collective representation of society as a risk society the emphasis is on unintended and undesirable consequences of societal action, in the security approach the main aim is the control of *deviant* behaviour. It is; in our time, in the first place a reaction to an increasing level of criminality and other types of a lack of respect for the dignity and integrity of other persons, especially in the public space.

The discussion about the latter problems is in many respects couched in other terms than those about the risk society. In the former discussion directly observable types of behaviour, which are considered to be unacceptable for society, are placed in the foreground. The discussion is primarily held in terms of control measures, which must reduce deviant behaviour. In a democratic society, confronted with a sharp increase of criminality that may strongly perturb the social order, such as terrorists’ actions, the ensuing emphasis on security measures may also endanger democratic life as such, because they may have as an important consequence a restriction of the rights of the citizens. An important danger of the collective representation of society as a security society is the tendency to restrict the solution of the problem of order to the repression of deviant behaviour and to neglect the analysis of causes which may underlie this

behaviour, such as economic and social developments.

### 3. The conservative society

After the presentation of the preceding collective representations of society, the question has to be raised whether I have omitted to mention other images of society which may be relevant. One can think of such concepts as class society in the Marxian sense, sustainable society, achievement society, consumers' society, anomic society, narcissistic society, active society, self-service society or information and knowledge society. My reply is that these concepts are either included in the preceding collective representations, or that their role is only marginal in modern times. An exception must be made for the collective representation of the conservative society, which is, in contradistinction to the former ones, backward looking. It could be objected that this type of collective representation is an awkward one when one is speaking about the future of Europe and the European Union. Such a view could imply a serious mistake. To understand this, we must distinguish between different types of conservatism. Conservatism may refer to status-quo conservatism, the clinging of the establishment to the existing order. It may also imply reactionary conservatism, that the status-quo conservatism rejects, and desires to return to an often romanticised past. Both of them are indeed difficult to reconcile with the construction of the EU. A third type of conservatism could play a political role in the development of the EU: reformist conservatism.<sup>164</sup> This reformist conservatism can be regarded as a conscious and consistent perspective on the development of the EU and of its nation-states.

In chapter III, I referred already to the ideas of Vico, Herder and Burke as reactions to the Enlightenment. In opposition to the Enlightenment, in which rationalism, universalism and individualism have a central position, those philosophers stressed, as we have seen, the idea that societies are cultural totalities, the product of very long historical processes of (collective) expressions, which can only be understood from 'within'. Against universality, they place plurality and diversity of societies and cultures.<sup>165</sup> The traditional institutions of society – family, local communities, religion, and ownership - protect the individual against modernity's forces of erosion. This conservatism shows a deep respect for the past collective achievements of society. It accentuates collective sentiments and feelings, tradition and the (national) community.

It is possible to imagine another type of reformist conservatism that neither opposes tradition to modernity, nor the community to the individual, but that defends the open or democratic society, the result of a long, unique and difficult

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<sup>164</sup> H.W. von der Dunk, *Conservatisme*. Bussum: Unieboek, 1976, p.13.

<sup>165</sup> Cf. Patrick Tacussel, *Mythologies des formes sociales. Balzac et les Saint-Simoniens ou le destin de la modernité*. Paris : Meridiens Klincksieck, 1995, p. 43.



historical process, against its internal weaknesses and external foes. Internal weaknesses are a result of widespread egoistic individualism – produced by the market-society - and sentiments of disorientation, powerlessness and meaninglessness. A consequence of this development can be a persistent lack of interest in the political process, as shown by a high rate of abstention during elections, but also a massive support for leaders of protest movements with – partly - non-democratic political programs. Internal and external enemies are fundamentalist movements, which exploit the democratic procedures and the high level of tolerance of democratic societies to further their undemocratic goals.

A reformist conservative program reacts to such dangers by efforts to enhance the democratic collective identity of society in front of the claims of groups and movements with closed identities. It emphasises the importance of the specific character of democratic societies, the result of a long and unique historical process. Society must be permeated by a vivid consciousness of the importance of this democratic collective identity. As such it must play a central role in all types of education, in public debates, in dialogues between different parties, in the judgement and the eventual condemnation of statements which are contrary to this democratic order. Reformist conservatism is the defence of this historically developed collective identity that combines a very high level of freedom with tolerance and respect for diversity. Nevertheless, a democratic society and its collective identity have their limits. A democratic society as a specific constellation of culture traits cannot integrate those persons and groups, which do not accept its basic principles. It is not democratic society that has to adjust its principles to the requirements of minorities with objectives, opinions and behaviour which are incompatible with the democratic order. It is the other way round.

#### **4. The fundamentalist society**

The collectivist society as the fundamentalist one is in most respects the opposite of the type of society we live in. In chapter III, I discussed already types of closed collective identities. Fundamentalism is based on a strongly closed collective identity and on the idea of possessing the ‘truth’. This may go together with the idea of the mission to impose this truth on all non-believers. This is often the case when we encounter groups, which pretend to possess the ‘universal truth’.

In our democratic society it is not very likely that such a collective representation of the fundamentalist society can result in the actual conversion of society into a fundamentalist one. Nevertheless, we should not forget that in the past Europe has been confronted with violent types of fundamentalism, such as fascism and virulent oppressing variants of communism. Today we witness the rise of Muslim or Islamic fundamentalism. At the same time it can be observed

that also the ideology of modernity/globalisation has its true believers, which represent a way of thought that has strong fundamentalist characteristics.

In certain respect, fundamentalism is a rather recent phenomenon. The concept of fundamentalism was used for the first time in the USA, in 1922, to designate Protestant movements, which based their belief on a literal interpretation of the Bible and advocated a true Christian way of life in accordance with this interpretation. These Christian movements preceded the use of the concept, as fundamentalist movements were already present in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, both in the USA and in Protestant countries in Western Europe.

Shupe and Hadden define fundamentalism as: 'a proclamation of reclaimed authority over a sacred tradition which is to be reinstated as an antidote for a society that has strayed from its cultural moorings'.<sup>166</sup> Fundamentalism implies a closed mentality. It is a way of thinking that is based on a system of values and principles and that is considered to be unchanging and unchangeable. Such a system must determine one's behaviour completely.

Fundamentalism is a reaction to the modernising society and to the principles that go with it: rationality, universalism, individualism, democracy, equality and liberty. It is fuelled by feelings of insecurity, of disorientation and alienation, caused by the weakening of traditional bonds. It advocates a return to the pure sources of religious and social life as a medicine against the evils of modern society. Most studies on fundamentalism only take into consideration religious types of fundamentalism: Jewish, Christian and Muslim fundamentalist movements. Although the religious types of fundamentalism are based on the idea of a return to the truth as revealed by God, there are also non-religious types of fundamentalism, which are basically characterised by the same way of reasoning and concomitant mentality.

#### *Main characteristics of the fundamentalist way of thinking*

As can be expected, many characteristics of collective identity, especially of the closed collective identity, resemble those of the fundamentalist way of thinking.<sup>167</sup> This does not imply that all groups and persons with closed collectivities are fundamentalists, as follows from our following description of fundamentalism.

1. Fundamentalism is based on the idea of one, unchangeable truth. This excludes all claims to possess the truth of other (religious) groups.
2. Consequently, universalistic fundamentalist thinking abhors the idea of cultural relativism. Its values are absolute and cannot be changed by societal and cultural developments. Hence, fundamentalism only accepts

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<sup>166</sup> A. Shupe and J.K. Hadden, 'Is There Such a Thing as Global Fundamentalism?'. In: J.K. Hadden and A. Shupe, *Secularization and Fundamentalism Reconsidered: Religion and the Political Order*. New York: Paragon House, 1989, Vol. III, p. 111.

<sup>167</sup> See chapter III: collective identity based on an inside-view and, in the same chapter: closed identities: a dangerous concept.

a return in the direction of the restoration of the 'original' values and the way of life that is based on it. It rejects the idea that human thinking is determined, at least in certain respects, by historical developments. Fundamentalism is often accompanied by an idea of redemption from the present degenerated religious and social conditions.

3. Fundamentalism presents itself as 'universalistic'. This follows logically from the premise of the one, absolute truth. In fact, fundamentalism is very particularistic. The main objective of some types of fundamentalism is the imposition of their truth on the whole world, achieving in this way, when successful, 'universalism'.
4. Fundamentalist thinking is Manichean or dualistic. It does not accept any commonality between themselves and those who do not share their way of thinking.
5. Fundamentalism is, as follows from the preceding premises, highly dogmatic and inflexible.
6. It is a holistic way of thinking: the elements or parts are totally determined by it. As such it reifies its way of thinking and its organisation.
7. From this follows that the individual has only one identity as an element in the fundamentalist organisation or movement. *Extra ecclesiam nulla salus*. His fate is totally dependent on the destiny of his collectivity.
8. Fundamentalists consider themselves to be superior human beings in comparison with those who do not share their truth.
9. Consequently, the fundamentalists draw very sharp lines between themselves and the outside world (the out-groups). The outside world is 'rotten', 'degenerate', etc. while they consider themselves as 'pure', 'crystalline', and 'eternal'. Their problems are easily transferred to external scapegoats. This way of thinking is accompanied by highly stereotypical thinking about outsiders.
10. Not surprisingly, fundamentalist are highly intolerant against all those who do not share their truth. They are xenophobic, ethnocentric, and often anti-Semitic and intolerant.
11. Fundamentalist are often convinced that they are engaged in a cosmic struggle against Evil. Their struggle is necessary for the redemption of the world from capitalism, individualism, false prophets and false religions.
12. Fundamentalist organisations or movements have a totalitarian character, both with respect to their internal organisation as to the external world which they want to dominate. The submission of followers or members must be complete. Generally, women are excluded from leading positions.
13. Fundamentalism ignores democratic procedures. Such procedures have no meaning in front of the 'truth'. Only those who 'know' the revealed truth, have the right to issue orders. This is akin to the 'Führerprinzip' in the Nazi-party and the famous 'intuition' of their leader.

14. The central values of fundamentalism are submission, self-sacrifice, contempt of death, glorification of danger - *vivere pericolosamente* - (in the service of the Truth, of course), abjuration of individualist tendencies, and rejection of rationality.
15. Fundamentalism uses the language of the (pseudo-)community: the members are 'brothers'. Especially religious fundamentalism is in most cases anti-feminist. This is perhaps instilled by the archaic and paternalistic image of the 'originally good' society.
16. Fundamentalism is a response to modernisation (the Enlightenment, the capitalist or (post-) industrial society). Although anti-modern, fundamentalism is not *per se* anti-modernistic. It uses the results of modern science and technology without reluctance, as means in the service of its goals.
17. Fundamentalism generally rejects compliance with the rules of the (non-fundamentalist) society in which they live. For strategic and tactical reasons they may accommodate to external exigencies, for the time being.
18. In a society in which the fundamentalist are not (yet) dominant, they will strive for compartmentalisation or isolation and for the control of opportunities for indoctrination of their youth in private education.

#### *Fundamentalism and democratic values*

Fundamentalism is a coherent system of values and principles. I have described a specific configuration of elements, which compose this configuration or 'Gestalt'. You cannot take just a few of those fundamentalist elements, which characterise a specific group, and declare that the members of such a group, community or network are fundamentalists. Moreover, some fundamentalist movements are motivated by the desire to dominate the world, or certain parts of it - they are 'innerweltlich'-oriented -, while other fundamentalists do not have such a desire to impose themselves on this world. They are 'ausserweltlich'-oriented and want to keep the society in which they live as far removed from their daily life as possible. Some religious fundamentalists manage to organise their life within a modern society, without trying to adapt society to their principles, albeit sometimes grudgingly after a long period of struggle. Other types of fundamentalists have been defeated and ousted from public life, such as the Nazi-racists. Nationalist fundamentalist are rather small minorities in the European Union which sometimes disturb public life, but are too weak to have a real impact on the quality of democratic life.

The present position of Muslim fundamentalists in several of the modern democratic societies of the European Union is a more problematic one, as their main objective is the acceptance by the political systems, of a multi-ethnic society in which the primacy of the individual is no longer a valid principle for certain groups. The realisation of such endeavours would open the gate towards other 'innovations', such as the rejection of universal rules in education. It would imply the continuing inequality between Muslim men and women and a policy

of systematic separation of some religious communities from society at large. In this line of thought, it would not be acceptable, to give a recent example, that a professor 'from the occidental culture judges the quality of the tasks performed by a Muslim student'.<sup>168</sup> Conan says that in comparison with the small groups of fundamentalists, the other Muslims may appear to be moderate. This is only in appearance, he argues, because they are creating, step by step, a Muslim community in the margin of society, a community that rejects integration into the democratic society by adaptation to democracy's basic tenets.

At present the fundamentalist threat seems to be moderate in the EU. Muslim fundamentalists do not offer a valid and tenable solution for most of the problems the Muslim immigrants are confronted with, certainly not in the long run.

In this context I prefer to speak about Muslim fundamentalism and not about Islamic fundamentalism. Muslim fundamentalists give a specific interpretation of Islam and its origins, an interpretation that must not be confused with the long and extremely rich history of Islam in the Arab world. Real specialists of Arab and Islamic history do not hesitate to say that the Muslim fundamentalists are 'half-literate', extremely poor thinkers, who ignore the richness of their own culture and of the theological interpretations of the past. Modern Muslim fundamentalist thinking is based on resentment, hate and vengeance against the Occident.<sup>169</sup> Bernard Lewis concludes in his *What Went Wrong? Western Impact and Middle Eastern Response*, that what strikes an observer from the Occident about the Arab and Muslim world, is precisely the absence of liberty: liberation of the mind that is liberated from dogmas and censure, liberty of economy, liberation from corruption and carelessness, liberty of women, liberation from masculine oppression, liberty of the citizens, liberation from tyranny.<sup>170</sup> With these comments in mind, it is difficult to imagine that variants of Muslim fundamentalism contain acceptable solutions for the problems Muslim migrants are confronted with in the European Union.

Most Muslims in the EU are not fundamentalists, although many of them may show, on different occasions, sympathy with fundamentalist points of view. This is often the case when they think that their religion is not taken seriously by the non-Muslim population. They often have a problem with freedom of speech in this respect and react vehemently when they think that someone has made a statement that is an insult to Islam. Imams react very quickly to bring an assumed insult of Islam to court when there is no reason to do so, because the denounced opinion does not contain an incitement to act against Islam and its

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<sup>168</sup> E. Conan, 'Islam. Ce que l'on n'ose pas dire.' *L'Express*, no. 2671, 12-18 September, 2002, p.102-107. This was formulated by the Muslim student organisation of the University Paris XIII.

<sup>169</sup> Abdelwahab Meddeb, *La maladie de l'Islam*. Paris : Editions du Seuil , 2002, p.19.

<sup>170</sup> Bernard Lewis, *What Went Wrong. Western Impact and Middle Eastern Response*. Oxford University Press, 2002, p.231. See also: Karen Armstrong, *The Battle for God*. New York; Alfred Knopf, 2000.

believers. When, on the contrary, some imams express in their prayers very violent statements against Jews, Americans, Christians or homosexuals, they remain completely silent in spite of the fact that these statements often incite believers to engage in negative actions against these groups. Under such circumstances the conditions for a real dialogue with representatives of fundamentalist movements are very poor. The fact that democratic society does not react adequately to fundamentalist incitements to violence means either that non-Muslims are already complying with a changing interpretation of freedom of speech or, even worse, are not taking Muslims seriously, considering them as retarded, uncultivated people.

Although only a minority of Muslims are fundamentalists, it must not be forgotten that fundamentalism is a reaction to modernity and is nourished by alienation and by feelings of disorientation, anomie, meaninglessness and powerlessness. Most migrants from Arab-Muslim regions have moved from rural to urban areas and from an autocratic Arab-Muslim culture to a European democratic one. They are exposed, as I remarked earlier, to a 'double culture shock', a shock that easily generates the above-mentioned feelings of disorientation. This is a fertile soil for fundamentalism, because it promises to rebuild these migrants' self-respect and their confidence along the lines that I described in the sketch of fundamentalism.

In reaction to this development, the societies of the EU should not put much energy in combating fundamentalism. A better strategy is to attack the economic and social conditions which generate feelings of disorientation, not only in society at large, but also within the Muslim population itself. Here the emancipation of Muslim women is an urgent task. Such a policy should be accompanied by an educational program in which the opportunities and limits of modern democracy are outlined. At the same time attention should be paid to specific cultural problems which arise in the relationships between European societies and their Muslim populations. One of the most important of these problems is related to the observation that the immigrants from Muslim countries have a very strong tendency to see themselves as victims of all types of negative events. This tendency to victimise oneself is stressed by Lewis, who says that the Arab-Muslim world is, since its decline as a great civilisation, always looking for the causes of their problems outside their own societies. It is the Other who has done it.<sup>171</sup> This tendency was already present long before the era of colonisation and globalisation. It is a constant trait. Reading newspapers and looking at television programmes, we can observe that every time that a person with an Arab-Muslim background is apprehended, even caught red handed and in relation to very serious crimes, the reaction of his family and of his neighbourhood is invariably, constantly and immediately, that the culprit is the victim. This position is followed by expressions of hate and by aggression against those who are considered to be the cause of this victimisation (e.g. the

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<sup>171</sup> See also: Béchara Nasser Carbal, 'Nier le crime ne peut que nuire'. In : *Nouveau Courier*, no. 618, du 5-11 septembre 2002, p. 25.

police, the teachers, the medical services.). This exploitation of the victim's role is matched by the sense of guilt or culpability that lingers on in the minds of many non-Muslim inhabitants, members of the political class included. The cause of this is perhaps related to the colonial past, but it must have a much deeper origin, especially in Protestant countries and even more so in those regions that have been deeply influenced by Calvinism.

The interactions between a culture of guilt and a culture of victimisation have, as we can often observe, many perverse effects, among which is the tendency of the responsible authorities not to act in a pragmatic way in front of evident criminal acts of those who belong to the culture of victimisation, and even to ignore them.

In this short reflection on fundamentalism I cannot go further into the theme of fundamentalism in a democratic society. However, the importance of this theme goes far beyond the national boundaries of the nation-states of the EU. This seems to be a good reason to put this theme on the agenda of the EU.

## CHAPTER X: MODERNITY AND MODERNISATION: TYPES OF ADAPTATION AND RESISTANCE IN OUR TIME

We have seen that the concept of modernity and the process of modernisation have deep roots in European history. Modernisation is an ongoing rationalisation of public and economic life. In our time an important part of this process of rationalisation is the strong development of global markets. The foundation of the European Union and its enlargement to 25 member-states is closely connected with this development. The EU promotes the intertwining of the European states and peoples and hence contributes to security and peace among the peoples concerned. The EU also creates an enormous internal market and can as such protect in a better way economic interests than the European nation-states separately.

How is this development related to questions about the European culture or cultures? Ongoing modernisation needs the rise of a modern rational culture of communication and a diminution of negative collective images about the 'Other', especially within Europe. Can the development of the EU protect Europe's common cultural heritage and its cultural diversity against the impact of the process of rationalisation? This is an important and difficult question. We have seen that the dominant ideology of globalisation offers no defences, as it states that 'culture' is only a dependent variable that has to adapt to the exigencies of technological and organisational change. In this view, many internal cultural and institutional differences within the EU will fade away, together with such differences between Europe and the outside world. And yet, we witness debates about the inclusion/exclusion of nation-states, such as Turkey, in which cultural arguments come to the fore. Turkey is not, it is argued by some, a European country. Why is Turkey not a European country? Because it does not share Europe's dominant values of Christianity and Humanism. These arguments also came to the fore in the debates about the European Constitution in which some groups want to include explicitly that the European Union is a Judeo-Christian entity. When the EU would argue that its main values, such as are embedded in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, are universal, then it would be a logical step to include other states and regions in which these rights are not only formally accepted, but are also officially enacted and *de facto* observed.

