Anis Bajrektarevic

Was history ever on holiday? The Europe of Sarajevo over 100 years: from WW1 to www.[1]

Abstract

Some twenty years ago, genocide was taking place just a one-hour flight from Brussels: assassination of a very different kind from that of 1914 enveloped Sarajevo. Bosnia (and the Union of different peoples – Yugoslavia) was being turned into a years-long slaughterhouse; meanwhile, the Maastricht dream was unifying the Westphalian world of the Old Continent. Two decades later, Atlantic Europe is a political powerhouse (with two of the three European nuclear powers and two of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council), central Europe is an economic powerhouse, Russian-speaking Europe is an energy powerhouse, Scandinavian Europe is a bit of all that, and eastern Europe is none of it. As soon as serious security challenges emerge, the component parts of true, historic Europe resurface. Formerly in Iraq (with the exception of France) and now with Sudan, Mali and Syria, central Europe is hesitant to act, Atlantic Europe is eager, Scandinavian Europe is absent, eastern Europe is on a bandwagon and Russian-speaking Europe is in opposition. Did Europe change (after its own 11/9) or did it only become more itself?

Keywords: *Westphalian System, unification, sovereignty, Russia, geopolitical security*

Introduction

The Europe of June 1914 and of June 2014. One hundred years in between; two hot wars and one cold one. The League of Nations; *Kristallnacht*; Eurovision; and the Helsinki Decalogue. Coco Chanel; VW; Marshall Aid; Tito; Yuri Gagarin; Tolkien's troll; the Berlin Wall. Ideologies, purges and genocides, the latest coinciding with the Maastricht birth of the Union: a televised charnel house and an Olympic city besieged for 1 000 days, just one hour flight from Brussels.

1 This work was first published in the Bahasa language in Jakarta in 2011 (*Seputar Indonesia*). An advanced version was published in Italian in Rome 2013 (IsAG-Rome) and by the *Foreign Policy Journal of Malaysia*, Kuala Lumpur 2013 (JDFR). The first English language version was published by Routledge/Francis & Taylor and IAFOR (London – Washington 2013). This, extended, version: 'Europe of Sarajevo 100 years later' was prepared in parallel for the Sarajevo magazine (BH Dani) and Addleton's GHIR (New York, 2014), but has been edited specifically for the *SEER Journal*.

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E non so più pregare
E nell'amore non so più sperare
E quell'amore non so più aspettare [2]

The keywords in 1914: jingoism; booming trade and lack of trust; assassination; imminent collision; grand war. One hundred years later: Europe absorbed by the EU project; demographic and economic decline; chauvinism reloaded. Alternating between the world of Gavrilo Princip and the global village of the monetisation (of everything and everyone… are our past one hundred years an indication of what to expect throughout this century? What is our roadmap? Is it of any help to reflect on the events of 28 June 1914 which, finally, fractured the fragile equilibrium of *La Belle Époque* and set the Old Continent into a series of motions that lasted almost a century before ending with the unique unionist form of today's Europe?

Four men leading one man bound
One man whom the four men hound
One man counted bound and led
One man whom the four men dread.[3]

The following lines are not a comprehensive account of events; rather interpretative in nature, this is a modest reminder of what Europe used and still tends to be, despite all our passions and hopes, visions and targets, institutions and instruments.

Is the EU a post-Westphalian conglomerate and post-Metternich concept of different Europes, the world's last cosmopolitan establishment enjoying its post-modern holiday from history?[4] Is it possibly the lost Atlántida or the mythical Arcadia – a Hegelian *end of history* world? Thus, should it be a mix of a local-domestic Marx-Engels grand utopia and Kennedy's dream-world 'Where the weak are safe and the strong are just'? Or, is it, as Charles Kupchan calls it, a 'postmodern imperium' (exhorting its well-off

2 Taken from the lyrics of *Miss Sarajevo*, the song written by Bono Vox of U2 and Luciano Pavarotti, and performed together with Brian Eno (1994). This instant radio-hit was inspired by the true events when Sarajevans – as a form of urban protest to a world indifferent to their suffering – organized the *Miss of Besieged Sarajevo beauty contest* only a few hundred metres from the battlefield lines. Translated from the Italian, these lines state: 'And I don't know how to pray anymore / And in love I don't know how to hope anymore / And for that love I don't know how to wait anymore.'.

3 ˙Mehmedalija 'Mak' Dizdar, Bosnian poet of the modern generation. The quotation is the closing lines to 'A Note about the Five' (translated by Francis R. Jones) from his *Kameni Spavač* (*Stone Sleeper*) poetry collection (1966-71), Svjetlost: Sarajevo.

4 Arnold Toynbee gives an interesting account of our civilisational vertical. He classifies as many as nineteen major civilisations: Egyptian, Andean, Sinic, Minoan, Sumerian, Mayan, Indic, Hittite, Hellenic, Western, Orthodox Christian/Russian, Far Eastern, Orthodox Christian/main body, Persian, Arabic, Hindu, Mexican, Yucatec, and Babylonic). Further on, there are – as he calls them – four abortive civilizations (Far Western Christian, Far Eastern Christian, Scandinavian, Syriac) and five arrested civilizations (Polynesian, Eskimo, Nomadic, Ottoman, Spartan). Like no other continent, the majority of these are related (originating from or linked) to Europe proper.

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status quo by notoriously exporting its 'transformative powers' of free trade dogma and human rights stigma – a modified continuation of a colonial legacy when the European conquerors, with fire and sword, spread commerce,[5] Christianity and civilisation overseas), a kind of 'new Byzantium'; or is it more of Richard Young's declining, unreformed and rigid Rome? Could it be, as one old *graffito* in Prague implies: EU=SU²? Does the EU-isation of Europe equal a restoration of the universalist world of Rome's Papacy? Is the Union Leonard's 'runner of the 21st century', or is it perhaps Kagan's 'Venus' – gloomy and opaque, a hotter but equally distant and unforeseen world as 'Mars'?[6]

Is this Brussels-headquartered construct the 20th century's version of Zollverein, with standardised tariffs and trade but with an autonomous fiscal policy and politics? Thus, is the EU a political and economic *rapprochement* of sovereign states or perhaps only an enterprise of borderless financial capital? *Ergo*, would that be a pure construct of financial oligarchy, whose *invisible hand* tacitly corrupted the Maastricht Treaty so as to make a spider's web of a borderless, limitless, wireless and care-less power hub while, at the same time, entrenching, silencing and rarefying labour within each nation state?

