STILL THE EUROPE OF MILWARD?

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On the Need for a New Long-Term Historical Understanding of Today’s Europe

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1. Introduction

This working paper argues for a new historical understanding of the European integration process. This might seem astonishing. Why should we care about the past? History is just for the records and of concern only to a few specialists. The focus must be on the present problems and future prospects of the European Union. Politics is about the future and not about the past.

The argument of the working paper is that such mainstream views are part of the problems of today's EU. We cannot plan for the future without a clear and realistic understanding of where we come from and how we got here. Politics must have a Janus face towards both the past and the future in order to correctly estimate the magnitudes and the nature of the problems we have to solve. Politics in modern societies is a permanent process of problem resolution, where the answers to today's problems constitute the problems of tomorrow. If we do not understand this human and social condition but begin to think in terms of permanent problem solving and of social institutions as self-propelling machines, we shall get into deep trouble.

The consequence of the argument is that views of the past also shift with changes of the present. Views on the Single European Act were different in 1987 than they are today with the hindsight of 25 years, for instance; the 'big' enlargement of the European Union was seen differently at the moment it was decided upon in 1997 to when it was implemented in 2004 – or indeed to after the French 'no' to the Constitution in 2005. There is a need for a permanent historical revision. Once upon a time, historians believed that they were observing the processes they analysed from privileged outside positions. Today we know that we are floating along in the powerful stream of time. This insight does not make the task easier. However, the argument remains. History is important not only for the records and the archives but for the identification of our problems and our positions in the time stream.\(^1\)

The focus of sections 2-8 of this paper is thus on how we might understand today's EU from a historical perspective. Taking their point of departure from the work of the late Alan Milward, formerly the official historian of British policy toward the EU and probably the most influential historian of European integration, the following section will discuss the key problems of the mainstream view on the EU's past. In what follows, the paper will then look in more detail at the de-historicisation of Milward's theory in the political sciences, and then attempt a historicisation of several central issues, including the democratic deficit, legitimacy,

\(^1\) The argument for a new historical understanding of the EU of today is developed in depth in Schulz-Forberg and Stråth 2010.
and European values, before contextualising the history of European integration within wider global developments. In conclusion, the ninth and final section will develop some thoughts on the connection between the history of European integration and a more long-term history of Europe. In this latter part, the paper draws on debates and results of an ongoing research project at the University of Helsinki: *Europe between 1815 and 1914*.\(^2\)

### 2. The Problem of the Mainstream View on the EU's Past

Alan Milward’s thesis about the European rescue of the nation state is a very convincing interpretation of European integration from its post-war beginning in the 1950s until the early 1990s (Milward 1992). His main argument was that the EEC was based on a division of labour between the European level, which was responsible for economic market integration, and the member state level, which was responsible for social welfare. It was closer to an intergovernmental confederation than to a federation.

Milward thus took issue with the mainstream federalist and neofunctionalist views on European integration as a goal-bound project towards a European federation. His controversial argument was that the European integration, instead of being a federal project, on the contrary was part of a post-war re-assertion of the nation state, which in the framework of the Cold War was in need of ensuring national prosperity and the legitimising delivery of welfare policies.

The problem with Milward’s thesis today is twofold: 1. It does not cover the dynamic period after 1992, and 2. Theories in political sciences have developed in ahistorical directions. Such ahistorical theories have provided the mainstream understanding of the nature of the European integration as a self-propelling machine towards higher stages of European integration based on an optimal distribution of labour between the union and the national levels. These two problems will be discussed in the following.

Federal ideas certainly existed from the beginning but they remained ideas without political implementation. In the aftermath of De Gaulle, there was a brief attempt to take more federal steps around 1970, in particular with the Werner Plan on economic and monetary union and the Davignon Report on member state’s coordination of foreign policy positions, but these plans soon evaporated under pressure from the general economic crisis and the break down

\(^2\) Cf. [www.helsinki.fi/erere](http://www.helsinki.fi/erere)
of the Bretton Woods order in the 1970s. The Davignon Report certainly formed the basis of the later EPU, but under very different conditions after the end of the Cold War and the enlargement of the EU. Moreover, the implementation after the Maastricht Treaty occurred against the backdrop of a power migration from the Commission to the Council (see below), and a development from hard law towards soft law as governing principles.

Willy Brandt was an eager promoter of the Werner Plan and the Davignon Report, backed by the aging Jean Monnet behind the scenes. He needed a convincing West European policy in order to make his new Ostpolitik legitimate. However, against the resistance of Georges Pompidou and Edward Heath he could not do very much.

When Alan Milward published *The European Rescue of the Nation State* in 1992, however, it was seen by many as a provocation. This was the year of the Maastricht Treaty, which turned the European Communities into the European Union and which the public saw as a decisive step in a federal direction. The fact that the British government so vehemently denied any federal dimension of the Maastricht architecture, and its absolute rejection of any social dimension of the Treaty beyond the Social Policy Protocol, is an indication that federal thoughts, indeed, were circulating. It would otherwise be difficult to understand the strong opposition against federal interpretations (Schulz-Forberg & Stråth 2010:45, 63-4, 169-70). The debate was reminiscent of the discussion of the Werner and Davignon Plans in the 1970s where those who wanted could see them as signs of federal steps, and those who did not want to do so, found good arguments too.

To talk about rescue of the nation states in 1992 was therefore to clash with powerful opinions. However, time has demonstrated that Milward was right for the period up to the publication of the book. Of course, he could not know much about the future, and he was also keen in the book to emphasise that his was a historical analysis and not a prognosis. He expressly rejected teleological understandings of European integration as a goal-bound project and was sceptical of path dependency. The future was open. However, in the subsequent reading and interpretation of Milward this openness disappeared.

The main problem with the present view on the European integration is to use Milward’s pre-1992 analytical frame to identify post-1992 developments. The preconditions of the efficient distribution of labour between the European and the national levels that constituted the core of Milward’s thesis eroded rapidly after 1992. This occurred ironically enough in the framework of a new language about Maastricht as a step in a federal direction. The tension
between speech and act became obvious when the financial markets in 2008 and ever since demonstrated the implication of concepts like globalisation and European monetary union. The situation that Alan Milward so convincingly analysed has become the main problem of today’s EU: the growing tension between the two levels of competence. The EU is about economic integration much more than about social integration, which the difficulties in formulating convincing immigration policy aims demonstrate. The EU is - through the Single Market – above all a “market Europe”. Social welfare politics belongs in principle to the competences of the member states. At the same time, the extension of free trade in commodities to the free movements of labour, capital and services through the Single European Act (SEA) in 1987 brought new kinds of pressures on the social realm. The next set of pressures was imposed upon the integration project in 2004 when the eastern enlargement to EU 25 made the perceptions of growing social inequalities increase rapidly. The EU has failed to convincingly respond to these pressures.