I outlined in chapter V four major perspectives on the culture of Europe. I said in that context that the concept of culture has to be used in *a dynamic sense, open to the future, as a culture in the making* that will never be finished and that never can be based on a complete consensus of the 'Europeans'. To this I added that solutions have been developed in the past in order to overcome major antagonisms within Europe, solutions that must be safeguarded in democratic decision processes. As such, these solutions, as major principles on which the EU is based, should be included in the European Constitution.



My analysis clearly revealed that the cohesion or integration of the EU is not dependent on *the* European culture, interpreted as a monolithic whole that comprises economic, social, political and juridical Europe. Such a view would cause extreme political tensions and constraints in economic life. In our history we have many examples of such a view on the level of nation-states. The development of the EU implies of course that many competences of national authorities are transferred to the European institutions. As such the nation-state's importance decreases in certain respects. A consequence of this is, in some cases, the rise of the quest for regional autonomy, often linked to a concept of culture as a closed, hence exclusive, backwards looking, totality. As the awareness of a common European culture seems to be rather weak and a European identity barely exists, the centrifugal forces seem to dominate. To this we can add the influence of many immigrants from non-European regions and their off-spring, who in most cases seem to reject both one of Europe's national identities and a European identity, defining themselves primarily in terms of their religious allegiances and of the backgrounds of their countries and regions of origin.

My analysis of the collective representations of the future of Europe and of European societies also revealed the absence of important adherences to *specific* models of development, except for the ideology of modernisation. But I remarked, those who adhere to this ideology do not consider it to be one, as they argue that it represents the world as it really is. The absence of massive adherence to ideologies is often referred to as 'The End of Ideology'. Although this idea of the end of ideology is certainly a false one in a period of the dominance of the ideology of modernisation/globalisation, it must be emphasised that this ideology bears an image of the future that is largely determined by technological and organisational forces. Non-interference, except for the removal of restraining (traditional) conditions, will lead to the best possible future for all. This is certainly not an ideology that incites European citizens to be active in political life, as it *restricts political action to choices which pertain to policies of adjustment* to the requirements of the process of modernisation, as I explained in chapters VII-IX.

Moreover, my analysis of the process of modernisation as primarily a process of rationalisation showed that in this process three interdependent oppositions continue to have their impact on political and social life. *In the first place*, there is the opposition between the idea of rational society and the conception of society as the result of historically specific forces (*rationalism versus historicism*). *In the second place*, we observe that the promise of individual freedom or autonomy is threatened by the development of rational systems (*liberty versus determinism*). And *in the third place*, we see that the reign of reason and predictability in many cases restricts the free expression of sentiments (*reason versus sentiment*). The march of modernity is, following these observations, an important source of alienation in societies in which most persons no longer have to cope daily with problems of subsistence.

Confronted with all those developments, how do European workers and citizens react? How do they define themselves as members of society? Which are their main responses to the conditions of life in a modern society in relation with the process of modernisation? In the following pages, I will present briefly the major types of adaptation and resistance of groups and individuals to the main tensions which are inherent in the process of modernisation. This description must shed some light on the question whether the ongoing individualisation of modern society goes together with an increasing individualism. Or can we discern new types of collectivism, together with the persistence of traditional types of collectivism? What do the different types of behaviour in reaction to modernity teach us about the changing character of social cohesion and solidarity? I will start with the most obvious *individualist* reactions to the process of modernisation, followed by *collectivist* reactions.

### **Individualist reactions**

#### *1. Substantial-rational (critical) individualism*

Modernity and the processes that ensue from it contain, as we saw in chapter IV, some major contradictions. The Enlightenment that gave birth to the idea of modernity promised the emancipation of the individual from traditional and religious bonds when following the way of reason. It also engendered the ongoing rationalisation of the production of commodities and of governance, a process that restricts individual liberties in many respects by creating new types of dependencies for citizens, workers and consumers.

The promise of the Enlightenment was the rise of rational individualism, the coming of personalities who strive for individual autonomy, independence and rational understanding of the world they live in. This type of individualism implies unavoidably the will to defend that type of individualism against societal developments which threaten it, such as fundamentalist movements, and to advance this type of individualism in the different domains of social life. This individualism is based on a *personal* identity as a rational individualist. We have in mind an individualism that is based on substantial-rationality, defined by Mannheim in the following way: 'We understand as substantially rational an act of thought which reveals intelligent insight into the inter-relations of events in a given situation. Thus the intelligent act of thought itself will be described as "substantially rational", whereas everything else which either is false or not an act of thought at all (for example drives, impulses, wishes, and feelings, both conscious and unconscious) will be called "substantially irrational".'<sup>172</sup>

Substantial-rational individualism is being marginalised, not only by the rationalisation of the forces of production and of governance, guided by the system-rationality of large organisations, but also by those persons who are

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<sup>172</sup> K. Mannheim, *Man and Society. In an Age of Reconstruction*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd, 1954 (1940), p. 53

opposed to the primacy of reason on the basis of ideas about the 'essence' of their collective or individual identity. So substantial-rational individualism is cornered in our times by both system-rationality and by old and new types of collectivism.

### *2. Instrumental market-oriented individualism*

Instrumental market-oriented individualism must not be confounded with the preceding type of individualism. Market-oriented individualism is a rather restricted type of individualism and it is certainly not on its way to extinction. The market-oriented individualist is a person who enters into exchange relations and into contracts on the basis of an assumed perfect knowledge of the market. Imperfections of the market-mechanism are in this view related to traditional constraints and by types of policies which tend to continue those imperfections. This is the type of individualism that has a central place in the ideology of globalisation and that is propagated by agencies such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. Progress is ensured, according to this ideology, when traditional institutions are destroyed and production is oriented to international markets. This type of thinking and acting expands rapidly within modern societies in which the market increasingly becomes a model for social life in general (see chapter VIII.1.).

### *3. Achievement-oriented individualism*

Achievement-oriented individualism is in some respects related to the preceding type of individualism. In contradistinction to this, however, achievement-oriented individualism is not connected with contract relations in an open market, but with professional careers in (large) organisations. The achievement-oriented society developed gradually during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, especially since 1950. This was a period in which the opportunities for advanced education increased rapidly, together with a continuous growth of the dependent middle-classes. It was a period with rising opportunities for advancement in orderly careers within expanding organisations. Achievement-oriented individualism was, within this context, optimistic. There was a firm belief within the middle-classes that investments in advanced education would improve a person's market value and would be rewarded by his advancement in professional life.

After a period of rising opportunities for many persons, several developments slackened the growth of these professional opportunities, such as a flattening of the hierarchical structures of organisations, a process that squeezed opportunities for advancement, the relatively high level of unemployment, and an increasing fuzziness of the reward systems in economic life. This implies an increasing tension between the actual opportunities for advancement in the labour market and the ideology of the achievement-oriented society. In the long run, these changes in the labour market will sap this ideology and will, henceforward, decrease the level of achievement-oriented individualism.

### 5. *The revolt against formal rules: populist individualism*

Achievement-oriented individualism necessitates the compliance of the persons concerned with the rules of the organisation in which they are working. Their opportunities for advancement depend also on their conformity to the rules of the organisation. Modernisation as a process of rationalisation is necessarily connected with the dominance of legal-rational leadership. But those persons, who are subjected to the rules of this leadership, issued in the name of this system-rationality, do not always understand the meaning of those rules and the changes of these rules within their own context. People can easily become alienated in these situations, both as workers, as clients of bureaucracies and as voters. Independent entrepreneurs of small and middle sized enterprises are annoyed by the bureaucratic obligations which are imposed on them by the national and European bureaucracies and which they consider in many cases as meaningless and as a waste of their time. Citizens do not understand why some of the problems they experience in their daily life – in their neighbourhood, in their relations with health services, with the educational system, with agencies of the welfare state, in their work situation – seem to have such a low priority in national and even local policies. Such a situation, perceived as such by the persons concerned, can be an important source of populist protest movements in which leaders promise to break through the assumed inertia of the ‘ruling classes’, to install a type of direct or popular democracy and, of course, to solve the problems of the discontent by applying some rigorous measures. Such movements may raise temporarily the level of participation in elections of those persons who ‘normally’ abstain as voters. This protest populism is an individualistic movement and brings together people with very different economic and social backgrounds, temporarily united by the idea of a loss of freedom in front of rational-bureaucratic structures. It must be distinguished from identity populism that was discussed under the collectivist types of reactions against modernity. Depending on the political and social circumstances, persons who are worried by the decline of national identity may join the ranks of protest populism in those cases where the identity populism movement is very marginal.

### 5. *Immoderate assertive egoistic individualism*

The tension between formal rules of rational systems and the (partial) rejection of them by certain persons can be observed in their sometimes exaggeratedly assertive and egoistic types of behaviour. Employees of public services, such as health services, education, or police-services are increasingly confronted with aggressive behaviour of individuals, who want to be served immediately because they have the ‘right’ to it. Their slogan is: ‘Me first’. Such egoistic assertive persons are likely to join populist protest movements when these arise in political life. This trend is certainly related to the individualisation of social life, a process that may release person from the (traditional) bond without having acquired a form of individualism that enables them to cope with a social environment in a positive way. Immoderate assertive egoistic individualism and

the behaviour that it generates, are related to the rise of certain types of criminal behaviour, especially in large cities with high concentrations of immigrants.

*ident*

#### *6. Personal ity individualism*

While the search for identity is primarily related to the tension between reason and sentiment, another individualist reaction is in the first place related to the tension between bureaucratic reason and individual liberty.

For many persons in an occidental individualised world, collective and communitarian reactions to modernity are not attractive. In our time most persons, who are attracted to fundamentalist movements have cultural backgrounds in which the individual is not or is scarcely emancipated from their traditional background. This is not to say that among those who grew up under modern circumstances fundamentalism does not have any appeal. However, those who are attracted by fundamentalist movements seem to exist in the margin of society.

Nevertheless, many persons in an individualised, disenchanted and rational society seem to be alienated and disoriented and try to overcome the rift between reason and sentiment by a search for their 'essential' identity, an identity that is not imposed by an institution and less so by fundamentalist conceptions. The persons concerned fly from a world dominated by rules and control. Theirs is a search for the real meaning of their life as individuals. They are searching for a re-enchantment of life in their inner, sacred 'me'; it is a Gnostic, esoteric search. This way of thinking is prominent in the New Age movement and is often accompanied by a preference for parallel medicines, even with a rejection of what they call 'official medicine'. All this goes often together with a 'renaissance' of magical thinking, with the idea of that there are many things between heaven and earth that cannot be understood by reason. The 'New Age' label refers to a great variety of activities. As Heelas remarks: 'An exceedingly wide range of practices – from enlightenment intensive seminars to astrology, from Wicca to Zen, from alternative empowerment courses, from mediation to shamanism, from the search for the Wild Man to the search of the Goddess, from the Headless Way to the Yantra Vibrational Energy Centre – have made their appearance under the 'New Age' rubric'.<sup>173</sup>

It is interesting to note that this search for identity penetrates nowadays even formal rational organisations. Many courses are given for those working in formal organisations to teach them how to tap their inner sources and to overcome the tension between reason and sentiment. With the main objective, of course, to raise the motivation and productivity of the employees of the organisation.

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<sup>173</sup> P. Heelas, 'The New Age : Values and Modern Times', in: L. van Vucht Thijssen, J. Berting and F. Lechner, eds, *The Search for Fundamentals. The Process of Modernisation and the Quest for Meaning*. Dordrecht/Boston/London: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1995, Chapter 9.

### *7. The flight into virtual worlds*

This is an option that is not only restricted to leisure activities, because also 'real' jobs can become touched by the virtual worlds of information technology. However, this is until now only the case in a limited number of professional activities, especially in architecture and in artistic professions.

It could be remarked that this option can also be related to our second main opposition: reason and sentiment. To a certain degree, this is a valid observation. But it seems to me that the contents of the majority of the CD/DVD games are related to the third opposition: (bureaucratic) rules versus individual freedom. Another critical remark could be that before the coming of information technology individuals could withdraw into the virtual worlds of the cinema and literature. This is too a valid observation, but especially for the younger generation the withdrawal into interactive worlds of cyberspace in which no, or only a few, basic rules are imposed, is much more rewarding than what non-interactive virtual worlds offer.

A more dramatic individualist flight from reality is that of drug addicts, who give up their personal autonomy by flight to imaginary worlds through the use of drugs and by, in many cases, adopting a way of life that cuts them off from normal social life and makes them dependent on dealers and public services.

### *8. The pursuit of a hedonist way of life*

The above-mentioned collectivist and individualist reactions have in common that they are primarily adaptations to one of the three types of tensions that I described in the preceding pages. An exception must be made for those fundamentalist movements, which want to destroy the occidental capitalist world *in toto*. In an individualised society we can observe another important type of behaviour: conformity to the consumer society and the pursuit of the satisfaction of individual needs, as offered by the commodities and services of the (global) market. This orientation often goes together with a weak interest in the long-term consequences of consumerism and can be 'legitimised' by the adherence to the ideology of modernisation. Conformity to the process of modernisation can be more inclusive than that, as is demonstrated by the acceptance of the ideology of modernisation as the only valid theory of economic and social change.

## **Collectivist reactions**

In the preceding section I reviewed several types of individualism in relation with modernisation. This analysis could suggest that modernisation is accompanied by the individualisation of social life and by increasing individualism. This idea is strongly suggested by the well known opposition

between tradition and modernity. We will see that ongoing modernisation leads not only to a further rise of individualism. Traditional types of collectivism are often waning, but at the same time we can observe the rise of new types of collectivism.

*1. The re-collectivisation of society.*

My analysis of different types of individualism clearly shows that the classical opposition between tradition and modernity is based, partially at least in our time, on wrong points of departure. We can observe that modernisation not only leads to an increasing individualism, but that at the same time collectivism as a mentality is reinforced, together with a collectivisation of society in certain respects. Collectivism stands in a marked contrast to substantial-rational individualism. While individualism implies autonomy, independence and self-reliance, collectivism stands for heteronomy, dependence, submission and an image of oneself that is defined by membership and belongingness to an inclusive unity. This difference has as a major consequence that persons with a collectivist mentality experience the ongoing process of modernisation in a way that is rather different from those persons who are marked by an individualist mentality.

Modernisation means, among many other things, ongoing individualisation of social life, a process that opens opportunities for emancipation for those persons who have acquired certain characteristics, such as a rational way of analysing the world around them, generally a rather high level of education, a social background that stimulates personal initiatives and a good sense of the importance of achievement-motivation. Many persons, however, are not well equipped to cope with the conditions of modernity. This lack of resources may result in a choice for immoderate assertive individualism, or for conformity to the rules of the consumer society, both being non-reflexive types of individualism. Persons who show these types of individualism can easily be seduced under unstable political and economic circumstances by collectivist movements. A very poignant and sad example of this is the rise of the fascist movement in some major European countries after World War I. Especially the Nazi-movement was very successful in organising the many persons with a weak individualist mentality, and certainly those with an anti-individualist mentality, into a large-scale re-collectivisation project of society, a re-collectivisation that went together with the promise of an upward collective social mobility for all those who were considered to belong to that mythical unity called 'Herrenvolk'. This type of collectivism is attractive for all those persons who are not capable of coping with their existence without being sustained by a stable and coherent social framework.

Also now social and economic conditions which can nourish populist collectivist movements are not absent. European countries witness, in varying degrees, the rise of what we will call 'national identity populism'. This identity populism can be considered as a reaction to modernity in relation with the changing position of the nation-state. The development of the European Union,

together with the immigration of considerable numbers of persons, who do not share the idea of national identity of many of the 'original' inhabitants can, depending on specific economic and cultural circumstances, lead to populist movements, which emphasise the importance of the nation's collective identity. This emphasis on this collective national identity goes together with the idea that this identity has to be protected against the negative influences of the 'intruders', the immigrants, the conquerors of the national space. This national identity populism accepts the 'Other' only when he assimilates to the culture of the host country. We must distinguish this type of collectivistic populism from the individualistic protest populism that we discussed above. Nevertheless, under specific political circumstances the two types of populism may merge, e.g. during elections, when the political leadership of a populist party succeeds in masking the difference between the different brands of populism.

## *2. Retreat on collective identities*

An other type of collectivisation is the retreat on collective identities. This retreat on collective identities shows in a few cases some overlapping with the preceding type of collectivism, but it has to be distinguished from it, as we will see. During the last twenty-five years we have witnessed a strong rise of claims by different groups and social movements to respect their collective identity. The most outspoken claims come from fundamentalist movements that are firmly grounded on the idea of an exclusive collective identity. Their idea of collective identity is a very closed one: 'we' have the truth, the outside world is erring and corrupt being only based on money and sex. I will return to this type of collectivism in the next section. However, not all claims to a specific collective identity are fundamentalist ones. Many groups and movements which claim a specific collective identity are far from having a closed identity and do not reject the outside world as is the case with fundamentalist movements.

The rise of these collective identity claims is certainly related to the present stage of modernisation in which many structural delimitations are becoming fluid and losing their potentiality as markers of identity. Such is the case in the relations between workers and their enterprises or their professional groups, between citizens and their country, between individuals and their family. Add to this the fact that the individualistic achievement society, based on the idea of an equitable relation between merit and reward, is being seriously eroded by the extremely high level of incomes that top managers, pop stars and top footballers receive.

The rise of collective identity claims is also incited by observations that in the process of modernisation, specific cultural and social characteristics of social groups and regions are gradually disappearing, and that collective action is needed to protect this cultural heritage. Such actions need not be embedded in the collectivistic identity trade, but in view of the present popularity of the concept of collective identity, this link may help to focus the general interest on these actions.



More important than this is the fact that the idea of collective identity is an important means to obtain advantages for those who claim such a collective specificity, as I already remarked. The present discussion about multicultural society is not only a discussion about the right of certain minorities to organise their life on the basis of their assumed collective identity, but also to obtain other prerogatives or rights, such as positive discrimination in certain domains. In chapter VIII, I introduced this theme systematically. I referred in this context to the tensions aroused by this idea of collectivistic rights in a democracy that is primarily based on rights of individuals. Many claims of groups with an assumed collective identity ask not only to be respected by 'society', but want to receive rewards or gratifications because their group or community has been disadvantaged by 'society' in the past. Such reasoning is clearly holistic-realistic and implies that individuals have the right to obtain scarce means solely based on their membership of such an entity. Here we enter the domain of the exploitation of the idea of collective identity. The present 'identity hysteria',<sup>174</sup> is certainly connected with the endeavour to exploit 'society'. This remark can be made while accepting that collective identity claims are in several instances also a specific type of reaction to alienation and disorientation, caused by the process of modernisation.

I already remarked that this rise of claims to collective identity is in certain respects related to the rise of fundamentalism. A major distinction between the two is the fact that the former reactions are characterised by a strongly closed collective identity and that the latter have a relatively open collective identity. These characteristics of such groups or movements need not be static. Groups with a relatively open collective identity may under specific circumstances change into the direction of a closed identity, depending on the ways in which society is reacting to their claims and pretensions. The way back from a closed to an open identity seems to be more difficult because a real dialogue with the outside world is excluded by the way the outside world is interpreted within the collective identity itself. Both types of reaction are related to the tensions, created in the process of modernisation, between rationality and historicism.