Is this a supersized Switzerland (ruled by a cacophony of many languages and enveloped in an economic egotism of its self-centred people), with its cantons (the member states in the European Council) still far more powerful then the central government (the European Parliament, the Commission, the European Court of Justice) – while the Swiss themselves (although in the geographic heart of that Union) stubbornly continue to defy any membership. Does it really matter (and, if so, to what extent) that Niall Ferguson wonders:

> *...the EU lacks a common language, a common postal system, a common soccer team [as also does Britain], even a standard electric socket...?*[7]

Kissinger himself was allegedly looking for a phone number for Europe, too. UK politician Lord Ridley portrayed the Union as a fourth *reich*, not only dominated by Germany but also institutionally Germanised. Another conservative Briton, Larry Siedentop, in his *Democracy in Europe*, remarked that actually it is France which is

5 Is globalisation the natural doctrine of global hegemony? Well, its main instrument, commerce – as we know – brings people into contact, not necessarily to an agreement, or to mutual benefits and harmony. Or, 'If goods cannot cross borders, armies will,' the famous saying of the XIX century French economist Frederic Bastiat, so often quoted by the longest-serving US Secretary of State Cordell Hull.

6 'No venue has been created in which an EU-wide public opinion might be formed… European Parliament elections are not truly European because they are 27 different elections with different electoral systems after campaigns in which national issues predominate… Under present procedures, both the President of the European Commission and the President of the European Council are selected in private meetings of heads of governments...', says former Irish Prime Minister John Bruton. Bruton, J (2013) 'How real is the danger of an EU collapse?' *Europe's World* 23(13), Brussels.

7 Ferguson, N (2005) *Colossus – The Rise and Fall of the American Empire* Penguin Books, p. 255.

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running the EU 'show', in the typical French way – a less-than-accountable bureaucracy that prevents any evolution of the European Union into an American-style United States. Thus, Siedentop's EU is more of a third Bonapartist empire than possibly a fourth *reich*.

Above all, is the Union yet another virtue out of necessity, as Brzezinski claimed: i.e. after centuries of colonial overstretch and of mutual destruction (between protagonists in close geographic proximity), in which Europe had irreversibly lost its (demographic, economic and politico-military) importance, were the early European Communities more of an attempt to rescue the nation state than a quest for a true European community-building enterprise?

Despite the different names and categorisations attached, and the historical analogies and descriptions used, most scholars would agree on the very geopolitical definition of the EU. It is, thus, predominantly defined as the grand *rapprochement* of France and Germany after World War II, culminating in the Elysée Treaty of 1963. An interpretation of this instrument is rather simple: a bilateral peace treaty through which consensus was achieved with Germany accepting a predominant French say in the political affairs of the European Communities/Europe; and France, in return, accepting a more dominant German say in the economic matters of the European Communities/Europe. All this tacitly blessed by a *perfect balancer* – i.e. Britain, conveniently returning to its 'splendid isolation' from the Continent in the post World War 2 years. Consequently, nearly all scholars would agree that the Franco-German alliance actually represents the geopolitical axis, the backbone, of the Union.

But what does it precisely mean? Why Germany, and why France? And why, besides the geographic (e.g. north-south, Nordic-Mediterranean) and the political (EU and non-EU Europe; or old (west) EU-15 and new (transitioning) EU-13; or the original, core six of the Treaty of Paris; etc.) categorisations, do we need to take an additional look at the classification of the historical Europes?

Una hysteria importante

The history of Europe is the story of small hysteric/xenophobic nations, traditionally sensitive to the issue of ethnic, linguistic, religious and behavioural otherness.[8] If this statement holds the truth, then we may refer to events before and after the Thirty Years War in general and to post-Napoleonic Europe in particular. The political landscape of today's Europe had actually been conceived by the early 14th century, gradually evolving into its present shape. The universalist world of the Holy Roman Empire and the Papacy is steadily contested by explicitly confrontational, or implicitly dismissive, political entities be it ideologically (the Thirty Years' War culminating in the Peace of

8 Enveloped in its own myopia of economic egotism (and falling short of constructively helping its neighbourhood), but not conveniently protected by oceans, like some other immigrant-receiving countries, Europe has constantly attracted unskilled migrants. The US, the Gulf States, the far east, Australia, Singapore, lately even Brazil, India or Angola – all have enormously profited from skilled newcomers. Europe is unable to preserve, protect and promote its skilled migrants. Simply, the European history of tolerance of otherness is far too short, while the legacies of residual fears are deep, lasting and wide.

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Westphalia) or geopolitically (the Grand Discoveries and the shift westwards of the centre of gravity). The first round of colonisers – the two Iberian empires of Spain and Portugal – are the first entities that emerged, followed by France, Great Britain, the Netherlands and Denmark (Belgium, too, although it appeared initially in the role of a buffer zone, providing strategic depth for France in balancing Britain and containing Denmark and Prussia).

Engulfed with the quest of the brewing French revolution for the creation of a nation state, these colonisers, all of them situated on the Atlantic flank of Europe, have successfully adjusted to the nation state. Importantly, the very process of the creation or formation of the nation-state has been conducted on primarily linguistic grounds (religious grounds being historically defeated once and for all in the Peace of Westphalia):[9] all peoples talking Portuguese dialects in one state, all Spanish dialects in another, all French dialects in a third, etc.[10] This was an easy cut for peripheral Europe, i.e. the so-called old colonisers on the Atlantic flank of Europe but notably for Portugal, Spain, France, Great Britain, Denmark, the Netherlands and Sweden.

Defeated geopolitically and ideologically contained by the Congress of Vienna and its instrument, the Holy Alliance, the very idea of a nation-state nevertheless remained appealing. Once revolutionary 1848 had ousted Metternich, the principal guardian of feudalism in Europe, the suppressed concept gained further impetus. Hence, the very creation of central European nation-states was actually enhanced by Napoleon III. The unification of Italy was his, nearly obsessive, intentional deed (he grew up in Nice with Italian *Carbonari* revolutionaries who were fighting papal and Habsburg control over the northern portions of today's Italy). Conversely, the very unification of German peoples under Greater Prussia was his non-intentional mischief, which saw two 'by-products' emerge later: modern Austria (a German-speaking core assembled on the ruins of a mighty multinational and multi-linguistic empire); and modern Turkey (a Turkish-speaking core on the ruins of a mighty multi-racial and multi-linguistic empire).

Despite being geographically in the heart of Europe, Switzerland remained a remarkably stable buffer zone: highly militarised but defensive and obsessively neutral; economically omnipresent yet financially secretive, it represents one confederal state of two confronting versions of western Christianity, three ethnicities and four languages. Absent from most modern European politico-military events, Switzerland is, in short, *terra incognita*.

