EUROPE TODAY
AND WHAT’S NEXT

Hannes Androsch

Foreword
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Abstract

The European Union is currently experiencing one of its worst crises in its history. Old fault lines that have run through the continent for centuries, once considered overcome, have become prominent once again; new challenges have arisen, especially in the wake of globalization, climate change and new technological developments (the Digital Revolution).

The world has seemingly become ungovernable. The proclaimed 1989 “end of history” (Fukuyama) is certainly over, and history has a firm grip on Europe. This, at least since the outbreak of the financial and economic crisis in 2007/08, no longer deniable fact is reflected in the still unresolved crisis in Greece (“Grexit”), the associated Euro Crisis, the British referendum on exit from the EU (“Brexit”), and in the renaissance of geopolitics.

The annexation of Crimea by Russia undertaken in violation of international law, the war in eastern Ukraine, as well as state disintegration in Libya, Yemen, Iraq and Syria have made it clear that, from the Caucasus to the Balkans and from Pakistan/Afghanistan via the Middle East to North Africa, extends a “Ring of Fire,”—a term used by former Prime Minister of Singapore Lee Kuan Yew to describe the geopolitical challenges of Europe more than twenty years ago. These long concealed—or ignored—distortions are now breaking out again in the form of “wars of succession,” leaving behind territories plagued by unrest, civil wars, and failed states, and resulting in terrorism and refugee waves now reaching the center of Europe.

The resulting “crisis mode,” within which the European Union has been operating for several years now, reached its climax with the result of the referendum conducted in June, determining Britain's exit from the European Union (Brexit). Aside from the medium and long-term economic implications for the country, Brexit was an earthquake with unforeseeable consequences especially on the political level. Scotland is once again discussing its potential separation from the United Kingdom, the fragile peace funded by the EU in Northern Ireland is threatened by collapse, and in a considerable number of other EU countries—mainly France and the Netherlands—populist and nationalist parties are interpreting Brexit as a signal to seek their salvation in national initiatives.

In many places it is forgotten that Europe, especially the EU, is a veritable success story, as this continent has never before experienced a period such as the past seven decades of democracy, peace and prosperity. Faced with the current challenges, especially the refugee crisis, there has been an increasing tendency among European governments to take unilateral action. This approach cannot be successful, however, as European governments attempt to implement policy prescriptions of the past to solve problems of the present.

In fact, we need not less but more Europe—but also a reformed Europe: a European Union with one voice for external policy (common foreign, security and defense policy and asylum and migration policy) and the capacity to overcome its internal turmoil (common economic, budget, and tax policies, and a minimum of a transfer union). We also need a European Union that makes the benefits of globalization available to all people.
The Liechtenstein Institute at Princeton University strives to introduce critical and timely analysis and evaluations to shed light onto developments concerning community, nation and state, peace and prosperity, in order to better understand policies in our world and be able to react or anticipate. This second LISD White Paper, written by Hannes Androsch, offers paramount examples of the necessity to be ready to think and grasp reality unsanitized, and the need to comprehend, even if it concerns what was hitherto seen as farfetched or unthinkable.

After decades of striving for integration and for establishing a region of peace and prosperity based on common values and the rule of law in an ever-expanding European Union, following the fall of the Berlin Wall more than a quarter century ago, the author finds, that many have become accustomed to “forgetting … history” and “forgetting … geography.” Further, the current cadre of leaders could not imagine – nor can most of the electorate – that war could be re-introduced as a means of politics in Europe, and with it great power geopolitics. The Ukraine Crisis “wake-up call” about these deficits could not have been more jarring. Few decision makers appropriately grasped context and complexities, nor objectively considered the full picture. This and the absence of open and reflective perceptions undermine the ability to successfully manage relations between different states and powers in our world. Increasing recriminations between various actors based on ignorance or misinterpretations of rules and laws or accusations are likewise not in any way helpful.

One can hence argue that leadership on all sides committed mistakes and the international system as it was know in the last five decades is not working effectively any longer; neither has a new system of equilibrium and stability been established. Russian President Vladimir Putin has repeatedly lamented “the breakdown in the

Interestingly, while Putin might reject the rules of the international system as we know it, he clearly adopts old rules and behaviors as befitting great power interests. The Russian military operation in Syria was launched 2015 for many reasons, though least of them to fight Da'esh. Besides trying to prop up President Assad, importantly for Russia’s own sake, the military operation was undertaken to make Russia once again a serious player in the world and especially the Middle East—hence to bely Pres. Obama’s “regional power” calling—and also to break out of the diplomatic freeze following the Crimea annexation and Donbas military operations.2

All this indicates “the pendulum has begun to swing back.” After years of deepening and widening integration, at least in Europe, and an overall strive for globalization, it appears that re-nationalization and enhancement of sovereign national interests have re-emerged. The post-Cold War Order begins to be shaken by nationalistic leadership, demagogy, fatigue of democracy, and also an end of the social contract as we have known it fueled by many factors including automatization and robotization.

In a powerful tour d’horizon, both historically and geopolitically, Hannes Androsch moves through Europe, Asia, and the Middle East to show strategic, political, and economic developments critical for today’s state of

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Europe and the world. Interestingly, malign non-state actors like Da’esh are a key challenge for the emerging global order, particularly since certain state actors appear to make good use of such terror organizations to further their own national interests. Androsch rightly underlines the need of EU Europe “to design appropriate strategies” of engagement and to actively help establish a viable and peaceful new order in its neighborhood.

Today the EU is experiencing perhaps the biggest existential crisis in its history. From the financial and economic issues to possible national exit of Greece, the associated Euro crisis, effective British exit from the EU—Brexit—and the refugee and migration crisis brought on in large part due to Europe’s non-involvement in the stabilization of Northern Africa and the Middle East, particularly Libya and Syria.