### *3. Universalistic fundamentalism*

In the preceding section I referred to the rise of fundamentalism as a reaction to modernisation. Nowadays, fundamentalist collectivism mobilises only a limited number of persons, although it has in spite of this, in some instances, a strong effect on society as a whole. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the coming of industrialist society was accompanied by the rise of social movements in search of community. They were reactions of uprooted people with traditional *rural* and urban backgrounds. This search for community was often related to religious fundamentalist thinking, but we can also discern this search in socialist and communist movements of that time.

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<sup>174</sup> E. Dupin, *L'hystérie identitaire*. Paris : Le cherche midi, 2004.

In our time most types of fundamentalism are a reaction to the modernising society and to the principles that go with it: rationality, universalism, individualism, democracy, equality and liberty. It is fuelled by feelings of insecurity, of disorientation and alienation, caused by the weakening of traditional bonds. It advocates a return to the pure sources of religious and social life as a remedy against the evils of modern society.

This fundamentalist reaction is observable among members of allochthonous Muslim minorities. Although only a minority of Muslims are fundamentalists, it must not be forgotten that fundamentalism is a reaction to modernity and is nourished by alienation and by feelings of disorientation, anomie, meaninglessness and powerlessness. These migrants underwent, as I explained earlier, a 'double culture shock', a shock that easily generates the above-mentioned feelings of disorientation. It prepares a fertile soil for fundamentalism, because it promises to rebuild these migrants' self-respect and their confidence along the lines that I described in my sketch of fundamentalism.

This type of fundamentalism that refuses to dialogue and to compromise with the 'evil and corrupt' outside world, cannot be integrated in a democratic society, certainly not when it tries to colonise the host society by imposing its specific rules. Such a type of fundamentalism is totally political in spite of its religious veil. It is comparable to other fundamentalist ways of thinking with which Europe has been confronted in the past: Nazism, built on the idea of the 'pure race' and other fascist movements based on the concept of fundamental inequality between men, and communism as harbinger of the only society that is capable of ending the condition of alienation. In all those cases we are confronted with 'universalistic' ideologies that have the endeavour to submit the whole world to their ideas about the 'pure society'. Moreover, this way of thinking is extremely holistic: individuals exist only as an element or 'function' of the political and religious system in which they are embedded.

#### *4. Particularistic fundamentalism*

In contradistinction to universalistic fundamentalism, particularistic fundamentalism is based on the assumed cultural or religious specificity of a collectivity, such as a region, a nation, an ethnic group or a religious community. The closed, exclusive identity that is part of this type of fundamentalism draws, of course, also a sharp distinction between 'us' and the 'outsiders'. We encounter this type of fundamentalism in extremist groups like the Basque ETA, the Armata Corsa, and in nationalist movements with their emphasis on 'Our own people first'. I am not arguing that all particularistic movements are fundamentalist ones. Most of them are not. They emphasise their cultural specificity, but are pursuing their objectives in a democratic way (e.g. the acknowledgment of their specific regional language).

Particularistic fundamentalist movements as mentioned above are trying to change the world in a restricted way, often bypassing democratic procedures, to acquire autonomy for their region, to cleanse their country or region from 'undesirable elements', such as was/is the case in Kosovo and other regions in

former Yugoslavia. But not all particularistic fundamentalist movements show this tendency. Some may prefer to live in isolation from modern society in order to preserve their ethnic or religious specificity. As such we can refer to the Amish and the Mennonite communities in the USA and South America. In Europe such a type of fundamentalism seems to be absent.

##### *5. Collectivism within large organisations*

The types of collectivism that I described briefly up to now have a common denominator: all of them are opposed in important respects to the march of modernisation. Our next type of collectivism and collectivisation accepts it wholeheartedly. Paradoxically, it is even part of the very core of this process. This collectivism is an adaptation by the higher and middle echelons of large rationally organised systems to their requirements or exigencies. The rise of this type of collectivism has been observed both in the United States and in Europe. Many employees within this type of organisation submit themselves to the organisation's system-rationality that has within their way of thinking a higher priority than their own autonomy. This type of collectivist adaptation is characterised by a way of thinking and acting on the basis of the interests of the organisation in which, and for which, the employee is working. It is an essential element of the culture of large private companies like Unilever, Shell, Philips or General Motors. This collectivism resembles the mentality of public servants in state bureaucracies. These civil servants can be considered as the precursors of what was called later the 'organisation men'.

Modernisation is the advance of formal, rational organisations, an advance that goes together with a weakening of the traditional structures of society in which the sense of community, of belongingness and of collectivistic thinking play a dominant role. This advance of formal large-scale organisations also hampers the growth of substantial rational individualism, especially with respect to autonomy and individual independence. The development of modern organisations can be considered as a new way of collectivisation that is accompanied by a modern type of collectivism. It is certainly not by chance that Mayo thought that the modern organisation could be an antidote against the 'atomisation' of modern life. This way of thinking laid the foundation of the Human Relations in Industry movement in the USA, which argued that the modern industrial organisations could augment the level of work satisfaction of workers by organising working-relations in such a way that fundamental needs for togetherness and belongingness were satisfied.<sup>175</sup> This movement's proposals were directed at the situation of blue collar workers. It could be remarked that blue collar workers had still many characteristics of a traditional mentality in the middle of the last century and that the Human Relations in Industry tried to accommodate this mentality to modern industrial life. But what about white collar workers? We have seen that the rise of modern society goes together with a rapid growth of the category of white collar workers and that those workers

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<sup>175</sup> See: Mayo, E., *Human Problems in Industrial Civilization*. New York, 1949.

were very strongly influenced by the ideology of the achievement society. Do they have an outspoken individualistic orientation in their occupational life? This is only observable in a limited sense. The advance of the rational large-scale organisation leads to the coming of a type of workers, especially on the lower and middle level of management, that has been labelled by W.H. Whyte as the 'organisation man'. This organisation man is only an individualist in a limited sense. Whyte remarks: 'The organisation man is the most conspicuous example, but he is only one, for the collectivisation so visible in the corporation has affected every field of work'.<sup>176</sup> These organisation men are conscious of the fact that they have only a slight influence on their work and working conditions. But this is not considered by them to be a problem as they think that between them and the organisation harmony reigns. They have gradually developed an ideology that sustains trust and confidence in the collectivity. They reject market-oriented individualism as being contrary to the ethics of their organisation. Instead of this three principles come to the fore in their way of thinking. The first one is the idea of scientific management. This is the idea that a scientific analysis, together with the interventions which are based on this, can create a 'good' organisation in which tensions and conflicts between individuals and between segments of the organisation can be resolved and even avoided. The second principle is 'belongingness'. This principle's main function is to entertain the social bond between the employees. It provides: 'the deep emotional security that comes from total integration with the group'.<sup>177</sup> The third principle - that will not come as a surprise to the reader - is togetherness. This principle is sustained by the idea that the group is superior to the individual. In this ideology it is argued that it is scientifically proven that this is a true statement. However, there is certainly not a scientific consensus about this 'truth'.

This collectivistic development has not been curbed into an individualistic direction during the last two or three decades. It is certainly true that the majority of the many professionals who are working in large organisations have a high degree of autonomy in the execution of their work. Nevertheless, this autonomy goes together with a strong dependence on the organisation and with a strong conformity to the organisation's rules. Their self-image is determined by the fact of being an 'organisation man'. The organisation's grip on them implies also that in many cases the separation between private and public life can become blurred. The requirement to be 'flexible' can have important consequences for their family-life (e.g. the requirement to move or the adaptation of the family to working schedules, efforts to include family-members in social activities of the organisation so as to strengthen the social cohesion of the organisation).

#### 6. *Compliance with the temptations of the consumer market*

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<sup>176</sup> W.H. Whyte Jr, *The Organization Man*. New York, Garden City: Doubleday & Company, 1957, p.3.

<sup>177</sup> W.H. Whyte Jr, *o.c.*, p.38.

The ideology of modernisation and globalisation accentuates, as we have seen, the ongoing individualisation and individualism of modern society. Collectivism within large modern organisations is at odds with this assumed trend. Could it be otherwise? I don't think so. Modern corporations have to defend their corporate interests against the attacks of other corporations in the same market. They are like armies the leaders of which often have to take quick decisions. Under those circumstances they have to rely on the conformity of the constituent parts of the organisation to their strategies and their orders. The described collectivisation and conformity can be seen as a logical consequence of the present stage of modernisation. Hence, it refutes ongoing individualisation and individualism in this respect.

A different type of collectivism is conformity to the rules of the consumer market. This is the strong and one-sided orientation of persons to the satisfaction of their needs through the latest products and services that are offered by the market. This orientation often goes together with a weak interest in the long-term consequences of this consumerism. This conformity does not necessarily imply a conscious adherence to the ideology of modernisation. Nevertheless, there is a strong link with this ideology as many political and economic leaders repeat daily that economic growth is increasingly dependant upon the rising level of consumption. Everything is done to stimulate the individual expenditure by raising the accessibility of credit and, of course, by the ongoing advertisement of new products and by changing rapidly and frequently the design of many products and by frequently organising sales. A growing part of the population seems to become increasingly influenced by the opinion of other persons in their personal networks. This is especially observable among the younger generations with their attachment to specific types of expensive brands. Already in the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Riesman observed a change in the population of the USA in the direction of an increasing 'groupism'. This was, and still is, a development that is contrary to the strong individualism that marked the preceding period.<sup>178</sup> He referred to this development with the concepts of 'inner-directed personality' and 'other-directed personality'. Gradually, the inner-directed personality is being replaced by the other-directed one. The inner-directed personality is a personality that acts on the basis of internalised objectives and ideals that have been inculcated<sup>179</sup> by his direct environment – generally his parents – during his education. These values and objectives are those of the Protestant Ethic and accentuate the importance of individualism, especially substantial-rational individualism and market-oriented individualism. The inner-directed personality has long-term goals in his life, related to the credo of the individualistic achievement society. He has to delay immediate

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<sup>178</sup> D. Riesman, *The Lonely Crowd. A Study of the Changing American Character*. New Haven, Con.: Yale University Press, 1973 (1950),

<sup>179</sup> D. Riesman, 'Individualism Reconsidered'. In: D. Riesman, *Selected Essays from Individualism Reconsidered*. New York, Garden City: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1954, p.19.

gratification of several present needs in order not to endanger the achievement of his long-term goals. Contrary to this, the other-directed personality is a person who orients himself in social life by means of the signals that he receives from relevant persons in his social networks. He is a sort of 'radar type', whose behaviour is strongly influenced by the networks and groups to which he belongs, his 'peer groups'. They make the difference between what is 'in' or 'out'. This personality is very susceptible to the messages of public advertisements, mediated by his peer groups. This shift towards other-directedness is accompanied by an accentuation of the importance of group life. This is shown by an orientation on the: '...group mood – a feeling on the part of individuals that they wanted or felt they had to spend their energies first in making a group, and second in attending to and improving its morale'.

According to Riesman, this orientation is strongly present in the middle classes, especially among the lower-ranking employees in middle-sized and large organisations, and among the not yet gainfully employed. The degree of heteronomy is high in this type of collectivism. There is, moreover, a strong dependence on the judgments of the peer group, and a submission to public advertisement with its continuing emphasis on the importance of having the latest and the most modern products at one's disposal. Also the distinction between private life and public life seems to fade away in the wake of the development of this other-directedness, witness the many television programmes in which persons show a great willingness to talk freely about their most intimate private life. Witness also the large audience, which highly enjoys such private revelations. European countries have followed in several respects the same social developments as the USA.

### **In search of new parameters of development**

#### *1. Alter globalisation and protection of the global environment*

Up to now, I have reviewed briefly several ways in which individuals and groups adapt to changing society, or resist specific economic, social and cultural changes. We have seen that none of these reactions can be seen as a (collective) effort to change the course of modernisation by proposing and elaborating a different course. A rejoinder to this remark could be to refer to the universalistic fundamentalism as an alternative for the modernisation of society. But this alternative cannot be attractive for most of us, based as it is on inequality, submission, lack of freedom, and the tyranny of a few over the many. In chapters VIII and IX we already came to the conclusion that none of the seven collective representations that can be distinguished on the political scene can be regarded as a model that offers opportunities to deviate from the main course of development.

And yet, there are networks and groups, inside and outside the established political circles, which have in mind a change of direction of the evolution of our societies. This search for another model of development of the world has many

faces. The different movements have in common that they are not primarily reactions to the major tensions within the process of modernisation itself, as are the reactions that we described briefly till now. Both alter globalisation movements and the movements that stand for the protection of the global environment have in common that they want to change the main course of development in some important respects, groping their way forwards, in the midst of populations and political leaders who are imprisoned in a short-term perspective.

### **In a whirlpool of contradictions and tensions**

Individualisation of modern societies is an important element in the process of modernisation. Many observers of modern life emphasise strongly this development and see it as the major force behind the growth of 'individualism'. This growing 'individualism' is, in this view, the main cause of some major problems of modern life, such as the rise of criminality, of vandalism, and of drug addiction. Consequently, these negative consequences of individualisation and individualism have to be counteracted by reinforcing both local integrative structures and the sense of community and solidarity of neighbourhoods which are considered to be 'disintegrated'.

It is not my intention to argue that policies, which are based on this view, are devoid of any merit. It can nevertheless be observed that their results are often very disappointing.<sup>180</sup> One of the causes of this lack of positive results is that the persons concerned – often with an allochthonous background – are far from being uprooted individualists. They are strongly integrated in their own local groups. Their collectivism is often marked by a strong conformity to the consumer market, together with a rejection of legitimate achievement-oriented individualism.

We have seen that the individualisation of society can result in different types of individualism. Some of these types are often discussed in relation to important changes in working-life, such as instrumental market-oriented individualism, achievement-oriented individualism and substantial-rational (critical individualism). Other types are primarily related to the changing relations between the citizen and the political institutions, such as populist individualism, and to the relation between the citizen as a client and public services (assertive egoistic individualism). Finally, the increase of free time stimulates a rise of personal identity individualism, especially in the middle classes, flights into virtual world, the pursuit of hedonist life-styles and, certainly, also the use of time in relation with achievement-oriented individualism – e.g. efforts to ameliorate one's market value - , or the use of time to pursue the paths of substantial-rational individualism.

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<sup>180</sup> See, e.g. J. Berting and C. Villain-Gandossi, o.c.. In: W. Beck et al., o.c., 2001.

Individualism has many appearances, which may be rather different in major areas of social life. Moreover, the same person may, depending on the social context, show rather different aspects of individualism and, as we will see below, of collectivism. This implies that it is difficult to present statistical data which show the distribution of the types of individualism and collectivism in society. Moreover, the frequency of the presence of the different types of individualism may change over time. In certain periods there may be populist upheavals which fade away rather rapidly. Certain soccer matches give rise to strong nationalist feelings, as we all know. When religious feelings are being hurt by a specific incident – e.g. by the Danish cartoons representing Mohammed – then there may be a strong demonstration of collectivism by the believers concerned. However, looking at the gradually changing conditions of modern life, it can be said that some types of individualism are reinforced or weakened by them. Substantial-rational or critical individualism seems to be endangered by our changing working conditions and by our modern life-styles. In contradistinction to this, instrumental market-oriented individualism is expanding in the wake of the ideology of modernisation and globalisation, as this ideology incites the replacements of many collective institutions by institutions which are regulated by market forces (such as health services and railroad systems), or to reorganise them in line with market requirements (such as universities and other institutions of higher learning).

Many observers of societal developments assume, often tacitly, that individualisation leads to the growth of individualism and that this individualism of the uprooted has to be restrained by programs of re-socialisation or integration. We have seen that individualisation can lead to different types of individualism and, at the same time, that individualisation of society has been long time dependent on the rise of an individualist mentality, especially the substantial-rational individualist type. We have to add to these observations that the ongoing individualisation of society does not lead to the disappearance of collective social structures and of collectivism, as the ideology of modernisation argues. Collective structures and collectivism are not disappearing in the wake of modernisation. Quite the contrary, and for good reasons. A society cannot be modelled totally according to the requirements of the market, as a society is much more than that. Each society represents also an idea of the common good and of principles and convictions which cannot be tampered with, as I explained in chapter VIII. The ongoing modernisation will be accompanied by old and new types of collectivisation and collectivism. We have seen that this is even taking place in the very core of the modern production processes, that ‘modern’ market behaviour is imbued by collectivism and that economic growth is strongly dependent on this. Other types of collectivism will continue and may even be reinforced under modern living conditions. Such is the case with religious beliefs. It is evident that religious beliefs, when being primarily individualistic, can be readily reconciled with the conditions of modern life. This not the case with universalistic fundamentalism, be it religious fundamentalism or worldly fundamentalism. Even the ideology of modernisation, interpreted in a



fundamentalist way, can endanger the march of modernisation in the years to come.

We should also keep in mind that the types of adaptation and resistance are nourished by the three main tensions which are inherent to modernisation and that those tensions may have different consequences in the major domains of social life.<sup>181</sup> The different collective representations of society do not take into account these main tensions, as is shown below.

The discussion of the different types of individualisation and collectivization, together with the presentation of the types of individualism and collectivism, leads to the following pivotal question: In which ways and direction will our society develop in the next decades? By now it is evident that the future will not only be the further unfolding of modernity, that not everybody will be better off when we leave the future to the forces of science and technology and to the forces of the global market.

Collective political choices have to be made which will strongly influence the living-conditions of future generations. In some respects it is obvious that some options have to be curtailed or erased totally. This has been done in the past with the struggle against Nazism and other fascist movements and regimes. Do the collective representations, which I presented in the chapters VII, VIII and IX, give adequate answers to the questions that are raised in the preceding pages? Can they help to reduce the tensions which come to the fore in our analysis, tensions which are at the base of societal problems now and in the future?

*The market society* does not contain real solutions for the problems that are aroused by the march of modernisation, because this model of society interprets the problems which were presented only as consequences of the lack of adaptation of society to the global market.

*The welfare society* can, to a certain degree, counteract growing economic and social inequality. Its policies may contribute to a reinforcement of solidarity and to a greater stability of society. At the same time it contributes to the rule of bureaucracies. To this we can add that a generous welfare state attracts growing numbers of immigrants and will as such contribute to the collectivist problems which we have mentioned. Moreover, the present reign of the ideology of modernisation implies the view that the welfare state has a negative effect on economic development, because it is too expensive and does not stimulate the unemployed to actively seek new jobs. Nevertheless, it is quite evident that the welfare state's institutions cannot be abandoned without causing many social problems. It can be reorganised in an intelligent way in order to avoid some well-known adverse effects.

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<sup>181</sup> I have in mind the oppositions between *rationality and historicism*, between *liberty and determinism* and between *reason and sentiment*. In some cases reactions can be interpreted as belonging to more than one opposition, depending on the content of that reaction. I invite the reader to connect the fifteen adaptations and resistances to the modernising process with these three major tensions.

*The multicultural society* is an answer to the questions which are aroused by the collectivistic religious and ethnic communities and movements, except for the universalistic fundamentalist movements. But it must be emphasised that the type of multicultural society that is based on rights of communities (the holistic variant) is a great danger for modern democracy. Such a type of society is based on Apartheid and we have ample illustrations of the adverse consequences of such a solution to intercommunity relations. When the multicultural society is interpreted within the context of basic rights of *individuals* as guaranteed by the constitution, it is reconcilable with the rules of a modern democratic society.