9 To be more accurate: Westphalia went beyond pure truce, peace and reconciliation. It reconfirmed the existence of western Christianity's own *Ummah*. Simply, it only outlawed meddling in intra-western religious affairs by restricting the then absolute (interpretative) powers of the Papacy. From that point of view, it was not the first international instrument on religious freedom, but a triumph of western evangelic unity which later led to the strengthening of western Christianity's supremacy intercontinentally.

10 All modern European languages taught in schools today were, once upon a time, actually a political and geographic compromise of leading linguists who – through adopted conventions – created a standard language by compiling different dialects spoken on the territory of particular emerging nation-states.

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Historically speaking, the process of the Christianisation of Europe, used as the justification tool to pacify invading tribes, which demolished the Roman Empire and brought to an end the Antique Age, ran on two tracks in parallel. One of them was conducted by the Roman Curia/Vatican, and its hammer: the Holy Roman Empire. The second was run by the cluster of Russian-speaking Slavic Kaganates receiving (the orthodox or true/authentic, so-called eastern version of) Christianity from Byzantium, and past its collapse, have taken on the mission of Christianisation, forming its first state known as Kievan Rus' (and, thereafter, its first historic empire). So, on the eastern edge of Europe, Russian-speaking peoples have lived in an intact world of universalism for centuries: one empire; one Tsar; one religion; and one language.[11]

Everything in between central Europe and Russia is eastern Europe; rather, a historic novelty on the political map of Europe. The very formation of Atlantic Europe's present shape dates back to the 14th and 15th centuries, and that of central Europe to the early 19th century, but a contemporary eastern Europe only started emerging between the end of World War I and the collapse of the Soviet Union – meaning fewer than one hundred years, in the best case. No wonder that the dominant political culture of eastern

11 Annotated from one of my earlier writings: '…The early Russian state has, ever since, expanded north/north-east and eastwards, reaching the physical limits of its extent by crossing the Bering Straits (ending in the sale of Russian Alaska to the USA in 1867). By the late 17th and early 18th century, Russia had begun to draw systematically into the European politico-military theatre(…) In the meantime, Europe's universalist empire dissolved, contested by challengers (like Richelieu's France and others – geopolitical; or Lutheran/Protestant – ideological), fragmenting into a cluster of confronted monarchies desperately trying to achieve equilibrium through dynamic balancing – a process which affected the Russian universal empire only by the late 20th century following the dissolution of the Soviet Union (…). Not fully accepted into the European collective system before Metternich's Holy Alliance (and even with access into the post-Versailles system denied it), Russia was still not ignored, like the other peripheral European power, the Ottomans, who were negated from all of the security systems until the very creation of NATO (by now: the Republic of Turkey). Through the division of Poland in the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact and successful campaigns elsewhere in eastern Europe, Russia expanded both its territory and its influence westwards (...). An early Soviet period of Russia was characterised by isolated bilateral agreements (with Germans, Finns, Japanese, etc.). The post-WWII days have brought the regional collective system of the Warsaw Pact into existence so as to maintain communist gains in Europe and effectively to oppose, geopolitically and ideologically, the similar US-led bloc. Besides Nixon's *rapprochement* with China, the collapse of the Soviet Union was the final stage in the progressive fragmentation of the vast Sino-Soviet Communist bloc (that dominated the Euroasian land mass, with its massive size and centrality), letting Russia emerge as the successor. The sudden Soviet break-up, however, was followed by cultural shock and civil disorder, painful economic crisis and rapidly-widening disparities, as well as humiliating wars in the Caucasus and elsewhere, since the centripetal and centrifugal forces of integration or fragmentation came into oscillatory play. Between 1989 and 1991, communist rule ended in country after country and the Warsaw Pact officially dissolved. Subsequently, Gorbachev-Yeltsin Russia experienced the greatest geopolitical contraction of any major power in the modern era and one of the fastest-ever in history.' (Bajrektarevic (2007) 'Verticalization of Historical Experiences: Europe's and Asia's Security Structures – Structural Similarities and Differences' *Crossroads – the Macedonian Foreign Policy Journal* 4(1): 111-112.).

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European states resonates residual fears and reflects deeply insecure small nations. Captive and restive, these are short in territorial depth, in demographic projection, in natural resources and in direct access to open (warm) seas; above all, they are short in historio-cultural verticals and in bigger, picture-driven long-term policies. They are exercising nationhood and sovereignty from quite recently; therefore, they are often dismissive, hectic and suspenseful; nearly neuralgic and xenophobic, of which there are frequent overtones.

The creation of nation-states (on linguistic grounds) in Atlantic, Scandinavian and central Europe was relatively a success story. However, in eastern Europe, it repeatedly suffered setbacks, culminating in the Balkans, Caucasus and the middle east, but which was also evident in the central or Baltic parts of eastern Europe.[12]

Keeping the centre soft

Ever since the Peace of Westphalia, Europe had maintained the inner balance of powers by keeping the core section soft. The powers on the periphery – such as Great Britain, France, Denmark, Prussia (replacing Sweden and Poland), the Ottomans, the Habsburgs and Russia – pressed and kept the centre of continental Europe as their playground while, at the same time, extending their possessions overseas (or, like Russia and the Ottomans, over the land corridors deeper into Asia and the middle east and north Africa proper). Once Royal Italy and Imperial Germany had appeared, the geographic core 'hardened' and, for the first time, started to push back politically and militarily against the peripheries. This new geopolitical reality caused a big security dilemma, which lasted from the 1814 Congress of Vienna to the Potsdam conference of 1945, before then being re-actualised with the fall of the Berlin Wall: how many Germanys and Italys should Europe have in order to preserve its inner balance and peace?[13] Latecomers on the scene, the central Europeans have faced a world clearly divided into spheres of influence.

In very simplified terms, we can say that both world wars, from the perspective of the European belligerent parties, were fought between the forces of the *status quo* and the challengers to this *status quo*. The final epilogue in both was that Atlantic Europe managed to divert the attention of central Europeans from themselves and their vast

12 Many would say that, proceeding past the peak Ottoman times, the aggressive intrusion of Atlantic Europe, with its nation-state concept, coupled with central Europe's obsessive control and surveillance drive, turned the magnificently mild and tolerant lands and intellectual exchange-corridors of south-eastern Europe and the near east into the modern day *Balkans powder keg*.

13 At the time of the Congress of Vienna, there was nearly a dozen Italian-speaking states and over three dozen German entities – 34 western German states and four free cities (*Kleinstaaterei*), Austria and Prussia. The Potsdam Conference concluded with only three German-speaking states (including Lichtenstein and Switzerland) and two Italian-speaking ones (including the Vatican State).