A further problem is that the distinction between the economic and the social is getting increasingly blurred as the drive for more market integration develops in ever new fields. The first target in the drive for free trade after 1945 was the abolition of quantitative import and export quotas and customs on commodities. With the expansion of the free trade from commodities to services, capital and labour in the SEA for the internal market in 1987 (‘the four freedoms’), ever more areas of social life got involved. The abolition of the so-called technical barriers of trade made new policy areas subject to EU regulation in the name of deregulation. The market imperative has increasing impact on social standards through the quest for standardisation and in the name of equal competition. These developments provoke more and more resistance, as standardisation does not mean an approach towards what would be seen as ‘best standards’ in the view of labour, and the fear of a race to the bottom is thus obvious.

The well-known 2008 Laval case is a case in point. Swedish unions took action against the Latvian construction company Laval over the working conditions of Latvian workers refurbishing a school in the Swedish town of Vaxholm. Laval refused to sign a collective agreement on the basis of the Swedish standards, and a blockade of the work place was initiated by the trade unions as a consequence. The Swedish Labour Court referred the case to the European Court of Justice (ECJ), which in turn ruled in December 2007 that the right to strike may be a fundamental right, but prioritised the right of businesses to supply cross-border services. The European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC), whose position had always been for equal working conditions for migrant workers according to the terms of the host country, was sorely disappointed. The ruling of the ECJ has by some been interpreted
as a licence for social dumping; certainly, key elements of national approaches to regulating industrial relations are challenged by the free movement provisions. Thus, although there is formally a national social focus, this is limited by the economic imperatives.

This European dilemma is part of the broader globalisation debate. The process of the invasion of the social by the economic since the Single European Act in 1987 is under-investigated, in particular if seen in a historical perspective, where convincing studies on the subject are very few. I only want to state in this context that it is important to see neither economic Europeanisation nor economic globalisation in terms of a relentless evolving natural force which cannot be opposed. It is important to highlight the potential scope of action for creative politics, to see the economy as a polity and not the other way round. An historical analysis which also considered the degree and role of social protest would be crucial.

The European rescue of the nation state through the distribution of labour between the European market and national social legislation functioned rather well in the economically and socially much more homogenous EEC of the six or the nine than in today’s EU 27. The big enlargement in 2004 failed to address the problem of growing social differences within the Union in a way that convinced broad opinions and so did the proposed constitution which aimed at confirming and sealing the enlargement. The worry about social competition by cheap labour from the Eastern parts of Europe was an important factor behind at least the French “no” to the constitution. Instead of the development of a European solidarity and a social Europe there was a trend towards national social protectionism. The belief in market forces which automatically would establish a kind of European social equilibrium was naive and the failure of the trade unions to develop politics for a European solidarity has become a heavy burden and contributed decisively to the legitimacy problems for the EU.

The belief in simultaneous deepening of the integration and enlargement of the number of member states has overstretched the integration project or is about to do so. It might have been wiser to deepen first and enlarge after the deepening had been decided upon. The belief of its feasibility was based on the idea of the Community as a self-propelling machine where only the velocity had to be discussed, while the claims for deepening have, at least implicitly, a federal thrust. Earlier federal projects in world history have sooner or later with continuous expansion been exposed to overstretch and collapse. This is a not unrealistic risk for the EU, although it is not a federal organisation. The growing gap between enlargement and deepening has become a major structural problem.
Having said this, it is equally important to keep Europe’s borders in cultural terms open and fluid in order to avoid cultural essentialisation, where we have historical experiences to learn from which we should not forget. At the same time, it is important to create clear political borders for the European institutions with a decision-making capacity worth the name so as to be able to respond to the shortcoming of the social against the market imperative. The development of today’s OECD is a case in point. It began immediately after World War II as an American attempt to implant a blueprint of itself in Europe: USE. After European resistance to this idea it became the Organisation of European Economic Cooperation, and then it was transformed into a general policy organisation as the Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development through continuous expansion of the membership beyond Europe (Stråth (ed) 2000).

The situation with 27 member states is a big problem that must be addressed instead of being swept under the carpet. It must be emphasized that the solution is not to cut down the number of member states and not to interrupt the process of planned enlargement. With the fall of the Soviet empire, the EU was faced with a historical task and challenge that it could not reject: to integrate Eastern Europe. However, it must also be emphasized that the number of member states is a serious problem which cannot be solved through beliefs in an automatic connection between integration and enlargement. The situation necessitates a much greater responsibility for what is at stake among all participants than we have seen so far.

3. The de-historicisation of Milward’s theory in political science

There is a need not only for a critical historical conceptualisation of European integration but also for a new historical understanding of it. The problem with The European Rescue of the Nation State is not Milward’s analysis and conclusion. However, there are two major problems in the wake of his thesis:

I.) Milward stops in 1992. In particular, the potentially lethal tension between deepening and enlargement and the no less potentially lethal problem with the construction of Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) emerged after 1992. Milward was sceptical of the Maastricht plan for a monetary union. He could, of course, not estimate the long-term implication of EMU, and expressly abstained from doing so. Moreover, 1992 was too early for an assessment of the single market as it had been established in 1987, with the big step from free trade with commodities to the free movement of capital, labour and services. In particular, he could not
envisage the implications of this step when it was connected to the big Eastern enlargement with the dramatically increasing social differences in Europe. The enlargement was far beyond his sights. The enlargement exposed the earlier relative balance between European market integration and national welfare guarantees to severe strains.

II.) Milward’s historical analysis was transformed into a political theory of how European integration has functioned and will continue to function. This is the end-of-history scenario, as Sverker Gustavsson (2010) calls it, and I endorse this label very much. Protagonists in the development of this political theory are Giandomenico Majone (1998) and Andrew Moravscik (1998, 2002). They confirm, through references to the EU as a Pareto-optimal arrangement, the perpetuum mobile of European integration. By this approach they de-historicise Milward’s historical theory. Economic integration under Pareto conditions means that some win but nobody loses. This relationship provides legitimacy for the transfer of competences for the market to Brussels while leaving other competences to the national governments. However, empirical evidence overwhelmingly suggests - in particular after the 2004/7 enlargement - that Pareto’s theory does not work. The empirical evidence says that there are also losers on the market, and even if it would be true that nobody loses, people compare their status and life careers to others and standing still when others draw away means in relative terms a growing social gap. When the insights about this development grow, the critique against the EU grows. In recent years Majone (2009) has as a matter of fact expressed a much more pessimistic view on how the EU functions or, better, does not function. Pareto does not work as an instrument to interpret the European integration. Only Moravscik, although he is anything but a functionalist, still seems to believe that he does. Yet his and Majone’s de-historicisation is still influential.