*The risk society and the security society* are both models of society in which concrete negative consequences of economic and societal developments, such as increasing crime and suicide rates, and polluting effects of production, are placed in the forefront. But these models do not lead to the *solution* or *reduction* of the major tensions which are inherent in the modernisation process.

*The conservative society* is directed at the conservation of the major values of democratic society, in our time primarily their safeguarding against the onslaughts of collectivist movements. But it offers no solutions to the problems which are the main consequences of modernisation itself. I will return to the question of the role of ideals, values and norms in the next chapter. Can political actions, with the objective to make the citizens of the European nations (more) conscious of their common democratic values, help to build a European consciousness and to reduce the centrifugal forces which seem to fragmentise Europe in many respects?

Finally, it is evident that *the fundamentalist society* is the worst imaginable solution to the problems of modernity, because it represses all expressions of individualism by reducing each person to a function of the collectivity. Fascist-, communist- and Muslim fundamentalist regimes show us vividly the atrocities of fundamentalist systems.

We conclude our analysis with the observation that we live in a (European) society that is pushed forward by the forces of modernisation and by the ideology of modernisation. The ideology of modernisation can, by its very nature, not be considered to give an image of our collective future in other terms than increasing wealth and individual freedom. It cannot produce collective strategies which have as their objective the reduction of the major oppositions that are inherent to this global development. To a certain degree, the ideology of modernisation itself is part of the causes that produce these tensions as described by our three main themes.

In the present chapter I have given a survey of the main adaptations and resistances within the populations concerned to the problems of modernisation. We see that those reactions cannot be handled adequately by the present different collective representations of society, as those representations are, as I said earlier, in the first place *models of adaptation* of society to the process of modernisation. As such they cannot be the source of policies which have as their main objective the preparation and the taking of collective choices which could change the future of European society.

One of the major problems of the process of modernisation and of the ideology that accompanies it is that it cannot protect Europe's specificity and diversity on the level of cultural expression and on that of its major institutions. Are we heading for a growing cultural convergence between, say, the United States and the European Union? Or can we, Europeans, make choices that will safeguard Europe's specificity and diversity in a dynamic, open culture of European modernity? We have noticed in the chapters V and VI that the European populations have a rather weak consciousness of Europe's specificity and that one cannot say that the Europeans show clear signs of having a 'European consciousness'. That means that they have a low awareness that something called a 'European specificity' has to be defended against the impact of modernisation.

My analysis of collective representations of Europe and of Europe's future, of the European culture, and of the perceptions of the main problems of modernisation within the populations concerned, shows clearly that we are in front of a *fragmentised, even shattered image of Europe and of its future*. Europe has common economic, military and international political interests and is developing common institutions to take care of them. However, it is evident that Europe's further development needs a stronger support from her populations. Such a support is certainly dependent on the political participation of the Europeans on the European level. A higher level of political support necessitates a sharp reduction of the present democratic deficit and of the massive political alienation, and also requires a growing consciousness within the populations of Europe's common (cultural) core. Such goals would certainly be served by the development of *European* political parties that propose opportunities for choices pertaining to Europe's future. European political parties would necessarily also imply elections in which the *European* citizen can vote for *European* candidates.

## CHAPTER XI: IDEALS, VALUES AND NORMS

### 1. Europe and values

Within the framework of the EU Presidency, the Dutch government took the initiative to organise a debate on (common) European values. The first meeting of

a series of five took place in The Hague on Tuesday, September 7, 2004. At the opening of this international meeting, Prime Minister Balkenende stated that a discussion on European values is necessary for the future of the European Union. He added that a renewed enthusiasm would also prevent the obstruction of the development of European cooperation. According to him Europe currently lacks the inspiration that existed when the Union was created. The Europe of 25 threatens to slip into becoming no more than an economic cooperative. 'Somewhere along the way Europe appears to have lost her citizens. Instead of focusing on a united Europe we should aim at uniting the Europeans'.

A relevant consideration of the values that unite the Europeans is, according to Mr. Balkenende, the proper instrument for it. 'A value', he said, 'is a task, a motivation, an incentive to take action'. This task is a consequence of Europe's history. 'Bitter experience has taught us how fundamental our values are and how great the mission they represent to all of us: respect for human rights and human dignity, liberty, equality, and solidarity'.<sup>182</sup>

It must be accentuated that this initiative to start a European debate on common European values does not imply that until now a major orientation towards common values was absent. The beginning of European Cooperation was marked by the strong desire of the participants to create a situation of durable peace within Western Europe after World War II. A second main objective was the creation of a common European market, as it became increasingly evident that the European nation-states had to cooperate economically, scientifically and technologically in order to take a common stand in a period of increasing international competition. This was the most rational way to ensure stable economic growth and welfare for all.

The present debate on common European values can be considered as the beginning of an effort to reflect on the next stages of the development of the European Union. The draft-Constitution states in article 2 (*The values of the Union*), the following values on which the Union is founded and which are *common to all member-states*: Respect for the human dignity, liberty, democracy, the constitutional state and respect of the human rights.

Article 3.1 (*The objectives of the Union*) mentions: peace, its values and its peoples' welfare.

Article 3.2 refers to: stable development, based on an balanced economic growth and social justice, with a free internal market and an economic and monetary union, oriented towards full employment and the establishment of a high level of competitive capacity and a high standard of living. The Union furthers economic and social cohesion, equality of men and women, protection of the natural environment and social protection, and is engaged in scientific and technical progress, including the discovery of space. It promotes solidarity between generations and between the states, and equal opportunities for everyone.

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<sup>182</sup> [www.government.nl/actueel/nieuwsarchief](http://www.government.nl/actueel/nieuwsarchief) : Balkenende : 'Discussion on European values'.(2004-09).

Article 3.3 mentions: ‘The Union is a space of liberty, security and justice in which its *common values are developed*, and the richness of its cultural diversity is respected’.

Article 3.4 states: ‘The Union tries, while protecting the independence and promoting the interests of Europe, to find a worldwide acceptance of its values’. Mentioned in this context are: durable development of the world, solidarity and mutual respect between the peoples, the abolition of poverty, the protection of the rights of children, strict observance of legality and peace between the states.

We see that a large number of values or objectives are mentioned in this Constitution. Their present status is rather ambiguous, as the Constitution speaks about ‘values’ as such and about ‘developing common values’, and about values which are common to all nation-states (article 2), a formulation that suggests that other values in the text are not (yet) common to the nation-states of the Union. Moreover, the possibility of incommensurability of the values is not mentioned. I will return to those questions later on in this chapter.

Connected with the preceding arguments in favour of a debate on common European values, is the observation that the occidental concept of modernity is laid siege to from different directions. Globalisation accelerates in several respects. At the same time, the *ideology* of modernisation and globalisation, with the concomitant emphasis on rationality, universalism and individualism, is increasingly criticized. Samuel Huntington rejects in his *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of the World Order*<sup>183</sup> the idea of ongoing convergence between the nations of the world as a consequence of ongoing modernisation. Instead, he states that the future world order will be based on the existence of seven, or perhaps 8, civilisations, which are presented by him as the most embracing cultural units of humanity. As he defines civilisations as major collective identities, which regulate the behaviours of those who are encompassed within them, the future will inevitably be full of tensions and conflicts. The European civilization – that is Europe and the United States of America – has to prepare itself for a new battle, because after the dissolution of the USSR it is not a victorious liberalism - and the end of history - that will prevail, but the clash of civilisations. Managers and politicians will always organize their actions on the basis of their own civilization, in which mutual understanding and trust are more easily attained than in inter-civilization relations, according to Huntington.

Such a vision on our future logically leads to a debate about common values. Huntington himself presented his ideas about the common values of the United States in his recent *Who are we? The Challenge to America’s National Identity*.<sup>184</sup> While in his *Clash of Civilizations* he regarded Europe and the United States as the main elements of the Occidental culture, in his *Who Are*

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<sup>183</sup> S. Huntington, *o.c.*, 1996.

<sup>184</sup> S. Huntington, *Who Are We? The Challenge to America’s National Identity*. 2004 (*Qui sommes-nous? Identité nationale et choc des cultures*. Paris : Odile Jacob, 2004).

*We?* the idea of a common identity seems to be abandoned. Nevertheless, when we look at the main values, which are mentioned in the draft-Constitution of the EU, it is evident that the EU and the USA share the same values, albeit that their interpretation is different in several respects, especially in relation with the idea of (social) welfare.

Still a more important argument for a debate on values is the fact that ongoing modernisation has gradually transformed the conditions of living of most persons in modern societies. This process has not yet come to an end. A discussion about values, both the values of Europe and those of the populations concerned in the different nation-states and the European regions, makes also urgent an intelligent analysis of the relationships between old and new values on the one hand, and the changing conditions in which citizens, workers and consumers find themselves.

*Values always have a specific social context.* Many persons are disoriented in several respects by the ongoing modernisation and seek some kind of protection by a nostalgic clinging to a past that never was. Moreover, many migrants and their families, who came to the EU for economic reasons in the first place, experience major problems as a consequence of their failing abilities or of their lack of willingness, to adapt themselves to the European culture(s) and their values. And what about those who think that we live now in the last stage of modernity and are entering into an age of postmodernist values?

In the preceding chapters, I discussed important concepts as civilization, culture, the different views on the culture(s) of Europe, collective identities, collective representations of society, modernity and modernisation and different types of reactions to socio-economic and cultural changes. Until now, I did not speak about values and value-changes, two topics which are certainly extremely important within the context of this book. This theme will be further elaborated in the following pages.

## **2. Debates on values: a rather muddled state of affairs**

The discussion about the values of Europe, or the European values, seems to need some elucidation because several interconnected, but nevertheless different, themes are often intermingled. I will distinguish between six different themes which can be discerned in this vast domain.

*Firstly*, the present political discussion about 'values and norms' is connected with the observation that there is an increasing number of persons in our society who can be considered as deviant in the sense of not respecting the laws of society, be it those of our national society, or of European society. The observed deviance can be related to transgressions of the law and as such the debates concern the rise of different types of criminality. Here the central theme is *security*.

*Secondly*, the discussion may be oriented towards the observation that increasing numbers of persons are not, or no longer, abiding by certain norms and values

which were respected in the past by 'almost everybody'. As such I can refer to impolite, selfish, rude behaviour in public life, and to types of behaviour which show a rejection of behaviour considered to be normal in an organised society (e.g. extreme laziness, lack of ambition to make some career in professional life, use of drugs, flight into sects and into other types of groups with closed collective identities). Here the central theme is *the (assumed) disintegration of society, anomie and lack of social cohesion*.

*Thirdly*, the debate can be related to questions of cultural specificity on the level of the nation, or of the region. This debate is often related to the theme of modernisation/globalisation. Questions that come to the fore are: 'Is our national identity or our national specificity threatened by modernisation?', 'Is our national diversity weakened by modernisation?' These two questions are sometimes interrelated ('Our national identity resides in our national diversity'), or are formulated as an opposition: ('Our regional specificity is menaced by the dominant culture of our society'). Here the main theme is *collective identity*.

*Fourthly*, the debate may be oriented towards the theme of integration of the national society into the European society. Which values do we share with the other member-states of the European Union (and with other nations which want to enter the EU, like Turkey)? Here we encounter questions like: 'To what degree are our national values and norms compatible with the main "European values" (and which are those values?)', 'What will become of our 'national identity' in the long run, as part of the EU?', 'What will be the future of our national diversity?' Here the main theme is *the future of our country as part of the EU*.

*Fifthly*, the main theme is not how national and regional populations see their future as part of the EU, but concerns primarily questions which pertain to the European Union's cohesion, built on common values and institutions. Here the main theme is European culture, Europe's cultural specificity, and European values as a binding force of the EU. What do Europeans have in common as Europeans? Is a European identity in the making?

*Sixthly*, we may pose the question whether 'European values' will endure in the process of modernisation. The ideology of modernisation/globalisation states that ongoing modernisation is a process of continuing rationalisation of economic life and of governance, pushed forward by science and technology. Everything has to adapt to this development: educational systems, family life, workers in factories and offices, citizens in relation to the state and its bureaucracies, the consumers in relation to market and also, finally, regional, national and European cultures. This is a powerful standardising process that pushes us in the direction of a global society. The main questions we can raise here are: 'Are the main values of modernity the same values of the process of modernisation in its present stage, Europe being the primary source of this process, joined by the USA?', 'Will Europe be able to defend its cultural specificity in front of ongoing globalisation?'. Here the main theme is *the maintenance of the specificity of the European value system and of European identity*.

Those six themes are, as I said, interrelated in complex ways. Their common denominator seems to be a concern about the binding force of the national values and norms on the national level (1-4) and on the level of the emerging 'new society', the EU (5-6).

In connexion with these six themes I referred to reactions on the national level to both modernisation and to the development of the EU. This latter development is, as I remarked earlier, a response to international developments, including globalisation. On the level of the EU we see the same duality. On the one hand there is the question that pertains to the forces that sustain the unity of the EU and on the other hand there is the question concerning the impact of global change on the EU which may undermine, in the long run, Europe's (cultural) specificity. This observation leads us to the next step: looking more closely at the nature of modernity and modernisation.

### **3. Tradition versus modernity**

There seem to be *two* main problems, which are almost never clearly distinguished. One of these problems is connected with the longstanding discussion about the opposition between *tradition* and *modernity*. The second problem concerns major tensions which are inherent in the process of modernisation and, hence, cannot be considered to be the result of traditional constraints on the march of modernisation. I will start with a brief discussion of the first opposition. This opposition is taken up in two ways in Western Europe since the 19<sup>th</sup> century. On the one hand there are those who deplore the gradual disappearance of the community ('Gemeinschaft') in the process of modernisation and who try to conserve traditional life against the onslaughts of modernity with its emphasis on rationality, individualism and universalism.

*The main values that are associated with the traditional way of life are:*

Obedience (to God and to those who are placed above you).  
Society is based on historically developed



institutions.  
Fundamental inequality  
(between estates, 'races',  
sexes, insiders-outsiders).  
Security for those who abide  
by the rules of traditional life  
and who follow traditional  
leadership.  
Respect based on collective  
identity (family, estate, tribe,  
religion)  
Predominance of communal  
life.  
Solidarity.  
Belongingness &  
togetherness is the main  
source of life-satisfaction.  
Importance of honour  
(honour of the family, of the  
kin group).  
Resistance to innovation.

On the other hand, there are the proponents of modernity, who argue that modernisation ('progress') is inevitable and that it will contribute to the well-being of everybody, at least in *the long run*. In this view it is 'tradition' that is an obstacle in the process of modernisation, an obstacle that has to be overcome in order to resolve the main problems of social life, such as poverty, poor health, illiteracy, obsolete social structures, a lack of individual liberty, or a lack of opportunities for talented individuals to make their way in economic and political life.

*The main values of modernity are:*

Reason as the main source of  
knowledge.  
Society is based on a contract  
between free, rational citizens.  
Equality before the law.  
Social justice for all.

Universalism.  
Individualism and individual  
responsibility.  
Individual autonomy.  
Individual liberty, including freedom  
of speech.  
Materialism (in relation to  
'progress').  
Equality (of opportunities).  
Solidarity based on  
citizenship.  
Social prestige based on  
individual achievements.

In this second view, it is always the past that lags behind and slows down modernisation. This is not only caused by traditional life in the sense of pre-modern social conditions. Also, especially in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century also the arrangements of *preceding stages of modernisation* (industrialisation) are considered to be handicaps for ongoing modernisation. As such we can refer to the institutions of the welfare state, which would encourage unemployed workers not to accept lowly paid jobs, a consequence of the relatively high level of their welfare allowances, or to the assumed negative effects of labour unions, which sometimes put a brake on the rationalisation of modern organisations.

In this perspective, the impact of international migration is also interpreted as being part of this opposition between 'traditional' and 'modern'. The migrant workers and their families come from regions in which traditional life is still dominant. Their migration to modern western societies produces in certain respect the same problems that arose when in the 19<sup>th</sup> century in industrialising European countries, people moved from traditional agrarian regions to the cities. Today, non-European migrants not only come from predominantly agrarian regions, but also from a culture that is in many respects different from our modern society. This enhances the problem of their adjustment to modern life. However, in the long run they will adapt to modern life, in the same way as workers from European rural regions did in the past, according to this modernist interpretation of economic and social change. The modern state can help to facilitate this adaptation by educational measures, especially focussing on the second and third generations of these migrants.

Here we can almost daily observe an opposition between those who maintain that these traditional types of behaviour will fade away in the wake of the process of modernisation, and those who state that the cultural and religious specificity of those allochthonous minorities has to be protected against modernity in the name of the right to cultural specificity and the right to be different. We witness the debate on the 'multicultural society'. On the one hand we see the 'modernists' who state that a modern society *is* a multicultural one, a society in which everybody can organise his life within the context of the

constitution. On the other hand we observe those persons who propose a multicultural society as a conglomeration of religious and/or ethnic communities ('Gemeinschaften'). Such a society would protect the collective identities and the ways of life, especially of the minorities concerned. So we witness a clash between the 'modernists' and the 'traditionalists'. These traditionalists are either persons who belong to the majority of modern society and who defend the (assumed) rights of allochthonous minorities, or persons who 'belong' to these minorities and who present themselves as their representatives.

The opposition between 'traditional' and 'modern' also plays an important role in discussions about national identities and regional identities in relation to the development of the European Union. On the one hand we observe that people are worried by the coming of the EU, which they consider as a threat to their national or regional identity. On the other hand, many persons do not consider this development as a threat to their national unity. On the contrary, the advent of the EU is an advantage as it is a way of resolving problems which cannot any longer be handled on the national level (international competition, very expensive investments in new technological and scientific pathways, the development of a huge internal European market, etc.). Moreover, they argue that the European countries have their core values in common, both as a result of their common history and as a result of modernisation (that has its roots in Europe's common history). At the same time we can observe that the coming of the EU has also as one of its important consequences a rise of regional aspirations to protect or to rebuild regional identity, as the coming of the EU presents them with the opportunity to escape from the dominance of the nation-state (Basques, Corsicans, Bretons, Catalans, etc.).

#### **4. The problems which are inherent in modernisation**

In the preceding discussion on 'tradition and 'modernity', the problem was formulated in terms of an opposition between 'tradition' or 'pre-modern' versus 'modernity'. In this debate it is always the Other who is the culprit. The modernists complain, as we have seen, that modernisation is hindered by those persons who cling to traditional ways of life instead of accepting modernisation as both inevitable and benign (in the long run). This is the position of institutions as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the G7 and, generally, of the political and economic elites of the advanced countries. The traditionalists complain that modernisation destabilises their ways of life, including their regional and national economies. The opening up of their national and regional markets to international markets, destroys their local economies or makes them dependent on multinational economic organisations, which exploit them and do not give a just price for their products.

When we turn to the problems, which are inherent to modernity and modernisation, we are confronted with other types of problems, problems to which persons in advanced societies react in several ways.

Which are these problems that we consider as being inherent to modernisation itself? We can distinguish three main problems which are interconnected. I already discussed those major problems in chapter IV, so it suffices to recall them briefly within this discussion about the role of values in modern society.