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overseas possessions towards eastern Europe and, ultimately, towards Russia.[14] To give the most illustrative of many examples: Imperial post-Bismarck Germany carefully planned and ambitiously grouped its troops on the border with France. After the assassination of the Austrian Archduke in Sarajevo (28 June 1914), Europe technically had a *casus belli*, as the subsequent mutually-declared war between all parties quickly followed this assassination episode and the Austrian ultimatum to Serbia). However, the first armed engagement did not take place on the south-eastern front, as expected, between the eastern belligerent parties such as Austria, Serbia, Russia, the Ottomans, Greece, Bulgaria, etc. The first military operations of World War 1 took place in the opposite, north-west corner of Europe, and only months later: actually, the German penetration of the Belgian Ardennes.

Even so, the very epilogue of *la Grande Guerra* was such that the single significant territorial gain of Germany was achieved only in eastern Europe. Despite a colossal four-year long military effort, the western border of Germany remained nearly unchanged.[15]

The end of World War I did not change much. The *accords de paix* – the Versailles Treaty – was an Anglo-French triumph. The principal Treaty Powers (i.e. Atlantic Europe) invited Germany finally to join the League of Nations in 1926, based on the 1925 Treaty of Locarno. By the letter of this Treaty, Germany obliged itself to respect in full its borders with Belgium and France (plus the demilitarised zone along the Rhine) with the (unspecified) promise to seek arbitration before pursuing changes in its borders with Czechoslovakia and Poland. The same *modus operandi* applied to the borders of Austria with Italy, Yugoslavia, Hungary and Czechoslovakia.

The Locarno accord thus actually instrumentalised two kinds of borders around central Europe (Germany-Austria): strict, inviolable ones towards Atlantic Europe; but semi-permeable, soft ones towards eastern Europe.[16] That is how the predominant player from central Europe was accepted into the League, a collective system to which Soviet Russia was only admitted a decade later (in 1934).[17] Soon after, this particular double standard sealed off the faith of many in Europe and beyond.

14 Why did the US join Atlantic Europe against central Europe in both world wars? Simply, siding with central Europe would have meant the political-military elimination of Atlantic Europe once and for all. In such an event, the US would have faced a single European confrontation-potent bloc with which to engage sooner or later, and would have lost the possibility of interference via remaining as the *perfect balancer*. (The very same balancer role that the US inherited from declining Britain.).

15 V. I. Lenin left Switzerland in April 1917 and headed for Russia by train (in the sealed-off wagon), travelling right across Germany – a self-telling episode in World War I.

16 Farce or otherwise, history nearly did repeat itself to the last detail in the early 1990s. The western borders of central Europe remained intact, while dramatic changes took place to the east: the borders of Germany remained the same; but many former neighbours have, one-by-one, disappeared from the political map.

17 The Cold War era has prevented any scientific consensus, systematically discouraging an unbiased, de-ideologised and objective view on World War II. Soviets consistently equated Nazism and imperialism while the US, for its part, equated fascism and communism. Right up until today, we do not have a full accord on the causes and consequences of the events in the years before, during and after World War II.

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In fact, the 1930s were full of public admiration of, and frequent official visits to, an Austrian-born Hitler. This was not only reserved to the British (ex-) royal family (the Duke of Windsor, by then the former Edward VIII), but to many more prominent representatives from both sides of the Atlantic. By 1938 in Munich, this 'spirit of Locarno' was confirmed in practice when French President Daladier and British Prime Minister Chamberlain (together: Atlantic Europe) jointly paid a visit to Germany and gave concessions – practically a free hand – to Hitler and Mussolini (together: central Europe) on gains in eastern Europe. Neither part of Atlantic Europe objected to the pre-Munich solidification of central Europe (the Hitler-Mussolini Pact; and the *Anschluss* following massive domestic Austrian support for Nazism by the 890,000 members of the Nazi Party, in addition to a huge ring of sympathisers). By brokering the Ribbentrop-Molotov non-aggression deal between Berlin and Moscow only one year after the shame of Munich, in 1939 (including the stipulations on Finland, the Baltic States and Poland), Stalin desperately tried to pre-empt the imminent: the horror of an uncontrolled expansion of central into eastern Europe and closer to Russia, something that had already been largely blessed and encouraged by Atlantic Europe.

For some three hundred years, Russia and the Ottomans have fought a series of bitter wars over the control of the Black Sea plateau and the Caucasus, which both sides (especially the Ottomans) have considered as geopolitically pivotal to their existence. Still, neither party has ever progressed on the battlefield so far as seriously to jeopardise the very existence of the other. However, Russia has experienced such moves several times from within Europe. Three of these were critical to the very survival of Russia and the fourth was rather instructive: the Napoleonic wars; Hitler's *Drang nach Osten*; the so-called 'counter-revolutionary' intervention;[18] and, finally, the brief but deeply humiliating war with Poland (1919-21).

Small wonder that, in 1945, when the Russians (suffering over 20 million mostly civilian casualties, by far the heaviest continental burden of the war against Nazism) arrived in central Europe, they decided to stay. Extending Russia's strategic depth westwards and south-westwards, and fortifying its presence in the heart of Europe,[19] was, morally, an occupation. Still, it was geopolitically the single option left which Stalin, as a ruthless person but an excellent geo-strategist, perfectly understood. Even

18 The six-year long insurgencies (largely financed and inspired by western Europe as an overt 'regime change' intervention) at the time of young Bolshevik Russia that saturated the country (bringing unbearable levels of starvation and hunger), took five million mostly civilian lives, and set the stage for the 'red terror'.

19 By the political-military settlements of the Teheran and Yalta Conferences (1943) and, finally, by the accord of the Potsdam Conference (1945), the US, UK and the Soviet Union unanimously agreed to reduce the size of Germany by 25% (comparable to its 1937 size), to recreate Austria, and to divide both of them into four occupation zones. The European sections of the Soviet border were extended westwards (as far as to what became Kaliningrad), and Poland was compensated for the loss of eastern territories by territorial gains in former eastern Prussia/Germany. The pre-World War II absorption of the three Baltic republics into the Soviet Union was also jointly confirmed by the US and UK in Potsdam. In practice, the Soviets managed to eliminate Germany from eastern Europe (and from its access to the central and eastern portions of the Baltic, too), and to place it closer to Atlantic Europe proper.

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a cursory look at a map of Europe would show that the low-lying areas of western Russia, Belorussia, Ukraine and eastern Europe are practically non-fortifiable and indefensible. Their topography exposes the metropolitan area and city of Moscow to an extreme vulnerability. Consequently, the geostrategic dictum is that, in the absence of any deep canyon, serious ridge or mountain chain, the only protection is either a huge standing army (expensive and badly-needed in other corners of such a huge country) and/or an extension of strategic depth.