To all this, as Androsch rightly highlights there has been a fundamental shift in the relationship between Europe and the United States, which began with the American operation “Iraqi Freedom,” continued with the Lehman Brothers-spurred financial crisis, and culminated in the NSA spy-affair and the enormous cyber issues surrounding Edward Snowden’s stealing and release of sensitive documents which are now in Russian hands. Terror threats emanating from Al Qaeda and Da’esh, as well as copycat or lone-wolf attacks would however suggest the need for much more intense intelligence cooperation and a re-intensification of cooperation in the transatlantic realm and amongst all states concerned.

Nevertheless, in dealing with these threats, it is important and helpful, as Hannes Androsch highlights, to keep them in their proper perspective. This is indeed true for all such challenges. While not trying to diminish them in any way, Androsch emphasizes that the some 1.5 million refugees the 550 million EU faced in the past year are really small in comparison to the per-capita level of Syria’s neighbors. This numeric reasoning, and attempt to bring challenges into a de-polemized context, becomes relevant even more when considering—though not minimizing—the casualties of Islamist terror attacks. As Androsch argues, terror attacks caused some 600 persons to perish since 2004 all over Europe, including in Russia and Turkey, while there were more than 27,000 deaths due to car accidents in Europe in 2014 alone. Neither reduction of liberties for the purpose of enhancing security, nor the building of walls and fortifying of borders will a la longue be successful. It is however imperative to address the fears and concerns of the people and the electorate effectively, sustainably, and credibly. Otherwise all those who feel that their hopes and aspirations are ignored or destroyed will look for other solutions and for other leaders who appear more capable, effective, and strong. Alas, to add to that conundrum, clearly in our world today forces and powers operate that fuel discontent, fear, and uncertainty with misconstrued and wrong information, ignoring facts - all with the purpose of fostering disintegration. Divide et imperare.

Hannes Androsch argues that the continuation of European integration represents the only effective way forward. He stresses the need for Europeans today to act jointly on the global scale and recommends working to transform Europe’s surrounding geopolitical “ring of fire” and crises into, if not a “ring of friends,” then at least a “ring of partners” in the long term. Even if costly, active contribution to the stabilization of the EU’s neighborhood will not only take care of so many security challenges, including the refugee issue and migration, and more effectively deal with terrorism, but would also be more cost-effective than its absence, in human, material, and financial perspectives. In addition it avails economic opportunities. Reevaluating cooperation with Russia and Turkey and all relevant regional powers might hence be in order, but only according to established values and principles and in ways that support and strengthen peace and prosperity.

If one would follow this recipe towards a deepening of the EU integration as an answer to the increasing internal and external challenges, one would not only become a stronger actor but also a more powerful negotiator and partner with Russia, the United States, and China. Thus one could smooth the current transformation process, more effectively deal with the fundamental challenges facing the world today, and shape the emerging new global system.

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On 12 October 2012, the Norwegian Nobel Committee announced the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to the European Union, recognizing the fact that this Union was crucial to securing peace and fostering development on the continent, particularly highlighting its role in promoting understanding between France and Germany; the advancement of democracy in the former dictatorships in Greece, Spain and Portugal; the integration of the Central European States; and its support for the pacification of the Balkans after the wars of the 1990s. Furthermore, it stated:

“The EU is currently undergoing grave economic difficulties and considerable social unrest. The Norwegian Nobel Committee wishes to focus on what it sees as the EU’s most important result: the successful struggle for peace and reconciliation and for democracy and human rights. The stabilizing part played by the EU has helped to transform most of Europe from a continent of war to a continent of peace.”1

It seems instructive to look back seven decades: Two world wars had taken a great toll on Europe, leaving behind catastrophic destruction and myriad victims; by 1945 our continent was in shambles. Millions were on the run, still more lost everything but their lives, and entire cities and regions were left devastated. Nevertheless, that Europe could rise as quickly as a phoenix from the ashes and offer the majority of its inhabitants unprecedented prosperity and welfare a few decades later was due to both the protection and support — (i.e. the Marshall Plan) — of the United States on one hand, and the ingenious work of a few courageous politicians on the other, including Jean Monnet and Robert Schuman, as well as Paul-Henri Spaak, Alcide De Gasperi and Konrad Adenauer. Their idea to merge German and French coal and steel production, and thus to unite the major war industries under a common authority, the Coal and Steel Community, gave rise to the impetus for the European integration process.

Thanks to the later-created Single European Market, the European Union, with its 28 member countries and 500 million inhabitants, is today the largest economic region with the highest economic output in the world.

However, the European integration process has been characterized by alternations between successes and setbacks from the beginning — crises were a constant companion. The EU’s motto — “united in diversity” — could not, even in earlier times, always conceal the complexity and differences amongst the driving forces that act in the Union and determine its political action—or inaction. Meanwhile, the EU stumbles from one crisis to the next, all of which have been caused by political failure and could thus far not be fully resolved: from the financial and banking crisis and the subsequent global economic crisis over the debt crises in Ireland, Portugal, Spain and especially Greece — connected to a feared impending exit of the country from the EU (“Grexit”) — up to the disunity of Union members in the face of the wave of refugees and the referendum on the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the Union (“Brexit”) in June 2016.

The European Union currently faces its greatest affliction since its conception and is seriously in danger of dissolution. How could it have come to this?

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* This paper was written with the collaboration of Bettina Ruttensteiner-Poller, and translated from the original German by Michelle Nedashkovskaya.

In 1989, the year perceived by many as an *Annus Mirabilis*, the Iron Curtain and the Berlin Wall fell, leading some of us to believe that we were at the “end of history;”2 the global advance of democracy and capitalism was to begin. Although the end of the Cold War and accompanying end of the “order of Yalta” enabled the reunification of the two German states, the so-called “German Question” became virulent again with the fear of a rise of a over-powerful Germany. Nevertheless, at the behest of the United States under President George H. Bush and Germany under Chancellor Helmut Kohl, reunification went ahead and the Two-Plus-Four Treaty regulated the reunification of the two German states. This was followed by the collaboration of France and Germany during the negotiations for the Maastricht Treaty, which, through the abandonment of national currencies (especially the German Mark in Germany) and the introduction of the euro as a common European currency, brought key European nations closer together and laid the foundations for the European order we know today.