In the first place, there is the tension between rationality/rationalisation and individual autonomy. Enlightenment's promise was that man could escape from traditional and religious dominance and from superstitions by being a rational man. Reason would lead to liberty, to taking one's fate into one's own hands. However, the modernisation of the West is not only the liberation of man from ignorance, but also the rationalisation of the organisation of the state (of governance, of the army and the navy), and of economic organisations. The individual is increasingly curtailed in the process of rationalisation, as a worker under rationalised working conditions, as a client of modern bureaucracies, as a citizen in a rationalised political system, as a consumer in front of the manipulation of the market, as a human being that is increasingly becoming dependent on information from the mass media, information that often is difficult to evaluate in terms of its truth. The main problem that is connected with this tension is *the solution of alienation and anomie* in modern life. It is the tension between the deterministic rule of rational organisation and individual liberty that has to be reduced.

In the second place, there is the tension between rationality (universalism) and historicism. The main values of modernity are universalism, individualism and rationality. Universalism is connected with the idea that scientific truth is universal (in contradistinction to traditional ideas about truth). Modern society is an association of rational men, based on contract, in pursuit of human happiness while applying scientific methods to control nature. However, this emphasis on society as an association of free individuals, bound by contract, was already very early opposed by those who argued that societies are the product of long historical processes, and are based on specific sets of values. We can refer to the ideas of Vico, Herder and Burke. Societies are specific configurations of values. One can only understand their real meaning from the inside, as a member of the specific cultural unity. Here the opposition is between universalism and historicism (Romanticism), two distinct ideas about societal development. This distinction must not be confused with the distinction between tradition and modernity, as the latter is, as we have seen, not a distinction between two visions on societal development, but one between stagnation (tradition) and change (modernisation).

This opposition between universalism and historicism never dies. It reappears again and again in modern history. As one of its latest manifestations, I can refer to the present debate about the clash between civilizations. Moreover, during the process of modernisation, we continually see the rise of groups that claim the right to their specific collective identity, based on class (especially in

the 19th century and the first part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century), on national identity ('Volk') in the 20<sup>th</sup> century's fascist movements, on ethnicity and religion, especially at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 21st century. In other words: this search for collective identity is not something that disappears in the process of modernisation, and that leaves only some traditional vestiges behind in modern societies. Quite to the contrary, it is part and parcel of modern life itself. Here the main problem is the tension between *rational individualism* on the one hand and the persistent need of many persons to belong to collectivities with a specific collective identity.

In the third place, there is the ongoing tension between reason or rationality and feeling or sentiment. This theme is about the disenchantment of the world (Weber) as a consequence of the rationalisation process, leaving little room for the expression of inner feelings, as even the churches have succumbed to this trend by emphasising formal structure and formal rules, instead of the expression of sentiments, feelings, and emotions. Many persons seem to be dissatisfied with this cold, formal world. They rebel against formal rules imposed on them by modern bureaucracies, or they try to escape from this world in virtual worlds, or in movements which emphasise the importance of the sacred core of each person (e.g. New Age movements).

## **5. Values in relation to the main reactions to ongoing modernisation within populations**

In the preceding chapter, I mapped out the main types of adaptation and of resistance to the process of modernisation. Although these reactions do not exclude an overlapping between different types with respect to the values they endorse, they show nevertheless that there is no consensus within modern society about the major values on which social life should be based. Different groups and categories of persons have, to a certain extent, quite different value-orientations. The totality of these reactions gives the vivid impression that modern society has gradually disintegrated during the latest stage of modernisation. We see types of behaviour, which are an expression of conformism to the ideology of modernity: the behaviour of many persons who occupy the upper layers in modern, large-scale organisation (organisation men), persons who show a modern form of collectivism. There are also those persons who cling to the tenets of the achievement society, pursuing their individual careers. There are the persons - certainly partially overlapping with the preceding category - who conform to the consumer society, accentuating a hedonist way of life. They live in the same society with several types of fundamentalists, who reject important elements of modernity and its central values, striving for a type of society in which traditional and religious values will be restored. In these reactions we perceive the opposition between traditionalism and the universalism. Other reactions are primarily related to the specific tensions which are inherent in modernity, such as the search for the

core of one's identity (the New Age movement), the revolt against bureaucratic formalism, the flight into virtual worlds and drugs, and the exhibition of strong assertive 'Me First' behaviour, sometimes coming together in populist movements. Moreover, there are those persons who preach the end of materialist values and argue that we are entering a postmodernist society. This end of modernity necessarily implies important value changes, but it is far from clear what could be the main values in this new area. And, finally, we should not forget those who want an important change with respect to the direction of (economic) globalisation, the anti- and the alter-globalisation movements.

As indicated in the beginning of this chapter, my major goal is to understand what the present discussions about the values and norms of the European Union want to achieve. One important element in these discussions should be a thorough analysis of the changing nature of our society. Modernisation implies increasing spatial and social mobility, adaptation to the requirements of rationalised or rationalising organisations by workers, citizens and consumers. There is a trend in the direction of ongoing individualisation of society. With this concept I refer to the declining importance of social structures and institutions which protect the individual, to a certain extent, against the vicissitudes of life, such as a stable neighbourhood, durable family ties, and social networks of friends, organisations which take care of individuals by giving moral, social and perhaps also financial support.

Not only the industrialisation of society, but also the rise of the welfare state, demolished or changed to a large degree many traditional ways of care, by creating formal structures based on the principle that care is the right of every individual. At the same time increasing social and spatial mobility of workers and their families which facilitated their adaptation to the exigencies of modernisation, reinforced strongly the further development of the individualised society.

But beware! As we have seen, this process of individualisation does not mean that modernisation necessarily implies an increase of 'individualism'. We can observe several individualistic developments, but they are in many cases very different from each other, as we have seen. We could distinguish between at least eight types of individualism, and among them we see the rise of a type of individualism that can easily nourish anti-democratic movements. Instead of freedom, heralded by the conscious rational individualist, the market-oriented individualist, the personal identity individualist and the egoistic individualist can be considered as an unstable factor in social and political life. Moreover, we have seen that modernisation does *not* lead to a progressive decline of collectivism. Far from that. Even in the core of the capitalist system, collectivism plays an important role.

## **6. In what ways can ideals, values and norms function as a binding-force on the national and the European level?**

### *The concept of value*

As we have seen, Prime Minister Balkenende stated in his opening-speech that values are an assignment, a motivation, an incitement to action. Values are not something we possess, they have to be acquired.

In their study about *Contrasting Values in Western Europe*, Harding and Phillips, when discussing the concept of value, remark: 'Explicit in many definitions is the notion that holding values involves *evaluations* of what is believed to be good and desirable, and what is believed to be bad and undesirable' They continue: '..social science approaches tend to stress valuing as an *activity*. People are seen as valuing certain things, dispositions, ideas, institutions, then, rather than values adhering to objects, and the values individuals express are regarded as providing them with criteria for choosing among alternative ways of behaving. Preferring one way of behaving to another implies an emotional reaction (like-dislike, undesirable-desirable), and in addition values are also attributed with *motivational* qualities, (we strive for values we cherish, and possibly are repelled from those we despise)'.<sup>185</sup>

The *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* defines values as follows: 'The term value may refer to interests, likes, pleasures, duties, moral obligations, desires, wants, needs, aversions and attractions, and many other modalities of selective orientation. Values, in other words, are found in the large and diverse universe of selective behaviour. Presumably sheer reflex behaviour does not manifest values or valuing' ... 'One of the more widely accepted definitions in the social science literature considers values to be conceptions of the desirable, influencing selective behaviour'.<sup>186</sup> In both definitions the emphasis seems to be placed on *preferences and choices of individuals*. There is no reference to values as part of culture. Values as *components of culture* are very present in the work of Parsons, who says that 'Values are (also) moral standards of a common culture, the core of the stabilizing mechanisms of the system of social interaction'. Values are part of value systems. Here a society is regarded as a normative order, collectively organised. Values are the connecting elements between culture - cultural systems - and the social system. Values in this sense are general orientations of a society, such as 'democracy', 'liberty', 'justice' or 'individual responsibility'. They are general orientations of a society and in this sense they are to be regarded as ideals to be pursued in social action.

An important aspect of western value systems is their generalisation: in the process of modernisation, the values are formulated in an increasingly abstract manner. 'The *generalisation* of value systems, so that they can effectively

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<sup>185</sup> S. Harding and D. Phillips, with M. Fogarty, *Contrasting Values in Western Europe. Unity, Diversity & Change*. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Macmillan, in association with the European Value Systems Study Group, 1986, p.2.

<sup>186</sup> *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, (Vol.16, pp.282ff). The Encyclopaedia *Britannica* gives as definition of value: '...something (as a principle or quality) intrinsically valuable or desirable'.

regulate social action without relying upon particularistic prohibitions, has been a central factor in the modernisation process', according to Parsons.<sup>187</sup> While values represent general orientations of societies, communities, social movements and individuals, the concept of norm has a regulating function in the first place. A norm is 'a principle of right action binding upon the members of a group and serving to guide, control, or regulate proper behaviour'.<sup>188</sup> Norms are prescriptions which indicate the appropriate behaviour for a person, or a category of persons, under specific circumstances.

Only a minority of the norms of a society are regulated by law. *Legal norms* imply the possibility of the application of formal sanctions. However, in public life many breaches of *social norms* or rules are sanctioned by a variety of reactions: hissing when a person speaks too loudly in places where silence is required, showing one's disapproval when someone shows up too late for an appointment, rebuking a person who is not wearing his safety helmet when required, putting pressure upon a person to abide by his obligations to his family or friends, restricting social interactions with a person who shows undesirable behaviour (and eventually, finally rejection of all interactions with the person concerned.).

#### *Common values*

The concept of value, as used in the political debates about the values of Europe, or the values of a specific society, are mostly referred to as *common values* of Europe, of the European Union, or the European nation-states. Used in this sense, it immediately poses the question concerning the relations between common values of those entities and those of other social entities, such as different social classes, ethnic groups, and religious denominations. What do those persons, who speak about common values, such as participants in international conferences to which I referred in the beginning of this chapter, mean when they use this concept? The meaning of common values cannot be that they are shared by the entire population of a nation, or of the EU at large. Does it mean that there is a substantive majority of the population that accepts these common values and abides to them? Or does it mean that certain values are common on the constitutional and institutional level, but that this goes

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<sup>187</sup> T. Parsons, *The system of modern societies*, p.14-15. Parsons remarks that 'a highly differentiated cultural system along with complex modes of articulation, is a hallmark of modern societies' (15).

<sup>188</sup> Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2004. The concept of ideal is defined as an object or aim of endeavour, goal', and as 'a standard of perfection, beauty, of excellence'. The Encyclopaedia Universalis, 2004 : 'les valeurs (ou les orientations vers les valeurs, pour employer un terme qui évite toutes les équivoques attachées à cette notion) sont des critères du désirable, définissant les fins générales de l'action'. The norms are 'des règles de conduite, stipulant quelle est la conduite appropriée pour un acteur donné dans des circonstances déterminées'.



together with the fact that large parts of the European populations are not concerned? In that case the draft-Constitution of the EU can be considered as, among other things, the formulation by the European political classes, of the common values on which the EU is or should be based, without implying that these values are common values of Europeans. At present, are political conferences about common values primarily organised by the political elites in order to discuss the possibilities and means to motivate the populations of the EU to become 'real Europeans'? Does it mean that the national European political classes agree on the common values on which the Union is based, and that now they consider it as their major task to educate the European populations?

*Values as elements in a value configuration or value pattern*

Another very important question concerns the relationship between the different 'common' values, such as formulated in the European Constitution. It is evident that (common) values cannot be considered as 'loose' elements within a society. *Values come in clusters or patterns.* This implies that the relationships between the values are very important. A value A in a value configuration X is not the same A in a different value configuration Z (e.g. the value 'liberty'). Values as moral standards are integrated in value configurations. As culture orientations, they are a core element of the culture of a society. This necessarily means that that they are constantly reinterpreted by each new generation.

*Value configurations and value conflicts*

Moreover, in a modernising society value configurations are inevitably connected with *value conflicts between different value systems* (emerging value systems, conserving value systems, intruding value systems, etc.). This signifies that we cannot detach the debate about values and norms from a profound analysis of the ways in which the social *and* cultural changes are producing uneasiness and worries about the state of the nation and of the EU. In the preceding pages, I have shown that the major economic and social changes are accompanied by important tensions and conflicts which are related to different collective conceptions of social life. We have seen the importance, until today, of the tensions provoked by the value pattern of modernity in opposition to the historicist value pattern. We have analysed the major tensions that are inherent in the modernisation process itself. We have also observed that in reaction to these tensions and conflicts, modern society lost much of its inner coherence or binding force. Society breaks up and the present-day debate about societal values can be considered as one of the reactions of persons who are worried by this development. Since the 19<sup>th</sup> century the processes of economic and social change have been accompanied by different interpretations about the direction of societal change and about the ways to organise political action in order to facilitate this development, or to alter its main course, to slow it down, and even to restore previous societal conditions.

### *Ideologies and conflicts*

Here the concept of *ideology* comes in, a concept that was coined at the beginning of the modern era. An ideology gives a specific interpretation about the world we live in and about the ways society is evolving. It indicates the goals, which the persons who endorse a specific ideology want to realise. It explains the ways in which these goals can be achieved by concerted action in order to change the world around us. Nevertheless, an ideology may also propagate as a central idea that the development of the world is predominantly determined by factors that we cannot control directly, such as the development of science and technology, the rise of a global market, or international political relations.

We can refer to ideologies as communism, socialism, liberalism, fascism and Nazism, but also to religions when they play their role in political life. Religious fundamentalism, and in our time especially fundamentalist movements which are based on Islam, play a prominent role as a new brand of fascism. Often ideologies are not recognised as such by the persons who are imbued or imprisoned by them. Today the ideology of globalisation is a dominant, ultraliberal ideology that presents itself as the only true theory and interpretation of the development of the world. Globalisation is a real process. But the *ideology* of globalisation is the interpretation of this process as being the only valid one. There is no alternative, according to the adherents to this ideology. When we think about ideologies as specific configurations of values, then it becomes evident that they must be the source of very important conflicts as long as there is no consensus in a society, or in the world, about society's future. It is not possible to achieve a durable consensus in a democratic society for obvious reasons. Hence, major oppositions and conflicts are to a certain extent inevitable.

In several cases, different ideologies can co-exist within society. This is the essence of a democratic society. But when groups arise, which consider themselves as the bearers of the only and the whole truth, as is the case when we are confronted by political fundamentalists, then democratic values may be endangered. I discussed in this book the ideas of 'the end of ideology' and of 'the end of history'. Such ideas suggest that in the latest stage of modernity common values can be arrived at and that value dissent is avoidable. I have argued that we have not arrived at a point of society's development in which conflicts about values have come to an end. It is true enough that in our time most of the major ideologies with their enormous impact in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century have lost their political vigour. They are no longer capable to arouse with enthusiasm important layers of the population for the remaking of society in order to make possible a better collective future. The only ideology that survives is the ideology of modernisation in its liberal version, an ideology that is, presented as the only valid theory of the inevitable societal development.

In the chapters VII, VIII and IX, I analysed at some length the major collective representations of society – both on the national and the European level -, an analysis that led to the conclusion that most of these collective

representations of society can be considered as types of adaptation to the process of modernisation. In fact, there is no longer a collective vision on the future of our (European) society that can arouse feelings of enthusiasm. In our times, popular uprisings are not related to a specific ideological basis, but to specific political issues, like a rejection of bureaucratic control, or the idea of the conservation of an (assumed) national identity. In a strongly individualised society, the (political) interests of the population are so strongly diverging that the idea of society as a collective enterprise, in which the conditions of life of future generations are created by concerted action, has largely vanished.

## **7. Europe's cultural specificity**

Do the preceding observations imply that common values of the nation and of the European Union are of little importance in the present stage of modernisation, and that the hallmark of modernity is the prevalence of diversity and opposition between different group and categories of individuals? If this judgment is describing the present situation correctly, then it does not necessarily relegate the idea of common values to the waste-paper basket. A democratic society must be based on common values and ensuing norms to manage this ongoing political process of oppositions between interest groups.

My analysis of Europe's specificity in chapter VI showed clearly that Europe's democracies are the result of a very long and sometimes extremely painful learning process. Our common values, and the major principles on which modern democracies are based, are not a collective heritage to be tampered with when political movements arise that try to undermine this fragile democratic construction. The rise of the fascist movements in our recent history, and their extremely destructive effects, make it evident that values such as tolerance and respect for the other have their limits when democracies are confronted with political movements, which deny the importance of the basic values of democracy and of dialogue as a means to arrive at a mutual understanding.

It must be stressed at the same time that this European democratic heritage is not the final result of a long process. Europe is also a modern culture in the making, not only pushed forward by the forces of modernisation, but also by a rising conscience within European populations of a specific European identity that has to be defended and that has to be further developed in a time of ongoing globalisation. A collective identity that comprises both an awareness of what the Europeans have in common – but not specifically only as Europeans –, and a conscience of Europe's rich cultural variety, a variety that also has to be defended and sometimes to be reinforced against the levelling forces of economic and cultural modernisation.

The organisers of the debates on European values, to whom I referred in the beginning of this chapter, expressed the desire to awake among the Europeans 'a renewed zest' for the European Union. The major question is whether such a

renewed zest for the European Union can be instilled by making the Europeans aware of their common values? This is very unlikely when such a political aim is not accompanied by important other projects. As such projects – following from what has been said before - I want to mention:

1. The formulation of a collective representation (or collective representations) of the future of the European Union, a collective representation that contains not only Europe's value configuration as a major element, but also a perspective on the future that goes beyond primarily economic development as implied by the ideology of modernisation. Such a formulation should also contain critical analyses of current political ideas about the future of democratic society. Among such ideas are presentations of the coming society as a corporate multi-cultural (multi-ethnic, multi-religious) one.
2. The presentation of the main lines of a policy that will lead to the rise of a politically responsible European citizen. The present democratic deficit is not a consequence of a lack of transparency of the European institutions and of European political decision-making, but a consequence of the fact that the European citizen does not yet exist. A good example of this is the political debate about the draft-European Constitution. In most cases the citizens have not been consulted and when they were by means of a referendum, then they had only a choice between acceptance and rejection of the draft-Constitution. Such a referendum puts the citizen in an awkward position. When he accepts the Constitution, he agrees with it without having had the opportunity to engage in a democratic debate about its main elements. Probably he did not even read the text, but he agrees because he thinks that a democracy needs a Constitution. When he rejects the draft-Constitution, he may be considered as an anti-democratic person, who wants to slow down the democratic development of the EU, not as a person, who does not accept a product that is imposed on him and that is not the result of a democratic consultation.
3. A systematic explication of the ways in which major (European) values will be implemented in political life – both on the European and the national level – in order to counteract developments, which run counter to one or more common values and which undermine the idea of justice among large parts of the population. In this respect one can think about excessive self-remuneration in corporations, excessive remuneration of certain activities in the domain of sport and other types of public entertainment, or fraudulent practices in political life which, when they become publicly known, do not lead to the definite expulsion from political life of the persons concerned.