In a nutshell, we can say that the very epilogue of both world wars in Europe was the defeat of central Europe (the challenger of the *status quo*) as regards Atlantic Europe (the defender of the *status quo*), with a relatively absent, neutral Scandinavian Europe, eastern Europe as more the object than the subject of these mega-confrontations and, finally, with variable degrees of success, Russia.

Returning to the Franco-German *rapprochement*, this is far more than a story about two countries signing an *accord*. That, indeed, marked a final decisive reconciliation of two Europes (the Atlantic and the central one): Europe won a *status quo* on the continent but soon lost its overseas colonies. Once this had been realised, the road for 'unification' of the protagonists, equally-weakened and in close proximity, was wide open.[20] This is the full meaning of the 1961 Elysée Treaty.

20 Nowadays, from a safe time and distance, it is easy to claim that the portion of Europe under American influence enjoyed considerably better fortune than the part under Soviet influence. Interestingly enough, elsewhere the situation was rather different: Vietnam – the Philippines; Cuba – Colombia; Egypt – Saudi Arabia; Ghana – Liberia. That means that intra-European differences are beyond pure US–Russian influences and, therefore, far more significant. As proof, we might point to the differences in the standard of living between London and Bucureşti, or Paris and Sofia, today being the same – or even wider – than they were some forty years ago.

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The collapse of the Soviet Union marked a loss of historical empire for Russia, but also a loss of geopolitical importance for non-aligned, worldwide-respected Yugoslavia[21] which, shortly afterwards, burned itself in a series of brutal genocidal, civil war-like ethnical cleansings. The idea of different nations living together and communicating in different languages in a (con)federal structure was (although imperfect) a reality in Yugoslavia, but also a declared dream of Maastricht Europe. Moreover, Yugoslavia was the only truly emancipated and independent political entity in eastern Europe. Despite the post-Cold War, often pre-paid, rhetoric that eastern Europe was rebelling against Soviet domination in order to associate itself with the west, the reality was very different. Nagy's Hungary of 1956, Dubček's Czechoslovakia of 1968 and (pre-)Jaruzelski Poland of 1981 dreamt of, and were fighting to join, a liberal Yugoslavia and its internationally declared third way!

By 1989-90, this country still represented, for many in the east, the hope of full emancipation and real freedom.

How, however, did the newly-created EU (the Atlantic-Central Europe axis) react? Intentionally or not, the indecisive and contradictory political messages of Maastricht-time EU – from explicit encouragement of separatism, and then back to a full reconfirmation of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Yugoslavia – brought this multinational state into a schizophrenic situation. Consequently, such mixed political mes-

21 Yugoslavia was, in many respects, a unique European country: no history of aggression towards its neighbours and with a high toleration of 'otherness'. Yugoslav peoples paid heavily in the second world war, losing 12% of the population in the four years of war that mark the Yugoslav experience of it. (Proportionate to the 1939 size of the territory of the state and its incumbent population, the most fatalities were suffered by Poland – 18%; Soviet Union – 15%; Yugoslavia – 12%; Third Reich/Germany – 10%. For the sake of comparison, the Atlantic rim suffered as follows: France – 1.3%; UK – 0.9%; the US – 0.3%.)
Yugoslavs also firmly opposed Stalinism right after World War II. The Bismarck of the southern Slavs – Tito – developed the doctrine of active peaceful co-existence after the 1955 south-south Asian-African Conference in Bandung, and assembled the Non-Aligned Movement in its founding, Belgrade conference of 1961. Steadily over the decades, the Non-Aligned Movement and Yugoslavia directly tranquilised the mega confrontation between the two superpowers and the satellites grouped around them (and balanced their irresponsible calamities all across the globe). In Europe, the continent where the ideological divide was the sharpest, with the two halves militarily confronting each other practically all over the core sectors of the continent, and with its southern flank of Portugal, Spain and Greece (and Turkey sporadically) run by military juntas, Yugoslavia was, remarkably, a mild island of stability, moderation and wisdom.
Domestically, Yugoslavia had a unique constitutional setup, being based on a strictly decentralised federation. A formal democracy in its political life, in many respects its social and economic practices featured real democracy, alongside largely-enjoyed personal freedoms and liberties. The concept of self-management (along with the model of the self-managing interest community) in economic, social, linguistic and cultural affairs gained much external attention and admiration in the 1960s, 70s and 80s. Even so, there was not enough sympathy in an EU-headed Europe to save either the Yugoslav people from immense suffering or the symbol that this country had represented, domestically and internationally.

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sages directly accelerated the internal confrontations of the Yugoslav peoples.[22] At the same time, it busily mobilised all the resources required to extend its own strategic depth eastwards (later formalised by the so-called enlargements of 2004, 2007 and, finally, of 2013).

Ultimately, huge centripetal turbulences have severely affected eastern Europe following the dissolution of the Soviet Union on its frontiers.

As early as the XVI century, eastern European thought – in the person of the famous Sarajevan, Kafija Pruščak – spelled out the universal and far-reaching wisdom that *progress is both the focus of a vision and an attainable reality for all*.[23] If this futurist assertion is accurate, then progress itself is unthinkable without social cohesion. That would, consequently, necessitate a shared interest which only comes following a thorough debate involving all segments of society (or, at least, its major interest groups). Is today's eastern Europe a classic case of indirect rule? Is it the deep, imperial periphery of nominally-independent native rulers while, in reality, the true power-holder resides outside, even if domestically supported by a dense web of NGOs, multinational corporations and locally handpicked 'elites'?

Accidentally or not, for the last twenty five years, reporting on eastern Europe has been rather a matter of faith than a reflection of empirical reality. 'Rhetoric' has been dominated by fragmented intellectual trends that are more cultural (e.g. poetry, paintings, film, etc.) than coherently economic and geopolitical in focus. How one defines a challenge largely determines the response: hence, the arts will always elaborate on emotions; while scientists will search for and examine the facts. However, besides a cacophonous noise, where is the serious research? If equality of outcome (as regards income, for example) was communist egalitarian dogma, is a belief in equality of opportunity a tangible reality offered to eastern Europe or just a deceiving utopia sold to countries in transition?

By contrasting and comparing the available UN Development Programme's Human Development Index data, and all relevant World Bank, OECD, UNCTAD, ILO and WHO socio-economic and health-based indices, including demographic trends, over the last two decades, we can easily spot considerable economic and socio-human growth in Asia and in Latin America, but moderate growth elsewhere. The only negative growth trends (including on suicide and functional illiteracy) comparable in du-

22 The brief, but bloody, 1989 televised episode of the hasty extrajudicial and savage killing of the Romanian president and his wife, Nicolae and Elena Ceauşescu, shocked the world – but not for long. The first ever fully-televised war, with its highly disturbing pictures of genocidal Armageddon, came by the early 1990s and remained on TV sets for years all over Europe, especially to the east.