The joy about this achievement, however, did not last very long. By the early 1990s Europe had to realize during the wars of the disintegration of Yugoslavia that the “end of history,” understood as the end of major ideological confrontations, was not tantamount to the end of armed conflicts. But the Europeans, and the Germans in particular, perceived,—as Münkler emphasized recently—“peace and prosperity enjoyed in peace … [and treated] the Yugoslav wars as an episode of disturbance … that one wanted to forget quickly,”3 especially since it was the US that could hasten the end of the conflict through intervention and was the only one with the capability and will to end the conflict through kinetic intervention.

Along with this “forgetting of history” came also a “forgetting of geography,”4 because very few had realized that the post-Tsarist space via Ukraine, stretching from the Western Balkans to the Caucasus, had never developed stable conditions in the nearly 100 years following the collapse of the Russian and Austro-Hungarian empires.5 Yugoslavia, after the Second World War, had also become a kind of temporary political solution, as had been the case with the Kingdom of Yugoslavia almost three decades earlier. The Federation of South Slavic peoples had not led to a stable order. For an extended period of time this was neither recognized nor ignored by the European Union; when the problems finally could no longer be overlooked, the EU tried to pacify this region by bribing it based on the concept of “financial alimentation for non-violence,”6 although it quickly became evident that the immobilization of the actors through financial gifts made for a very precarious peace. In the words of Münkler: “The peace in the Balkans will depend ultimately on the financial blackmail of the EU. This is not a comfortable situation for the Europeans.”7

But those issues which the Europeans had for so long ignored they encountered even more starkly in 2013, after the flare-up of the Ukraine crisis and Russia’s illegal occupation of the Crimean peninsula: this brought about the recognition that geopolitics and, with it, war as the advancement of policy by other means had indeed returned to Europe.

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5. Münkler 2016 (p. 22 f).
It may have been the vulnerable position of his own small state and an associated special sensitivity to the importance of geography that sharpened his geopolitical mind in particular. In any case, Lee Kuan Yew, the first prime minister of the city-state of Singapore, was aware of the immediate possibility of tectonic upheavals, huge shifts of meaning and the associated risks of violent conflict in the European context when he articulated the idea more than 20 years ago that Europe is surrounded by a “ring of fire,” which includes Europe’s entire southern and southeastern neighborhood.

This “Ring of Fire,” running from Ukraine and the conflict regions in the Caucasus over to the Middle East to Northern and along the coast of West Africa, is—as much as the already mentioned Balkan region—the result of the collapse of former great empires: the Ottoman Empire and the Russian-Soviet empire. These states—like the Habsburg monarchy—were multiethnic empires, the legacies of which are disputed to this day and will probably remain in the form of “wars of succession” for some time.

Egon Bahr, the former architect of Willy Brandt’s “Ostpolitik,” was as farsighted as Lee Kuan Yew. In a 1999 radio interview—(the same year when Vladimir Putin was appointed as prime minister by then Russian President Boris Yeltsin)—Bahr expressed:

“There is no stability in Europe without the participation and involvement of Russia. And I know for sure that Russia will not remain as weak as it is right now. We can, in principle, now do anything we would like and Russia could not prevent it, for it is too weak. But I would warn against humiliating an immensely proud people.”

In fact, then-Prime Minister Putin began to mold Russian society based on a nationalist-imperialist discourse soon after taking office, and after his later statement from April 2005, calling the collapse of the Soviet Union the “greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the century,” it was clear that Russia would sooner or later try to rectify this disaster. In accordance with this was also Putin’s warning to the West during the Munich Security Conference in 2007, when he called the eastward NATO enlargement a “provocative factor” and stressed that Russia would no longer tolerate unilateral objectives of other states.

It suffices to look at the map of Europe to see that the Russian perception is determined in terms of its geopolitical position by the fact that, west of northern France, via the Benelux states, northern Germany and Poland to Belarus, the Baltic states and Ukraine extend a plain that, in the absence of geographical barriers such as mountain ranges, constitutes an ideal gateway to Russia. In fact, the country has been repeatedly overrun from this direction—by the Poles, the Swedes, the French, and twice by the Germans—although it was never conquered permanently due to its strategic depth, apart from the time in the 13th and 14th centuries when large parts were under Tatar rule. But above all, it were these historical experiences that led the Soviet Union to create a buffer zone after the Second World War by a cordon sanitaire from “friendly” countries in Eastern Europe, which on the one hand allowed the Soviet sphere of influence to extend further west and at the same could protect it from western territorial advances.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the Russian Federation shrank more or less back to the area it occupied in pre-communist times. This territorial

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loss, but in particular the inclusion of former “brother-states” such as Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria, and even former Soviet areas like the Baltic States into NATO and the associated eastward expansion of the Western military alliance was therefore not considered as an act of peace by Moscow; instead, this stirred old fears that could inspire increasingly aggressive Russian political action.

The conflict with Georgia over the regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia in 2008 was de facto Putin’s first step on the way to his goal of the territorial restoration of the Russian sphere of influence. It also served as a warning to NATO to not extend its sphere of influence any further eastward.

Today only Belarus, Moldova, and Ukraine remain between NATO and Russia, and so it is not surprising that Moscow will seek to prevent any changes to this status quo. Sevastopol is Russia’s sole year-round ice-free port located on the Crimean Peninsula. Ukraine’s membership in the western security alliance would hence come to be the equivalent of a declaration of war for Moscow. The planned signing of the Eastern Partnership (EaP) with the EU by the former Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovych was seen by Moscow as an attempted crossing of a red line. This is why Russia exerted pressure to bring Yanukovych back under its control. The subsequent protests were undertaken by already westward-oriented Ukrainians, especially hopeful for EU economic support and to end the corruption, ultimately leading to Yanukovych’s downfall. However, from Moscow’s perspective, it was necessary to regain control of the port of Sevastopol and the Crimean Peninsula, which belongs to the Russian heartland—regardless of fact that the area was only annexed by Catherine the Great in 1783, and that the Tartars were harassed then as they are today. This internationally illegal annexa-
tion, as well as the subsequent support of pro-Russian rebel forces in eastern Ukraine, are examples of hybrid warfare, characterized as a condition “between open war and continued existing peace.” More of such conflicts could be expected in the future.