4. A systematic explanation why, and when, a democratic society has to react to types of behaviour, which endanger the stability of democratic society. Living in a democratic society not only gives the citizens the liberty to organise one's life according to their desires and wishes, but also requires a strict observation of the values and principles on which democracy is founded. The best type of explication is contrasting the democratic value figuration with value configurations which are not at all compatible with democracy, such as those of fascists and different other types of fundamentalism. The 'clash of cultures' is very real inside our societies and seems to be much more realistic than Huntington's clash between civilisations.
5. The presentation of the results of a systematic analysis about the ways in which economic, social and cultural changes are intertwined. The interpretation of the major values and the observance of them changed in different important aspects since the rise of the consumer society. A value such as parsimony did not disappear totally from the scene, but its interpretation changed in important ways. Also the values of individual achievement and individual responsibility changed largely during the last forty years or so. All this means that policy-makers should have a keen eye for the meaning of certain values for different kinds of persons, who are living under various economic and social circumstances. In other words: values are not free floating, loose elements of a society. They are patterned in specific ways of life that characterise the behaviour of real persons in real situations.

The presentation of the main ideas, which should guide the EU in the changing network of international relations. These main ideas must guide the international policies of the EU in order to ensure that neither liberal universalism, nor clashes between civilisations as closed collective identities, will characterise our future, but a more subtle interplay between different culture areas and a gradual change of these culture areas in the process of globalisation. Globalisation will not impose one common global culture and one universal framework on the world. It will be a future in which ideas and other cultural products are exchanged between the areas, in which counter currents will prevail, instead of the one-way process that follows from the universalistic conceptions, be they liberal universalistic, or religious universalistic.

## CHAPTER XII: CHOICES BEFORE US

My analysis of the concepts of culture, collective identity and collective representations, and its application to Europe and the European Union, shows in a transparent way that the further development of the European Union is also dependent upon adequate political responses to some major challenges which become increasingly more visible. These challenges are in the first place

*problems of meaning*. What does it mean to be a citizen of the European Union? In what ways will the European citizen be protected against the negative consequences of modernity? In what ways will this development offer new opportunities within a democratic context?

Europe has to make important choices and it is evident that this new Europe holds many trumps, which can have a positive impact on our collective and individual future. But Europe is also confronted, as we have seen, with many uncertainties. On the one hand there is a growing awareness of important negative consequences of the dominant ideology of modernisation. On the other hand, our vision of the future is shattered and obscured by the evident inadequacies of alternative views.<sup>189</sup> At present, the enthusiasm of the Europeans for the EU is rather moderate and in several cases even declining.

### **The coming of the European citizen?**

It can be argued that, in spite of the lack of political transparency and of failing intellectual and political leadership, the European citizen exists as a member of European democracies. In the prologue to a book edited by Dennis Smith and Sue Wright, entitled *Whose Europe? The turn towards democracy*, John Rex remarks: 'Any search for a cultural unity is misguided and the most that can be looked for is the sharing of a public political culture, the culture of a democratic political system, perhaps based on values of liberal or social democracy. This could lead to the development of a constitutional patriotism...'<sup>190</sup> The answer to the question 'Whose Europe?' may seem evident and univocal: 'Europe of the European citizens'. But such a statement does not fit the political reality of the European Union. Although the EU is a reality today, the European citizen is still a very bleak creature. Where was the European citizen when, to give one important example, the European political leaders were preparing the enlargement of the EU? Another example: where was the European citizen when the European constitution was in the making?

In a juridical sense, the European citizen exists. The *Treaty on the European Union*, article 8, indicates that the persons, who have the nationalities of the member-states, are citizens of the EU. As such they have some rights, such as the right to circulate and to reside freely in the other member-states, the right to vote and to be elected in municipal elections and to vote in the elections for the

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<sup>189</sup> Pierre Moscovici resumes this situation as follows: 'Jamais, peut-être, elle (l'Europe) n'a possédé autant d'atouts et connu de si grandes perspectives. Jamais, sans doute, elle n'a été confrontée à de telles incertitudes et à des difficultés aussi impressionnantes; jamais, à l'évidence, elle n'a autant fait débat. Jamais son avenir n'a été à la fois aussi ouvert et aussi indéterminé. Tous les scénarios sont en effet possible.' (P. Moscovici, *Les 10 questions qui fâchent les Européens*. Paris: Perin, 2004, p. 221).

<sup>190</sup> John Rex, 'Prologue', in: Dennis Smith and Sue Wright, Eds., *Whose Europe? The turn towards democracy*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1999, p. IX..

European Parliament – a parliament without European political parties, the right to diplomatic and consular protection and the right of petition and of appeal to a mediator. Without any doubt, the European citizen has still more rights than these which are mentioned. But as rights exist, the citizen has also to be informed about them and about the ways to use them effectively (e.g. the right to participate, as a citizen of the EU, in municipal elections as a resident of an other country without having the nationality of this country). In spite of the fact that these rights are important, the concept of the citizen remains shallow and is far removed from the concept of the citizen of the present democratic nation-states. The modern European nation-state is not only a *Rechtsstaat*, but is also based on the idea that its citizens have a sense of participating in a historically developed national structure and culture, which can be further developed and moulded by concerted political action. The modern nation-state is based on the priority of both the individual and the citizen. This implies that political decision-making must always be based on a high degree of consent and of participation of the citizens. This implies a much richer concept of the citizen than the preceding one. It means that the political institutions must be - minimally- within the reach of the citizens. A still further elaboration of citizenship is the idea that the citizen is included in processes which create new social and cultural bonds and which can modify prevailing market relations. Such processes will be very important in the development of the EU, because they should overcome, in the long run, the narrow vision of the EU as only a system of nation-states. The active European citizen is not yet present in the European political arena. The vision of a real European citizenship is still a 'project for the future', but one that has a tremendous importance for its inhabitants. Some of the most important conditions for this include a profound reconstruction of the EU-institutions and a sharp analysis of the domain of the EU-institutions and decision-making processes in relation to the autonomy of the participating nation-states. They also include the development of political views, which state clear goals about what might be achieved by European citizens, a clear statement about the basic unalienable principles on which the EU is based (the European Constitution), and juridical barriers against political movements within Europe that advocate principles, which cannot be reconciled with the European Constitution. Moreover, there must also be guarantees against non-desirable encroachments of European institutions upon the national and regional levels of decision-making. The democratic development of the EU is dependent on the quality of the national democracies. Here we find important conditions, such as the quality of leadership in the most important domains of social and cultural life, together with the quality of education, which depends on much more than on education for professional life. In a formal, juridical way, the European citizen exists, but this creature seems to be rather anaemic and not very much aware of its being a 'European' in this sense. This will change, no doubt, once the awareness arises that the European Union or a European Federation not only deals with economic arrangements and financial systems, but that it has also at its disposal, potentially at least, the means to solve important economic, social and cultural problems,

which concern the European citizen directly and which can be handled in a more effective way on the European level. Such a rising awareness must go together with opportunities for a more direct influence on the main policies of the EU – which implies a profound reorganisation of its institutions - and a well defined European Constitution.

There is, however, also a farther reaching project of citizenship: political citizenship. This implies the bringing of the EU-institutions within the reach of the citizens and the promotion of the active participation of the citizens in political decisions. This objective is included in the Maastricht Treaty of November 1, 1993 and is connected with the idea to make the EU more democratic.

Juliette Bridier notes that the juridical and political definitions of citizenship still leave out an essential aspect: the social dimension.<sup>191</sup> This dimension of citizenship refers to the ways in which European citizens could create their reciprocal social and cultural relationships. This is in fact the project of creating a European society based on the cohabitation of different collective identities which were created in the past (such as national identities), but at the same time will be forward looking. This means a European society that will develop a stronger European consciousness than is the case nowadays and, finally, an open-minded European identity. The latter will not replace the other identities. The cohabitation of collective and open identities will be the hallmark of Europe with its variegated cultural richness.

Especially the last dimension of citizenship shows that 'individualism' cannot be reduced to the idea that each individual is only pursuing its own, egoistic interests, as the essence of social and cultural dimensions is reflection on relationships with the Other and on the values which (should) govern these relationships. Neither European society, nor the market, can function without values and ethics, which go beyond the narrow interests of the 'autonomous individual'. Nevertheless, this does not mean that the individual can be regarded as only a function of collective interests with which it has to comply. The ultimate yardstick must always be the inalienable rights of the individual human being, its individual conscience and freedom of choice. *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights* must be taken seriously in all European politics. The European Union has to protect the citizen against the many developments which encroach upon his dignities and liberties, such as some consequences of technological developments (e.g. data about an individual's genetic code, cloning, personal data on internet sites)<sup>192</sup>, the claims of groups with closed

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<sup>191</sup> Juliette Bridier, 'La citoyenneté européenne: un projet politique de cohabitation culturelle'. *Hermès 23- 24 Cognition, Communication, Politique. La Cohabitation culturelle en Europe. Regards croisés des Quinze, de l'Est et du Sud*. Paris : CNRS Editions, 1999, p. 84-87.

<sup>192</sup> C.G. Weeramantry, *The Slumbering Sentinels. Law and Human Rights in the Wake of Technology*. Penguin Books, 1983; C.G. Weeramantry, *The Impact of Technology on Human Rights. Global Case- studies*. Tokyo: United Nations



collective identities (fundamentalist movements of all types), the one-sided rationality of some parts of the market with its negative impact on the dignity of workers, large-scale organised criminality with its total contempt for the individual as is witnessed by the drugs trade, the transport of illegal migrants and the illegal arms trade, or the degrading image of the individual as is given in an increasing number of transmissions in the mass media. In these domains the EU can in principle be more effective than the nation-states separately.

This last observation could give the impression that the EU finds its coherence in opposition to negative influences. It is also possible to point at many developments, which bind us together in a positive way. The fact that West Europeans have managed to live together since 1945 without war is already an achievement to be proud of, in the light of European history.

One of the most important conditions for the development of the EU is perhaps the fact that we have known for several decades a situation in which most of the members of the EU have developed stable political systems. Imagine a strong political volatility in the national political arenas to become aware of this point. A second point is that political changes on the national level generally did not have an important impact on the process of integration within the EU of the member-states of the EU, although the entry of some countries into the Union could, in certain cases, be realised thanks to an important political change in those countries. This is undoubtedly a good basis for the continuation of the process of integration. In many respects the populations of the EU feel attached to the EU, but the ways in which they are implicated – or is it better to say: not implicated - in this process makes an important reorganisation of the institutions and agencies very urgent.

It is evident that such a reorganisation must be sustained by a European Constitution. Such a Constitution is important for at least two things:

1. A well-defined constitution should contain the necessary details and explanations concerning the rights and duties of the European citizen in relation with his national position. A constitution can contribute to taking away fears connected with the loss of national 'identity' or national specificity. It could clarify the specific differences between national and European policies; it could, moreover, also contain paragraphs concerning the protection of languages and of minor cultures.
2. A European Constitution can be the point of anchorage for a European citizenship. In the long run such a development could be a first step towards a European citizenship that is independent of citizenship of one of the nation-states.

The Constitution of the European Union should not only be a core document that brings together the recent treaties of the EU, but should, moreover, contain the

description of the basic rights and obligations of the European citizen. Such a document should be drafted after ample consultations with European citizens. The adherence to such a European Constitution can be regarded as a first step to a European *constitutional patriotism*. Such a constitutional patriotism must not be confounded with *historical* types of patriotism, which are based on an uncritical acceptance of the historic past of one's nation. Neither should it be seen as a form of *juridical* patriotism that severs the ties with the past and remains an empty construction. As Jean-Marc Ferry says, constitutional patriotism is oriented to the historical past, but in a self-critical way.<sup>193</sup> Such an orientation to the past should of course neither present the national past in an exclusive way, nor try to erase parts of the national memory. It can accentuate the commonalities with other nations and at the same time the specificities of the own nations and regions, their different historical developments, but also their interdependencies in their historical developments. It can show in which ways currents of thought and artistic innovations are on the one hand not 'national' (but nevertheless with national accents) and on the other hand often specifically *European* in the sense that, e.g., the Arab world did not undergo the influences of the Renaissance, the Enlightenment and Romanticism.<sup>194</sup>

### **Transparency and democratic deficit**

The opaqueness of the present European decision-making processes, the lack of a clear vision on the future – especially the relationship between the (global) market and the civil society – and the sometimes difficult demarcations between national decision-making and decision-making on the EU-level are certainly constraints on the development of the EU-institutions. It could be argued that this is a severe judgment and that the situation is not that bad once one invests a bit more energetically in order to understand what is really going on. However, in many cases the national parliaments have the feeling that they cannot really control what is going on in Brussels and that their democratic rights and obligations are being bypassed and sapped. No wonder that the populations of the EU have a strong feeling that they are at a too large distance from this decision-making level and that they cannot really influence the outcomes of this process by voting. Hence a tremendous abstention rate when they are called to the ballot-boxes. The European Parliament could play an important role in this situation, together with the mass media. But until now I am, as a citizen of the EU, not impressed by what is going on. This is not to say that the Parliament's role is negligible, far from that. But in the daily news we learn almost nothing

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<sup>193</sup> Jean-Marc Ferry, 'Devenons des patriotes européens'. *Le Monde des Débats. L'Avenir de l'Europe en jeu*, mars, 23, 2001, p.21.

<sup>194</sup> Mourad Wahba, Ed., *Roots of Dogmatism. Proceedings of the Fourth International Philosophy Conference*, October 1982. Cairo: The Anglo-Egyptian Bookshop, 1984, passim.

about the activities of the EP and even less about the outcomes of its decision-making. And neither are we consistently informed about Parliament's major problems vis-à-vis the other major institutions of the EU and about the types of constraints that the European Members of Parliament experience in their relationships with their national political system.

The lack of transparency and the democratic deficit in the EU enhance feelings of uneasiness with respect to the future of the nation-states and of the national 'identities' and 'cultures'. The influx of large numbers of migrants to the European Union already produces a nationalistic effect in parts of the autochthonous populations, a morbid myopia concentrated on the myth of the eternal nation and the cherishing of a type of national identity in which there is no place for the Other. At the same time, the fuzziness of the contours of the coming Europe and the idea of the fading away of the nation-states, kindle dreams of independence among proponents and self-selected leaders of regions and groups with their specific ethnic or cultural diversities. Such centrifugal tendencies can weaken the further development of the EU. In the chapter V and VI, I concluded that the European collective identity, the European solidarity and the consciousness of being a European are weak but that there is, nevertheless, an awareness of Europe's specificity. Such a state of affairs is as such not a disadvantage for the further development of European institutions and for the enlargement of Europe, because it enables the integration of many types of national consciousness without major problems. We could even argue that a clear consciousness of one's national identity is an important condition for the ongoing construction of the EU. A century ago August Vermeulen, Flemish author of a book entitled: 'Vlaamsche en Europeesche Beweging. Van Nu en Straks' ('Flemish and European Movement. By now and in the near future') wrote: 'We want to be Fleming in order to become Europeans'.<sup>195</sup> And a century later on, Helmut Schmidt says in the same vein: 'The European Union is in our patriotic interest'.<sup>196</sup> Schmidt is a European because he is a German patriot. This implies that German interests, like the interests of other nations, are best served by their integration in the European Union.

Nevertheless, this does not mean that we do not need more transparency. Lack of transparency is also likely to enhance feelings of distrust with regard to other nations' 'real' objectives. Distrust is certainly generated by the political behaviour of some larger European nations. As such we mention the German-French couple or tandem, often referred to by (French and German) politicians as 'the motor of the European Union'. To a certain extent this central role of these two nations is, for the time being, inevitable. But this obliges these nations

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<sup>195</sup> August Vermeulen : 'Vlaamsche en Europeesche Beweging. Van Nu en Straks'. In: *Nouvelle Série*. 4<sup>e</sup> année, Bruxelles, 1900, cited in l'article of M. Holthof, 'Des créateurs qui n'ont pas froid aux yeux', *Le Monde Diplomatique*, April 2000, p. 25.

<sup>196</sup> Helmut Schmidt, *L'Europe s'affirme. Perspectives pour le XXI<sup>e</sup> siècle*. Paris : Editions de Fallois, 2001, p.125.

to be extremely prudent vis-à-vis the smaller and the middle-sized nations in Europe in order to avoid any semblance of dominance and of depreciation of the specificity of the other nations by criticising the ways in which they handle their national policies and by judging their cultural significance and achievements. Negative stereotypes and prejudices still play their nasty role among the nations of the EU and it is evident also that political leaders are not able to look at other nations in a value-free way or that they are able to shrug off all the high opinions they have about their own nation's role.

This seems to be one of the major constraints in the present situation, in which Germany tends to see the future of the EU as a federation, while France objects to this idea. France sees the EU as an instrument to play an important international role that it is no longer able to play as a sole national actor. But France sees itself as the sole European actor that can play such a role, as an international leader of the EU. There is a great persistency of this position. From the beginning of the making of the EU, the French held the opinion that the construction of the EU would give to France, whose position as a great power was limited after World War II, the means to play an important international role. George Bidault, minister of Foreign Affairs in 1946 declared himself to be in favour of a European Community. He observed: 'France is first and foremost a European country. Our present mission is to make France the champion of the European Union'. Pierre Gerbet notes: 'But he was not a very convinced European, because he wanted to preserve the position of France and of its privileges as a great power. He did not want a European Federation, but he thought that a close European association, or even a European confederation, would give France the position as the leader of Europe. This idea was shared by the majority of French politicians'.<sup>197</sup>

More than a half century later, the French political class seems still to be trapped by this illusion about its leading international role. The future of the EU is dependent upon an intelligent comprehension of the role of variety in all domains of life and on shrewd policies to protect and to promote variety in front of standardising tendencies. This is more important as the further development of the EU will necessarily imply processes of adaptation on the national level.

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<sup>197</sup> Pierre Gerbet, *La Construction de l'Europe*. Paris : Imprimerie nationale Editions, 1994, p.65: 'Bidault déclarait : « La France est avant tout un pays européen. Notre mission présente consiste à faire de la France le champion de l'union européenne ». Mais il n'était pas un Européen très convaincu : il voulait préserver le rang de la France et ses privilèges de grande puissance. Il ne voulait pas d'une fédération, mais il pensait qu'une association européenne étroite, ou même une confédération, permettrait de donner à la France une position de leader ». Cette idée européenne était partagée alors, par la plupart des hommes politiques français, en tout cas par ceux de la majorité'. Some other useful sources are : Christine Houteer, *La Construction Européenne. Etapes, objectifs, réalisations*. Paris : Nathan/HER, 2000 ; Christophe Réveillard, *Les dates-clés de la construction européenne*. Paris : Ellipses, 2000.

### **Cross-border cooperation as a 'bottom-up' approach**

It could be argued that the integration of the EU is not only a question of integration of the participating nation-states and of the inclusion of new member-states. It is evident that the development of the EU goes together with a changing role of national frontiers. Before the development of the common market, borders were lines that separated nations. Now borders can be considered as zones that connect different realities, not only as fixed and stationary, 'but equally as something that moves, shifting and evolving in space and time'.<sup>198</sup> Indeed, the creation of the EU has opened the road to cross-border regional development. Such a cross-border cooperation can be based on practical considerations, such as regional ambulance services, entrance to hospitals – in those cases in which one side of the border does not have an easy access to its national-regional hospitals – or the improvement of cross-border transport facilities. Gradually there may emerge other types of cooperation in order to take advantage of other economic, social and cultural differences in the emerging region. It may lead to common cultural productions, to regional artistic manifestations, but also to the taking of a common stand towards governmental policies that are considered to have negative effects on the regional development.

The rise of cross-border regional activities and structures is an important side of European integration as it creates new types of intertwinement in Europe, in most cases between two or three nations.

