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EUROPE, BATTLEFIELD OR AREA OF PROSPERITY?

May 7, 2018

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THE CONGRESS OF EUROPE

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"I realize that all society rests upon forces. But all the great creative actions, all the decent human relations, occur during the intervals when force has not managed to come to the front. These intervals are what matter. I want them to be as frequent and as lengthy as possible and I call them 'civilization'."

(E.M. Forster, 'What I believe')

“Europe is an incredible construction,

much criticized. Much too slow, very laborious on occasions but it is also an extraordinary achievement of the immediate aftermath of the second World War where countries had been at each other's throat and millions of people had died at the hands of each other for centuries.

And to actually decide that in the name of peace and prosperity they were going to establish that free market zone where product, service and people can actually move, is something that should not be wasted at all.

And it is a resilient construction and a resilient territory which is unfinished and which needs to be completed.”

INTRODUCTION

Certainly, an incredible and resilient territory and construction where, because of the horrors of WWII, the lowest form of life have pushed us to one of our highest level of thoughts: the path of collective and individual reconciliation and *'to discuss ideas on European unity'*, as Churchill said.

EUROPE, BATTLEFIELD OR AREA OF PROSPERITY?

Throughout history there have been in Europe beautiful perfections as well as horrible tragedies. And from the thought to limit wars and domination, already 2000 years is a vision of a future envisioned in which Europe would acquire a kind of unity.

Europe is territory of double-natured characters: many major (civil) wars along with related peace conferences (the Peace of Westphalia, the Congress of Vienna, Versailles Peace Conference, the Congress of Europe), as well diversity, grand history of rich culture, varied nature, and unique typical binding personalities **(1)**.

The idea Europe will not disappear, according to the centuries of ongoing discussions about Europe's precise borders, the geographical centre and its cultural and political issues. But if we view Europe, then we yet can give her the value she deserves? Just as the Congress of Europe did 70 years ago for the purpose of the establishment of a united Europe and where the desire to cooperate in order to create a prosperous society was unstoppable.

On this Congress the European Movement was founded. Pioneers of a united Europe, including Winston Churchill, Konrad Adenauer and Alcide de Gasperi and idealist politicians were meeting about the ambitious goal of securing Europe. This historic congress was one of the initiatives taken to ban war and division on our continent and to preserve peace, stability and cooperation.

THE EUROPEAN MOVEMENT

The European Movement, a movement of peoples that adheres to the ideas of the Congress, connects people with Europe. It is a lobbying association that coordinates the efforts of associations and national councils with the goal of promoting European integration, disseminating information about it and envisions a community of citizens that is based on common values, such as respect for human rights, freedom, equality, solidarity, democracy and active citizenship and is therefore an important servant of 'the Grand Design' that brings us further on the road of eternal peace.

THE EUROPEAN UNION

Europe started the most successful integration experiment of all time, building an ideal of a civil society. It is in this world the largest area with common prosperity and long-lasting peace. The European Union, born from the WW-II horrors and the urge "never again war", is a positive factor for stable peace and also an important servant of 'the Grand Design'.

The choice between battlefield or prosperity is simple: further care for the idea Europa, design and direction of the polity. That should continue to be the challenge.

E. (Erik) Van der Kooij,
director **Feeling Europe** Foundation

(1) brilliant painters, creative architects, unique writers, leading clerics, talented footballers, virtuose composers and musicians, great philosophers, scientists, innovators and statesmen made unprecedented furore.

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Madeleine Albright once said:

"To understand Europe, you have to be a genius - or French".



**“Here I got Minos, who later became king of
Crete” (Europa)**

EUROPE, BATTLEFIELD OR AREA OF PROSPERITY?

THE VALUE SHE DESERVES (I)

My father is Agenor, my mother Telephassa. I dreamed goddess Asia insisted I belonged to her, because I was born in Asia. But the opposite happened. Once when it was nice weather, I went with my girlfriends to the shore at Sidon to pick flowers. Over there, Zeus, the ruler of the gods, had his eye on me. He was as white as snow, beautiful and protective. I fell in love and did not know who he was, when I was sitting on his back. Gradually he walked with his hooves into the waves, after which I was kidnapped to Crete. Here, I entered the Hellenic world and we gave birth to among other Minos, who became later king of Crete.