Empires like Russia think not in years but in decades. And they often look back on much longer periods of time, from which they draw their historical experiences. For them, “the past is not dead, it's not even past” (William Faulkner), and so it should be clear to Europeans that Russia does not simply forget its history and that its security concerns regarding its western flank will not be easily placated.

In addition to this fear of a threat from the West, Russia has also always had dreams of expansion and great-power ambitions—a condition which manifested itself not only in the conquest of the Caucasus and Central Asia and Siberia, but also in eleven Russian-Turkish wars. Currently, the expansionist plans in Moscow are clearly demonstrated in the model of a “Eurasian Union,” in which Belarus, Armenia, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan would once again be closely tied to Russia. This has already been exemplified, above all, by the annexation of Crimea and the subsequent support to pro-Russian forces in eastern Ukraine. With these actions Putin very clearly demonstrated his willingness to again impose Moscow’s interests by force, at least when the associated risk of a conflict with the West is calculable.

There are now legitimate fears that the situation in Ukraine could develop similarly to those in the Balkans. Durable, especially financial and economic, assistance to Ukraine, alongside simultaneous calls for comprehensive reforms, and fighting corruption, could potentially stabilize the country and prevent further refugee flows. This, however, will draw the EU even deeper into conflict with Russia. Should Ukraine be left aside, however, the situation could not only trigger another wave of refugees in Europe, but would also break with the principle that the EU is open to any European state that identifies with its values.

A joint resolution will, in any case, be necessary. Ukraine has always been a border area, which is why the task of organization in this region cannot be left to Putin alone. In addition, for Russia it is also no solution to turn their backs on Europe, especially given the fact that its geopolitical claims have no economic basis. For this purpose, it is sufficient to compare the nominal gross national product of Russia, which is about 2.1 trillion dollars, with that of the European Union (approximately $17.3 trillion), the USA (approximately $16.8 trillion) and the People’s Republic of China (about $9.2 trillion).

As a result, we have now entered into a “new Cold War”, according to the Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev. And the situation in which the European Union finds itself in this conflict is very bad: not only is it currently at loggerheads with regard to almost all questions it faces, but several of its members also feel threatened by Russia to varying degrees—also a result of geography and related historical experience. Moscow’s announcement that Russia is “where Russians are” leads those EU countries that have Russian minorities in its population, especially the Baltic countries but also those directly adjacent to Russia, to have legitimate fears regarding Moscow’s intentions. On the other hand, the further away from Russia the EU Member States are located, the less aware they seem of this situation. This is in spite of the fact that Putin uses almost any available opportunity to destabilize the European Union, not least by supporting various forces—from the extreme right, even neo-Nazi parties, to radical left movements – seeking to undermine the EU. The European Union, as an association of liberal, pluralistic and democratic countries, contradicts the pre-democratic nationalist-chauvinist model that Putin envisions. Russia, as a “managed democracy,” will hence use every opportunity to weaken the EU and thus “also the social, civil and political model for which it stands.” Moscow operates according to pure power politics: this fact must be accepted in the political ranks of the Union, as well as the fact that Russia is adamant about its geographic designs. We must therefore accept the Russian challenge, whether we like it or not.

12 Simms/Zeeb 2016 (p. 27)
Nonetheless, Putin, with his 2014 Crimean operation, was not the first to disregard international law. President George W. Bush had even made it a maxim in his 2002 “National Security Strategy” of the United States: “We cannot let our enemies strike first.” Thus any unilateral, “pre-emptive” action by America was justified whenever it was perceived that its national security was threatened.

This potential break with international law, committed by the world’s leading democratic power by arguing for the need for pre-emptive strikes to fight terrorism and “rogue states,” was first realized in 2003 with the invasion of Iraq by the United States and allies including the United Kingdom. The results were disastrous. Because this form of “realpolitik” recognizes only the reality of power, rather than the effectiveness of “values” and particularly the rule of law. It could certainly be employed in an authoritarian political system, such as Russia. However, if a democracy prescribes this view of politics, it inevitably encounters a conflict with its normative foundations and, ultimately, enters a crisis of legitimacy.13

While the United States will remain the strongest power in this new anarchic, multipolar world for the foreseeable future, and probably the only power capable of engaging both militarily as well as diplomatically in global affairs, it demonstrates significantly less readiness for international engagement today unless their economic and/or strategic interests are directly affected. President George W. Bush’s successor, Barack Obama, sees both the Ukraine crisis and the flow of refugees from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan as problems with which Europe must cope alone. In his view, which he recently presented in an interview for “The Atlantic,” Ukraine is “a core Russian interest but not an American one”, and “even as his Secretary of State warns of a dire, Syria-fueled European apocalypse, Obama hasn’t recategorized the country’s civil war as a top-tier security threat.”14 Even the crisis-ridden Middle East, for which Obama had diplomatic ambitions at the start of his tenure – implemented at least partially through the nuclear deal with Iran—is now on its own. The focus of American interests has transitioned increasingly to the Pacific region, where new challenges have emerged, not only economic but also relating to terrestrial and maritime regulations, especially with respect to China—(keyword: “New Silk Road”).

For Europeans, this means nothing less than the necessity of recognizing that they can no longer base the enforcement of their security interests on the United States as “free riders” (Obama), but must finally emancipate themselves and develop their own strategies for ensuring the development of their interests. Here, however, they should consider the 2011 episode in Libya, when a military intervention in the civil war was decided on French and British urging, but then American support was needed again. So while it did succeed in overthrowing the Libyan dictator Muammar Gaddafi, at the same time a new disaster, a new “failed state”, and a gateway out of Africa was created because it failed to stabilize the country.