23 Taken from Kafija Pruščak, H. (1596) *Universal theory of global governing wisdoms* (Usul Al-hikam fi nizami-el-alem, org. Temelji mudrosti o uređenju svijeta). At the time, he was nicknamed in western Europe as the eastern Machiavelli.

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ration and severity to that of eastern Europe is situated only in (the central-west, central to the Horn/central-east portions of) sub-Saharan Africa.[24]

By this, we might conclude that a fragmented and de-industrialised eastern Europe is probably the least influential region of the world – one of the very few under-achievers. Obediently submissive and, therefore, rigid in a dynamic environment, eastern Europeans are among the last passive downloaders and slow-receivers on the otherwise blossoming stage of the world's creativity, politics and economics.[25] It does not exercise political sovereignty (gone with the EU); military sovereignty (gone with NATO); economic and monetary sovereignty (gone with massive domestic de-industrialisation 'preached' by the International Monetary Fund, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the European Investment Bank and, eventually, the European Central Bank);[26] or financial sovereignty (gone with the full penetration of German, Aus-

24 A sharp drop in life expectancy in Russia, from 72 to 59, is something faced only by nations at war. The evidence that Russia has suffered such a steep decline, unreversed ever since the collapse of the Soviet Union, is unprecedented in the peace-time history of any industrialised nation. Not as alarming as in post-Soviet Russia, the remaining post-Soviet republics and eastern Europe have closely followed the same pattern – not to mention devastating birth rates, a 'brain drain' and other demographic data. The projected life expectancy of today's-born Berliner is around 100 years, while that of a Muscovite is only 67. Simply, the east is unable to (re-)produce itself (or, once conceived, to keep the best of it at home).

25 With the exceptions of Visegrád countries (such as Poland, the Czech Republic and, latterly, Hungary) which have sporadically opposed a constant jumping on the bandwagon (but, even then, only in the domain of narrow EU fiscal or economic matters), the eastern Europe of today is unable to conceive and effectively promulgate a self-emancipating, balanced and multi-vectored foreign policy. Ferguson goes as far as to claim for eastern Europeans that: 'They looked at Brussels the way former British colonies obeyed everything said and done in London.'.

26 'The entry criteria for eastern European states was particularly costly: so-called small and open economies, de-industrialized and over-indebted didn't have any chance to be equal partners. For most of them, FDI (Foreign Direct Investment) is the only economic solution, which turned them into colonies…' – argued the Nobel laureate economist, Joseph Stiglitz, in his *The Price of Inequality*. Moreover, the overly strong and rigid exchange rate of domestic currencies in eastern Europe is only good for foreign lenders: it rewards importers while disadvantaging the domestic manufacturing base and exporters. Such an outdated, anti-growth economic policy has been universally abandoned long ago, even by LDCs (the UN-listed Least Developed Countries).

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trian and Swedish banks).[27] Most eastern European states do not control a single commercial bank on their territory.[28] Additionally, this region does not effectively control its media space – the media there (of too-often dubious orientation and ownership) is discouraging and disorienting, and silences any sense of national pride or influence over destiny or direction and its related calls for self- (or re-)assessment. The east is sharply-aged and has been rapidly-depopulated which, in return, will make any future prospect for a full and decisive generational interval simply impossible.[29] The 'Hon-

27 According to the findings of the Budapest Institute of Economics (Corvinus Institute of Budapest, Hungary), for the past two decades, the volume of the Austrian banking sector has increased 370%. How is this spectacular percentage achievable for a country with a flat domestic economic situation and negative demographic growth? This covert occupation of south-eastern Europe by the foreign financial sector did not create new jobs or re-create an industrial base. In 1914, Austria also controlled the banks in Croatia, Bosnia, Romania, Serbia, Hungary, southern Poland and western Ukraine. However, at that time, it also had a strict governing obligation as all of them were a part of the monarchy. In having recognised the formal sovereignty of each of these entities, Austria today (like Sweden towards the three Baltic States in the north-east flank of Europe, and Germany in the central sector of eastern Europe) has no governing obligations whatsoever. Hence, EU accession criteria, combined with the nominal independence of eastern European entities, means that the economic and other assets have been siphoned out while the countries have to take on the burden of state maintenance solely on themselves.

28 The current picture of labour relations in most of eastern Europe rather resembles the conditions of the 18th than the 21st century, especially in the private sector of employment. This is connected with weak, or even totally absent, trade unionism, dismal labour rights and a poor level of protection of other essential social rights. 'We have labour conditions which are at an unbearable maximum, so that the few self-styled "top managers" can play golf for a longer period… How can you possibly build any social cohesion when disproportionately many suffer for the dubious benefit of the asocial, predatory few…,' confessed to me the Ambassador of one of the largest eastern European countries who, before his ambassadorship in Vienna, served as a mayor of his country's capital.

29 Some ten years ago, at a special OSCE forum on demographics, I warned: '…Lasting political, social and economic changes, including very important technological breakthroughs – throughout our history – have primarily occurred at generational intervals. This was an engine of our evolution… Presently, with demographically-collapsing east European societies… the young cohort will never constitute more than a tiny minority in a sea of aged, backward-looking, psychologically defeatist and biologically incapable, conservative keepers of the *status quo*. Hence, neither the generational change that brings fresh socio-political ideas, nor technological breakthroughs – which usually come along – will successfully ever take place in the future given such demographics.' (For a detailed demographic outlook and tentative recommendations/ conclusions, see: A. Bajrektarevic (2005) *Our Common Futures: EURO-MED Human Capital beyond 2020* Crans Montana Forum, Monaco; as well as A. Bajrektarevic (2005) *Green/Policy Paper Submitted to the Closing Plenary of the Ministerial Chairmanship Summarizing the Recommendations and Conclusions of the OSCE Ministerial Summit, Prague 2005)* OSCE Documents EEA 2005.

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duras-isation' of eastern Europe is full and complete.[30] If the post-World War II Soviet occupation of eastern Europe was overt and brutal, this one has been tacit but subversive and deeply corrosive.

By the early 1990s, the 'security hole' of eastern Europe was being approached in a multi-fold fashion: besides the (pre-Maastricht) European Community and (post-Maastricht) European Union and NATO, there was the Council of Europe, the Commission on Security and Co-operation in Europe (the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe after the 1993 Budapest summit), the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the European Investment Bank. All of them were sending political, economic, human and commercial signals, assistance and expertise.[31] Such moves were making both sides very nervous; Russia becoming assertive (as regards its former peripheries) and eastern Europe defiantly dismissive.[32] Up until today, each is portraying NATO as the central security consideration: one as a must-go; and the other as a no-go.