My family missed me. They started a search. It is believed that the land extends from west of Asia, north of Africa and is bounded by the Arctic and the Atlantic Ocean. They have not found me.

My son King Minos originated the earliest 'high' culture, far before the age of ancient Greek civilization. Later, the Celts in Western Europe spread the La Tène culture on aspects to compare with the Roman state, where there was already a vision of a future in which Europe would acquire a kind of unity.

The idea of cooperation has regularly returned **(1)**, until today with the plan to protect the largest area of prosperity ever in human history and to solve factors that cause civil dissatisfaction.

"Europe will not be made all at once, or according to a single plan. It will be built through concrete achievements which first create a de facto solidarity"

(Robert Schuman, 9 May 1950)

500 Years ago, it became justified that ideas have no objective existence outside man. The new period typified not only humanist themes such as tolerance, freedom of thought, peace, education for the development of the individual, and the mythology of antiquity, but gave also rise to artistic, literary, social and intellectual movements. The age became one of the pillars of Western civilization and brought about major changes in thinking about religion, philosophy, art, science and politics. It led to the prosperous life we live in, influenced by progressive thinking and the creation of new value. It is in this world the largest area with common prosperity and long-lasting peace.

But it went not all without war and conflict.

TRADEGY OF EUROPE

In the first half of the 20th century, the humanist values did not win the battle against rivalry, revanche, nationalism, threats and the conditions preceding World War I, which resulted in a tragedy.

"I WISH TO SPEAK TO YOU TODAY ABOUT THE TRADEGY OF EUROPE"

(Sir Winston Churchill, the Zurich speech)

"This noble continent, comprising on the whole the fairest and the most cultivated regions of the earth; enjoying a temperate and equable climate, is the home of all the great parent races of the western world. It is the fountain of Christian faith and Christian ethics. It is the origin of most of the culture, arts, philosophy and science both of ancient and modern times.

If Europe were once united in the sharing of its common inheritance, there would be no limit to the happiness, to the prosperity and glory which its three or four hundred million people would enjoy.

Over wide areas a vast quivering mass of tormented, hungry, care-worn and bewildered human beings gape at the ruins of their cities and homes, and scan the dark horizons for the approach of some new peril, tyranny or terror. Yet all the while there is a remedy which, if it were generally and spontaneously adopted, would as if by a miracle transform the whole scene, and would in a few years make all Europe, or the greater part of it, as free and as happy as Switzerland is today.

*What is this sovereign remedy? It is to re-create the European Family, or as much of it as we can, and provide it with a structure under which it can dwell in peace, in safety and in freedom" **(2)**.*

(1) Émeric Crucé (1590-1648), Charles Irénée Castel (1658-1743), Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), Sir Winston Churchill.

(2) The Churchill Society, London, <http://www.churchill-society-london.org.uk/astonish.html>

**“after this long passage of
time, we are the servants
of the Grand Design”**

(Sir Winston Churchill, The Congress of Europe in The Hague, May 7, 1948)

BUILDING AREA OF PROSPERITY

“If we all pull together and pool the luck and the comradeship and firmly grasp the larger hopes of humanity, then it may be that we shall move into a happier sunlit age, when all the little children who are now growing up in this tormented world may find themselves not the victors nor the vanquished in the fleeting triumphs of one country over another in the bloody turmoil of destructive war, but the heirs of all the treasures of the past and the masters of all the science, the abundance and the glories of the future”.

(Sir Winston Churchill's address The Congress of Europe, May 7, 1948, The Hague).

Organised by the International Committee of the Movements for European Unity and presided over by Winston Churchill, the Congress brought together representatives from various departments of learning, science and art and from across a broad political spectrum, providing them with the opportunity to discuss ideas about the development of European Union. In order to ban war and division on our continent, and to preserve peace, stability and cooperation, they launched a call for a political, economic and monetary Union of Europe and determined social and cultural frameworks.

Call for common effort for freedom, prosperity and peace

The landmark conference was also to have a profound influence on the shape of the European Movement (**appendix**), which was created soon afterwards.