The alternative historical theory to this a-historical transformation of Milward’s historical analysis into a functionalist theory without a time dimension, must instead emphasise the contingency, openness and the fragility of the European project. Key to such a theory must be the focus on the constant tension between competing goals and no less competing attempts to implement these. Moreover, the theory must attune to what is at stake, appeal to the responsibility for the situation. It must evaluate and discuss missed as well as taken opportunities to act in the past and determine historical responsibilities in this respect. It must emphasise the crucial role of political action and political management of the market. I would call this alternative historical understanding of Europe a realistic historical theory (Schulz-Forberg and Stråth 2010). It should through historical analogies also reflect on the risks of overstretched as much as confirming progress. Recent references to medieval empires to describe the EU’s functioning (cf, Zielonka 2006) are simply naive.
An ingredient of such a new historical view is the argument that in federal terms the EU culminated around 1970 with the Werner Plan for an economic and monetary union and the Davignon Report on political cooperation on foreign policy. These plans were more ambitious than the Maastricht Treaty. After Maastricht, a power migration from the Commission to the Council began, driven by a shift from *acquis communautaire*, hard law and harmonisation towards soft law, monitoring and the governments’ open method of coordination. The softening of the Growth and Stability Pact is a case in point with disastrous impacts on the EMU. On the other side, with a GSP without any consideration of the social dimension, was there any political alternative to respond to social pressures without softening the pact? The name shift from Community to Union did not change Europe in a federative direction as it at least implicitly pretended to do. On the contrary. The culmination around 1970 was moreover a culmination at the level of plans and ideas which were never implemented.

4. The historicisation of the talk about the ‘democratic deficit’

The argument about a deeper integration was and is — to the extent that such arguments are brought forward at all these days — underpinned, in particular, by the concept of a ‘democratic deficit’. The provenance of the term is often ignored and located in the origin of the European integration project. However, the EEC was never thought of as a democratic organisation but as an instrument to save democracy in the member states. This is the convincing core of Alan Milward’s thesis. The association *Young Federalists for Europe* launched the term ‘democratic deficit’ in 1977. It was thus an argument for a federal Europe in a time when the integration project had got into a backwater. The term can be seen as an instrument to save the federal potential of the Werner Plan for an economic and monetary union in a situation when this potential was about to evaporate.

In the 1980s the term was canalised in new directions to provide democratic legitimacy for the internal market project. From then on, the *problems* began, with the quest for the healing of the alleged lack of democracy.

The constitutional draft in 1984, designed by Altiero Spinelli and a blueprint for the 2003 constitution proposal, belonged to the preludes of the internal market and was thought of as an instrument to get out of the backwater situation in the 1970s. The report argued for further steps after the direct elections to the European Parliament in 1979. Part of the debate around the Spinelli report, although hardly in the report itself, was the issue of a politicization of the European Parliament. However, the long-term impact of the report was that it became the
trigger of the argument that there is a connection between the development of an internal market with free movement not only of commodities but also of capital, services and labour, and the emergence of a European democracy. The report can in a certain sense be read with federal eyes, but not necessarily.

However, the report was too much for the summit in Milan in 1985, which decided instead on an intergovernmental conference to elaborate an internal market. The remaining influence of the Spinelli Report was to link the idea of a European democracy to the European internal market, with individual European citizens as the intermediaries. The European identity language — introduced at the summit in Copenhagen in 1973 amidst the oil price shock — provided new meaning to the European integration project. Imaginaries of a political and economic union were replaced by homogeneous understandings of a European demos through a European identity, which through clear demarcations to Europe's Others aimed at defining the place and role of Europe in a new international order. The free and sovereign European citizens with EC-wide driving licences, wine-red passports, a European anthem and other symbols would reinforce the internal market and in turn, by enjoying its benefits, be reinforced as citizens. The market was made compatible with an imagined emerging European people. The market would solve the problem of the democratic deficit and provide European institutions with the missing European people.

In retrospect, this was a hypocritical bypass operation around the real problems, those about the connections between the economic, the social, and the issue of democracy, but the effects of this circumvention were only fully visible 20 years later. The connection in order to legitimate the internal market project was based on an old myth that liberal democracy more or less automatically follows on market capitalism. This argument was used a few years later in the globalisation rhetoric after the collapse of the Soviet Empire, where the new states were advised to introduce market capitalism as a necessary step towards democracy. Used in the European argumentation, the term democratic deficit has blurred and circumvented the real problems of the tension between the social and the economic.

The rhetoric about a democratic deficit undergirds the urgent need for more conceptual clarity when we discuss the history and the prospects of the present EU. The EU is obviously something between the extremes of a federation and a confederation, between European and national decision-making competences, between the opaque conclave of comitology and inter-governmental negotiation on the one hand, and claims to be democratic and transparent on the other. However, how more precisely can it be conceptualised if we do not want to surrender to the empty term *sui generis*? Such a conceptualisation must be based on
considerations of how the positions between these extremes developed and shifted historically. It is crucial to bring more conceptual clarity in a historical perspective where change is not automatically equal to progress. There is a need for a historical conceptualisation of the problem of economic integration and social disintegration.

One urgent issue in this set of problems is the fiscal dimension of the monetary union and how to conceptualise it. In the attempts to restore stability after the Greek, Irish and Portuguese crises there is talk about an economic government, *Wirtschaftsregierung*, as the fiscal dimension. The ever stronger signs that also countries like Italy and Spain are exposed to similar pressures do not make this argument less urgent. However, the term government, as it has been used so far in the debate, leads astray: it was not even used in the negotiations about the Werner Plan in the 1970s, which as to the fiscal dimension was much more ambitious than the Maastricht EMU. Rather, it is a play with words with the explicit aim to reconstruct the Growth and Stability Pact (GSP) and adjust it to new challenges with much larger financial consequences. There is hardly any intention to go beyond the GSP in the direction of fiscal harmonisation. We all know what happened to the firm commitment to the GSP during the Maastricht Treaty negotiations: the promise to stick to the rules was taken as hard law – until country after country began to break the rules. Having said this, the recent developments towards a transfer union and a currency fund, where national budget deficits and debts become a common European concern, do contain a potential for the establishment of a long-term political economy with a social dimension.

The situation now is no different. The limits of the future range and scope of a revised GSP are not set by a legal straight-jacket but by the good will of politics, which can loosen even the tightest straight-jacket in the long run and under certain political challenges. Law, case law as well as customs, private, and constitutional law, is not only setting the rules of politics and economies. It is also entangled with and changed through politics.

Another case requiring more conceptual clarity is the language of the ‘democratic deficit’. If the concept of democracy is taken seriously, the question is at what level democracy is or should be implemented and institutionalised. Has anything changed that makes Alan Milward’s solution less viable? Are we still in the Europe of Milward? If not, where are we? Does the EU make its member states safe for democracy? These are the crucial questions which are not adequately answered by the term ‘democratic deficit’.

Another kind of question is whether there are arguments for a European democracy at the European level. The EU would not only guarantee democracy in the member states but
become a democracy in its own right. This is mainly a normative question, which I am just noting here without going into a deeper reflection on it. The question no doubt has to do with conceptual clarity: what does a democratic Europe mean? At what level, with what goals and what means is a democratic Europe to be institutionalised and implemented? What is the difference between democracy in Europe and a democratic EU? Irrespective of normative arguments for or against, one can just state that a step towards a democratic EU would require a politicisation of the EU level. This argument is derived from the experiences in the nation states where political legitimacy emerges from political contention about alternatives. The conflict welds the polity together. The Parliament is the centre of political life through its distributive capacity. A politicisation of the European Parliament is something more than direct elections. A struggle between left and right alternatives would probably require a new fiscal regime. This is what an economic government would be about. The attempts to show more muscles than there are by using the term for a revised GSP do not convince. Things should be labelled what they are.