Take the example of the Middle East: In this highly geostrategically significant area, Europe has either nobly restrained itself in the past years and decades or has followed the US’ lead; developing its own long-term strategic considerations of dealing with these neighbors, however, has been and remains far away. Even when, after the unfortunate American Iraq War and the outbreak of civil war in Syria, all state structures collapsed in these countries and increasingly sank into chaos, the Europeans looked on, lacking ideas or advice. Meanwhile there is no longer an Iraqi, Syrian or Libyan state, but only a number of warring factions and warlords and despotic regimes supported by Russia or Iran. Those with the opportunity to escape do so, resulting in waves of refugees to Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey, and now also Europe.

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14. Obama, in: Goldberg 2016 (pp. 87 and 89).
Henry Kissinger recently stated\(^\text{15}\) that the events in the Levant show that the Middle East policies of the past years and decades now stand before shambles, characterized by chaos and disaster. The military intervention in Afghanistan was aborted without ensuring that the country could actually be stabilized; Saddam Hussein was removed from power in the course of the Iraq war, but the country plunged increasingly into chaos, from which the terrorist organization “Da’esh” or Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, and Syria ISIL/ISIS was able to emerge. The so-called “Arab Spring” in the Middle East did not bring about anticipated progress but rather turmoil and unrest. For approximately five years now, Syria has been entrenched in a bloody civil war, which has driven half of the approximately 22 million Syrians to flee, leading to a destabilization of the surrounding countries, particularly Jordan and Lebanon. Yemen and Libya have become failed states, and the decades-long conflict between Israel and the Palestinians remains, due to the isolation of the Gaza Strip and the ongoing Israeli settlement policy in the West Bank, further from a solution than ever before. Finally, the entire Middle East is under the influence of the ongoing conflict between Shiites and Sunnis, which is greatly exploited in the power-political rivalry between Iran and Saudi Arabia.

In fact, the roots of all these conflicts go far back into the past; history casts a long shadow, which we have not recognized for a long time. The events of today are also part of the long-term consequences of the unresolved disintegration of the Ottoman Empire and the many unfortunate policies undertaken in dealing with its heritage. Almost clairvoyantly explained in 1919 by Archibald Wavell, British Field Marshal and later Viceroy of India, in view of the results of the Paris Peace Talks and the reorganization carried out in the Middle East through arbitrary boundaries, they were a “peace to end all peace.”\(^\text{16}\)

The reluctance of the Europeans in the Middle East after all their failings of the first half of the 20th century—committed especially by the British and French (see: Sykes-Picot Agreement of 1916)—can be understood. Nevertheless, this does not change the fact that this area is in Europe’s immediate neighborhood. Most recently, the 2011 “Arab Spring” began a decay of order in the entire region which remains unfinished, and its end will probably see a Middle East that has nothing to do with the one we knew before.\(^\text{17}\) “We destroyed Sykes-Picot,” said a fighter of the “Islamic State” in 2014,\(^\text{18}\) but at the moment it is still absolutely unclear how the new order will look or how it could be built. For Europe it is therefore vitally important not to leave the reorganization to forces like Da’esh (also known as ISIS or ISIL), but rather to design it based on appropriate strategies to support those forces in the region that promote a peaceful and democratic development of these countries without overestimating their the potential of their influence on development in the region.

The development of pan-European strategies is also necessary because, alongside the wave of refugees and Islamist terrorism, the crisis of the Middle East has now arrived in the heart of Europe.

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\(^{16}\) Fromkin 2009 (p. VII).

\(^{17}\) Perthes 2015 (p. 9).

\(^{18}\) cit. in: Marshall 2016 (S. 149).

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**We Need Not Less, but More Europe**

For a long time the US and Europe have shared three common interests in the region: the supply of crude oil, the containment of terrorism, and the security of Israel. However, with the wave of refugees it is clear that Europe is linked with the fate of the Middle East to a much greater degree than the United States is because of its geographical proximity and its historical and cultural ties; this all the more since the US is now virtually en-
nergy self-sufficient thanks to intensive shale gas extraction and increasing use of alternative energy. Europe therefore needs to continue to develop an increasingly greater awareness of and interest in ensuring that the people of the Levant are living in such conditions that do not drive them, out of desperation, to revolution, civil war, terrorism and/or flight. For this purpose the development of new strategies and unused channels should be prioritized. Those attempted so far, such as support for despotic rulers to “pacify” the populations of their respective countries, are no longer working and have, moreover, not been very effective in the past.

Currently, however, the EU is faced with the fact that one and a half million refugees from Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq and North Africa arrived in recent months to Europe, now constituting only 0.3 percent of the population of the 28 EU member states. By comparison, Jordan has received about 1.5 million refugees with a population of 6.5 million inhabitants, in Lebanon there are besides a total population of 4.5 million, more than 2 million refugees, and in Turkey about 2.7 million. Particularly affected by the wave of refugees to Europe were the three target countries: Germany, Sweden and Austria, although the latter waved through most of the refugees. More intensely affected for a much longer time, however, have been Italy and Greece on the islands of Lampedusa, Lesbos, Samos, Kos and others; for years, thousands of people have been stranded, but we failed to demonstrate solidarity regarding this issue.

In addition, there is the paralyzing threat of Islamist terrorist attacks, most recently in Paris, Ankara and Brussels—a European 9/11—although it should be noted that—in spite of all legitimate necessity to fight it—the threat that this terror represents does not actually correspond to the extent of the paralyzing fear which it seems to produce. As a comparison: since 2004, Islamist terrorist attacks in Europe—including Russia and Turkey—claimed some 600 human lives.19 This is a depressing number, but also informative, especially when compared with the number of murders in the US just in 2013 (14,000), or even to the number of road deaths in the European Union (i.e. excluding Russia and Turkey) in 2014 alone, the year with the lowest number of road deaths in total; this number is more than 25,700! This, compared to the threat of terrorism, should neither trivializes nor diminish the associated suffering. Nevertheless, it is important that proper judgment is preserved in order to be able to find appropriate and accurate solutions to the problems at hand. This harkens to the words of US President Franklin D. Roosevelt, who noted in his inaugural address of 1933: “The only thing we have to fear is fear itself”.20 Although the provision of security represents one of the most important tasks of the state, this is also achieved through securing the personal freedom of its citizens. In Benjamin Franklin’s words—“They who can give up essential liberty to obtain a little temporary safety, deserve neither liberty nor safety”.21 It has been repeatedly stressed that the terrorists want to destroy Western values—starting with democracy, the freedom of religion and gender equality up to the freedom of expression. But in response it has to be pointed out that the terrorists may be attacking these values, but they cannot do away with them; that we can only do ourselves, and are doing so already, by increasingly valuing security over liberty, and xenophobia over tolerance. Events like those that took place on New Year’s Eve 2015 in Cologne, Germany, must be pursued with all the necessary means of law, but must not lead to a blanket condemnation of refugees or—more generally—of all Muslims. In that case, we would be destroying precisely those values which we pretend to defend and render ourselves agents of those forces which we want to fight. Also, we must understand that the attacks of Da’esh and other Islamist terror groups are – while carried out locally – are not directed against individual European cities or states, but against the European Union as a whole and everything it stands for. The defensive struggle, in order to be successful, must therefore be waged with a joint-European initiative and on common constitutional grounds.