It is no wonder that the absolute pivot of eastern Europe – Ukraine – is a grand hostage of the very dilemma between eastern pan-Slavic hegemony and western 'free trade imperialism'. Russia is, for Ukraine, a geographic, socio-historic, cultural and linguistic reality; Ukraine is, for Russia, more than a lame, western-flank geopolitical pivot – it is an emotional place with a firm historio-civilisational attachment.

The EU has secured itself on the south-eastern flank too. But, why does this matter? The flank of Europe known as the Balkans is situated in one of the most fascinating locations of the world. It is a cradle of the eldest European civilisation – thus, it is more than symbolically important. This antique theatre is a place of strong historio-civilisational attachment, the credibility and authenticity bond of Europeanness. Less esoteric,

30 Eastern Europe has become 'Honduras-ised', referring to an operationalisation of the Monroe Doctrine in central America by which Washington allows its strategic neighbourhood to choose, to a degree, its own domestic political and economic system but maintains its own final (hemispheric) say over the latter's external orientation.

31 Through the conditionalities of the EBRD–EIB and EU accession criteria, eastern Europe was practically compelled to dismantle its entire industrial and service base. This dictum was followed by loans and assets received from the EU Accession and Structural Funds. It was seen in the East as an award and presented to the population as such. However, it was rather intended to tranquilise the population at large and to pacify their local scenes, and not at all at the modernising, re-industrialising or diversification of the economy, or at making the production and services sector more efficient or competitive.

32 Subsequent to the end of World War 2, there has been no other external military interventions other than to Europe's east. To be accurate, in its long history (earlier and nearly twice as long as the Warsaw Pact), the only two interventions of NATO ever conducted in Europe both took place solely on eastern European soil. Russian interventions aimed at its strategic neighbourhood (in former Soviet republics, heavily inhabited by ethnic Russians) were (unsuccessfully) justified as pre-empting encirclement, whereas in both NATO cases (Bosnia and Kosovo), it was well beyond any membership territory, and short of any UN-endorsed mandate, meaning without real international legitimacy. 'Humanitarian intervention in Kosovo was never exactly what it appeared… It was a use of imperial power to support a self-determination claim by a national minority,' wrote Michael Ignatieff, as fresh and accurate as if reporting from Sevastopol in spring 2014.

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but equally important, is that the Balkans actually represents, along with middle east/north Africa and the Caucasus, the only existing land corridor that connects three of the world's continents. Simply, whoever controls Bosnia controls pretty much the rest of the Balkans; and, from there, access to the Black Sea, to the Caucasus-Caspian Basin and to Asia, too.

Therefore, it remains an imperative for the external/peripheral powers to dominate such a pivotal geo-economic and geopolitical theatre. In the course of the last few centuries, the Balkans was either influenced or controlled by Russia to the east (and by the Ottomans there, too), Turkey to the south and centre, and Austria to the north and west, alongside pockets of Anglo-French influence (Greece, Serbia, Albania). This indicates that, ever since the late XVII century (precisely, from 1686, when Russia joined the Holy League; and then continuing on past the subsequent 1699 Treaty of Karlovci), the peripheries have kept the centre of the Balkans soft, as their own playground. The only pre-modern and modern period in which the centre has been strong enough is marked by the time of the Balkans' Bismarck: President Tito of Yugoslavia.

The rest of the western Balkans is still finishing the process of the dissolution of Yugoslavia, by forming ever-smaller, incapacitated (and de-populated) mini nation-states. Less than a decade after President Tito's death, the tectonic changes in the eastern bloc led to the dramatic change in the geopolitical position of Yugoslavia and the Non-Aligned Movement. In the absence of compromise among the major external geopolitical projectors, the region is still undergoing fragmentation, being kept as a soft centre in relation to strong peripheral pressures. Bosnia is the best example of such external intrusion and of the setting of such a dysfunctional government.[33]

Nevertheless, ever since Antique Roman times, the territories of the southern Slavs (even all the Balkans) have always existed within larger multinational entities (be it Byzantium, Hungary, the Ottomans, the Habsburg Empire or Yugoslavia) – hardly ever in more than two states. Accommodation to a life in numerous smaller nation-like states

33 By far the largest EU delegation ever run is the Mission in Bosnia (the Delegation of the EU to BiH). The Mission's staff has kept increasing over the last two decades – but so has the distance of Bosnia from any viable prospect of joining the Union. Many are bitterly joking that the Mission's true mandate is – in fact – to hinder, not to assist, EU integration. According to the UN and the ICTY, Bosnia has suffered genocide on its territory – the worst atrocities on European soil since the end of World War 2. To assess only the speed of the admission process offered to Bosnia, it seems that the EU does not like its victims: Sarajevo 20 years after is a perfect litmus paper for Bosnia being an EU barometer for the ethical/moral deficit of the Union and its members.

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is a historical novelty; and a lasting solution is only likely to appear with a return to the historical legacy – life within a larger, multinational entity.[34]

Realities have dramatically changed for Atlantic-Central Europe and for Russia, while for eastern Europe much remains the same – the east still serves others as strategic depth.[35] In short, Atlantic Europe remains a political powerhouse (with two of the three European nuclear powers and two of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council), while central Europe is an economic powerhouse, Russian-speaking Europe is an energy powerhouse and Scandinavian Europe is all of that a bit – but eastern Europe is none of it.[36]

34 Bosnia, as a habitual mix of cultures, ethnicities and religions, has a historical legacy and strong quality of integration, with cohesive spill-over potential for the region. Therefore, instead of a conceptual politics after the war, a territorial anti-politics (with a confrontational political culture) was initially externally imposed by the so-called Dayton Peace Accord; and, further on, strongly encouraged and supported in everyday practice over nearly two decades. It is clear that any conceptual, and therefore inclusive, politics, would, sooner or later, end up in a reconciliatory, integrative approach. Perpetuating anti-politics in Bosnia aims at keeping the former Yugoslav political, cultural, economic and territorial space separated and antagonised – fragmented into xenophobic and inward-looking quasi nation-states.

35 Despite the (formal) end of the Cold War, and contrary to all that we celebrate as technological progress, the distances between Gini coefficients are far larger than they were two decades ago. Additionally, as the EU was getting closer to eastern Europe, the socio-economic inequalities and political-cultural exclusions were growing wider. The contemporary world has unprecedented wealth. Over the last four decades, the global workforce has tripled from roughly 1 to 3 billion, but the world today holds mass poverty – like never before, especially in under-developed Africa and the de-industrialised east of Europe. The newly-set 'economic system' in eastern Europe reproduces poverty, even among the fortunate ones – those with a job, who are victims of low wages and long hours. According to the World Bank, total global wealth was $241 trillion in 2013 and this is expected to rise to $334 trillion by 2018. The World Bank defines the UN standard poverty line as a threshold of $1.25 per day. Lant Pritchett, a critical WB/IMF development economist, advocates a more reasonable bottom line of $10 per day. If his calculation were applied, between 90 and 95% of the population in Russian-speaking eastern Europe would be well below dignified life, deep below the poverty line!