5. The problems of the EU today in historical light

The extension of the free movement of commodities to capital, persons, and services through the SEA in 1987, and the enlargement of EU 15 to EU 25 in 2004 exposed the relative equilibrium in the distribution of labour between European economic integration and national social integration to severe strains. It was ever more difficult to accommodate the two levels and the two dimensions. Ever since what was called the social question became an issue in the 1830s, reinforced in the 1870s, and again in the 1930s, there has been a certain uneasiness across Europe about how to cope with the seemingly unruly dimension of ‘the social’ and prevent social unrest. Already Max Weber had warned that the quest for social justice belonged to the populist agendas, and this threat made Friedrich Hayek discern the road to serfdom (1944).

Both Weber and Hayek emphasised the *Rechtsstaat*, the state that guaranteed legal equality. To Weber equality was formal and procedural and did not involve substance. The state could set the rules of the game, but not intervene for economic redistribution. Issues of poverty or social justice were not a legal matter but a question of interest struggles (Weber 1980 [1922]:470). In practice, the *Rechtsstaat* came to stand for the protection of private property rights and became a bulwark against emerging ideas of a redistributing *Sozialstaat*

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3 The question is developed in more depth in Schulz-Forberg and Stråth (2010).
or welfare state. In the wake of this legal separation of the economic and the social, an influential trend among lawyers argues that constitutional law cannot intervene in the economic conflict of interests about distribution as such but only look to the rules of the game, i.e. to guarantee the market. Another group of lawyers, in particular labour lawyers, argues however that the social can very well be constitutionalised. Yet Weber’s (and Hayek’s) argument about a distinction between the economic and the social is still on principle the guideline of the EU or at least the European Court of Justice.

In the 1950s, the European integration project was an immediate response to the national socialist catastrophe, which in retrospect makes Weber’s statement about populism as a consequence of the social issue look like a prophesy and which belonged to Hayek’s experiences. Christian Joerges (2010) has begun a reconstruction of the institutional locus of ‘the social’ in the various stages of the integration project. My argument – which is also that of Joerges (2003) – is that this reconstruction requires a long historical perspective, which throws light on the role of the prehistory of European integration for understanding it properly today. In this historical light, he convincingly argues that the European integration project was a reaction to national socialism and a different kind of reaction than when Woodrow Wilson wanted to make the world safe for democracy in 1919 after the previous war. Not the political but the economic dimension was highlighted in order to establish sustainable democracy. The choice for ‘economic Europe’ after 1945 implied a renunciation of a European social model, which would have addressed the tension between rule of law and social justice, Rechtsstaat and Sozialstaat/welfare state (Joerges 2010 a:67-8). This tension had provided the dynamics in the nineteenth century European processes of nation building and in one version ended in national socialism. The European Court of Justice has since the beginning seen its role as the guardian of ‘economic Europe’, which it has kept separated from the idea of a social Europe despite the above-mentioned political attempts to reconcile the two in the Werner Plan in the 1970s and the Maastricht negotiations.

There were alternative views in the prelude to the Rome Treaty. At the negotiations in 1956, French socialist Prime Minister Guy Mollet argued for harmonisation of social regulation and tax burdens as a precondition for the economic integration of industrial commodities. French business supported him. A counter-factual question, impossible to answer but nevertheless interesting to put, is whether a break-through of Mollet’s approach would have prevented the whole integration project or saved it from its basic problems half a century later?

Fritz Scharpf is one of the most prominent analysts of the European division of labour between the economic and the social which became the outcome of Mollet’s failure. The
outcome was a construction which was immunised against political democratic control, which was what the social was about. The European integration project was shunted onto the economic track precisely because it was a reaction to the experiences of the 1930s. Mollet’s idea lost and the construct was armoured against what was perceived as threats of populist attacks. There is a need to follow Scharpf and retrieve the early debate about Mollet’s proposal, which disappeared during decades of expounding about functionalism, neo-functionalism, institutional incrementalism, and Pareto optimum.

Scharpf describes the road that was taken as a ‘de-coupling’ of economic integration from the social constitution at the European level, locating the social at the member state level. Europe got the mandate to open up the national economies. De-coupling has a negative connotation against the backdrop of the fact that they were unified at the national level of the welfare states (Scharpf 2002; cf. Joerges 2010 b:379).

The debate on the four freedoms and the internal market launched by Jacques Delors in 1985 made many – but not Delors himself – discern the contours of a pure market project in the context of the growing strength of neoliberal discourse. What was arguably a project to strengthen European competitiveness on the world markets became a process whereby the market imperative penetrated ever more policy areas and in the name of de-regulation developed an ever more complex regulatory machinery. Consumer, labour and environmental protection, and other ‘technical barriers of trade’, were ‘marketised’. The neo- ordo-liberal proponents of a ‘pure’ economy did not see the long-term consequences in the form of a politicisation of the social under the label of what they believed was a ‘pure’ market (Joerges 2010 b). The first attempt to accommodate the market and the social after Maastricht was the rule of law in the economic sphere and softer political monitoring, benchmarking, and coordination of the social issue. The voluntary cooperation in selected areas was in 2000 formalised under the label of the Open Method of Coordination (OMC). In the course of the intensifying impact of the Europeanisation of ever more policy fields as a consequence of the Single European Act, and after the enlargement to EU 25, Europe’s social deficit became apparent. The Open Method of Coordination faced its limits.

Stefano Bartolini (2005) has analysed the same tension between the economic and the social as Scharpf and Joerges but from a somewhat different perspective. The distinction between a rule-governed market Europe and a continuously politically negotiated social Europe is in his view a matter of border setting. He sees a growing tension between different borders for different policy areas as the present threat to European integration. Bartolini convincingly argues against mainstream analytical assumptions that political agency is
unnecessary and that the EU can perform as a gigantic forum for coordination games. A variety of different forms of access and opting out, and an enriched set of actors such as experts, bureaucrats and lobbyists, try with increasing difficulty to legitimize the fragmented decision-making process. It is fragmented because of the economic imperative invading ever more policy areas in the name of equal competition, in turn, resulting in ever more opt-in and opt-out cases in the wake of national protests. It is fragmented through the development from rule of law for the economic to the Open Method of Coordination for the rest.

Under the development of new legitimizing languages, the political bargaining reorders the disjointed order, according to the mainstream conceptualization of the EU, whether under the Pareto optimum label or not. This is a problematic view, according to Bartolini. If a certain overlap between social identities, political boundaries and social practices is the point of departure for establishing political agency, then the political and economic engineering by the European experts, technocrats and lobbyists is, in the long run, likely to result in tensions, conflicts and problems that could jeopardize the features specific to European civilization. The mainstream argument in the globalization rhetoric was that the nation-state had played out its role in facing global market forces. On the ruins of the 2008 collapse of the financial markets and of beliefs in the globalization ideology, it was the nation-states that tried to restore order. They certainly did so under some international coordination, but the responses were mainly national, and risks of international subsidy competition cannot be ignored.