This type of cooperation involves a learning process amongst those who are engaged in this type of collaboration. On this cross-border cooperation the political actors are much more in touch with the local populations, their needs and opinions than the national and European political classes. They also experience directly the advantages and difficulties of this type of exchanges, in which national differences play a role. At the same time they understand better, in many cases, *regional commonalities*, which preceded the coming of the nation-states with their rigid, dividing frontiers. It is understandable that cross-border cooperation is easier to realise when the two sides of the border have a common language (e.g. between Dutch-Flemish regions), or in those case in which the language difference is modest, especially on the level of the regional dialect (e.g. certain border regions between Germany and the Netherlands, between Germany, France-Alsace and Switzerland, between Germany, Belgium and Luxembourg, between South-East France and adjacent regions in Italy, the development of a Slovenian Istria region, the regional cooperation between Bulgaria and its neighbours). Even in those cases where language differences are

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<sup>198</sup> R. Ratte, 'Cross-border regional development and spatial integration of Europe: an active space approach'. *Regional Contact*. XIII, no.14, 1999,p.40 (Thematic issue: Regionalism and Freedom of Identity. Selected contributions to the 18<sup>th</sup> Conference Europe of Regions, 21-23 August 1998, Copenhagen).

very large, the translation-services will be very modest in comparison to those in the European political arena.

Integration on the level of cross-border cooperation can be a powerful instrument for the integration of the EU. Moreover, this type of integration can be enlarged to more inclusive regions on the basis of common interests, facilitated by the further development of transport facilities (e.g. the regional cooperation between the Southern part of the Netherlands, Western Belgium, and North-Western France). In this context we should not forget the development of international non-governmental organisations, a development that can be considered as the rise of a European civil society. This fills important gaps in domains in which the governments are acting only reluctantly (such as environmental protection, acting against gross abuses against human rights, international medical aid, civil protests against certain effects of globalisation).

### **Growing interdependence and a weak European consciousness**

The European Union, being both a construction and a process, gradually creates new interdependencies in response to the enlargement of economic markets, to changing intra-European relations and to new problems the EU is confronted with as such. The further development requires legal harmonisation in numerous domains, such as the labour market, labour conditions, the protection of the physical environment and security and an increasing coordination of activities in international cooperation in reaction to international crime, terrorism and many other major risks to which I referred in chapter IX. Ongoing harmonisation, coordination and cooperation are an important side of the growing unity of the EU and this process will gradually extend to other domains in economic and social life. This is largely a process of step by step adjustment to problems which Europeans encounter under changing economic and social conditions.

We have seen that on the level of the nation-states the ideas of a European culture, of Europe's specificity and of a European identity do not play an important role, in contradistinction to the idea of national culture and identity. Often, the growing importance of the EU is seen as a double attack on this national culture and identity. The EU stands, according to many national citizens, for a growing 'universalism' that threatens to efface national differences. At the same time the EU facilitates the rise of new aspirations for collective identities in front of a weakening of the nation-state. Several reactions to this situation have been described and analysed in chapter X.

As I remarked already, the European Union is the result of the increasing inability of nation-states and their national economies to cope effectively with the process of globalisation. The EU created market-conditions and European institutions, which reinforced the position of the EU as an economic unity in this process of globalisation. At the same time, the dominance of the ideology of globalisation in Europe's economic and political decision-making, installed policies of adaptation to the 'inevitable exigencies of globalisation'. As such, the

European Union did not yet succeed in developing a perspective – or several perspectives - on Europe's future in other terms than adaptation to globalisation. We need a perspective on the future of Europe in which Europe's cultural diversity and its specificity play an important role in the creation of a society that is based on reflection and coherent political choices which 'make' the future in other terms than only adaptation, 'for better or for worse', to international market-conditions.

Until now, the European Union failed to develop a first sketch of the ways in which Europe's specificity and its diversity could be placed in a model of development in which they are not only protected against the standardising effects of globalisation, but also play a strategic role in its development and in its relations with the outside world. Moreover, such a sketch should elucidate the ways in which (cultural) diversities on national and regional levels are linked to Europe's specificity. This latter point includes the policies that have to be developed to treat claims to collective identity which run counter to Europe's specificity. Like the national economies, which were no longer able to compete as such in an international market, the national and regional cultural specificities are decreasingly capable to withstand the standardising effects of cultural globalisation, a globalisation that is strongly linked to international production and diffusion systems, which are in most cases located outside Europe.

### **Intellectual leadership**

With the construction of the EU, one would expect an ongoing and very lively debate on the selection of the main goals of the EU, on alternative ways to reach them, on the major dangers that have to be avoided, on the struggle between competing collective representations of the European society that we are, collectively, constructing. But no, such debates are absent or are reduced to almost purely technical-instrumental issues by the governing elites of the nation-states and of the EU. This is very strange, indeed, the more so that at present many persons, belonging to the generation of 1968, who have actively propagated slogans like 'l'imagination au pouvoir', are absorbed by the political classes in the EU. What can be the main reasons for this absence of intellectual drive and ferment, this end of stimulating leadership? Is this the era of the 'end of ideology', and have political decisions become primarily rational-scientific affairs (Aron, Bell)? Or is it of the 'end of 'history' (Fukuyama)? Or is this the age of the 'one-dimensional man' (Marcuse), the rise of the culture of narcissism' (Lash), the pursuit of individual happiness of the New Age 'philosophy'? Do we witness a return to fundamentalist values and the search for one's 'true' roots and for collective identity in a postmodernist epoch, which rejects the intellectual reflections on other ways of viewing the future? Or have the mass-media lured away the masses from critical thinking about the future by drowning them in unrealistic and faraway artificial futures in which paternalistic leaders guide their peoples in a world that is, at the same time, both

technologically advanced and socially and culturally backwards? Worse than that, have the masses been transformed into viewers of silly programs like 'Big Brother', 'Loft Story' and 'The Farm'?

Is political decision-making concerning the EU in the first place a matter of technical-bureaucratic implementation that does not need consultation of the citizens, only their consent after the major steps have been taken by the political elites? At present the elites, which ground their ongoing decision-making on the dominant view on globalisation and the ensuing policies of adaptation, hold the reins of government tightly, either directly or indirectly. These are primarily the national networks of political, economic, bureaucratic, military, scientific and diplomatic elites with some international (European) ramifications. Some nation-states may be more closely bound together than others, leading to some sub-clusters within the European elitist governing network. These governing elites are nested in huge organisations (corporations, bureaucracies), which offer orderly careers that can lead to elite positions. The continuity of the elites is in this way guaranteed.

These techno-bureaucratic elites, included within this octopus of corporate power, are capable of making, if necessary, a common front. The intellectual, moral, artistic and religious elites are divided among themselves and cannot produce enough leverage to counter the forces of the ongoing political process that is orchestrated by the octopus of power. Although there are links with the governing elites, they themselves do not have the organisational means at their disposal to oppose effectively the strategies of the power elites.

### **Political and intellectual leadership and distrust**

It is not difficult to conclude that the actions and thoughts of the ruling elites are in the first place functional-rational and that we can find almost *no signs of reflection on the selection of the main goals of their policies*. Substantial rationality, if present, is very well masked in front of the general public. Moreover, elites and counter-elites (intellectuals, moral leaders etc.) are not fuelling a debate that has a substantially rational character: e.g. by presenting a systematic criticism of the collective representations, which are guiding the functionally rational acts of the ruling elites. There are some outbursts of *substantial irrationalism* against the enlargement of the EU and against globalisation. But such protests can be ignored easily, as they do not offer proposals based on substantial rationality. The summit of the G8 in Genoa in July, 2000 was confronted with even more vehement protests in the streets by people coming from most of the countries of the EU, than the EU-summits. The political leaders deplored the violence, without giving signs of any comprehension of what is going on. On the last day, July 22, the French President, Jacques Chirac, declared that 'globalisation is inevitable and it is also a good thing, as it produces riches for everybody. To think that globalisation can



be stopped is not realistic, it is a utopia'.<sup>199</sup> This is a rather worrying statement, as the major point is not whether 'globalisation' can be stopped, but whether society has no other choice than to adapt itself to this 'inevitable course'. In fact, we have here an example of confusion between globalisation and the ideology of globalisation. The latter implies, as I have pointed out earlier, that we can only adjust to the inevitable course of globalisation and that it is useless to think about major political choices which might change the future in (some) respects.

Must we conclude from what has been said, that this is, indeed, the End of the Ideological Age?<sup>200</sup> Or do we live in a historical period in which the capacities to develop and organise intellectual answers to the overwhelming organised power of the ruling octopus is reduced to almost nothing? The connection between leading elites and followers has profoundly changed since the end of the Second World War. In connection with this I refer to the following observations:

- In the last period of modernisation, the number of elites has still more increased and their exclusiveness has further declined. We can refer to the role of some major sports and their heroes in public life, a role which, in a time of globalisation, seems primarily to glorify feelings of national pride (a modern version of *Divide et Impera*?). Is this another example of substantial irrationality, which diverts the attention of the masses from the serious substantial questions?.
- The rise of 'virtual' and ephemeral elites in the mass media, especially on television, which captivate the minds of the masses, together with the many television games. Such transmissions are for most people much more interesting than discussions about the future of the EU, in spite of the fact that the latter are related to developments in real life.
- The withering away of the traditional class structure to which intellectual elites were addressing their messages (socialist, liberal, communist, Christian-Democrat publics).
- The loss of trust in intellectual and moral leadership, caused by failing leadership in front of totalitarian systems, even when the inhuman side was difficult to ignore: Stalinist communism, the Cultural Revolution in China, the Cuban Revolution, and not to forget the retarded and weak resistance to the Fascist ideologies and their political systems and especially to the brutal march of the Nazi's in Germany. This point is perhaps more prominent in France, with its tradition of 'les intellectuels', than in other parts of the EU.
- A lagging behind of researchers in the social and cultural sciences in their international orientation. Most researchers seem to be strongly attached to national frames of reference. This fact can be explained, partly at least, by the ways in which research proposals are judged within the national context. The social and the human sciences, to give an important example, have not succeeded, until now, to transform a part of their intellectual efforts into a

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<sup>199</sup> During a transmission of LCI, on July 22, original text in French.

<sup>200</sup> R. Aron, *L'opium des intellectuels*. Paris : Gallimard, 1968 (1955), p. 410ff.

type of analysis that is truly European. At best, their efforts show in most cases 'Europe' from their national vantage-point.

- The gradual and ongoing reorganisations of the universities in Europe have severely curtailed the universities in their role of intellectual breeding-grounds during the last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Pressure from the market and democratisation of the universities have led to a very strong emphasis on the so-called 'utility' of university training, often strongly endorsed or even required by large (international) corporations. This point refers to a *decrease* of opportunities to play such a role, not to a disappearance of intellectual breeding-grounds. Moreover, there may be important differences between different national cultures as to resistance to the dominance of the market model in academic life.

### **The right to know**

In relation to the preceding observations, it must be emphasised that we, as Europeans, have the right to know where we are going in the long run. This right to know implies several things. On the simplest level it means transparency of the European political agenda and European decision-making processes. It also implies continuous information on the collective representations on which such decision-making processes are based. As this is far from being only a question of instrumental rationality in relation to specified objectives, this should be tied to ongoing political, intellectual and artistic debates with respect to Europe's (specific) development. In these debates it must be elucidated what is considered as the common good, in contradistinction to market-related individual or segmental interests. What are, on the European level, the central ideas concerning public services, ideas on social justice, on solidarity, on types of inequality, on the extension of fundamental rights, on our obligations towards the outside world? This brings us to the important question of political and intellectual leadership in the European Union. In which ways are the outcomes of such debates translated as major inputs of the national political programmes? Can these outcomes be effectively handled without the existence of European political parties and European political programs?

These points are related to the role of the European citizen: the necessity to elaborate the ways in which the European citizen can participate in a democratic way in European development. At present, we can only observe a tremendous democratic deficit caused, among other things, by too great a distance between the national citizen and the European institutions, the opaqueness of decision-making procedures, the lack of coherent views on Europe's future, in other terms than the ideology of globalisation and the adaptation policies which we described, and the insufficient presence of competent political leadership on the European level. Moreover, the different national educational systems are, in spite of many intentions to 'Europeanise' the curricula, still far removed from *real* European educational programmes which are related to the theme of living and

working in the European Union, to the understanding of cultural diversity and of the, in most cases negative role of collective stereotypes.

### **Main problems reconsidered**

There seems to be a serious confusion in the minds of many politicians and economists between globalisation as an ideology or a myth and the actual processes of globalisation. This statement can also be formulated in a Machiavellian way: it is not confusion, but a purposeful way of presenting the world in order to sustain the interests of international capitalism. Or do they really think that the world is fitting in the mould of this model of development? Let us assume that these three positions are often intermingled.

The ideological stance of globalisation is the fact that this model of development is not only an interpretation of the present economic conditions in the world, but at the same time a model in which the future developments are assumed to be already known, hence the 'End of History'. This presentation of the world is based on facts – actual developments in the international market – and on a leap into the future, which is produced by the ongoing impact of technological and scientific developments, implemented by (international) economic corporations, operating in a global, competitive market. The leaders of these economic corporations have the obligation to adjust their organisations continuously to changing technological conditions and changing international market-relations. If they do not adjust to these changing conditions in time, they will lose their market advantage. Hence the necessity to restructure, to dump those employees that have outdated professional qualifications, or that can be replaced by younger, less expensive workers, and to move production of commodities and services to sites where the production costs are lower.

All this is well known. Nevertheless, when I look at the facts I see that globalisation is far from being a comprehensive world economy in a global village. Globalisation refers, in its non-ideological sense, to the extension of global markets and communication systems. Or, as Salesse remarks, only in 1973 was the level globalisation of the period before 1914 again attained. Even in 1994 the economies of the principal industrialised countries of Europe were not more open to the outside world than before World War II. At present, only a part of the investments are international. Also international migration is far from global, as most migrants from outside Europe come from former colonial countries or from neighbouring countries. Less than 2 million Europeans are working outside their country of origin.<sup>201</sup>

I do not argue against the idea that an increasing globalisation takes place and that this process has many positive effects, more in the future than at present, for the populations of this world. At the same time I note that this actual process of globalisation is exaggerated and that it is presented as unavoidable in its

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<sup>201</sup> Yves Salesse, *L'Europe que nous voulons*. Paris : Fayard, 1999, p.26.

consequences. To this I can add that during the last decades the push towards neo-liberalism has greatly aggravated economic inequalities in this world.<sup>202</sup> This means that the positive effects for the populations are far from being automatic consequences of globalisation. Without any doubt, important and effective policy-measures are called for to produce more equality and social justice. In this realm it is certainly urgent to attack the massive financial corruption by the rapidly expanding networks of Mafiosi and of other criminal organisations which have infiltrated the economic, the financial and the political domains. Effective policies are not only called for in the name of justice, but also in the name of democracy. The evident intertwining of politics and criminal circles erodes trust and confidence in democratic leadership and adds as such massively to political instability.

Returning to the ideology of globalisation, here again I observe the ideological moment: the exaggeration and the (supposed) ineluctability of the process is emphasised to convince the regional, national and local markets that they have to open up to globalisation and have to adapt to it in order to survive. Moreover, it is stated that the consequences of such an adaptation will be positive, at least in the long run.

Globalisation is not the only bogey. More important is the impact of the technological-deterministic way of interpreting economic and social development, which includes both globalisation and the national and European interpretations of economic development. When I speak about the negative consequences of economic development for social and cultural life, I refer to this deterministic way of thinking. And when politicians, bankers and economists state that economic development as it presents itself is ineluctable and is, moreover, a process to which society has no other choice than to adapt, then globalisation is a handy formula, because it suggests that the powerful mechanisms of change are far away, out of reach of the national and European political arenas. In spite of this, many of these developments are still national and European. The acceptance of this model of development as the only valid model has the following consequences:

- Although this way of thinking is often referred to as neo-liberal, it is in fact *extremely anti-individualistic*. Following the 'logic' of the model – as a collective representation – the individual is only autonomous to the degree that he follows this logic, although it is very evident that his rewards will be very poor, in spite of his merits, when he does not belong to the inside-circles of the system. We have seen that, after the restructuring of the economic system, the rich became rapidly richer and the numbers of the

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<sup>202</sup> Ignacio Ramonet notes that in 1960 the 20% of the richest persons of the world had incomes that were 30 times higher than the incomes of the poorest 20%. Today, the incomes of the rich are 82 times higher than those of the poor. (I. Ramonet, 'Pour changer le monde'. *Penser le XXIe siècle*. Manière de voir 52, *Le Monde diplomatique*, juillet-août 2000, p.6.

(very) poor grew rapidly, both of the working and of the unemployed poor. I repeat that the basic tenets of the model are deterministic and that, moreover, the market model that goes with it has nothing to do with a market that is based on the actions of free individuals. Instead, it is an arena in which corporate groups fight each other, if they are not dividing parts of the market between them.

- The model is also anti-social or anti-societal to a high degree. It leaves no autonomy to society, as society must, following this logic, adapt to the economic impacts on society. This adaptation requires, among many things, a high professional level of workers, together with their acceptance of spatial mobility<sup>203</sup>, a high level of flexibility and of productivity. Those who have not enough skills, who are not enough adaptable to changing requirements, are excluded from the labour market. They may find themselves in a situation of second-class citizens. What is important to emphasise is that this process accelerates the individualisation of society, it destroys its social texture, but it does not produce new types of cohesion and solidarity. The market model is not capable to contribute to this, because it is based on individualistic short term calculations. Daily life, especially in large urban zones, testifies to the poverty of the individualistic market model with respect to social relationships. This process of social degradation requires an organised political response, not in terms of repression, but in terms of societal construction. Instead of downstream policies which have deviant behaviour as their main target and which translate criminality and other types of deviant behaviour in terms of mental inadequacy of individuals, the main efforts should be upstream policies of which the main goal is the restructuring of social and cultural life and the re-socialising of the victims of the poverty of the preceding economic and social policies.
- As the main objectives of development are already implied in the model itself ('The End of History'), the rationality on which the economic and social policies are based, is restricted to functional (or instrumental, or technical) rationality. From this vantage-point the advocates of this way of thinking tend to relegate other ways of thinking to the domain of the 'irrational' or 'utopian'. They state that they cannot understand opposition to their policies, as 'there is no alternative'. In fact, this way of thinking excludes other valid ways of interpretation of our future. It demonstrates a narrow-mindedness that constantly stresses, albeit in a hidden way, the end of liberty, equality and solidarity. Perhaps even worse than this is the way in which the individualist market model is used to organise almost every sphere of social life. It is a model that is without any doubt very useful in the economic realm. However, we have seen that this model, based on individual calculations in exchange relations, tends to invade the whole of society. As such it is detrimental to democracy that is reduced to a market of

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<sup>203</sup> See, e.g., 'Sociétés sous contrôle'. *Manière de voir* 56, Bimestriel, Mars-Avril 2001. Paris : *Le Monde diplomatique*, 2001.

voters who pursue their individual interests only. It is detrimental to education, as it reduces (higher) learning to programs based on functional rationality and it treats students as persons who have to be 'processed' at an economically and politically 'acceptable price'. It downgrades the quality of public services with the general slogan that privatisation of services leads to a higher efficiency and to lower costs. After several decades of experience we know that this is, in many cases, not true. On the contrary, in most cases the prices rise and the quality of the services deteriorates. The level of risks rises, as privatised enterprises tend to neglect the maintenance of the infrastructure (e.g. railroad maintenance). Moreover, we observe a degradation of the quality of working-conditions, which show a much higher level of vulnerability and uncertainty for the workers.