“This is not a Movement of parties but a movement of peoples. Europe can only be united by the heart-felt wish and vehement expression of the great majority of all the peoples in all the parties in all the freedom-loving countries, no matter where they dwell or how they vote.”

<- Source: Nederlands Instituut voor Beeld en Geluid

“The Movement for European Unity must be a positive force, deriving its strength from our sense of common spiritual values. It is a dynamic expression of democratic faith based upon moral conceptions and inspired by a sense of mission. In the centre of our movement stands the idea of a Charter of Human Rights, guarded by freedom and sustained by law. It is impossible to separate economics and defence from the general political structure” (1).

ACHIEVEMENTS

Europe started the most successful integration experiment of all time, build on an ideal of a civil society and led us to the world's the largest area with common prosperity and long-lasting peace. The first major achievement of the European Movement was the creation of the **Council of Europe** (which Council also created the European Convention on Human Rights) in May 1949. The European Movement was also responsible for the creation of the **“Collège d'Europe”** in Bruges, where academics from many different countries could study and coexist, some only for a short time before their countries were in conflict, and the **European Centre of Culture** in Geneva.

One of its major functions during the 1950's through to the 1990's was the setting up of think-tanks and a network of mobilisation in the democratic countries of Europe and in countries subjected to totalitarian regimes.

Since 1948, **the European Movement** has played an essential role in the process of European integration by exercising its influence on European and national institutions. It fought in favour of the direct election of the European Parliament by all European citizens, in favour of the Treaty on the European Union and also for a European Constitution. To achieve this goal, the European Movement always put the citizen at the heart of Community construction.

(1) The Churchill Society, London, <http://www.churchill-society-london.org.uk/WSchague.html>

A result today of the call for common effort for freedom, prosperity and peace is the European Union (**appendix**). Its merits are Erasmus+, largest humanitarian aid provider, widest diplomatic network of the world, the single market, the trade agenda, the growth strategy (Europe 2020), building a common energy policy and reform of the financial sector.

DECLINE

It was not merely progress and success. Wealth, carelessness, complacency and unperformed maintenance caused tragedies that were forgotten, which led to deep trouble. *“We forgot to do things that are effective rather than those that are just dignified or decorative”*, said Walter Bagehot.

The look at Europe dramatically changed and she was no longer valued

Europe struggled from 2008 with multiple (vicious) issues at the same time. Societies saw prosperity and well-being decline, strong impacting the social field. It questioned Europa’s *raison d’être* seriously. Business was not finished **(1)** and its effects increased hostility. Populism and nationalism were given space and made grateful use of the situation.

The right to achieve chaos was fully exploited: lies, half truths and kept back information made and fed discontent among populations. Euromyths strengthened that emotion further. Compared to the events, happened in the 19th and at the beginning of the 20st century, not harmless and therefore unwise. Empty promises, great sense of drama, little sense of realism, a too simple representation of affairs, advocating easy solutions that do not work and fighting against ourselves was the atmosphere. But rather looking for rivalry, revanche, nationalism, threats and ‘each other’s throat’, was thought of the value she deserves.

THE VALUE SHE DESERVES (II)

Sensible people went the dialogue, turned the tide and arranged in time that politics and society took the right direction again. They saw advantage in the crisis, what put in motion the discussion about what kind of Europe, in stead of “I want my country back”. Europa became stronger and the influence of populism and the political ideology of nationalism has declined. European citizens have recognized again the advantages and achievements of further cooperation and are obvious involved in our common future. The discontent and the lies disappeared.

The tide seems to turn in favor of Europa, despite of many measures still needed. New positive dynamics in politics and among citizens provided discussions about the future of Europe, not only within the EU, but also in the (largest) member states: the direction taken by the United Kingdom, the new perspective for France, a possible more open and intense role for German leadership, the smaller Member States who had to reorient their positions, and the new (transaction-based thinking and acting) order in the United States, did affect Europe.

**With regard to Russia:
“EU is ready to build bridges.
We agreed to increase the
level of exchanges on
foreign policy issues”.**

(EU External Action, 11 July, 2017)

The momentum to further care for the idea Europa, design and direction of the polity was used. But to complete, we ourselves have to give meaning and sufficient capacity and we are able to do that, because we are equipped with a repository of tools that can shape our life and are therefore able to find appropriate relevance to give Europa the value she deserves: creation of a sustainable balance between the application of Reason in the public sphere of human affairs, religion and attention for the humane. Lifestyles, whereby every person, education and the European Union can borrow and can contribute in order to assemble together towards a better society.