At the European level, the EU is, according to Bartolini (who published his book three years before the financial collapse), both a source of problems – compare, for instance, the naïve belief in self-regulating financial markets – and the only possible solution to them if the ambition is to avoid a new wave of national competition with protectionism nurtured by, and nurturing, nationalism and populism. It can be seen as a project for regaining some degree of coherence between extended social practices, social identities, solidarity ties and rules of deliberation at the European level. Based on this description of the situation of the EU, Bartolini concludes: ‘Most of the ideas expressed in this book show how problematic I believe this project to be’ (Bartolini, 2005: 412). It has hardly become less problematic after 2008.

There is a considerable degree of pessimism in this conclusion of Bartolini. What remains of European integration is a bargaining project with some hopes of muddling through between the European and the national levels so that the building does not collapse. This is a realistic estimation of the situation confirmed by a historical analysis of the developments after the Single Act and Maastricht. Bartolini’s hope without doubt is something very different from the dreams of Pareto optimum. One could add to Bartolini’s analysis in 2005 that the muddle-
through situation is moving in a direction where the earlier Milwardian function is about to be replaced by dysfunction through growing expressions of nationalism and populism all over Europe. The muddle-through situation might erode the EU to the brink of collapse.

6. The legitimacy of the EU and academic research

Thus, there is an urgent need for more allegiance and commitment for the European project. Allegiance, commitment and legitimacy emerge through political contention and conflict about alternatives, not through administrative attempts to produce consensus or political statements that there are no alternatives to proposed solutions.

One way to achieve more competition and contention about political alternatives would be to politicise the European Parliament along a left-right axis. For the time being, the alleged growing power of the EP has rather resulted in attempts to position the Parliament better in the power triangle that the Parliament, the Commission and the Council constitute.

Another approach towards more contentious alternatives would be to open up a critical gap between the academic research on European integration and European institutions and politics. As it is, academic research in the social and historical sciences on the EU has mainly confirmed the mainstream view in Brussels.

In December 2005, giving a speech to a large audience of representatives of the social and human sciences, indeed the first time the Commission organised a conference focussing on social science and humanities as such, rather than on the products of their research, Commissioner Potočnik defined the role of social sciences and humanities. While science and technology open up options for the future, showing what can be achieved, they do not tell what should be achieved or how it should be achieved, because these were questions for the decision-makers. However, in order to formulate the policies and the decisions they have to turn to the ‘soft’ academic disciplines, whose object is the study of our societies (Commission. Speech 2005/786).

The speech reveals a mechanical view where the role of the social and human sciences is restricted to providing recommendations for policies. Would not more dynamics emerge if the academics in this area concentrated on the fundamental and critical questions and thereby developed more pressures rather than being passive tools for policy formulation? This would mean an academic investment in getting the questions right rather than providing the
answers, which would belong to the domain of politics. Instead of confirming a self-propelling machine, the task would be to pose basic questions regarding both principles and alternatives.

Walker (2006) has convincingly argued that today the obvious challenge to the integrity of EU research is posed from the other flank. He raises the question whether the failure, or at least deferral, of the documentary constitutional project signals a crisis in the EU, and to the extent that it does, whether this also implies or foreshadows a crisis of direction in academic EU research. In response to Maastricht’s message of supranational expansion from a self-confident political elite, constitutionalism became a key term of academic reference, Walker notes. One could add that this academic research itself was not less self-confident and uncritical.

Already ten years ago, Michael Jachtenfuchs (2002), suggested that, as an object of analysis in political sciences and as a focus of interdisciplinary fertilization and collaboration, the EU has become a victim of its own success. Rather than the dependent variable, the shape and dynamics of the increasingly mature EU polity had gradually come to be treated as the taken-for-granted independent variable in the development of a new wave of transnational sectoral policy studies. This argument was brought forward at the time just before the optimistic Maastricht spirit, underpinned by social sciences, came to an end.

The broader normative turn since the end of the Cold War deals with new conceptualisations of authority, legitimacy, solidarity and democracy. In a process of self-critical overhaul, the European academic communities and networks must again begin to ask critical and fundamental questions about social, political and theoretical problems. Transformations of the state, forms of democracy, functions of social inclusion and exclusion, political spaces, social justice, and many more core issues must be tackled in new-old ways.

This required turn presents an intellectual challenge for EU research at the same time as it poses a political predicament for the EU (Walker 2006). The only way to respond reasonably to this challenge must be to open up a gap between critical academic research and EU politics. The alternative would be that uncritical academic research falls into the same legitimacy hole as EU politics by applying the fallback strategy of self-fulfilling rhetoric (Schulz-Forberg & Stråth 2010:138-151).
7. The historicisation of European values

The cultural construction of a history and a heritage occurs under value deployment. The processes where we negotiate and select what to remember and what to forget are replete with values. This is not an argument against the idea of a patrimony based on European values. However, the argument takes issue with the belief that such values can be derived from a single European history in an easy and linear way. The idea of a European normative order based on European values is constructed. It is a mental projection, and as such it is contradictory and open to contention through alternative translations of the past. For instance, the idea of the universality of certain European values such as human rights is not natural, but was an Enlightenment construction. In that sense, there is not one history, not one Antiquity or one Christian heritage that can be mobilized to underpin a set of so-defined European values. The definition of Europe has changed constantly according to its spatial expansion and cultural content (Vierhaus, 2003: 64; see also Malmborg and Stråth, 2002, Persson and Stråth, 2007).

An alternative view to the linear progression from Antiquity via Renaissance to Enlightenment and towards final liberty and wealth would emphasize superstition, poverty and malnutrition for the vast majority of the population. It would emphasize the tension between chivalric ideals and lived experiences. Obligations and oaths about devotion to public order and wealth went hand-in-hand with pillage, looting and exploitation of the poor. Being courteous was compatible with rape, and so on. In this alternative perspective, the Holy Roman Empire would not be seen as an expression of unity. Rather, it would be understood as marked by rivalry between two power centres, each of which tried to incorporate both religious and secular arguments for legitimatization of their power claims; not one holy against one secular power. This alternative view would also emphasize the crusades and the atrocities that accompanied them as part of the Christian heritage. The concentration on a patrimony, which describes Europe as the cradle of modernity, should not forget that European modernity was not only trans-ocean expansion and the spread of a specific civilization with positive values. Rather, slavery is another European historical heritage. The other side of expansion was mass genocide in the New World. Holocaust was not the first European case of genocide. Not only in Washington and in Latin America, but also in Spain, there should be genocide memorials analogous to the Holocaust memorial in Berlin, not to mention the Central and Eastern European heritage of anti-Semitism and anti-Gypsyism.