36 For example, remembering the labour union *Solidarność* from the Gdańsk shipyards: today there are few unionists there, their leader Lech Wałęsa has been forgotten, as there are no shipyards ever since Poland (eager, but without careful preparation) opened its EU accession talks… The termination of all public subsidies is stipulated in Chapter 8 (Competition Policy) of the accession treaty admitting Croatia to the EU, and the European Commission has been closely monitoring the implementation of the 'restructuring' programme of the Croatian shipyards. The ongoing demise of the shipyards will complete Croatia's de-industrialisation (adding to the already record-high in unemployment in coastal areas, of some 25%). All over the globe, states assist shipbuilding as a formidable provider of jobs: in Italy, the Fincantieri shipyards are entirely in public hands; in France, the state is still a minority shareholder in the biggest yards, such as STX-Chantiers de l'Atlantique. Even in South Korea, the world champion in naval construction, the state subsidises shipbuilding. It seems that what is globally acceptable is forbidden in eastern Europe; all the way from Poland to Croatia, and in the name of European integration.

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From WW1 to www. 9/11 or 11/9?

Throughout most of human evolution, both progress and its (horizontal) transmission has been an extremely slow and tedious process. Well, up to the classic period of Alexander the Macedonian and his glorious Alexandrian library, the speed of our transmission – however moderate – still always manage to surpass the cycles of our breakthroughs. When, in contrast, the breakthroughs finally started to turn faster than the speed of their transmission – that was the point of our departure. Simply, our civilisations significantly started to differentiate themselves from each other in their respective techno-agrarian, political-military, ethno-religious, ideological and economic set-ups. On the eve of the grand discoveries, that very event transformed wars and famine from the low-impact and the local into the bigger, even colossal.

The phenomenon of cycles of technological breakthroughs, patents and discoveries being faster than their own transmission primarily occurred on the old continent. That event marked the birth of the mighty European empires and their schools of applied biology, racism, genocide, organised plunder, ethno-social engineering, eugenics and similar forms of ideological justifiers. For the past few centuries, we lived fear but dreamed hope – all for the sake of modern times. Now we have transited from World War 1 to the world wide web, does this modernity of the internet age, with all the suddenly-reviled breakthroughs and their instant transmission, now harbour us in a bay of fairness, harmony and overall reconciliation? In the hype of the early 1990s, Francis Fukuyama euphorically acclaimed the *end of history*. Just two decades later, however, and twisting in the inevitable sobriety, he quietly moderated it into the *future of history*. Was, and will, our history ever be on holiday?

One hundred years after the outbreak of World War 1, on 28 June 1914, young generations of Europeans are being taught in schools about the singularity of an entity called the EU. However, as soon as serious external or internal security challenges emerge, the compounding parts of the true, historic Europe resurface. The 1986 Reagan-led Anglo-American bombing of Libya was a one-off, head-hunting punitive action. This time, both Libya and Syria (and Iraq, Mali and Ukraine, too) have been given a different attachment: the considerable presence of China in Africa; successfully pipeline deals between Russia and Germany (which, circumventing eastern Europe, will deprive it of any transit-related bargaining premium and could tacitly pose effective joint Russian-German pressure on the Baltic States, Poland and Ukraine); and finally

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the relative decline of the US and the recalibration of its European commitments. All of this, in combination, must have triggered alarm bells across Atlantic Europe.[37]

This is to understand that, although 'unified', Europe is, essentially, composed of several segments, each with its own dynamics and its own political culture (considerations, priorities and anxieties): Atlantic and central Europe is confident and secure at the one end; and, at the other, (EU and non-EU) eastern Europe, as well as Russia, is insecure, neuralgic and, therefore, in a permanent quest of additional security guarantees.

America did not change on September 11. It only became more itself. (Kagan, 2004: 85)

Paraphrasing, we may say that, from 9/11 (9th November 1989 in Berlin) and shortly after, followed by the genocidal wars all over Yugoslavia and up to the Euro, middle east/north Africa or ongoing crisis, Europe did not change; it only became more itself – a conglomerate of five different Europes.

Conclusion

How can we observe and interpret the distance between success and failure from a historical perspective? This question remains a difficult one to satisfy with a single answer. The immediate force behind the rapid and successful overseas projection of Europe was actually a combination of two elements: Europe's technological (economic) and demographic expansion from the early 16th century onwards. However, the west/Europe was not – frankly speaking – winning over the rest of this planet by the superiority of its views and ideas, by the purity of its virtues or by the clarity of its religious thoughts and practices. For a small and rather insecure civilisation, it was just a superiority and efficiency in applying rationalised violence and organised (legitimised) coercion that Europe successfully projected. 21st century Europeans often forget this 'inconvenient truth', while non-Europeans usually never do.

The large, self-maintainable, self-assured and secure civilisations (e.g. those situated on the Asian landmass) were traditionally less militant and confrontational (or nation-state 'exclusive'), but more esoteric and generous, inclusive, attentive and flexible. The smaller, insecure civilisations (e.g. situated on the modest and minor, geographically remote and peripheral, climatically exposed and scarce in natural resources

37 In response to the middle east/north Africa crisis, Europe failed to keep up a broad agenda and an all-participatory basis in its strategic neighbourhood, despite having the institutions, interest and credibility to do so. Europe compromised its own perspectives and discredited its own principle of transformative power by undermining its own institutional framework within the Barcelona Process (EU) and the Euro-Mediterranean Programme of the OSCE. The only direct involvement was a military engagement via an Atlantic Europe-led coalition of the willing (Libya, Mali, Syria). The consequences are striking: the sort of Islam that the EU supported (and the means which were deployed to do so) in the middle east yesterday is the sort of Islam (and the means that it uses) that Europe gets today. No wonder that Islam in Turkey (or in Kyrgyzstan and in Indonesia) is broad, liberal and tolerant while the one of northern Europe is dismissive, narrow and assertive.

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continent of Europe) were more focused, obsessively organised and "goal-oriented" (including the invention of *virtue out of necessity* – the nation-state).

No wonder that European civilisation has never generated a single religion (although it has admittedly doctrinated, 'clergified' and headquartered the original middle east religion of Christianity). On the other hand, no other civilisation but the European has ever created a significant, or even a relevant, political ideology.

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