- This dominant way of thinking emphasises the advantages of enlarging the scale of economic actions. Advantages are not absent, certainly not from a purely economic point of view. Globalisation is almost synonymous with the highest level of economy of scale. Such a development has important effects on national, regional and local markets, as we can observe every day. Advantages for whom? It is evident that the advantages are very unequally distributed and that the opening of regional and national markets to the world market can have adverse effects for the population, as is clearly illustrated by the fate of several nation-states that were forced to follow the orders of the World Bank and the IMF. Also within the EU it is necessary to think about the correct policies in the face of globalisation to protect, to a certain extent, the diversity of markets and to avoid the MacDonaldisation of Europe.

We have seen that the social and cultural policies of adaptation to the exigencies of this dominant way of looking at development are not adequate in the face of the major problems our societies are confronted with. The policies of adaptation are targeting the consequences of structural changes in our societies, but they neglect the analysis of the main causes of present societal problems. The present dominant way of interpreting societal development seems to block the rise of alternative models of development, which are not only models of adaptation, but models in which realistic societal choices are presented, choices which could, when implemented, 'change the future'. This was our main conclusion in the chapters VIII and IX. In other words: there is no critical political and democratic debate going on. It could be said that this statement is not correct, e.g. by referring to the Green parties. The Greens have certainly an idea about important objectives to be realised concerning the relation between societies and their physical environment. To reach these, a re-orientation of the ways of both production and of the population is necessary. Nevertheless, they do not offer an image of society that has to accompany such a change, as follows from my analysis in the preceding chapters.

There exists a politico-ideological void that is very dangerous, because it can be occupied very quickly, under certain socio-economic circumstances, by

substantially irrational models of social life, models against which civil society's defences may be (too) weak. We have seen that the image of a society that combats economic and social exclusion (the exclusion paradigm) cannot do the job, because it lacks a coherent vision of the nature of the changing society. A different type of political discussion is that about the multicultural or the multi-ethnic society. This debate offers, indeed, a model of society that can be coherent and attractive to several parts of present society. I have argued that the realisation of such a type of society is very dangerous, because it is anti-democratic in its consequences, it reduces the common good to a configuration of a plurality of ethnic or religious 'common goods', it is an attack on the liberties of the individual, it leads to narrow-minded types of leadership, in most cases of a very authoritarian character, based on exclusive collective identity, and it will aggravate the educational and economic inequalities within our societies.<sup>204</sup>

The politico-ideological void presents another menace that follows from policies which are directed at the consequences of societal change, without having a societal model that allows us to develop policies that attack the causes of major social problems. The tendency to attack the consequences – 'beat the symptoms' – may lead to a continual reinforcement of the forces of repression in society (zero tolerance, more policemen and more privatised surveillance, more technical surveillance, more extensive data banks with data on every citizen).

Finally, I can say also that the individualistic market model will not do as a model of society. It reinforces the calculative society, in which everybody calculates, firstly, the individual benefits and secondly the benefits for his own groups. The model cannot, as we already argued, recreate or create the social bond.

As observed, there is also a lack of adequate leadership in several domains of social life, both on the national as on the European level. It is as if all leadership is entangled in the web of the dominant way of interpreting the world and is, consequently, only able to propose minor changes that do not violate the 'logic' of this approach. This is somewhat exaggerated, because there are certain types of leadership in our societies, which are opposed to these policies. These types are, fortunately, in most cases not capable of influencing the main line of thinking about the development of social life. Here I have in mind ultra-nationalist leaders, religious and ethnic fundamentalists, gurus or health preachers. Political leadership seems to be imprisoned in the network of political institutions, especially on the European level. The political system itself is not capable of breaking through this establishment in order to advance with the really important issues: the reconstruction of the major institutions, the bringing in of the citizen as a responsible participant, instead of speaking about the goal of making the political process more transparent and comprehensible for the 'citizens'. If the European Union would only be a European market, then we

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<sup>204</sup> Jean-Michel Demetz, *o.c.* In : *L'Express*, no. 2613, semaine du 2 au 8 août, 2001, pp.32-33.

would only need the regulatory capacities of European institutions in relation to the market. But when the goals are the founding of a European Confederation or Federation, then there must be an important change to the present orientation. This is not only a question of political leadership, but also of intellectual and moral leadership. We do not need more 'transparency' for its own sake – although most people will not be against it - but well-defined proposals concerning our future in which collective political choices come to the fore. Proposals which are not 'anti-globalisation', but which show how other uses of the production of wealth is possible. Such proposals must have the capacity to show that we, Europeans, can do better than the USA, in organising our relations with the outside world, in creating a better quality of life for everyone, in guaranteeing and developing individual liberties and choices, in contributing to the quality of the physical and social environment, in educating responsible and active citizens, in creating better conditions for cultural expression and for scientific development.

This is a tremendous task, especially because the quality of national citizenship is weakening as a consequence of the processes that I outlined earlier in relation to the devastating effects of the uncontrolled international economic system. There is a situation of mass alienation, in which the functions of the substantial elites have been substituted, or are being masked, by many kinds of 'virtual' elites, who have, finally, nothing to offer.

The links between the societal groups and the elites have been thoroughly severed during the last sixty years. Society has become very fluid, traditional class structure almost vanished, individualisation increased rapidly, aggregates of individuals can quickly shift their political orientation, depending on the issue that is on the public agenda. In such a situation it is very difficult to find stable anchorage points for political proposals that are not only 'issues', often with rather short-term perspectives, but political programs with long-term perspectives, based on explicit models of society. The central question is: how to organise under the present circumstances the 'production' of such proposals for the construction of the EU? How to select – and by whom – the persons who are capable to contribute to this goal and to reject, in an age of postmodernism, the unfit and the misfits with their irrational propositions about the future?

From what I have said follows that the position of the citizens of Europe's nation-states and of the European Union can – and has to – be improved in many ways. When I make this remark, I do not intend to say that the citizen does not exist in a legal sense, as an individual, who is the exponent of a set of inalienable and very precious rights. Rights, moreover, which are generally very well protected. In those cases where these rights are violated by the state, the individual has at his disposal well-defined ways to appeal and to redress the injustice to which he was subjected. No, I am speaking about the citizen as a political actor, as an actor who is also motivated by ideas about the common good, who wants to be actively engaged in the process of collective choice which could make the future different from a future that results from the ongoing politics of adaptation.



## **Learning for democracy, peace and mutual understanding**

### *The desirability of an early start*

The improvement of the quality of European democratic life is not only dependent on the types of positive change, which I outlined. Also on the European level democracy has to be learned and our preceding analysis shows that the process of learning for democracy, peace and mutual understanding is a very difficult one that should start as early as possible in the life of children. There are several important reasons for an early start:

- a) A child's habitus is formed in its early years and the educational system, in cooperation with parents, can more easily influence this habitus in the first stages of contact with the outside world. The main strategy should be to influence the 'unconscious' part of group life, instead of trying to demonstrate that certain collective representations and stereotypes of oneself and the Other are in opposition to 'reality'. Such a strategy includes also the education of the educators. They have to learn in what ways we inevitably tend to perceive social reality in a distorted way, as has been explained in the chapters III and V. A further task is to learn how to disentangle the confusions created by the fallacy of the wrong level in collectivist thinking and how to tackle the problem of the misplaced concreteness of collective identity (see chapter III).
- b) Mass media, especially television, confront children at a very early age with a one-sided view of social life, a view in which violence and terrorism predominate, even in several programmes that are designed primarily for children, as in animated cartoons and CD-ROM-games in which terror and death by violence (often followed by a reincarnation) seems to be the normal condition of life. Moreover, there is a strong tendency to present the 'Other' as bad, as an object to be destroyed, not as persons and groups about whom one would be tempted to learn more and who could be seen as attractive partners in social life. There is a strong need for counteraction programmes in this domain.
- c) The coming of 'Europe', together with the increasing interdependence between the populations within it, pose important questions about Europe as a collective representation and about a European identity. At present there is no such a thing as a European identity and several collective representations of Europe are struggling for supremacy in the minds of the peoples concerned.<sup>205</sup> At this strategic point the educational systems could contribute to the awareness of the necessity of an open Europe, that stands for the defence and promulgation

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<sup>205</sup> J. Berting and W. Heinemeyer, *o.c.* In: K. von Benda- Beckmann and M Verkuyten, *o.c.*,p.52-70

of its central value system and that fights, as a civil society, against the patterns of economic, political and social exclusion within its boundaries.<sup>206</sup>

Learning about intercultural relations should not have as its only major objective the changing of collective stereotypes about the Other. I have argued that collective representations have important functions for persons, as they help the members of groups to orient themselves in an otherwise almost incomprehensible world. Collective stereotypes are elements of collective representations. Changing them in a durable way is a difficult task because of the functions they have for the group and because they are, as I said before, connected to the unconscious level of group life, to the habitus of its participants. A consequence of this is that this role should be made explicit. Groups should be helped to integrate changes in their collective representations without becoming alienated. So attention should be paid to possible strategies to master this type of problem. Preferably, the learning of these strategies to cope with the effects of changing interrelations of the 'Other' should take place in situations in which two or more groups with different collective identities are present. The double distortion in action (see chapter III) can be used to elucidate the situation as an intercultural exchange.

A strategy of change in a learning situation cannot be effective when it is not explicit about the type of society that goes with it. We have stressed the fact that increasing interdependency goes together with a 'pacification' of the relations between its constituent parts within Europe. This process is far from automatic; there is a lot to be learnt. So it has to be made clear that peace and peaceful relations mean not just the absence of war and of other overt and violent conflicts. The absence of war can be a result of negative peace, produced by a policy of *Divide et Impera*, or by the domination of a superpower that has the means to suppress and that assures a 'peace' that is in fact based on structural violence. In contradistinction to this negative peace, Europe should be oriented towards positive peace. Positive peace reigns in the EU, but certainly not yet in Europe. Positive peace is based on intensive cooperation between its constituent parts and on a free exchange of persons, ideas and products. Such a positive peace has to be based, at least partly, on a consciousness of the populations concerned that there is a common interest in pursuing certain objectives that are indivisible, such as durable and positive peace and a consensus about the basic principles that should govern the life of Europe's citizens. Such a consensus about the basic principles of public life should be formulated on a rather abstract level in order to avoid interpretations of them that leave out the rich cultural diversity of Europe.

Those values have not to be invented, they exist within Europe and they are fortunately not only restricted to this area of the world. There seems to be a

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<sup>206</sup> J. Berting, 'Patterns of Exclusion: imaginaries of class, nation, ethnicity and gender'. In: J. Nederveen Pieterse and Bhikhu Parekh, eds, *The Decolonization of Imagination. Culture, Knowledge and Power*. London and New Jersey: Zed Books, Ltd, 1995, chapter 9.

consensus with respect to the importance of those values, a consensus that does not exclude, however, important differences with respect to their interpretation and to their place in a hierarchy of values. The values which come to the fore are often the result of long and painful experience in the past, such as wars between religions, the struggle for self-determination of peoples, and the struggle for the right to one's own conscience and the struggle for the right to have a decent life (e.g. based on socio-economic rights). They are, moreover, based and reinforced, by the wars and struggles against barbarism and against the efforts to impose values which are contrary to our precious heritage (e.g. the proclaimed inequality of 'racial' groups, the effort to exterminate the 'impure' on racial, ethnic, religious or other ideological grounds). On this level historical and sociological lessons on the nature of western society can contribute to lift the veil of ignorance, both among autochthonous and allochthonous groups. This type of education should be accompanied by intercultural learning about the system of central 'European' values (see chapter V): tolerance as a positive value and not as a pretext to live and let live, which expresses a lack of involvement with the Other<sup>207</sup>; respecting the dignity of the Other, which pertains both to individuals and the achievements of other cultures; individualism implying that every person must be treated in public life as a person with, in the first place, a multiple identity, and not as someone who is supposed to have certain - mostly undesirable - characteristics because his or her belonging to a minority; autonomy and responsibility, as a person and as a citizen, and public participation, the right and duty to take part in democratic decision-making processes.<sup>208</sup>

Education, directed at learning for peace and mutual understanding would not be complete without giving attention to the role of political, economic and social conditions in intercultural relations. Several of those conditions have been mentioned in the preceding text. It is evident that a process of learning for democracy, peace and mutual understanding is doomed to slow down and even to come to a halt when no amelioration takes place with respect to these

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<sup>207</sup> A good example is given by Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, in his *Nathan der Weise* (1779), in which he stresses the equality of the three great religions with regard to their ethical basis: love without prejudice and devotion to the service of mankind. At the end of the play the principal characters – Saladin the Muslim, the Templar as the Christian and Nathan the Jew - discover that they are blood relatives. This underscores their common membership in a larger family of mankind. Instead of exclusion, the play emphasises the importance of inclusion.

<sup>208</sup> Not everybody will agree with this list. Much depends on the ways in which the central concepts are defined. I do not include solidarity as a central value in education because it is implied in the complex of values as such. Nevertheless, in education it should be explained that a Europe of 'us' cannot exist without an overarching solidarity. As such solidarity could be included. (See: A. Perucca, *Today's Process of Building the European Community*. Università degli Studi di Lecce, 1997, 4).

conditions. Without elaborating on them, I mention as important conditions for the development of positive intercultural relations: an explicit and stable policy of the state and its agencies with respect to the rights, duties and responsibilities of members of minorities (the 'Others') and the promotion of a climate of trust and confidence; a considerable reduction of social and cultural exclusion, especially in the labour- and housing markets and in the educational system, of the groups concerned; adopting policies in which (allochthonous) minorities are not treated as objects – often in spite of the good intentions of those who do so when engaged in efforts to reduce economic and other inequalities - but to treat them as responsible citizens, who have collectively and individually the responsibility to enter in an open dialogue with, for the time being, the 'host' society.

The systematic policies of the national states of Europe and of the European Union, together with the civic forces within the emerging European society, and in consonance with educational systems that are impregnated by the need of education for democracy, peace and mutual understanding can reinforce the awareness that the problem that is analysed, is not only a problem of intercultural relationships, but a problem of how to define, for Europe, the 'common good'. The common good concerns all of us. It has to do with the characteristics of the open society and the values it should be based upon; it has to do with the never ending quest for truth and veracity; it has to do with an awareness of the forces, which threaten the development of a free society, such as, in some respects, a non-reflexive acceptance of new technologies, a too ready compliance of the citizen to the forces of the market and to the forces of order.<sup>209</sup> Calhoun formulates this very nicely when he says: 'Even multinational, multicultural states require more than simply tolerance among subsidiary peoples. They require public discourse. Citizens from different nationalities, as from different regions, religions, or occupations, need to be able and willing to engage each other in discourse about the social arrangements which hold them together and order their lives - in brief, about the common good. Moreover, the same is crucial within nationalities'.<sup>210</sup> Indeed, learning to understand each other in intercultural situations is in the first place learning to see ourselves as both national and European citizens, who still have a lot to learn about ways to act as such on a European level.

An important part of this book concerns the analysis, the elucidation or clarification of the major problems and tasks which we find on our way towards a dynamic and fundamentally democratic European Union. Such a Europe must

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<sup>209</sup> See, e.g., J. Robert, 'Les libertés publiques dans les sociétés libérales'. In: *Encyclopaedia Universalis.*, 2000.

<sup>210</sup> C. Calhoun, 'Nationalism and Civil Society'. In: C. Calhoun, ed., *Social Theory and the Politics of Identity*. Oxford, UK and Cambridge, USA: Blackwell, 1994, p.

have at its disposal collective representations about the future, which imply not only adaptations to 'deterministic' forces of technical and economic development. In chapters VII, VIII, IX and X, I have presented a sketch of the present situation which reveals that the dominant ways of thinking about development or 'progress' do neither take into account Europe's cultural specificity, nor the political relevance of Europe's diversity (chapters V and VI). Discussing the contents of Europe's culture, I found that several views on European culture come to the fore in political debates and that, consequently, it is a rather unprofitable enterprise to try to establish a consensus in this domain. It is much more important to delineate Europe's specificity as a dynamic constellation of basic principles and values that resulted from its long and often tragic history. Furthermore, I concluded, that Europeans still have a weak European identity. This is not a major problem, as such an identity is likely to develop gradually in the wake of the advent of a democratic European society. In the meantime, confronted with the rising tide of claims to collective identities, some of these claims being a threat to Europe's specificity, I pointed out that we are at the cross-roads of history. The processes of decision-making on the national and the European level, not guided by a clear awareness of what is really at stake, and accompanied by large masses of alienated persons, can easily lead to collectivistic types of organisation of society and hence to a society in which individual liberties are severely curtailed (chapter X).

I also paid ample attention to the development of the European society. We could observe that the building of social and cultural Europe is hampered by the persistence of the problems which we elaborated in the preceding chapters. It does not suffice to have policies which combat social exclusion, because such policies do not touch the roots of the problems of inequality in society. Social Europe remains a poor concept as long as it is only tied to the politics of adaptation and accommodation. Social and democratic deficits generate risks, which cannot be reduced by policies of prevention and of protection only. They also require policies of precaution, as I explained in chapter IX. A logical next step is to return to the present position of the citizen and to the coming of the European citizen. This theme requires a rethinking of the links between the individual and his national and European society. Learning for democracy, peace and mutual understanding is a process that cannot be left to the forces of the market-place, but should be an inevitable part of every citizen's coming of age.

The terrorist attacks on the USA, on September 11, 2001, have very strongly demonstrated that rapidly changing international relations may need a quick and well-coordinated response. In front of these tragic events and the following diplomatic encounters, the European Union 'evaporated', at least in the eyes of the common citizen. We saw a show of some political leaders of the European Union's member-states, who pushed themselves to the front to demonstrate the importance of their nation-state. This example – and many others could be given – amply demonstrates that it is urgent to have a European Union that can act as a coherent unity and that can avoid political behaviour by nation-states' leaders who try to reap *national* advantages in this international political market.

These tragic events brought home to us another important lesson. A high level of feelings of insecurity and of fear can open the gate to the acceptance of security measures which, when implemented, curtail our civil liberties. Terrorism and a strong increase of criminality already led to the instalment of systems of surveillance of which the citizen is in many cases unaware. It is certainly necessary to raise the level of vigilance under the present circumstances. Nevertheless, the citizen should be informed about the options which are available. Political slogans such as 'zero tolerance' are misleading, because they exploit citizens' fear and feelings of insecurity. They direct attention solely to the repression of criminal behaviour and neglect the analysis of the economic, social and cultural conditions under which criminality develops. I have amply discussed in which ways policies of adaptation to market conditions are unable to counteract the rise of such unhealthy conditions. Risk management should be based on prediction, prevention, protection and precaution. This is not to say that the European Union should be active in all domains of risk management. Many problems can be handled more effectively at the local, national and regional levels. But in a European space without frontiers, one of the major tasks of the EU is, nevertheless, the coordination of risk policies on different levels and their systematic evaluation. This evaluation comprises an alertness for perverse effects of risk policies (one nation's 'solution' may affect negatively other nations) and for their impact on the citizens' rights (such as the creation of a multicultural society based on collective rights of minorities).

The achievements of the European Union during the last fifty years are considerable. In a relatively short period more has been achieved than could be expected in an arena with so many diversified and often opposed interests. This observation gives rise to hopes concerning a coming European future in which its major challenges will be handled both in a democratic and a rational way, as *European* challenges.



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