The distinction between histories in Europe and the history of Europe highlights the question of the definition of Europe. There was no idea of Europe as a politically unifying concept
before the Enlightenment (Fehér and Heller, 1987; Heller, 2000; Vembulu, 2003). Before that, only Christendom existed as a concept of unity. The Catholic Church unified people and imputed a sense of community. Two challenges, the Protestant Reformation and the Enlightenment philosophy, fundamentally changed this situation. Enlightenment and the emphasis on rationalism questioned the role of religion in human life, but at the same time promoted a quest for new truths based on positive facts and their classification (Schulz-Forberg and Stråth, 2010:120-121).

Furthermore, the spread of enlightenment ideals was more than a 1:1 translation. People in the colonies got inspired by Karl Marx and other protagonists in struggles for social emancipation and social justice. They connected the emancipative message in enlightenment philosophy to local experiences in the colonies. The universal values got a local anchorage and became particularized. Europe was provincialised, as Dipesh Chakrabarty (2001) formulated it.

The European foundation myth exists in two versions. One is in the short perspective and describes how a few men, in particular Jean Monnet and Robert Schuman, stood up on the ruins of World War II and made Europe safe for democracy. This was at the time of the Cold War, so Europe meant Western Europe. This was the myth that Milward confronted in his emphasis on the structural dimension of economic forces and on the role of allegiance generated from the functioning of the European division of labour.

The long-term foundation narrative makes a bypass operation around the term ‘Middle Ages’ (medium aevum), which was coined in the fifteenth century to reflect the view that this period was a deviation from the path of classical learning, a path supposedly reconnected by Renaissance scholarship. Nietzsche saw the Middle Ages as the dark era where religion seduced humankind and interrupted the classical heritage. Nietzsche referred to Protagoras’ argument that man is the measure of all things. Edward Gibbon argued in the same direction in his Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, where he described the period between the fall of Rome in 395 and the fall of Constantinople in 1453 as ‘one thousand and fifty-eight years… of premature and perpetual decay’ and recast the era as the triumph of barbarism and religion. In the nineteenth century of European colonialism as a civilizing mission a counter narrative emerged where the Christian heritage was incorporated into the enlightenment patrimony. The two opposites now began to reinforce each other. There should today at least be an awareness of the other and older tradition.
Rémi Brague (2002) gave European narcissism an Asian touch by arguing that Europe emerged through the incorporation of values established in what still today is called the Middle East but where Maghreb would be a less Eurocentric term. Europe began in what is seen as outside itself with an Asian foundation myth (*Europa and the Bull*) and an Asian religion. The exocentric definition of Europe, as Brague sees it, through continuous alienation from its own Asian origins, at the end became centric, or egocentric, when it ended in Rome, and when 1 500 years later the look backward and eastward changed in the direction of forward and westward after the discovery of America. The crusades were an important step in this process.

Garth Fowden argues for an alternative history more suitable for the twenty-first global century. His narrative does not move from Asia to Europe and does not at the end make Europe the centre of the world. He suggests a new periodization, during which the ancient world in the first millennium was gradually transformed and there came into being, across Europe and West Asia, a triad of sibling civilizations, successors of Rome, whose commitment to revealed monotheism either Biblical in Greek and Latin Christendom, or Qur’anic in the Muslim world, was to varying degrees tempered by the rational principles derived from Greek and Roman Antiquity. Fowden undertakes a recontextualization of Late Antiquity in time as well as space. In the dimension of space, the conventional Mediterranean framework of late antique history is superseded by the triptych of the Iranian plateau and the Eastern Mediterranean basin flanking the Amanus, Taurus and Zagros Mountains, the highlands of South Arabia and Ethiopia’s rugged plateau in the South, and to the West the mountains flanking the Red Sea and backing the Eastern Mediterranean littoral. Fowden challenges the idea of Europe as the centre of modernity and looks for a more entangled Eurasian understanding where the role of Islam is seen as not less important than Christianity.

The argument of this section is clear: more alternatives are needed also in terms of European values.

8. A history of the European integration in its global context

The EU must be seen much more in its global context not only in the present and in the discussions of its future, but also in the historical evaluation of the European integration project. What continuities and discontinuities are there to the colonial experiences and what importance has a historical outline of this question today and for the future? What continuities
and ruptures are there to Europe of the Cold War? What historical migration patterns are there to which the present immigration situation can be connected? How does the growing tension between economic integration and social disintegration within Europe relate historically to similar patterns in a global framework? What historical alternatives can Europe offer to imaginings of clash of the civilisations and the war on terror and what historical warnings are there in imaginings of civilising missions? These are some of the crucial questions in such a global view on Europe and its past.

The problem of the colonial heritage and European unification has been addressed by Georg Kreis and Guido Thiemeyer. They refer to the obvious parallelism between de-colonisation and the construction of Europe. The question is more precisely of the nature and appearance of these interrelationships. Georg Kreis argues that the preludes of the Rome Treaty contained an estimation of the situation by the French government, according to which its European foundation partners behaved in a highly Eurocentric manner and were inclined to forget the world outside Europe. According to the self-understanding of the French government, the other governments began to recognise the need to provide development aid to underdeveloped countries. Kreis asks whether France thereby looked for a silent perpetuation or a liquidation of its colonial empire. His answer is that the first was sought in the short run and the second came only as the long-term consequence. The idea of the foundation moment of the European Community was a transformation of national colonialism into a supranational colonialism. Kreis bases his conclusion on an argument by Guido Thiemeyer that the French government wanted to maintain its traditional colonial policy, but allow it to be financed by the European Commission (Kreis 2007; Thiemeyer 2006:284).

The ambivalence as to the colonial heritage was no less obvious in the declaration on a European identity in 1973, which dealt with the definition of Europe’s place in a new international order after the collapse of Bretton Woods. The political programme for a European identity was based on the principle of the unity of the Nine, on their responsibility towards the rest of the world, and on the dynamic nature of the European construction. The meaning of ‘responsibility towards the rest of the world’ was expressed in a hierarchical way. First, it meant responsibility towards the other nations of Europe with whom friendly relations and cooperation already existed. Second, it meant responsibility towards the countries of the Mediterranean, Africa and the Middle East. Third, it referred to relations with the USA, based on the restricted foundations of equality and the spirit of friendship. Next in the hierarchy was the narrow cooperation and constructive dialogue with Japan and Canada. Then came détente towards the Soviet Union and the countries of Eastern Europe. At the bottom of the list came China and Latin America, and finally a reference was made to the importance of the
struggle against underdevelopment in general (Passerini, 1998, 2000). The fact that the USA was mentioned after the Middle East must be understood in the framework of the prevailing oil price shock and the fact that since 1971 President Nixon had refused to let the dollar guarantee the Bretton Woods order. ‘Refused’ is perhaps not the right word. He could not. The Vietnam War had overstretched the dollar to the edge of collapse, but already de Gaulle had begun to undermine confidence in the American substitute for the gold standard by his repeated threats to change his dollar reserves for gold.