The humanities provide opportunities and starting points to reach the attainable measure of peace of mind, meaning of life and to include other peoples, truth, beauty and greatness.

Much of the immaterial is already there, we just have to decide to enrol.

(1) the turmoil around and influx from European external borders, still insufficient economic reforms in peripheral countries, further completion of euro architecture, sustainable security of energy supply, climate, internal security, and building a (widespread) companionship / 'a common sense of belonging'.

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APPENDIX: THE EUROPEAN MOVEMENT (1 and 2)

ORIGINS

The origins of the European Movement date back to July 1947, after the creation of the British United Europe Movement and at a time when the cause of a United Europe was being championed by notables such as Winston Churchill and Duncan Sandys in the form of the Anglo-French **United European Movement**. The UEM acted as a platform for the co-ordination of organisations created in the wake of WWII.

As a result of their efforts, the congress of The Committee for the Co-ordination of the European Movements took place in Paris on **17th July 1947** incorporating “La Ligue Européenne de Coopération Economique” (LECE), “l’Union européenne des Fédéralistes” (UEF), “l’Union parlementaire européenne” (UPE) and the Anglo-French United European Movements. They met again on the **10th November 1947** and changed their name to **The Joint International Committee for European Unity**. They retained this name until after the 1948 Congress of The Hague.



The European Movement was founded in 1948 by the pioneers of a united Europe, including Winston Churchill, Konrad Adenauer and Alcide de Gasperi during the Hague Congress. Idealist politicians were meeting in The Hague with the ambitious goal of securing Europe. This historic congress was one of the initiatives taken to ban war and division on our continent and to preserve peace, stability and cooperation.

The European Movement was formally created on the 25th October 1948, when the Joint International Committee for European Unity decided to change its name. Duncan Sandys was elected President and Léon Blum, Winston Churchill, Alcide De Gasperi and Paul-Henri Spaak were elected as Honorary Presidents.

REPRESENTATION

Currently, **the European Movement International** is represented in 39 national European offices and regroups 36 international Associations.

THE EUROPEAN MOVEMENT NETHERLANDS (EBN)

The European Movement Netherlands (EBN) is a network organization of citizens, civil society organizations and companies. The EBN functions as a Europe platform. What binds is an involvement in the European integration process and the conviction that we can contribute to shape the future of Europe. The EBN seeks to further develop a united Europe that aims at promoting peace, freedom, prosperity and well-being in Europe and in the world, having in mind a community of citizens based on common values, such as respect for human rights, freedom, equality, solidarity, democracy and active citizenship. The EBN wants to involve the Dutch people and ranks more closer to European integration, using information provision and debate. In addition, annual prizes are awarded to Dutch people who have actively attracted Europe and inspired others by commitment and activism **(3)**.

(1) https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/European_Movement_International

(2) <http://europeanmovement.eu/who-we-are/history/>

(3) <http://europesebeweging.nl/>

APPENDIX: THE EUROPEAN UNION

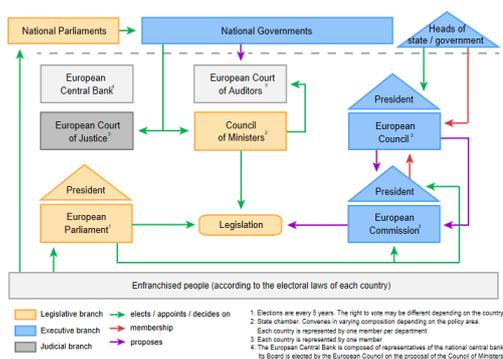
ORIGIN

The EU traces its origins from the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), proposed by Robert Schuman, and the European Economic Community (EEC), established, respectively, by the 1951 Treaty of Paris and 1957 Treaty of Rome. The original members of what came to be known as the European Communities, were the Inner Six; Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and West Germany. Over the following decades many new members joined them while at the same time integration of economic, cultural, judicial and so forth would then deepen the relationships distinct European entity **(1)**.