However, at the moment, the European Union is far from a common position on these issues. “L’Europe n’existe pas” described the Neuen Zürcher Zeitung: “Not an integrated continent, but only the sum of its fears and antipathies.”22 Illiberal forces in their own ranks – especially within Victor Orbán’s Hungary as well as other Visegrád states—through the successive degradation of rule of law, the repression of the media, and op-

20. Roosevelt, cit. in: Otey 2009 (p. 252)
21. Franklin/Franklin 1818 (p. 333-334).
position in their own countries, undermine EU values and thereby render the EU increasingly less capable of action. Nationalism, populism, and, above all, provincialism, are increasingly shaping thoughts as well as actions. Rising demands for a construction of a “Fortress of Europe” are being called out for yet again with each European state pursuing its own agenda. This, however, is not a reasonable substitute for the strategic planning that is so urgently needed and does not guarantee efficacy in the preservation of Europe's stability and prosperity. If anything can be learned from history, it is that the construction of walls and enclosures of barbed wire not only bring about more disadvantages than positive contributions to solving the problem, but that they ultimately also amount to the order to fire. This has been proven by all historical examples—the Berlin Wall and the Iron Curtain, as well as the Great Wall. The Swiss writer and playwright Max Frisch demonstrated in his play, “The Great Wall,” that the Emperor wanted to contribute to the construction of this barrier to peacekeeping because it was to “stop time” and prevent the future. But what appeared as a valid short-term solution actually led to isolation, backwardness and political as well as economic decline.

“The more maverick the Europeans behave, the more they reduce their chances of advancing their own ideas,” warned Neue Zürcher Zeitung. One could imagine the case in which each individual European country would have to represent itself in climate negotiations – in the face of great actors like the USA and China, soon also joined by India and Brazil. What would be the likelihood that the Dutch, the Hungarians, the Swedes, or the Poles – the options go on and on – would be able to advance their individual interests in decisions on climate goals? Even major European countries like Germany, France or the UK would not stand a chance and ultimately be relegated to bystanders.

A recent example from another issue: The inability of the Europeans to unify has meant that the EU now has to rely on the goodwill of that country in the refugee issue, which has already sought to exploit the refugees for its own Syria policy in the past: Turkey.

Turkey, like Russia, is one of those regional powers whose foreign policy is critical to European security. Furthermore, all of the challenges posed by the Middle East cannot be resolved without Turkey— from the Syria conflict, to the Kurdish question, to the refugee problem. Already a short time after the outbreak of the Syrian civil war, Turkish President Erdogan expressed his for a rapid rebel victory and the removal of Syrian-President Bashar al-Assad from power all in the hope to be able to soon perform a ritual prayer in the Omayyad Mosque of Damascus. His strong support of the Sunni rebels and the generous reception of refugees was to ensure that Turkey would emerge as the dominant power in the region after the war.

The highly controversial March 2016 agreements with Ankara adopted by the EU clearly illustrated the extent to which refugees had already become a geopolitical tool. Ankara used the refugee issue for the enforcement of claims such as the abolition of visa requirements for Turkish citizens, which had nothing to do with the refugee issue. This won Ankara prestige for its own people, but could become a problem for Europe if, for example, the Kurdish question is stoked further and a war of the Turkish army against the Kurdish areas in the Southeast produces more refugees.

Turkey, after a prolonged phase of closer ties to the EU was eventually snubbed and rejected by German Chancellor Angela Merkel and French President Nicolas Sarkozy in a humiliating manner, is now under Recep Tayyip Erdogan a difficult counterpart in the refugee crisis. Nevertheless, an isolation of Turkey on the periphery of Europe would be a devastating mistake. Turkey, like Russia, cannot be moved and so meeting with the leaders of these countries on an equal footing is of paramount necessity. At the same time, however, as former German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer has recently stressed, “the price of this partnership (...) can never be the abandonment of our own democratic principles.”

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23. Frisch 1964 (p. 7).
25. Seufert 2015 (p. 6).
26. This allegation is poised against Russia, whose air force carried out intensive bombardments on the side of the Syrian armed-forces, which in Europe raised suspicions that this was done to cause thousands more people to be forced to flee to Europe to put pressure on and divide the continent.
27. Fischer 2016a.
We Also Need a Reformed Europe

The current crisis period in which Europe has found itself for several years now can make it easy to forget that the integration of Europe and its institutional core, the European Union, is a great success story, which, as mentioned, was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. The unification of Europe as a response to the ravages of the two World Wars with their millions of deaths, the turmoil of the interwar period, and defense against the Soviet threat provided the framework within which its members witnessed decades of peace and incredible economic advancement.