As I argued above, the idea of a European identity was introduced as an instrument to stabilize the situation and to support the Werner and Davignon Plans. The designed was made more precisely at the Copenhagen Summit in December 1973. The declaration on European identity looks at first glance like a brave new step in a federal direction after the Werner and Davignon Plans, but the framework of the statement hinted rather at the limits of the federal step. Caught between the Yom Kippur War and the oil price shock, the initiatives from December 1969 when the Werner and the Davignon Plans were decided upon after De Gaulle had left the scene began to lose momentum. Already in April 1973, the Commission warned that the dynamics were evaporating from the two plans. This was before the oil price shock. The determined commitment to establish a European alternative to US global hegemony in financial and military political terms was easier in argument than in action.

Here we have two condensed moments of European integration, 1957 and 1973, which belong to a European space of experiences and remembrance but which never have been made a European subject in relation to the colonial heritage. The two historical moments provide stuff for reflection in the present situation of European commitments in Afghanistan and Maghreb, not to mention Iraq a few years ago. Colonialism has rarely been seen as part of the European memory landscape about post-1945 integration. Despite the national focus of the colonial past, an effort to include the damages caused by European expansion and its quest for global domination could serve as a valuable European memory platform. The difficulty remains, however, in developing the insight that the colonial heritage is a shared European responsibility.

9. Today’s Europe in a long-term historical perspective

However, the questions about Europe in its global context must also look for answers in the more distant past before the start of the integration process after World War II. The role of the enlightenment heritage must, as I have argued in the section on European values, be
seen not in terms of a straight evolution towards refined stages of democracy, but in terms of the history of its inherent contradictions, tensions and oppositions in a cluster of contentious values. Other historical connections deal with colonialism, the empires and the nation-state building of the nineteenth century, and others again with Europe of the revolutions and the totalitarian regimes. The heritages implicit in these connections are all much more present around us today than we want to believe.

The period between the Peace of Vienna (1815) and the outbreak of the ‘Second European Thirty Years War’ (1914) was a European century which constitutes the pre-war historical ground on which the peace of 1945 and our present conception of Europe are built. It testifies at least as much to conflict and fragility as to progress.

The century is traversed by a series of tensions in the political, cultural, social, economic and legal fields and struggles between the protagonists of different conceptions of European modernity. The legal and political basis for a new European order established at the Congress of Vienna was what was called the European concert. The Treaty of Vienna opened an era that lasted until 1914 in which wars in Europe decreased, whereas the number of civil wars increased and “the Revolution’ came to no end’ (Koselleck 1969:199-229). The only wars which challenged the borders regulated in the Treaty were the Italian and German unification wars between 1859 and 1871. The other international wars during the century after Vienna – the Crimean War 1853-56, the Russian-Turkish Wars 1828-29 and 1877-78, the Balkan Wars 1912-13 (about the spatial order in South-Eastern Europe and in the Ottoman Empire) and the colonial wars between European powers – were excluded in the Vienna Treaty. The European battlefields were exported or transformed into internal social conflicts.

The long-term history does not embody a homogeneous notion of ‘Europe’. Instead, it presents the nineteenth century in terms of a series of tensions which were imposed upon the European states and other actors in the wake of the French revolution and the Napoleonic wars. These tensions were articulated in different geopolitical strategies, constitutional conceptions, prescriptions for economic efficiency and claims for social protection, and alternating views of the meaning of ‘Europe’. In one way or another, they all dealt with the interactive dynamics between politics and law, nationally as well as internationally. These interactive dynamics were also visible in the permanent movement between the search for and expectations of stability and experiences of fragility.4

4 For details, see http://www.helsinki.fi/erere
These three thematic fields of tension — geopolitics, constitutions, and the economic and the social — deal with Europe in terms of space, time and values. All three thematic fields are tied together in tight webs of interaction. They are selected as separated entities basically for analytical operative purposes. The historical argument is that these tensions have not gone away with the EU but rather have mutated. They were historically articulated in the different constitutional traditions and notions of European international law, public order and territorial power politics.

In each of the three thematic fields of European tension, a long-term political and academic debate has brought teleological imaginaries, which must be critically confronted. Teleologies about some form of self-propelling development towards predetermined goals are, since the enlightenment, important parts of our interpretations of the past, the present and the future. The experience of modernity meant the identification of a past that had been different, i.e. worse, and a future that could be made different, i.e. better, by human action: humanity took over the role of divinity (Wittrock 2004). History was interpreted in ever more goal-bound teleological terms. At the end of this long-term debate, the idea of development as a self-propelling machine emerged as a consequence of the teleological thinking. Probably, we can not think without teleologies, but it is important to historicise, deconstruct and destabilise them without giving up the role of human action and responsibility, and the belief in the human capacity to manage the world.

I will finish by briefly discussing the three fields of tension in terms of teleology and in terms of two entangled and inter-dynamic discourses/narratives which constitute this teleology. I will then link this discussion to the present in each of the three fields. I will begin the confrontation of each of the three teleologies by a critical reference to a European philosopher: Immanuel Kant (space), Adam Smith (time) and G W Friedrich Hegel (values, development and progress). For this, I draw on the work of the research project ‘Europe between 1815 and 1914’ based at Helsinki University (cf. footnote 4).

**Space**

The teleology to be contested here is that Europe will be the leader of the world. The most recent contribution in this vein is the Lisbon decision in 2000 about Europe as the world’s most prosperous and technologically advanced region by 2010.

The argument about Europe as the centre and point of departure for global progress is much older than the critical views of Immanuel Kant in his ‘Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Purpose’ (1785) show, where he refers to a ‘regular process of improvement in
the political constitutions of our continent (which will probably at the end legislate for all other continents)’.

There were two nineteenth century languages for the ordering of European space: the language of dynastic territorial politics, which at the end of the century became geopolitics, and the language of international law, which tried to confine geopolitics. Throughout the nineteenth century, conceptions of European public order varied between the territorial stability established by the Holy Alliance and the European concert, and the emerging modern international law as alternative modes of stabilisation. The interplay between the two modes became more pronounced after 1870 when the establishment of the German Empire fundamentally changed the power relationships on the European continent. The tension between geopolitics and international law was also a tension between the dictates of the Great Powers (geopolitics) and the claims for equality by the emerging nation states (international law). The tension between national and international in the two languages was obvious when states positioned themselves in an international game about the show of power and control of power. The transformation of states from monarchical towards parliamentary rule and legitimacy (although to a little extent achieved by 1914) increased the tension between the two languages.

**Links to the present:**
The establishment of international courts, and the attention received by developments in the fields of human rights and democracy after 1989 have given rise to a lively debate on the ‘constitutionalisation’ of the international legal system, and what part European integration might play in it. Kosovo is a case in point and an example of the re-emergence of European protectorates based on ideas of a specific European responsibility and on legal as well as military weapons. These debates have their pedigree in the heterogeneous nineteenth century upsurge of international law as one key language of political legitimacy and contestation. However, probably the most obvious heritage from this thematic field of tension deals with questions about a hard power European political approach to security and defence with a preparedness to wage global military interventions, Europe as a super-power, or whether Europe should develop a soft version of global power. The tension between informal and formal empire is still present under the new conceptualisations.