DESIGN

Ulrike Guerot is dreaming of a republic of Europe, Guy Verhofstadt about a federal Europe, in the European Parliament's mind 73 seats of the UK can be assigned to establish a pan-European party, several Member States maintained for a long period of time a status quo / muddling through scenario, other Member States were in favor of an improved continuation of full supranational cooperation, Niall Ferguson resonates "or the dismantling of Europe to regain the flexibility of smallness, or God back on the throne or to weapon".

But for the moment, the European Union is a hybrid system of supranational and intergovernmental governance **(2)** and is the most important partnership in Europe to which participating countries have transferred some of their sovereignty. As highest institution of this union is considered to be the European Council.



Politics and policies must always be refreshed for confronting the multiple issues. As an antidote to antagonism, we need to talk about other levels of consensus, distribution of voting power and redefine the notion of subsidiarity.

Europe, the EU, has to deliver and to show (both itself as through member states) results to the citizens to make it clear that they give meaning to our lives. Economics (and of course political will) is the essence of the story: policies to be implemented and future aspects regarding immigration, climate, energy, defense policy will indeed need to be financed.

HUMANITIES

Humanities provide opportunities and starting points that contribute to further promotion of the human condition. Inspired by the cultural, religious and humanistic traditions of Europe, the EU plays a role in strengthening the western principles, all from the cultural, religious and humanistic inheritance and to make our lives more meaningful through objectives set out in the **Treaties**, the **Charter** and the **European Agenda for Culture**.

Cultural tradition

- The **Treaty on European Union (TEU)**: "respect, support, coordinate or complement its rich diversity of culture and language" and monitor the "conservation and development of the European cultural heritage";
- The **Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU, article 167)**:
 1. The Union shall contribute to the **flowering of the cultures** of the Member States, while respecting their national and regional diversity and at the same time **bringing the common cultural heritage to the fore**.
 2. Action by the Union shall be aimed at encouraging cooperation between Member States and, if necessary, supporting and supplementing their action in the following areas:
 - improvement of the knowledge and dissemination of **the culture and history of the European peoples**,
 - **conservation and safeguarding of cultural heritage of European significance**,
 - **non-commercial cultural exchanges**,
 - **artistic and literary creation**, including in the audiovisual sector.

(1) https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portal:European_Union

(2) https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/a/ac/Political_System_of_the_European_Union.svg

3. The Union and the Member States shall foster cooperation with third countries and the competent international organisations in the sphere of culture, in particular the Council of Europe.
 4. The Union shall take cultural aspects into account in its action under other provisions of the Treaties, in particular in order to respect and to promote the diversity of its cultures.
- The **Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union**: "The peoples of Europe are resolved to share a peaceful future based on common values": democracy, dignity, freedoms, equality, solidarity, tolerance, the rule of law, citizens' rights, justice.
 - The **European Agenda for Culture** has been the strategic framework for EU action in the cultural sector. It is based on the promotion of three strategic objectives **(1)**:
 1. cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue;
 2. culture as a catalyst for creativity; and
 3. culture as a key component of international relations.

The Agenda's core methods are dialogue with cultural stakeholders and the open method of coordination. The 2015-2018 Work Plan for Culture further concretises the agenda and sets out four priorities:

1. accessible and inclusive culture;
2. cultural heritage;
3. cultural and creative sectors: the creative economy and innovation; and
4. promotion of cultural diversity.

Religious tradition

Lisbon Treaty, article 17 TFEU (2):

- (1) The Union respects and does not prejudice the status under national law of churches and religious associations or communities in the Member States.
- (2) The Union equally respects the status under national law of philosophical and non-confessional organisations.
- (3) Recognising their identity and their specific contribution, the Union shall maintain an open, transparent and regular dialogue with these churches and organisation.

It's all there, but rather there is a European society, a sense of sharing and belonging, people struggle with identity, sovereignty and capacity, and are looking for a destination.

(1) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/atyourservice/en/displayFtu.html?ftuld=FTU_5.13.1.html

(2) <http://www.lisbon-treaty.org/wcm/the-lisbon-treaty/treaty-on-the-functioning-of-the-european-union-and-comments/part-1-principles/title-ii-provisions-having-general-application/159-article-17.html>