As US-President Obama recently emphasized: “A strong, united Europe is a necessity for the world because an integrated Europe remains vital to our international order.” But Europe's unification remains “an unfinished story.” Still today, the EU does not present itself as a single European unit, as the current lack of a common refugee, asylum and migration policy, or a common economic and fiscal policy, and especially the lack of common foreign, security and defense policy, which address much more than securing economic interests alone. Decades ago Egon Bahr spoke of Europe as “an economic giant, a political dwarf and a military worm.” The capacity of Europeans today to act jointly on the global scale depends on their capacity to transform the surrounding “Ring of Fire” into, if not a “Ring of Friends,” then at least a “Ring of Partners” in the long term. As the former German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt once said in a television interview, “in this century the self-assertion of European civilization is at stake.”

Moreover, the European Union needs not only a more cohesive and convincing presentation globally but must also survive its current crisis by convincing its member-states not to relapse into primordial national interests at the expense of communal interests; those favoring such a regression seem to misjudge the advantages of cooperation and integration on the economic policy level in our globalized world. As the US sociologist Daniel Bell pointed out already in the ’80s: “The nation-state is becoming too small for the big problems of life, and too big for the small problems of life.” It is therefore as Mark Twain said: “Either we hang together or we’ll hang separately!”

Germany, which since reunification and EU eastward expansion has become the “power in the middle” has a special role to play in this process. However, this position is not only a geographical one, as Münkler stressed, but first and foremost a political one, “which combines increased influence with increased responsibility” and requires constant effort “to maintain the balance of the political and economic space, of which it is the center,” in face of the increasingly more powerful centrifugal forces.

That this cannot take place without tension is in no case more evident than in Greece, especially regarding its still unresolved so-called “Euro Crisis”: the Greek government’s announcement of the imminent insolvency of their country in April 2010 sparked an emergency meeting in Brussels and “rescue packages” were generated, though a viable and lasting solution could not yet be found. The very fact that Germany plays the leading role, which it itself sometimes still struggles with, has aroused some old fears but also highlights the fact that, without Germany, the rescue of neither Greece nor the euro will be possible. In the meantime one begins to recognize that—though not yet officially announced — in the current construction of the economically weaker Euro countries such as Greece, as well as some others gripped by debt, while it will be extremely difficult for them to emerge from this situation independently; meanwhile the economically strong countries, led by Germany, no longer wish to sink their money into a bottomless pit, and want to afford Danaidenarbeit. A

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29. Loth 2014
30. Schmidt 2013 (p. 8).
32. Münkler 2015a.
33. Münkler 2015a (p. 9).
34. Danaidenarbeit: Named after the daughters of Danaus, who
viable solution can only be found if these facts are taken into account as much as national sensitivities and fears.

Presently, the resentment is still great on all sides and is manifested in ever-increasing growth of radical groups and parties on the left as well as on the right. In the Christian prayer “Our Father in Heaven” it says: “And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors”—but we are still quite far from that. This may be due to the similarity of the terms “debt” and “guilt” in the German language. While moral “guilt” in the English language is clearly distinguishable from “debt,” a monetary term, in the German language “schuld” means guilt but is also used to describe economic debt, a condition based solely on contractual obligations brought into the vicinity of a moral or legal offense by which “schuld” (guilt/debt) occurs. “Schuld” is always the result of individual misconduct, and thus something personal, but not something for which the collective population of an entire state can be criticized.

In order to salvage the common currency and, with it, the European Union, Greece will require more than a financial change of appearance. The opinion, which existed at the introduction of the euro and reemerged in the wake of the crisis, that the introduction of a common currency would have required a substantial economic equality between all participating countries, is a hypothesis that can be disproved by the example of the United States and its individual member-states. The individual federal states or economic regions of the United States have an equally uneven economic range as the Euro zone. The design flaw of the “euro” is another one: a common currency requires either a common central state (as in the case of the US) with appropriate compensation mechanisms between regions, or at least common institutions capable of generating monetary and fiscal policy – at minimum a coordinated fiscal policy—and a banking union or, at the very least, a transfer union. The failure to fulfill this condition was a serious constitutional failure that was inadequately accounted for by the Maastricht criteria. And even the Maastricht criteria were not adhered to by Germany and France when Greece joined under false pretenses. The development of recent years has certainly demonstrated that the introduction of the Euro and the Schengen area were ambitious projects that, since they were implemented as preliminary steps and not as a result of a political union, had to fail as soon as conditions worsened. Although the “gradualist approach,” i.e. the deepening of European integration through a series of small steps especially at the economic level, had functioned for a long time, it should also have been clear that such far-reaching measures like the single currency or freedom of travel guaranteed by the Schengen Zone could only function if the related policies—economic and fiscal policies on the one hand, security and migration policy on the other—were already unified and federally organized.

Will 2016 Be the Fateful Year for the EU?
The “Brexit” as a Wake-Up Call

Even before the financial crisis, popular distrust of Brussels developed in many Member States, often fomented by national governments but even more commonly so by extreme populist parties. This phenomenon was clearly illustrated by the failed referenda in France and the Netherlands, which derailed the “Treaty Establishing a Constitution for Europe” signed by the governments of all Member States in October 2004. Most recently, in April 2016, the Dutch again voted negatively in a referendum, thus rejecting the EU Association Agreement with Ukraine. Meanwhile, the forces of disintegration are as strong as ever. And, each of the discussed challenges—from a newly power-hungry Russia, to the tectonic upheavals in the Middle East, North and West Africa, and thusly triggered refugee crisis and to the need for economic stabilization in Eu-
A Garden Choked with Weeds*

During the last thousand years of common history the relations between the British Isles and the European continent were sometimes closer sometimes wider – they were considered “thousand years of conflict and cooperation.” 37 Just prior to the referendum some British historians conducted an intense debate how deeply “European” really are the Islands, and whether the UK does hold a “distinctive character, rooted its largely uninterrupted history since the Middle Ages.” 38 Whenever the UK turns away from Europe, however, it turned out to be always to the disadvantage of both sides. Prime minister Cameron, himself warned his citizens some

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weeks before the referendum on Brexit: “Isolationism has never served this country well. Whenever we turn our back on Europe, sooner or later we come to regret it. We have always had to go back in, and always at a much higher cost.”