**Time**
Here the teleology to be contested deals with automatic progress through economic performance (‘rationalisation’, ‘modernisation’, ‘globalisation’). The Helsinki project contests the view that markets without political management and regular frameworks (cf. the term ‘de-
regulation') develop economic growth and wealth automatically, and that the markets thereby also automatically solve emerging social problems. Our contention in Helsinki means that instead of harmonious relationships without politics between the economic and the social, we thematise the tension between economic integration and social disintegration, and the role of politics and law in the attempts to respond to this tension. The key figure in the market teleology is Adam Smith, who in *The Wealth of Nations* (1776) argued that wealth was based on value. In Smith’s theoretical construction of a growing economy, which ever since has been a lodestar in the political debate, labour became a means, not only to maintain existence, but also to create expanding capital. Labour was synonymous with economic growth, and economic growth signified material and moral happiness. There is a tension between persuasive utopian utilitarianism and pragmatic reasoning in Smith’s text where he also identified social problems in the wake of economic progress. There has been a strong tendency among later commentators and disciples to over-emphasise this utopian element. Such was the case when neo-classical thinkers read Smith a hundred years after he wrote. And such is particularly the case when neo-liberal interpreters do so today.

The two languages of European progress and European modernity have dealt with the idea of progress based on the understanding of a past that was different from the present – thereby rejecting cyclical understandings of history – and on the subsequent insight that the future can be made different through human agency. The imagination of a past that was worse and of a better future was in particular formulated as economic and social progress. History got a direction. The language of economic efficiency and the language of social solidarity have historically been seen in both political and academic debates as two separate discourses, analysed by two different academic disciplines, economics and sociology. It would be important to bring the two languages together and demonstrate their entanglement and mutual constitution of one another with politics and law as the bridge. During the nineteenth century, the imagination of economic and social progress welded together national communities of destiny through international ideas about global markets and class solidarity. The national – international theme was evident in both languages.

*Links to the present:*

The tension between economic efficiency and social solidarity, and between the fiction of the market and the fiction of the welfare state, is one of the most evident *Spannungsfelder* in Europe today. The nineteenth century European experiences on this point provide a historical backdrop of high relevance as a corrective to a simplistic debate under the label of ‘globalisation’. The emerging conflict between the politics of social protectionism and the politics of social dumping has a long pre-history.
Values

Here one must contest the view that there is a stable European identity underpinning the European integration project and in uncomplicated relationships to national patterns of identification, a European identity seen as both the motor of the economic integration and its long-term outcome. The Helsinki project contests the idea of a European identity founded on specific values and on essentialised imaginations of a European patrimony. It furthermore contests the view of a standard road of value transformation towards liberal democracy – with the German Sonderwege as the exceptional case – in an evolutionary linear teleology from monarchical power towards parliamentary democracy. Our alternative approach in the project in Helsinki emphasises bottom-up processes of value clashes, which at the end lead to a variety of institutionalised compromises and preliminary stability but long-term fragility.

On this point, a critical assessment of Hegel’s theory on values is crucial, as his view on development and progress has fuelled the thinking in this vein. Departing from Kant, Hegel cemented the foundation stone of a European cosmopolitan genealogy with Reason and Weltgeschichte, world history, as key concepts. The states and the peoples, i.e. the nation states, were the prime movers of world history. The states were not eternal but like human beings they had a rise, a time of prosperity and a decline. From a world historical viewpoint one particular state with its people’s spirit (Volksgeist) in each historical moment constituted the link in the chain of world history as the carrier of Reason (Weltgeist). World history was the history of the states in terms of progressiveness. The relevant states were distinguished through the degree of consciousness about freedom. The realization of freedom was the purposes of the states and of world history. The undulating pattern of rise and decline of the individual cultures and at the same time progression towards ever higher stages of civilization for the world as a totality moved from the East towards the West, beginning with oriental despotism and proceeding via Greek democracy and Roman aristocracy towards Christian European monarchies and Napoleon’s empire. This moving transmission of power constituted the junctions in the motion of History towards ever higher stages of freedom and the rule of reason in the philosophy of Hegel.

There were two intertwined languages of values in nineteenth century Europe. The one aimed at nation-building and the other at defining Europe’s place in the world. The national value language dealt with the transformation of monarchical power towards popular sovereignty and parliamentary power. The instrument developed and exploited in this transformation was the constitution. The other language focused on the concepts of culture and civilisation and dealt with the colonial experience. The instrument developed and exploited in this vein was geopolitics and imaginations of a civilising mission.
**Still the Europe of Milward?**

**Bo Stråth**

**Links to the present:**

Hegel is fully visible in the frequent arguments today that Western civilisation and Europe are doomed and that Asia, in particular China, is going to take over. This is the story of inherent rise, decline and fall. The only difference to Hegel is that the direction of history has changed, from westbound towards eastbound. Furthermore, the debate around the European constitution that failed in 2005 departed from imaginations of essentialised European values. So did and does the debate on the War on Terror and the Iraq and Afghanistan Wars. The impasse of these debates demonstrates the urgent need for a more complex and fluid conceptualisation of ‘European values’ with a development potential in very different directions. In a situation where the imagination of a European identity does not seem to provide mobilising and legitimising guidance any more, a more complex understanding of the term ‘value’, as suggested here, is an instrument for a more realistic understanding of the historical foundation of Europe.

**9. Concluding notes**

The key question of this paper was whether we still are in the Europe of Milward. The answer is no. Milward described convincingly a Cold War epoch of West European integration based on a kind of equilibrium and distribution of labour between the Commission in Brussels and the member states, the former responsible for economic market integration, the latter for social welfare.

Twenty years after its end, we can look upon the Cold War as a closed epoch, which provided very specific preconditions for the (West-)European integration project. These preconditions are no longer there. Enlargement has eroded cohesion and again highlighted the tension between economic integration and social disintegration, to which a solution had been found in Milward’s Europe.

A special problem is that Milward’s theory, convincing for the time it analysed, was high-jacked by theoreticians on European integration and transformed into a theory about a self-propelling Pareto-optimal machine. Such theories won great attention, but after the end of the Cold War and, in particular, the liberalisation of capital movements (‘globalisation’) they have lost credibility and must be refuted. Instead, there is a need for theories that emphasise openness, fragility and contingency in the European project, at the same time as they recognise and define the scope for political action and political responsibility, for the better or for the worse.
An efficient tool to emphasise both contingency and scope for politics would be to connect the present Europe to Europe of the nineteenth century. Civilising missions and colonial expeditions during the fatal century following on the Peace of Vienna in 1815 seem very relevant today. The destiny of the gold standard and the long-term road towards the Great Depression is one of the examples of a history, which is worth reflecting on today.

**References**