For the European Union, the exit of the United Kingdom is not only a major setback due to the loss of around 65 million inhabitants and their enormous economic power, but also another massive risk to its cohesiveness. Each “divorce” is profoundly difficult and associated with massive disadvantages for both sides; therefore, it is all the more important that a “War of the Roses” is prevented. Additionally, however, the departure of the British from the EU could also trigger a domino effect, as it is being considered by many right-wing populist and nationalist parties in Europe as a signal to seek their salvation again in national initiatives. “The underlying causes for the rejection of Europe run deep: the return of nationalism and myths of a golden past of the nation states, ethnically and politically homogeneous and without the constraints of compromise machine called Brussels, without globalization, while the majority of Europeans in their welfare states living very well, they nevertheless but ghastly place,” found former German Foreign Minister and Vice Chancellor Joschka Fischer. Thus, voices ranging from the Netherlands through Belgium and from Denmark to Austria, are ready to vote on their country’s withdrawal from the Union. Should it also come to such a decision in France – one of the founding members of the European unification process –, as advocated for by Marine Le Pen, the chairwoman of the Front National and prospective candidate for the French presidential elections in 2017, it would mean the end of the EU and the successful political model of peacekeeping in Europe along with it.

All of this momentum persists, although those who oppose the EU still owe a substantive answer to the question: exit to where? Stated differently: what should come after the European Union? “To seek salvation in the nation state”, according to Joschka Fischer, “amounts to a self-fulfilling prophecy of decline.” British historian Brendan Simms referred to the fact that a return to the nation state with national currencies does not necessarily mean true national sovereignty: “For true sovereignty you need a certain mass and coherence, a weight in the world.” The euphoria of “independence day” in the UK could thus quickly give way to the bitter realization that the country is to bear alone the harsh storms of the world market.

The European Union must recognize that “Brexit” represents far more than just the British turning away from Europe. Frank Luntz highlighted the point in TIME Magazine: “The Brexit question represents a political conflict rapidly spreading across the globe: Do hard-working, taxpaying citizens fundamentally trust or reject half a century of globalization and integration? Or is it time for a rethinking and redrawing of our political and economic system from the ground up?” because voters are increasingly expressing: “We aren’t feeling the benefits you promised in our daily lives.” With this, it is also clear that Brexit is only the beginning “of a debate the developed world is about to have with itself —not the end.”

In this respect, the British referendum is a watershed moment for the future of Europe: either as a signal and a starting point for a fundamental shift—including reform of the institutions—or as a sign that European integration has reached its zenith. In order to successfully maintain its validity as a project of peace and prosperity, the EU must refashion itself in line with the saying of Jacques Delors, former Commission President and “architect” of the Maastricht Treaty, after which one “cannot love an internal market” and it must therefore also be possible to give Europe a soul “[so] to be provided with a deeper meaning” and offer a positive narrative. Delors knew that the European project could only be implemented with the support of the citizens. For this, it is necessary to set forth an objective consid-

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40. Fischer 2016b.
41. Fischer 2016b.
42. Luntz 2016.
44. “If in the ten years ahead of us we do not succeed in giving Europe its soul, a spiritual dimension, true significance, then we will have been wasting our time. That is the lesson of my experience. Europe cannot live by legal arguments and economic know-how alone. The potential of the Maastricht Treaty will not be realized without some form of inspiration.” Commission of the European Communities 1992; Delors wiederholte diese Forderung “Europe needs a soul” später, beispielsweise im Oktober 2010 in einem Interview (siehe: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/20101006STO85428/Jacques-Delors-Europe-needs-a-soul)..
ered worthwhile and necessary by the people.
The consequences of a relapse into nationalist small-statehood, however, would be unquestioningly devastating because no single European country can successfully meet the challenges that global developments gives rise to, such as climate change and the consequences of globalization and digitalization in addition to the previously discussed challenges. Historians Brendan Simms and Benjamin Zeeb both recently reminded us that successful public unions – such as the United States of America— “are not caused by gradual processes of convergence under relatively favorable circumstances, but rather through breaks in extreme crises. ... There are events, not processes that bring them into being.”45

The current crisis situation that the European Union finds itself in could be such an event. In any case, Konrad Adenauer words from 1954 are more relevant today than ever before: “The unity of Europe was a dream of a few. It was a hope for many. Today, it is a necessity for all of us”.46

45. Simms/Zeeb 2016 (S. 78 f).
46. Adenauer 1954.

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Hannes Androsch was born in Vienna, Austria, in 1938. He was Austrian Federal Minister of Finance from 1970-1981, and Vice Federal Chancellor of the Republic of Austria, serving under Federal Chancellor Dr. Bruno Kreisky, from 1976-1981. Subsequently Dr. Androsch became Director General of CA Creditanstalt Bankverein (1981-1989), a major bank in Austria and Central Europe. Today Androsch chairs Androsch International Management Consulting GmbH (AIC), and is an industrialist involved in many corporations in Central Europe and Asia. Dr. Androsch has been dedicated to economic-political, socio-political, educative, and scientific-political matters. He chairs the supervisory board of the Austrian Institute of Technology (AIT). He has received numerous distinctions and awards, is author of several books and articles, and has instituted a major private scientific foundation in Austria.
The Liechtenstein Institute on Self-Determination at Princeton University (LISD) supports teaching, research, and publication about issues related to and emerging from self-determination, especially pertaining to the state, self-governance, sovereignty, security, and diplomacy with particular consideration of socio-cultural, ethnic, and religious issues involving state and non-state actors. The Institute was founded in 2000 through the generosity of H.S.H. Prince Hans Adam II of Liechtenstein, and is directed by Wolfgang Danspeckgruber.

The Liechtenstein Institute on Self-Determination seeks to enhance global peace and stability by bringing together academic experts, practitioners, representatives of the public and private sectors, and decision makers to explore key events and crises from strategic, political, legal, economic, and cultural-religious perspectives in order to find innovative and sustainable solutions to pressing issues. In addition to conferences convened as part of specific LISD projects, the Institute regularly sponsors public lectures and special meetings that bring a diverse group of experts and policy makers from around the world to Princeton University to share their work with students and members of the wider University and local communities.

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